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# SPECTRUM

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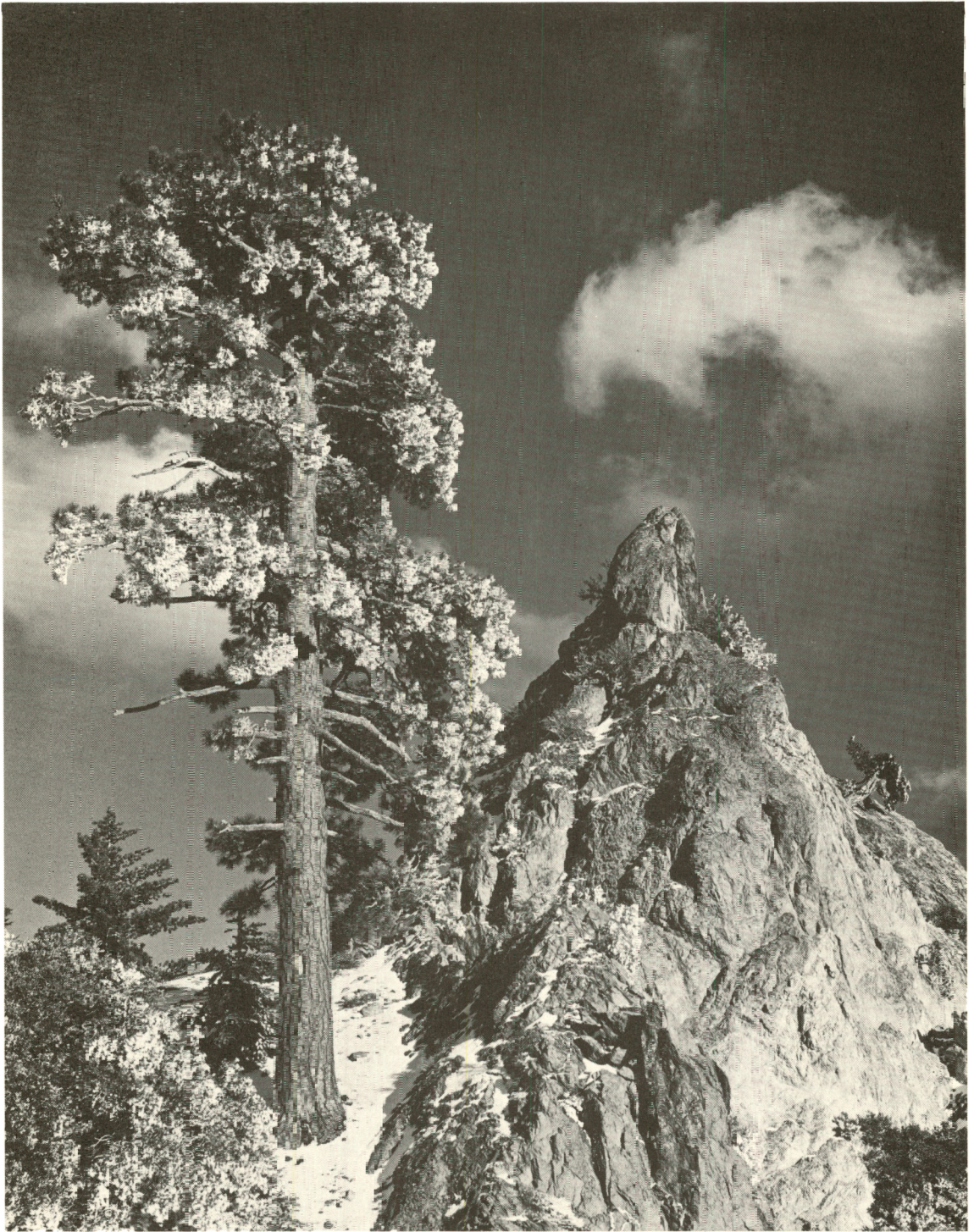
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JOHN DAVID GRIFFITH

# The Seventh-day Adventists and the Ecumenical Movement

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COSMAS RUBENCAMP

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*PRECIS.* While Seventh-day Adventists are wrongly understood as a sect or cult, they remain staunchly outside the ecumenical movement. For one thing, they greatly distrust the Roman Catholic Church, whose papacy seems to most SDA's to be antichrist. They see here, and in the ecumenism of other Protestant churches, fulfillment of dire predictions in the books of Daniel and Revelation. At the same time, individual Roman Catholics and Protestants may be true Christians and no defamation is intended.

Seventh-day Adventists thus condemn the ecumenical movement, seeing themselves, a "remnant church," as called to witness to Sabbath observance, the nature of man, and the imminent return of Christ. All of these are ignored in the World Council of Churches. However, at least a very small minority of SDA's have reacted favorably to the suggestion of the WCC that membership in this body, which is neutral on doctrinal and ecclesiological questions, would be an opportunity to witness to their faith.

The time has come for serious dialogue between Adventists and other Christians. The high quality of theological faculties at Andrews University in Michigan and the Séminaire Adventiste du Salève in France indicates the fallacy of dismissing this church as a group of fanatics. Contact with other scholars, as well as the changes taking place in the Roman Catholic Church, may help to bridge the gulf between them and other Christians. But one must also take into account the Adventist fear of becoming just one more denomination, losing distinctive doctrines and evangelistic concern.

Seventh-day Adventists feel that they are coming into their own. No longer so frequently misunderstood as a "cult," a "sect," or an offbeat body with a ghetto-mentality, but generally considered a respectable denomina-

tion of the Christian Church, they are anxious to communicate with their fellow Christians so that their message may make an impact on them.<sup>1</sup> This attitude is illustrated by the fact that SDA Elder LeRoy Froom's book on the history of the doctrine of conditional immortality was projected in order that "Seventh-day Adventists [would] no longer appear as upstart innovators, out of step and out of tune with all segments . . . of the past whose names we rightly venerate."<sup>2</sup> Rather, they want to be seen as "restorers and continuators" of the ongoing reformation of the Church.<sup>3</sup> And, as the late Elder Francis D. Nichol put it: "The reformation calls for completion most notably on these two doctrines, the sabbath and the nature of man; this is simply another way of saying that we have here two very real reasons for the existence of the Seventh-day Adventists."<sup>4</sup>

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The ecclesiological self-understanding of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is not widely shared by other Christians, and this is due to some extent to the SDA noninvolvement in the ecumenical activities of these churches. In exploring the causes of this, we will analyze first the SDA attitudes toward the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches, and then their view of the worldwide ecumenical movement. This will lead to an exploration of the question whether or not there are in fact components of the Seventh-day Adventist faith-commitment which call for or prohibit their entrance into ecumenical relationships with other Christian churches. Finally, we will take up the problem of the response of these churches to the SDA phenomenon.

#### ADVENTIST ATTITUDES TOWARD THE OTHER CHURCHES

Throughout its history,<sup>5</sup> Seventh-day Adventism has been preoccupied with a struggle to define its view of the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>6</sup> In order to understand this preoccupation, it should be noted first that Adventism began at a time when nativist Protestantism both hated and feared the Catholic Church. The nineteenth-century Millerite movement (out of which the Seventh-day Adventist [movement] arose) was not loath to accept the identification of the apocalyptic beast and harlot and the Babylon of Revelation as "papal Rome," an identification made as a matter of course in the churches from which the Millerites had come.<sup>7</sup> Their preoccupation with Daniel and Revelation did, however, make this identification more definitely a part of Adventist thinking, and it has remained such to the present day. As late as 1952, for example, at the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Conference (a kind of general council of the denomination), a paper was delivered by a then-professor at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Semi-



nary in suburban Washington, D. C., in which paper the papacy was analyzed quite seriously as the antichrist.<sup>8</sup>

Even *Questions on Doctrine*, a responsible and authoritative statement of SDA faith, did not refrain from including the identification of “the Catholic, or great Roman, apostasy” with Daniel 7:24-25.

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As for the ten horns,  
Out of this kingdom  
    ten kings shall arise,  
    and another shall arise after them;  
he shall be different from the former ones,  
    and shall put down three kings.  
He shall speak words against the Most High,  
    and shall wear out the saints of the Most High,  
    and shall think to change the times and the law;  
and they shall be given into his hand  
    for a time, two times, and half a time.

In the same chapter the horn of the fourth beast with “eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth speaking great things” (Daniel 7:8) is described as “Rome’s pagan and later papal phases.”<sup>9</sup> In other places in this same work we read that “Seventh-day Adventists believe that the prophecies of Daniel 7 and Revelation 13, relating to the beast, refer particularly to the Papacy.”<sup>10</sup> It further decries “such papal innovations as a mediating priesthood, the sacrifice of the mass, the confessional, and the worship of Mary, by which it [papal Rome] has successfully taken away knowledge of, and reliance upon, the continual ministry of Christ . . . and rendered that ministry inoperative in the lives of millions of professed Christians.”<sup>11</sup> It goes on for pages to condemn, out of a vast ignorance of Catholic theology, the so-called teachings of the Roman Church.<sup>12</sup>

Lest, however, there be any unfortunate misunderstanding, the compilers of *Questions on Doctrine* add that “our statements . . . do not have the defamatory character that some would impute to us. They are uttered in sorrow, not for invidious comparisons.”<sup>13</sup> There is reason to believe that this latter statement is quite sincere; it is repeated later in the book:

This prophetic interpretation does not justify the charge that its holders are anti-Catholic. We do not deny credit for any good that has been done by Catholics, or discount the sincerity of earnest individual Catholics because we find the system condemned in the Scripture. We respect the freedom of every Catholic to worship God as he thinks right; and we hold the freedom to point out what we see as error and to seek to persuade men to accept what we believe is truth, without prejudice or bigotry.<sup>14</sup>

The “Babylon” charge applies to the papacy as an institution (“system”)

only, it would seem, for earlier in the book the reader is informed that “we fully recognize the [heartening] fact that a host of true followers of Christ are scattered all through the various churches of Christendom, including the Roman Catholic communion. These God clearly recognizes as His own. Such do not form a part of the ‘Babylon’ portrayed in the Apocalypse.”<sup>15</sup> This apocalyptic Babylon, rather, is composed of “those who have broken with the spirit and essence of true Christianity, and have followed the way of apostasy.”<sup>16</sup>

That the Babylon question is nevertheless still unresolved is pointed up by the contradiction in the — admittedly unofficial — *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, published almost ten years after *Questions on Doctrine*. There we read concerning “Babylon:”

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SDA interpretation today is essentially that of Uriah Smith and other early SDA commentators. Modern Babylon is understood to stand for all Christian churches that have departed from the “everlasting gospel” as set forth in the Scriptures, including both the great Roman apostasy of the early Christian centuries and the more recent departure of Protestantism [from God’s Word, beginning in particular with] their rejection of the 1844 message. The fall is understood to be progressive; it is not yet complete, but it will be so when the major Protestant churches collaborate with the Church of Rome in an attempt to coerce the conscience (Revelation 13).<sup>17</sup>

This statement illustrates the fact that Adventism has been almost as consistently critical of the churches of the Reformation as of the Roman Catholic Church. Ellen White, for example, strongly indicted Protestantism:

Many of the Protestant churches are following Rome’s example of iniquitous connection with “the kings of the earth” — the state churches, by their relation to secular governments. . . . Besides a sinful union with the world, the churches that separated from Rome present other of her characteristics.<sup>18</sup>

She goes on for seven pages in like vein. Furthermore, foreshadowing developments to come, eighty years ago the same Ellen White wrote:

Romanism is now regarded by Protestants with far greater favor than in former years. In those countries where Catholicism is not in the ascendancy, and the papists are taking a conciliatory course in order to gain influence, there is an increasing indifference concerning the doctrines that separate the reformed churches from the papal hierarchy; the opinion is gaining ground that, after all, we do not differ so widely upon vital points as has been supposed, and that a little concession on our part will bring us into a better understanding with Rome.<sup>19</sup>

She obviously did not approve of this changing attitude, but sounded a warning about what we today call a “false irenicism.” This view of Ellen White is still quite typical of Seventh-day Adventists. There is a widespread

presupposition that the Catholic attitude toward religious liberty and the ecumenical movement is (at least at the policy-making level) somewhat cynical, an astute power-play.

The 1965 papal visit to the United Nations headquarters was commonly looked upon by Seventh-day Adventists as a decisive step in the regaining of world leadership by "the Vatican." It was no ignorant country preacher, but the secretary of the Ministerial Association of the SDA General Conference, who commented on the visit in this fashion:

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From our very early beginnings Adventist preachers, through the study of prophecy, have declared that Roman Catholicism will rise to the place where she will ultimately become the voice of the religious world. For many decades there was no indication that such a thing would or even could ever happen. The study of prophecy also convinced us that the United States . . . will increase in prestige until she becomes the most influential nation in the world. As such she will play a leading role in bringing about the full and final exaltation of the Papacy. . . . The prophecies of God's Word . . . should mean more to us today than ever, for we can surely 'see the day approaching.'<sup>20</sup>

The fraternal contacts between Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras have been described in Adventist sermons as "signs of the times;" and the new attitude of most Protestant churches toward Roman Catholicism since the second Vatican Council likewise seems to the majority of Adventists as the fulfillment of Revelation 13:3: "One of [the beast's] heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth followed the beast with wonder."<sup>21</sup>

#### THE ADVENTISTS AND THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

As might be suspected from the foregoing analysis, Seventh-day Adventists do not participate in the ecumenical movement as such. They believe it has been foretold as one of the signs of the gathering darkness, and so they expect it to go forward and to reunite the Western Catholics and Eastern Orthodox, and ultimately to result in the union of the Protestant churches among themselves and with "Rome."

The ecumenical movement will then become a concerted effort to unite the world and to secure universal peace and security by enlisting the power of civil government in a universal religio-political crusade to eliminate all dissent. SDA's envision this crusade as the great apostasy to which John the revelator refers as "Babylon the Great." They understand, also, that God's last message of mercy to the world prior to the return of Christ in power and glory will consist of a warning against this great apostate movement, and a call to all who choose to remain loyal to him to leave the churches connected with it.<sup>22</sup>

This quotation, of course, is not from an official source, and there has been no authoritative statement from the General Conference enunciating an official attitude toward the ecumenical movement. Published statements from individuals, however, have thus far been consistent with this quotation.

The SDA's see themselves vis-a-vis the churches engaged in the ecumenical movement as the "remnant church." In his introduction to Ellen White's *Patriarchs and Prophets*, Uriah Smith indicates that the first Adventists described this remnant simply as "the last generation of Christians, or those living on the earth at the second coming of Christ," who, according to Revelation 12:17, "keep the commandments of God" (including, of course, as Adventists insist, the sabbath commandment).<sup>23</sup> To this day Adventists maintain the validity of referring to themselves in this style because of their message to what they consider to be the last generation of men; they do not use the term in an exclusivist sense, they emphasize, for they recognize the Church of Christ existing wherever there are those individuals "who remain faithful to the light which God has given them."<sup>24</sup>

But Seventh-day Adventists do feel especially called upon to transmit the angelic message of Revelation 14 to the whole human race:

If Seventh-day Adventists seem to differ in emphasis from some of our brethren of other Protestant faiths, it is because we believe we have a special message for this hour. We hold the "everlasting gospel" of Revelation 14:6 to be the apostolic gospel, understood and emphasized in the setting of God's great last-day judgment hour, and designed for the preparation of a people completely clad in the righteousness of Christ and fully following the revealed will of God as they prepare to stand in His presence at His imminent glorious appearing.<sup>25</sup>

They maintain that the proclamation of the imminent return of Christ and of the proper preparation for this event would be incompatible, for instance, with membership in the World Council of Churches.

This is a view held by a majority within the denomination, a way of thinking represented frequently by Nichol. As stated editorially by him, the Adventist attitude toward the ecumenical movement must continue to be negative:

Though we should not judge them [the leaders in the movement], we cannot join them. That should be transparently clear to every Adventist who knows anything of the real spirit and nature of the Advent Movement. The essence of the ecumenical movement is "Come in." But at the very heart of the Advent Movement is "Come out." Indeed, only as we preach this command and call on men to be obedient can there be any Advent Movement. . . . Finally, the ecumenical movement should make us more conscious than ever before of the times in which we live. The end is near. . . . It is the uniting of the great religious bodies that makes possible the final conflict. And in that conflict we cannot be ecumenical.<sup>26</sup>

In a later issue of the same paper this feeling was reiterated in the remnant-context by another member of the editorial staff:

The role of the remnant church is a difficult one in this age when "ecumenism" has become a shibboleth in the religious world. We favor true unity, but we cannot participate in the general ecumenical movement, for several reasons, among which are these: (1) the ecumenical movement seems to place the goal of unity above truth, (2) the Protestant wing is dominated by religious liberals, . . . (3) we have a message for all churches and could not give it clearly from within the ecumenical movement, (4) to join forces with churchmen and churches whose goals and beliefs differ from ours, yet pretend we are in harmony, would be dishonest.<sup>27</sup>

II

The author of this statement is now the editor of the *Review and Herald*, the general SDA church paper. As press-observer at the Fourth Assembly of the WCC at Uppsala in 1968, he reflected editorially on his return: "The remnant church is unique, and while it should pursue its mission with a friendly, cooperative attitude toward fellow Christians . . . it cannot lock arms and step with the ecumenical movement as institutionalized in the World Council of Churches."<sup>28</sup>

The WCC has in fact acknowledged the Seventh-day Adventist attitude toward the Council in a description of the denomination drawn up for the information of the member churches: "Seventh-day Adventists have a deep conviction that it is their duty to proclaim their distinctive witness, and the church therefore consistently rejects any kind of comity arrangements."<sup>29</sup> For its part, however, the Adventist Church does, on a nonofficial level, react favorably to the WCC's self-description as a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The difficulty, most Adventists feel, is not with the common calling, but with the possibility of distinctive witness. The WCC has, nevertheless, raised a question for Adventists to ponder: "whether in the light of the openness of the WCC Constitution and its neutrality on doctrinal and ecclesiological questions, a proper place of witness and engagement is not precisely within the movement rather than apart from it. Can the WCC . . . be seen as one more place where witness to the full truth of the gospel is needed and can be made?"<sup>30</sup>

This is the question now being discussed quietly in ecumenical circles. Most moderately conservative theologians tend to be negative toward membership in the WCC and cautious about formal cooperation in WCC departments. Most progressive Adventist theologians, on the other hand, are decidedly positive toward the latter and even cautious toward the possibility of membership. It is worthy of note, in this connection, that at Uppsala one

Seventh-day Adventist became, along with nine Roman Catholics, a regular member of the Faith and Order Commission.<sup>31</sup> Thus, to some degree, at least, Adventists have been willing to let their witness be made from within the WCC. Likewise in America, while Adventists are not members of the NCC, they are represented on some committees, mainly those concerned with evangelism.

Thus, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has a well-thought-out position regarding the other Christian churches and the ecumenical movement in general. Its stance cannot be dismissed as fundamentalist, or as a haughty aloofness, much less as a holier-than-thou posture. Rather, its position is based on a conviction springing from its attempt to be faithful to its witness-responsibility to the churches and to the world.

12

#### ECUMENICAL POTENTIALITIES WITHIN ADVENTISM

The question arises whether the de facto stance taken by the Seventh-day Adventists is an attitude essential to their faith-commitment, or whether this same faith-commitment could, or even should, find its expression also within various levels of ecumenical relationships with other Christian churches, including the Roman Catholic. In this connection it seems possible to say that there are indeed forces within Seventh-day Adventism which of themselves impel its members toward increasingly greater involvement in ecumenical relationships.

One of these forces is the Adventist share of responsibility for the ongoing reformation of the Church. Adventists are, in fact, heirs of the Protestant reformation, and their theological self-understanding finds its expression within the Reformed tradition. Ellen White was a Methodist before her disfellowship because of her advent-expectation, and many of the early leaders came from either Methodism or the Calvinist-Arminian soteriological tradition of other churches.

Adventists have usually understood this responsibility to lie especially within three areas: (1) the return of Christians to seventh-day sabbath observance; (2) emphasis on the unity of man's nature in opposition to any Neoplatonist/Cartesian dualistic view of the body-soul relationship common in popular Christianity; (3) sensitivity to the imminence of Christ's coming.<sup>32</sup>

It is this writer's conviction that in all three areas there is room for serious colloquy between Seventh-day Adventist theologians and theologians from other Christian communions. Too long have the latter simply assumed that the former are fanatics or at the very least "fundamentalists,"

and hence easily dismissed from serious consideration. Granted that SDA pamphleteering and preaching does frequently justify such an attitude, the high quality of the theological faculties of such Adventist institutions as Andrews University (Berrien Springs, Michigan) and the Séminaire Adventiste du Salève (Collonges-sous-Salève, Haute-Savoie, France) makes generalizations about a monolithic Seventh-day Adventist largely unwarranted.

13

A second force within Adventism with much potential is their tradition of biblical scholarship, especially in the area of biblical archaeology, a field where competent scholars like Siegfried Horn have distinguished themselves. Seventh-day Adventists now have increasing contact with developments in biblical studies; although the popular attitude toward these developments is that they are "modernist," SDA scholars are participating more and more in the professional societies. It would seem that this cannot but cause them at least to rethink such critical issues for their theology as the dating and literary form of Daniel, a process which in turn will affect their interpretation of Revelation. This, of course, will have profound repercussions in all areas of their theology, including their understanding of the Roman Catholic and other Christian churches.<sup>33</sup>

A third force exerting pressure from within Adventism is, it seems, the almost innate SDA preoccupation with Roman Catholicism referred to above. One of the main reasons sustaining the negative SDA evaluation of Roman Catholicism has been the lack of direct contact with Catholic thinking. This situation, however, is rapidly changing, at least at the university and seminary level (where courses on Roman Catholic theology are offered by knowledgeable professors — though thus far no Roman Catholics have been invited to teach them). On the General Conference level, however, the change has not been so apparent. There is, furthermore, among American Seventh-day Adventists the frequently heard opinion that there is such a thing as "the Roman Catholic view" on almost every question, "religious," or otherwise.<sup>34</sup> The initiating of unofficial dialogue would seem, then, for this reason alone, if for no other, imperative — a need which was demonstrated in the reaction to an editorial in the denominational organ of the Seventh-day Adventists, which stated:

The church that never changes is making the most earth-shaking changes any church has ever made. In many respects the stereotype picture of the Catholic Church . . . is fading fast. Many things that have truthfully been said about the church in the past are no longer true, or will soon not be. In all Christian fairness we should not be guilty of misrepresenting the present by citing the past.<sup>35</sup>

If the letters to the editor published a month later are any indication of the general SDA response to this view, the popular reaction was not very favorable.

On the personal level, on the other hand, this writer's contacts with SDA people, professors, and ministers have been usually warm and Christian. One occasionally encounters reserve, suspicion, or hostility, but this is unusual (and frequently embarrassing to other Adventists). Their sermons and popular literature, nevertheless, continue to take an apocalyptic view of contemporary developments in the Catholic Church, especially on the "Vatican" scene. Further progress toward a more positive attitude toward the Catholic and Protestant churches will depend, it would seem, on increasing contact by Adventists with developments in biblical scholarship and in other areas of theology. In regard to systematic theology, for instance, above we indicated that the Adventists feel that their call is to witness to, besides the imminent coming of Christ, the sabbath, and the nature of man. A case might be made for stating that the SDA doctrine of man is not incompatible with that of mainstream Christian thought. Contemporary eschatological theology has likewise given reason to insist on the doctrine of the "coming" of Christ as an integral, if difficult, element of the Christian message.

Finally, there is the force of the "angelic" element of Adventism. The SDA call is to participate in the communication of the message of the angels of Revelation 14 to mankind. Since the SDA experience has been that polemic is not the most effective way of accomplishing this, they must explore other methods of fulfilling their responsibility without compromise to their faith-commitment.

#### THE PROBLEM OF RESPONSE

In view of these forces among others within Adventism, and in the face of the SDA policy of "nonparticipation" in ecumenical relationships, what attitudes should the other Christian churches try to form at this juncture?

First of all, they should be sympathetically aware of certain problems confronting the SDA Church related to its own attitude toward the Christian churches and the ecumenical movement. For one thing, as the denomination becomes better known, more accepted, better educated, and more affluent, it is also in danger of becoming just another denomination (albeit with a few unusual, though tolerable, aspects, such as Saturday worship and dietary restrictions), with their distinctive doctrinal witness softpedaled. The new ecumenical spirit in a small but expanding SDA circle poses some serious problems for the denomination as a whole. As expressed by Elder William Loveless, a well-known SDA pastor with a great interest in ecumenism:



We do not hold that all our members have the earmarks of God's people as laid down in Revelation, namely, keeping the commandments. Merely attending church on sabbath morning does not mean that we are keeping the commandments necessarily or that we have a correct relationship with God.

The saving relationship is a personal one, which means that people from all denominations, people from no denomination, probably, will be granted the free gift of eternal life. . . . *However*, there is a rationale for the existence of the Adventist Church that transcends the rationale for the existence of most other churches and/or religious institutions.

This rationale is doctrinal. . . . We have a special message which, if properly understood and properly taught, will bring our neighbors and friends and certainly ourselves into a closer, more meaningful relationship with God. . . . While we do not believe that we have any corner on salvation, we do hold that through these understandings we can make salvation in this life more meaningful to anyone.<sup>36</sup>

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He feels that it is only in a self-denying obedience to their distinctive message that Adventists can avoid becoming just one more denomination.

There is likewise the problem that Adventists generally are persuaded that involvement with the ecumenical movement will result in a diminished interest in "soul-winning" and in their getting bogged down in programs of only a political, cultural, or sociological nature. SDA leader B. B. Beach, a delegate-observer at Uppsala, for example, has pointed out that "ecumenism has had a soporific effect in the field of evangelistic witness and individual conversion."<sup>37</sup>

Keeping these and other SDA causes of hesitation in mind, however, it is nevertheless time for the other Christian churches to take a new look at the two-million member Seventh-day Adventist communion. Careful study will make it clear that these Christians are not a sect like the Jehovah's Witnesses, for instance (with whom they are frequently confused). In the witness of their personal commitment and in the essential aspects of their faith, Seventh-day Adventists are a Christian church. Ongoing dialogue will of necessity focus very quickly on the difficult question of the precise content of these "essential" aspects.

The sabbath question admits of no casual glossing-over; the problem of the sanctuary doctrine is a real one. No facile resolution of the differences between them and other Christians is possible. The real problem for immediate attention is the overcoming of the barrier of widespread misunderstanding of why Adventists feel that they have a reason for existing. On the SDA side, one problem needs more in-depth discussion: the question of whether the distinctive SDA witness can be effective if it is *not* made within the context of relationships of an ecumenical nature with other Christian churches.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

- 1 In addition to *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine: an Explanation of Certain Aspects of Seventh-day Adventist Belief* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1957), cited hereafter as *Questions on Doctrine*, and *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (Commentary Reference Series, ten volumes; Don F. Neufeld and Julia Neuffer, editors; Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1966), cited hereafter as *SDA Encyclopedia*, referred to elsewhere in this article, for further information on the SDA message, see LeRoy Edwin Froom's two works, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1946-54) and *The Conditionalist Faith of Our Fathers* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1965-66).
- 2 LeRoy Edwin Froom, *Finding the Lost Conditionalist Witnesses* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1965), p. 4.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Francis D. Nichol, Bible Teaching Regarding Man's Nature Dissolves Doctrine Difficulties, *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 110, 9 (September 14, 1933). See also *Questions on Doctrine*, p. 189, for a more recent and more official statement. In this work also is to be found a statement of the twenty-two SDA fundamental beliefs (pp. 11-18), among which are: the necessity of baptism by immersion, Saturday-sabbath observance, the conviction that immortality is a gift bestowed upon the righteous only, that in 1844 Christ began the investigative judgment phase of his priestly atoning ministry in the heavenly sanctuary (as predicted in Daniel 8:4), and that the imminent coming of Christ will mark the completion of this judgment and initiate the resurrection of the dead, the destruction of the wicked, the purification of the earth, the reward of the righteous, and the establishment of his kingdom.
- 5 Seventh-day Adventism developed from the Millerite movement of the last century, a premillennialist advent movement begun by William Miller (1782-1849), a Baptist layman. The Millerites expected a literal coming of Christ in 1844. When their expectations were disappointed, some fell away; others were convinced that 1844 inaugurated the premillennial coming of Christ in judgment, the final phase of which will take place visibly and imminently. A strong formative influence on this latter group was Ellen Gould (Harmon) White (1827-1915), who accepted Miller's advent message in 1842 and was disfellowshipped from the Methodist Church for so doing. Henceforth, her visions and writings were to help carry the Millerites through the "Great Disappointment." By 1863 the group was organized (congregational polity) as the Seventh-day Adventist Church, with denominational headquarters in Battle Creek, Michigan (subsequently moved to Washington, D. C.). An account of SDA beginnings can be found in Francis D. Nichol's *The Midnight Cry* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1944).
- 6 Probably the most astute SDA interpretations of Roman Catholicism have come from Professor Raoul Dederen, chairman of the theology department at the SDA Theological Seminary, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan. See, for example, his articles, A Crisis of Authority, and Is the Encyclical Reformable?, *Review and Herald* 146 (June 5 and 12, 1969).
- 7 Adventist pioneer James White, for example, identified the false prophet (or second beast) of Revelation 19:20 with the Vatican and Moscow. See Destruction of the Wicked, *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 6, 96 (October 31, 1854).

- 8 Frank H. Yost, The Antichrist in History and Prophecy, *Our Firm Foundations* (volume one of two; Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1953), pp. 625-716.
- 9 *Questions on Doctrine*, p. 254. In a dissertation done on this latter symbol a few years before the publication of *Questions on Doctrine*, this same "little horn" was linked with both Romes. See Reuben Lynn Hilde, An Exegesis of the Little Horn of Daniel 8 (unpublished master's dissertation; Washington, D. C.: Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary 1953).
- 10 *Questions on Doctrine*, p. 181.
- 11 *Ibid.*, pp. 256-257.
- 12 It is interesting to note that Ellen G. White, the early SDA prophetess and very influential leader, though clearly a woman of her times, has nevertheless left testimony representing a somewhat different spirit: "We should not go out of our way to make hard thrusts at the Catholics. Among the Catholics there are many who are most conscientious Christians and who walk in all the light that shines upon them, and God will work in their behalf. . . . Let every one bear in mind that we are in no case [to invite persecution. We are not] to use harsh and cutting words. Keep them out of every article written, drop them out of every address given. . . . Let the spirit of Christ appear." See her *Testimonies for the Church* (volume nine of nine; Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1944), pp. 243-244.
- 13 *Questions on Doctrine*, p. 202.
- 14 *Ibid.*, p. 335n.
- 15 *Ibid.*, p. 197.
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 Babylon, [Symbolic], *SDA Encyclopedia*, p. 96.
- 18 Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1911), p. 383.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 563.
- 20 R. Allan Anderson, The Pope and World Peace, *The Ministry* 38, 27 (December 1965).
- 21 See, for example, R. A. Anderson, Prophetic Fulfillment in Current Events, *The Ministry* 36, 8 (March 1963).
- 22 Ecumenism, *SDA Encyclopedia*, pp. 361-363. Others also have expressed the fear that the "unionization" of the churches would "effect a breach in the wall of separation between church and state, and the end result would be the ostracism and eventual persecution of dissident minority groups." Frederick Diaz, The Positive Side of Ecumenicity, *The Ministry* 39, 8 (August 1966).
- 23 Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Company 1908), p. xxi (introduction by Uriah Smith).
- 24 The Seventh-day Adventist Church in *An Ecumenical Exercise*, M. B. Handspicker, and Lukas Vischer, editors. Faith and Order Paper No. 49 (Geneva: World Council of Churches 1967), pp. 23-24. See also Remnant Church, *SDA Encyclopedia*, pp. 1068-1069.
- 25 *Questions on Doctrine*, p. 617.
- 26 Francis D. Nichol, Why We Cannot Join, *Review and Herald* 142, 14-15 (March 18, 1965).

- 27 Kenneth H. Wood, Archbishop Ramsey Visits Pope Paul, *Review and Herald* 143, 12 (April 28, 1966).
- 28 Kenneth H. Wood, Eight Convictions and Observations, *Review and Herald* 145, 13-14 (November 7, 1968).
- 29 The Seventh-day Adventist Church in *An Ecumenical Exercise*, p. 17.
- 30 *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- 31 Dr. Earle Hilgert, [then] academic vice president of Andrews University. Three delegate-observers represented the Adventists of the United States, the Soviet Union, and Finland.
- 32 For instance, what might come of a discussion with SDA theologians of Schnackenburg's suggestions about a "standing expectation" as more fundamental than "imminent"? See his *Christian Existence in the New Testament* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press 1968), p. 146, n. 21.
- 33 According to Dr. W. G. C. Murdoch, dean of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University, however, such changes — as, for instance, a later dating for Daniel — would be regarded as representing unfaithfulness to the mission of the denomination. He does see, though, the possibility of Revelation's being interpreted in "a much broader light" than the Rome-centered approach of the the past allowed. He says, for example, that the various symbols of Revelation should be seen in their larger dimension (interview of August 1, 1967).
- 34 The phrase occurs in an otherwise objective article by Kenneth A. Strand, The Rise of the Monarchical Episcopate, *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 4, 67 (January 1966).
- 35 Raymond F. Cottrell, Post-Conciliar Shock Waves, *Review and Herald* 143, 12 (August 11, 1966).
- 36 William A. Loveless, Indian Summer, *The Ministry* 38, 25 (November 1965).
- 37 B. B. Beach, Should Christians Stop Proselytizing?, *The Ministry* 39, 22 (November 1966). See also his article, Christian Evangelism in an Ecumenical Age, *Review and Herald* 146, 13-14 (May 15, 1969).

# An Adventist Response

TO "THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS  
AND THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT"

19

RAOUL DEDEREN

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I find Professor Cosmas Rubencamp's attempt to understand the ecclesiological self-understanding of Seventh-day Adventism and its ecumenical relationships with other Christian churches very unusual. His is a genuine effort to get "inside" the concerns of Seventh-day Adventists. Naturally a Roman Catholic will not fully succeed in such an attempt, any more than an Adventist can fully succeed in giving a comprehensive picture of Catholicism "from the inside." But some attempts come closer than others, and Professor Rubencamp handled this difficult task with admirable judgment and honesty. His is the most accurate and objective statement on Seventh-day Adventist self-understanding and ecumenical theology I have ever seen from a writer not of our faith.

Two things stand out in this Catholic reassessment of Seventh-day Adventism: (a) its genuine willingness to acknowledge that Seventh-day Adventists are not just another strange sect holding fantastic theories and unscriptural doctrines, but are truly Christians in respect to the great fundamentals of theology; (b) the evidence it provides of an increasing recognition in some theological circles that the concern of the founding fathers of Adventism was a genuine (even if "misguided") attempt to recover the rightful prophetic heritage of Christendom. Naturally, the way in which early Adventists went about denouncing the "Roman apostasy" seems mis-

guided to a Roman Catholic such as Professor Rubencamp, and to stem from "a vast ignorance of Catholic theology." But for him to have been able to bring the discussion to this stage is to have overcome what seemed to be an unbridgeable chasm. A new day has assuredly dawned when a Roman Catholic theologian can recognize that Seventh-day Adventism has a justifiable reason for existing as a part of the Christian Church.

In my opinion Professor Rubencamp would have come even closer to understanding the stance of Seventh-day Adventism vis-a-vis the ecumenical movement if he had grasped fully that Seventh-day Adventists understand themselves, preeminently, as a people of prophecy. They recognize that God has led in the revivals and reformations of the past. They also believe that God prophetically ordained that in the last days there would arise a religious movement that would warn the world about the imminence of earth's transcendent event — the second coming of Christ — and seek to prepare men for the day of God by turning them to paths of full conformity to the teachings of the Bible.

Adventists believe that the prophecy of Revelation 14:6-12 began to be fulfilled in the rise of the Advent movement of the 1840s.

Then I saw another angel flying in midheaven, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come; and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water."

Another angel, a second, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of her impure passion." And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If any one worships the beast and its image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also shall drink the wine of God's wrath, poured unmixed into the cup of his anger, 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 goes up for ever and ever; and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name."

Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

This passage of the Apocalypse announces a prophetic movement that would carry a prophetic message to the whole world. Adventists like to describe it as a special message for a special time, indeed the last message that will ever come from God, for John describes it as culminating in the coming of the Lord. It is a message which proclaims the Gospel of the love of God in Christ, the unavoidable necessity of obedience to the revealed will of God, and declares both the certainty and the imminence of final judgment.

Adventists make this identification of themselves with this passage of the Apocalypse in a spirit of humility, recognizing the tremendous implications of their interpretation. Nevertheless they say it unqualifiedly and ardently, believing that the message they preach is the true measure of the significance of their movement.

Prophecy, here, is not merely the inspired depiction of the great controversy between good and evil. It is fundamentally the portrayal of the redemptive activity of God centered around and demonstrated in the first and second advents of Jesus Christ. Throughout their history, Seventh-day Adventists have been occupied with proclaiming this distinctive message which, in its highest sense, is the "everlasting gospel" (verse 6). Yet although they believe that Revelation 14:6-12 in a special sense points to the experience and work of their church, they do not believe that they alone constitute the children of God. Professor Rubencamp is fair and correct when he reports that Adventists hold that God has a multitude of earnest, sincere followers in all Christian communions and even beyond the walls of Christianity.

Part of this message is the declaration of the mighty angel: "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great," followed by the warning, "Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues." By setting forth the view that "Babylon" refers to the Roman Catholic church, the early Adventists were continuing what Protestantism had taught since Reformation times. Adventists continue to make this identification to the present day. The fact that "Babylon" has been made to refer not only to the Roman Catholic church but also to the great body of Protestant Christendom is no evidence, as Professor Rubencamp suggests, that for Adventists the Babylon question has remained unresolved. The fact is that at the peak of the second advent awakening in the early 1840s there occurred an increasing ecclesiastical opposition to the emphasis on an imminent second advent among the larger Protestant bodies, particularly the Methodists and the Congregationalists of New England. It was specifically in response to this cold reaction to the doctrine of a literal coming of Christ or to its spiritualization that Adventists left their respective churches. Babylon, therefore, with her "daughters" involved all Christendom. Adventists today still believe the phrase is rightly interpreted in this manner.

Adventist objections to the churches they describe as "Babylon" are concerned not directly with people as individuals, but with structures, ordered systems of social relationships, the institutions which embody such relationships, and the attitudes which result from these structured relationships. It is correct that in condemning such social structures Adventists condemn the

deliberate work of men. But they do not find it necessary to apportion blame or to condemn individuals. Specific examples of wrong attitudes and actions must be cited to illustrate what is being denounced, but the responsibility of individual persons is left as an affair between them and God.

This is the way in which an Adventist looks at the Christian world. This is the way he thinks. It may not be convincing to a Catholic — or to a Protestant — who will use different categories and different methodologies, but one is not likely to object to Professor Rubencamp's remark that, on the basis of their own principles of interpretation, Adventists have been consistent when they have refused to participate in the ecumenical movement.

Seventh-day Adventists heartily agree with the leaders of the ecumenical movement that the endless divisions in Christendom are a tragedy. Although they do not believe that the problem of unity is the central issue facing Christianity, they do believe that by their divisions Christians impede the progress of the Kingdom of God. They profess that a movement resulting in the union of all Christian churches has been foretold as one of the "signs of the times." But at the same time they do not know what particular part today's ecumenical movement will play in the fulfillment of biblical prophecy, and therefore in the closing events of earth's history. A few, now and then, have succumbed to the temptation to claim more wisdom than they really possess. They have offered dogmatic forecast as to how and when the World Council of Churches, for instance, or the leaders of the Roman Catholic church are going to fill in the details of prophecy. Confessing to a lack of the gift of prophecy, most of us don't think it wrong to hold that the ecumenical movement as we know it today *might* so evolve in the days ahead as to fit the descriptions found in the thirteenth and seventeenth chapters of the Apocalypse.

As mentioned earlier, Adventists agree that it is laudable to seek to remove the divisions that separate Christian churches. They doubt, however, the wisdom of the methods followed by the ecumenical movement in its quest to secure it. They firmly believe that true unity is possible only in terms of Bible truth. When, for instance, the National Council of Churches was founded in 1950, Adventists refrained from uniting with it because they felt that membership would impair their autonomy. They regarded the Council as being under the influence of theological liberals who magnify the implications of the gospel to the disparagement of the gospel itself. There also are developments in the ecumenical movement, in its organizations and programs, which have given anxiety to Adventists on the ground that the central task of evangelism was being obscured or distorted by pre-



occupations with social and political affairs. The preoccupations of ecumenism lack the splendor and awe of that conception of human destiny which is inseparable from the eschatological hope on which Adventists have set their eyes.

Separatism is alleged to be a wrong-headed, wrong-hearted sin against humility, unity, and charity. But I think that there are conditions under which separatism is neither schism or heresy. The officials of the ecumenical movement have tried to make clear that they do not demand a union based on diluted doctrine and the acceptance of the lowest common denominator. Yet owing to circumstances not under their control, ordinary people are often confused to believe that this is their demand. The World Council of Churches has explicitly repudiated the suggestion that a church would have to surrender its claim to uniqueness in order to join the Council, but striking statements made by some renowned ecumenical representatives can — and have — set up mental associations between “ecumenism” and “theological latitudinarianism.” I believe that Adventists would not be asked, upon joining the Council, to surrender any doctrine they hold, but I also believe that if they joined and walked along the path toward actual unity, they would ultimately find themselves having to give up distinctive beliefs for the sake of unity.

Doctrinal matters are of the highest importance for us who believe the advent message to be from God. It is precisely in the area of doctrine that from the beginning we have been most definitely at variance with other Christian churches. The doctrine of the sanctuary, the return of Christians to seventh-day sabbath observance, and sensitivity to Christ’s second coming are only three evidences of our theological distinctiveness. With such wide divergence from the great body of Christendom, coupled with a deep conviction that our belief on these matters is in harmony with Scripture, how could we possibly come into any kind of genuine and lasting unity with other churches? In such circumstances membership could easily become an occasion for mutual embarrassment.

Perhaps as important in our decision not to identify ourselves with the ecumenical movement are the limitations involved in comity agreements on mission fields. Since their inception the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council have taken as one of their aims a lessening of the scandal caused by competing missionary activities in nonchristian lands. They have attempted to achieve this goal largely through comity agreements which have divided territories among the missionary agencies. Seventh-day Adventists on the other hand, with their conviction that they

have been called to transmit a special message to the entire world, consider it impossible to restrict their witness to any limited area. At the same time the Adventist official "Statement of Relationship to Other [Missionary] Societies" adopted in 1926, has interested more than a few members of the World Council of Churches because of its close resemblance to the provisions concerning proselytism put forward at the New Delhi Assembly in 1961.

The attitude of the Seventh-day Adventist church toward the ecumenical movement is based, in my best judgment, upon the charity of true wisdom. Its stance cannot be dismissed (as some have thought) as a haughty aloofness. Rather, it has been guided by principles, sometimes unknown, more often misunderstood. I entirely agree with Professor Rubencamp's observation that this position of the Adventist church "is based on a conviction springing from its attempt to be faithful to its witness-responsibility to the churches and to the world." The very logic of our belief demands that we seek to persuade men to accept the message we preach and to join the advent movement, and help it accomplish its worldwide task. How could we, with any sincerity or enthusiasm, join hands with the ecumenical movement? We think it would be hypocrisy for us to do so.

After all that I have just said, it now remains to be emphasized that it is with no small regret that Adventists find it impossible, as an organization, to be more closely associated with others who profess the name of Jesus Christ. We have been happy to accept individual invitations to meet with groups of ecumenical leaders and there represent the Seventh-day Adventist point of view. Further, although we are not members of the National Council of Churches, we hold consultative membership in certain Council committees that are mainly concerned with evangelism. Such memberships permit us to cooperate in certain areas of activity where it has been thought the Seventh-day Adventist church could make a useful contribution to the Council, and at the same time obtain information and contacts that would assist us in our world work.

Before concluding I wish to make it clear that our decision to remain out of the ecumenical movement is not to be explained on the grounds offered by certain Christian groups who have repeatedly charged that the ecumenical movement is Socialistic, even Communistic, in its trends and goals. Our failure to join is not because we think that the Protestant leaders of the National and World Councils are agents of the evil one, in league with Rome. We need never question the sincerity of others' motives in order to prove the sincerity of our own. We believe that these men are sincere, while at

the same time we hold that sincerity on our part prevents us from joining with them in their ecumenical endeavors.

The ecumenical movement has brought a clearer perception that the unity which Christ willed for his Church is a recognizable unity. It has also made it necessary for every denomination to reevaluate its historical position and its reason for existence. By bringing members of widely different churches together the ecumenical movement has driven many Christians to seek a deeper understanding of the distinctive positions of their own churches. Paradoxically — but quite understandably — the growth of the ecumenical consciousness has led to a widespread revival of denominational awareness. This conversation within the Christian Church, accompanied as it has been by some conflicts, has made many Seventh-day Adventists reflect on the power and significance of their mission and discover their own distinctive witness anew. It has greatly added to their conviction of truth and to their confidence in their mission.

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At the same time, churchmen of all nationalities and communions have embarked on the serious business of attempting to know one another's minds, of entering with deeper knowledge and sympathy into traditions and usages other than their own. As a result it is no longer a sign of being a "bad" Roman Catholic to be informed about Seventh-day Adventism, nor vice versa. It is, on the contrary, a very necessary part of being a responsible Christian in the the world of today. Professor Rubencamp is correct when he concludes that, in this context of ongoing dialogue, "the real problem for immediate attention is the overcoming of the barrier of widespread misunderstanding of why Adventists feel that they have a reason for existing." He himself has gone a long way toward that recognition. Perhaps the invitation I received from the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* to write an Adventist response to Professor Rubencamp's article is another indication that the gulf separating the Roman Catholic understanding of Adventism and the Adventists' own understanding of themselves is narrowing.

# The Orphanage

MAX GORDON PHILLIPS

26

There were no windows in his room. Except for the cherished hole in the wall near the head of his bed, only the scarred wooden door relieved the monody of the cold-sweating gray concrete interior.

At times, when he was alone, he would lie on his bed and watch the dirty boys and girls in ragged clothes, like his, playing in the street. Sometimes they would bounce lacerated volleyballs against the walls, sometimes fight, sometimes pitch pennies toward a chalk bull's-eye inside a chalk circle drawn on the sidewalk.

It was wrong. He knew it was wrong. Wrong to watch the bad boys and girls playing in the street. He would stuff paper into the hole, then pull it out and watch. He feared the mechanical godmother would find out. He dreamed she was monitoring him with an electronic machine. He was looking outside now, watching the wind sweep a dirty paper bag along the dirty street. With no warning knock, the door opened. He swung his head around. The mechanical godmother was standing in the doorway staring at him.

"So," she said, "you've been looking outside through a hole in the wall." The boy said nothing, fearing she would plug the hole with more gray concrete. "You're rotten," she told him, "rotten to the core. I've always known it. From the time you first came here, I knew it." The boy stared back at her with unblinking eyes.

"It is necessary for me to inform you," she continued, "that today is your tenth birthday. According to state law we must inform you on your tenth birthday that you may leave the orphanage if you so choose. After you are presentable you are to tell the headmaster your decision. Come this way, please."

She led him out the door and down the hall to the shower room, where, on a scarred wooden chair, were stacked new clothes and new shoes. She left him with instructions to bathe himself, put on the new clothes and new shoes, and sound the buzzer when he was ready. Obediently he finished his tasks and sounded the buzzer. As he walked about, his new clothes felt stiff and his new shoes squeaked.

The shower room door opened and the mechanical godmother appeared. "Come with me," she said. "We are going to see the headmaster."

Despite his hot shower he felt suddenly cold. He tried to stop trembling. He had never been to the headmaster's office before.

The headmaster was a small old wrinkled man. As the boy entered his office the face behind the desk did not smile. "So," he said, "you are the boy who has been looking outside into the street through a hole in the wall." He rose, walked over to the boy, fastened a pinching grip on his shoulder, and led him out the door, down the hall, and out another door into an interior court which enclosed a small garden paradise with freshly mowed, sweet-smelling, bright green grass, many colors of flowers, and children in beautiful clothes and shiny shoes playing croquet.

These children had been allowed to play there, the headmaster explained, because they had kept the orphanage rules. "But the mechanical godmother has told me," he said, "that you have been watching the bad children play in the street. This is the reason you have not been allowed to play here."

The headmaster frowned at the boy. "But," he said, setting his thin lips in a tight line, "the state law, over which I have no control, requires that you be given a choice on your tenth birthday. You may stay here or you may go into the street."

The other children had stopped playing croquet and were gathering around, watching. "Come with me," he told them, resuming his pinching grip on the boy's shoulder, "all of you."

He led them to the main entrance, which was guarded by a set of great double doors. Walking over to them, he swung them open, each one in a wide arc. The children gasped at the scene in the street — dirty children in ragged clothing pitching pennies at a chalk mark inside a chalk circle drawn on the sidewalk.

"I'm going to make you an offer," the headmaster told the boy. "In cases such as yours we are supposed to simply give you the choice of going out into the street or returning to your room. But so many children have been choosing the street that I am going to lower the standard and make

you a special offer. If you decide to stay with the orphanage, you will be allowed to join the other children in the paradise garden. So which do you prefer, the paradise or the street?"

Everything went quiet. The children were packed tightly around in a semicircle, their faces white, startled, staring. The mechanical godmother stood waiting, staring, her arms folded. "Well?" said the headmaster.

"Outside," said the boy. "I want to go outside." He broke away from the headmaster's grip and started walking rapidly, then running, toward the open gate. The children gasped. Some began to cry.

"Just one minute! Just one minute! No so fast, young man." It was the mechanical godmother, reaching out after him. He felt the familiar pinching grip on his shoulder, felt himself being dragged backward into the orphanage.

"Those new clothes," she said, "and those new shoes. Do you expect to go walking out into the street wearing those expensive things? They belong to the orphanage. You must take them off and put on your old rags. Orphanage rules."

# *for two brothers*

BEN JACQUES

He said, well war's war,  
and you, I can see you now,  
Mothering his words,  
Couldn't remember why anyone  
Could have

Where the grass is tall as  
On the rain-seasoned Serengeti plain  
Where dik-diks graze the air  
In slender gulps.

For here they are pictured  
In real life  
Packed hard against the earth  
As if they had fallen from planes.

Here two young brothers,  
Unable to run against  
The circling fire,  
Leap inside their  
Thin legs.

In the next life, Jesus  
May they run with the gazelles,  
Fast and arc-jumping in  
An Africa so dark  
No one will ever find it.

Then may we, fathering  
Lieutenants' clean faces, not  
Be driven from thy face like flies.

Written soon after the publication of the  
December 5, 1969, *Life* magazine in which were  
photographs of the Mylai incident and also  
photographs of an antelope in East Africa.

# Ellen White: A Subject for Adventist Scholarship

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ROY BRANSON  
HEROLD D. WEISS

Most Seventh-day Adventists know that for some time we have been able to make Ellen G. White say almost anything we want. Her authority is universally recognized in the church, but what we make her say with authority often depends on who of us is quoting her. In the life of the church, therefore, she speaks with many accents. Sometimes on a single topic we make her voice blare out arguments on both sides of a debate.

Take the subject of health reform. One Ellen White talks reasonably about the advantages of temperate living. Another Ellen White fanatically demands that we eat only foods grown according to certain rigidly defined methods. Which is the *real* Ellen White?

Sometimes we make her march determinedly in opposite directions — as in our discussions of justification by faith versus perfection, or God's sovereignty versus man's free will. As important a topic as the universality of salvation throws us into a dilemma when quotations extracted from her writings are simply strung together end-to-end. She appears on both the banner of those who say that the heathen who never hear the name of Christ will be as if they never were, and the banner of those who insist that every man is given right sufficient for a choice determining his eternal destiny.

The result of having so many Ellen Whites is that the Adventist church may soon have no Ellen White at all. Conceivably all that may be left will be a few members shouting at each other in her name; the great majority, having already despaired of understanding her, will only wonder what all the commotion is about.

It should be clear by now that among the top priorities of the church



ought to be the establishment of more objective ways of understanding what Ellen White said. The church needs to see a coherent whole in her wide-ranging writings. To find a consistent method of interpretation for these writings should not be thought of as merely an intriguing academic possibility; it is an essential and immediate task for the church.

Up to now, two main ways — both of them wanting — have been used to understand Mrs. White's thinking. One way has been to compile quotations taken at random from all her works, and then to group these quotations simply by topic. The other way has been to consider as more authoritative those statements that start with the words "I was shown," or some similar expression.

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Both of these ways have sometimes proved useful, but they remain inadequate. A collection of quotations by topic often exaggerates the seeming contradictions among them. As a result, the consistent viewpoints Ellen White actually had are obscured, and her persuasiveness is diminished. On the other hand, to take as authoritative only the statements that cite a specific vision depreciates the value of the many things God "showed" her through the guidance of the Holy Spirit pervading her life. She was led by God even when she could not refer to a particular vision for a specific admonition.

The church has not sufficiently perceived the full significance of Ellen White's message by using these means. New methods are needed. What follows is a set of proposals to make possible a more consistent interpretation of these inspired writings.

The *first step* should be to discover the nature of Mrs. White's relationship to other authors. We know that she borrowed terms, phrases, and historical accounts from others. To find the real Ellen White we must undertake the vast, but absolutely necessary, task of learning exactly what kind of use she made of the work of these other writers. Sample cores have been taken,<sup>1</sup> but the vital information — the nature, selection, and use of the abundant material available to her and integrated by her in her writing — is still a mystery. Until we know more precisely which authors she respected sufficiently to rely on, we will not really know Ellen White or her ideas.

The *second step* should be to recover the social and intellectual milieu in which she lived and wrote. How can her testimony be understood until the economic, political, religious, and educational issues that were the context of her words are recognized? Unless we know what meaning specific words had in the culture of her day, how can we know her meaning in using them?<sup>2</sup> Either Ellen White lives for us first in her own cultural situation or

she does not live for us at all. Of course, if we hear her speak within a definite cultural milieu, we do not thereby confine the significance of her words to that context. Understanding her in terms of the nineteenth century does not mean that what she said is irrelevant to the twentieth century. Actually, finding how her words pertained to the past century is a necessary step in establishing their relevance to our own. Like most things in nature, words do not live in a vacuum.

The *third step* should be to give close attention to the development of Ellen White's writings within her own lifetime, and also to the development of the church. What was first written as a small series of books grew through the years into the rather voluminous Conflict of the Ages series. Personal letters became articles in church papers, only thereafter to be transformed into parts of books. Events in Mrs. White's life and currents in the church are relevant to understanding why her writings took the shape they did. Compilations of her writings published since her death should be examined in terms of the issues that confronted the church when the editors did their compiling.<sup>3</sup>

By taking the three foregoing steps we can know with more assurance what the real Ellen White said. By making certain that our investigations follow clearly defined guidelines, we can more completely free our interpretations of conflicting personal biases. When we compare what she took from her sources with what she ignored in them, we can see more clearly a trend in her thinking. By knowing the streams of thinking in which these sources fall, and by being aware of what other alternatives existed for her, we can see for the first time the significance of her choice of sources. By putting ourselves in the crosscurrents of her day, we can see why she used one argument on a topic at one time and another argument on the same topic at another time. Anything we learn about her and the church at every stage in the preparation of her writings can only help draw us further into her mind.

Our final step should then be to apply in our day the words she spoke in her day. We may never be able fully to recapture Ellen White's original intentions or the absolute truth of what she meant. But if the methods proposed here, or similar ones, were implemented, the church would be much closer to her ideas than it is now. Setting up objective criteria for interpretation would restrain individual prejudice and decrease confusion. With relatively greater consensus on what she said, we would increasingly agree on what she would say today. Her influence, instead of waning, would then become more pervasive.

Using such methods would put the church in touch with a more vital and interesting Ellen White, with nuances and enthusiasms we do not recognize now. This more vibrant Ellen White would not always agree with her modern readers (any more than she did with her original readers), but she would be a more believable person. She would be seen as God's human spokesman — perhaps less magical and less awesome, but also less obscure and less ignored, and therefore actually more influential than she is now. And if she were more vital and effective, she would thereby be actually more authoritative also. Rather than being an impersonal voice subject to our manipulation, she would become again the living, breathing person who drew men to God.

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Following methods like those outlined here would open up far-reaching scholarly enterprises. No one Adventist during his entire life could accomplish the tasks that would emerge. Indeed, no single discipline has adequate tools to do the job alone. It is imperative, therefore, that Adventist scholars from various disciplines bring their different perspectives and insights and equipment to the challenge of understanding Ellen G. White.

This kind of interdisciplinary effort by the Adventist academic community could help more clearly to distinguish the essence of Adventism.

#### NOTES

1 An example is William S. Peterson's article in this issue: A Textual and Historical Study of Ellen White's Account of the French Revolution.

2 In an unpublished study, *Ellen G. White and Fiction*, John O. Waller examines the meaning of the word *fiction* in Mrs. White's time and relates his findings to her use of the term.

Richard Rice's article, *Adventists and Welfare Work: A Comparative Study* (*Spectrum* 2, 52-63, winter 1970), recounts some of the attitudes and endeavors of social welfare activists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and thus gives an idea of the issues that concerned Mrs. White when she commented on social welfare.

The task of recreating the milieu in which Mrs. White and other early Adventists discussed interracial relations is attempted by Branson in *Ellen G. White: Racist or Champion of Equality?* *Review and Herald*, April 9, 16, and 23, 1970.

3 In his recent book, *Ellen G. White and Church Race Relations* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1970), Ronald D. Graybill has established the setting, in Mrs. White's life and in the work of the church, of her comments on race in *Testimonies for the Church*, volume nine (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1970), pp. 199-226.

Jonathan Butler, in *Ellen G. White and the Chicago Mission* (*Spectrum* 2, 41-51, winter 1970), shows that a knowledge of the church's controversy with John Harvey Kellogg is essential to an understanding of Mrs. White's seemingly contradictory statements on inner-city mission work.



WAR GLORIES . . . HERSCHEL HUGHES

# Divine Revelation:

A REVIEW OF SOME  
OF ELLEN G. WHITE'S CONCEPTS

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FREDERICK E. J. HARDER<sup>1</sup>

## THE SOURCE OF REVELATION

"No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known."<sup>2</sup> Thus did the Apostle in one sentence state the essence of the doctrine of revelation: revelation is necessary because of the separation — no man has ever seen God; revelation has taken place — God has been made known; revelation has been personal — by the Son in the bosom of the Father. In stating the *need*, in asserting the *reality*, and in declaring the *means*, John has made a threefold declaration identifying the *subject* of revelation as being God.

Throughout history man has been more aware of the gulf between himself and his God than he has of the fact that this gulf has been bridged. Men speak freely of the One whose name is holy and who inhabits eternity, but they are reluctant to concede that his presence in the human heart is just as authentic and more perceptible. However, this is the awesome proclamation of God through the prophet: "I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit."<sup>3</sup>

The tendency to accentuate the distance between God and man, the heavenly and the earthly, the unseen and the seen, becomes evident in the epistemological concepts of conservative Christianity. A distinction is usually drawn between knowledge attained by reason or experience and knowledge received through revelation. The universe and its observable processes are supposed to constitute the source of "ordinary" knowledge, and God is supposed to be the source of "revealed" knowledge.

Although the separation which exists between man and God within a

world in rebellion against him is undeniable, of equal, indeed of far greater, importance is the fact that this separation may be *transcended* by all who are "of a contrite and humble spirit." If God is one, and if the natural universe is an expression of his power, character, and nature, then all truth, whether learned by "ordinary" or "revelatory" means must say something about him. Perhaps the visible and the invisible worlds are closer than is generally recognized. Could it be that all real knowledge is a revelation of the one God? This concept is basic to the following assertions:

From God, the fountain of wisdom, proceeds all the knowledge that is of value to man, all that the intellect can grasp or retain.<sup>4</sup>

Whatever line of investigation we pursue, with a sincere purpose to arrive at truth, we are brought in touch with the unseen, mighty Intelligence that is working in and through all. The mind of man is brought into communion with the mind of God, the finite with the Infinite.<sup>5</sup>

Things in this world are more intimately related to heaven and are more directly under divine control than is usually realized. This holds true not only in spiritual matters but in the advancement of knowledge. Helpful inventions and improvements, the physician's skill and knowledge of the human mechanism, the ability of the carpenter, the strength of the blacksmith have their source in God.<sup>6</sup> Whenever, wherever, however man learns, to the extent that he finds truth or attains helpful skills God is revealed in him.

God has revealed a transcript of his character, his will for humanity, and the principles of the divine government.<sup>7</sup> However, the revelation of God is not all in the past, and mankind is not dependent solely on revelatory records. All spiritual illumination has God as its source. Who can say that the potential for divine revelation today is not as great as it ever was? "God can communicate with His people today, and give them wisdom to do His will, just as He communicated with His people of old."<sup>8</sup> The communication between heaven and the soul of man may be a free and open process by which the light and glory of God are granted abundantly to man. The fact that the human race still lives is evidence that it actually is happening. Communication with God is a necessity to human survival.<sup>9</sup>

A formidable obstacle to the formulation of a viable doctrine of divine-human communication is the lingering residue of nineteenth century Protestant orthodoxy, which insists that revelation is different in kind and process from inspiration, and that the former is to be found only in the Bible. Ellen White suffered from no such arbitrary presuppositions. For her, divine revelation was not a dogma but a dynamic, vibrant, continuing ex-

perience essential to the redemptive process. Her concepts were so broad that they can be treated only in miniature here.

#### THE PURPOSE OF REVELATION

When Isaiah was granted a vision of God and his glory, he cried out, "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, . . . for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts!"<sup>10</sup> This must always be the effect on a human mind confronted by the Deity. What man can continue in self-glory after an experience that lays bare the concealed deformity of his soul?<sup>11</sup> Revelation makes man aware of his slavery to sin and captivity to evil, leads him to hate sin,<sup>12</sup> and enables God to expel it from his soul. Thus, revelation breaks the shackles of his bondage, lifts his mind from its degradation to an appreciation of eternal reality, and restores his soul to liberty.<sup>13</sup>

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If revelation resulted only in self-abasement, however, its desirability would be in question. When Christ dispels the darkness of evil, the bondage of guilt is broken, and God is revealed as dispensing forgiveness through his infinite mercy.<sup>14</sup> The slaves of sin are liberated to become sons of God. In place of the master-slave relationship in sin, the new Lord-disciple communion develops and deepens into a similarity of mind and character.<sup>15</sup>

Even this similarity, however, does not meet the full intent of revelation. It must culminate in a oneness between humanity and divinity. Revelation is not merely a passing on of knowledge; it is an imparting of the divine nature so that in God human nature may be made complete.<sup>16</sup> A union between God and man is accomplished so that the Deity dwells in humanity and activates the powers of body, soul, and spirit.<sup>17</sup> This union of the human and the divine through a personal knowledge of God is climaxed by earthly man gaining entrance to heaven and mortal man achieving eternal life.<sup>18</sup>

This is the ultimate purpose of revelation. Contingent values may be identified, but they are incidental to the primary purpose: to make man god-like and to unite God with man.

#### SPECIAL AND GENERAL REVELATION

The idea that special communications are sent by God to certain individuals has dominated thinking throughout most of the history of the church. That God is revealed by his handiwork in creation in a more general sense has also been a long-accepted belief. The revelation in nature

alone, however, has always been considered inadequate to fulfill the redemptive purpose of the divine disclosure. At least three limitations show this inadequacy: general revelation brands men sinners, but it does not save them; general revelation is available to all men, but not all receive it; those who do receive it are enabled to do so because another revelation has been given. Unless he is guided by the wisdom of a special revelation, man is likely to exalt nature above the God of nature. Only in the light of divine wisdom is nature illuminated and rightly interpreted.<sup>19</sup>

At times the general and special revelations become closely related. The experience of John in exile on Patmos, where he learned to observe closely the manifestations of divine power in the book of nature, is an illustration. He delighted to meditate on the great work of creation and the power of the Divine Architect. To him the desolate cliffs and the dashing of the waters against them spoke of the terrors of the awful outpouring of God's wrath. The glory of the sky, day or night, taught him the littleness of man. In the mighty rocks he saw reminders of Christ, the Rock of his strength, in whose shelter he could hide without fear. As John recalled that God spoke to Moses from the rocks, that God descended upon rocky Horeb to speak his law amid thunder and lightning from a thick cloud, the Spirit of God came upon him. As he continued to meditate on the majesty and greatness of the Creator, John was overwhelmed. He recalled incidents related to his association with Jesus years before.

Suddenly his meditation is broken in upon; he is addressed in tones distinct and clear. He turns to see from whence the voice proceeds, and lo! he beholds his Lord, whom he had loved, with whom he had walked and talked, and whose sufferings on the cross he had witnessed. But how changed is the Saviour's appearance! . . . His eyes are like a flame of fire; His feet like fine brass, as it glows in the furnace. The tones of His voice are like the musical sound of many waters. His countenance shines like the sun in its meridian glory.<sup>20</sup>

Unable to endure the enveloping glory, John fell to the earth. By the hand and voice of the One who thus confronted him he was strengthened, "and then were presented before him in holy vision the purposes of God for future ages."<sup>21</sup> In this instance, general revelation appears to lead into special revelation without the individual's awareness of the transition at the time.

"God has communicated with man by His Spirit, and divine light has been imparted to the world by revelations to His chosen servants."<sup>22</sup> Before the invention of writing, those who had communicated with God passed their knowledge orally from one generation to the next. Beginning



with events related to the Exodus and continuing to the close of the apostolic age, inspired revelations were committed to writing and "embodied in an inspired book."<sup>23</sup> Through the truths recorded in the Old and New Testaments God speaks to each man individually, and as directly as if his voice could actually be heard.<sup>24,25</sup>

Although the Word of God is correctly called revelation, the Bible reveals truth only to those who search for it. Reading the Bible is not sufficient; one must study it diligently to the accompaniment of much prayer. One must receive it as it is perceived. One must believe it as it is revealed. One must act upon it as it is learned. Its truth must become an integral part of the life, exemplified in the character.<sup>26</sup>

He who would be an effective exemplar must himself have direct enlightenment; he cannot depend on the reflections of others. He must plead with God in prayer for enlightenment of the mind.<sup>27</sup> He must be able to witness to what he has seen, what he personally knows of God. He dare not parrot that which he has learned from others; he must be able to speak from his own experiential knowledge.<sup>28</sup>

"By the secret influences of His holy spirit, again and again the Lord comes to us and presents to us the things which pertain to our eternal welfare." This communication is termed "the dictates of the heavenly voice."<sup>29</sup> Out of a communion with the Spirit grows a close cooperation between man and God, and the Spirit's educating power will constantly be unfolding truth that elevates and refines.<sup>30</sup> At no point in this growth should one be satisfied. There must be a continual reaching out after God in the realization that "there is an eternity before us in which there will be revealings of His glory and we shall become better and better acquainted with our divine Lord and have a more comprehensive knowledge of Him."<sup>31</sup>

Moved under the Spirit's inspiration, a speaker says the words of God in warning, reproof, and appeal. By God's power, not his own, revelation is transmitted; it is God working through a faithful servant.<sup>32</sup>

Two experiences illustrate how Ellen White thought this should work in practice. The first concerns a minister who was confronted by one of his parishioners with a question that made him realize his "business as usual" preaching was inadequate. He left his pulpit for three weeks to study and plead with God for a greater revelation. "When this minister returned to his charge he had an unction from the Holy One. . . . He presented the Saviour and His matchless love. There was a revelation of the Son of God, and a revival began that spread through the church and to the surrounding regions."<sup>33</sup>

The second experience is from Ellen White's own life. At a camp meeting in Ottawa, Kansas, for several days it seemed that her preaching was not accomplishing what it should. She became particularly impressed that the people needed to realize the necessity of exercising living faith. Then while she was speaking on righteousness through Christ alone, the Holy Spirit became evident: "Truths were presented that were new to the majority of the congregation. Things new and old were brought forth from the treasure house of God's word. Truths were revealed which the people were scarcely able to comprehend and appropriate. Light flashed from the oracles of God in relation to the law and the gospel, in relation to the fact that Christ is our righteousness, which seemed to souls which were hungry for truth, as light too precious to be received."<sup>34</sup>

That Ellen White believed in a continuing revelation to individuals, even special revelation to particular individuals, is clear. That she firmly believed she had a place in this special revelation is also apparent from even a superficial acquaintance with her writings. Early in 1856 she wrote: "God has seen fit to use me, a feeble instrument; . . . messages have been given me, and it has been enjoined upon me to be faithful in declaring them."<sup>35</sup> From the beginning she felt "bidden by the Lord, 'Write, write the things that are revealed to you.'"<sup>36</sup> She obeyed, certain that she was strengthened to do so by none other than the Lord himself and certain that her writings contained the word of God. The writing she did for journals and books she believed expressed not only her ideas, but ideas that God had opened for her.<sup>37</sup>

In the introduction to *The Great Controversy* she wrote:

Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the scenes of the long-continued conflict between good and evil have been opened to the writer of these pages. From time to time I have been permitted to behold the working, in different ages, of the great controversy between Christ . . . and Satan. . . .

As the spirit of God has opened to my mind great truths of His word, and the scenes of the past and the future, I have been bidden to make known to others that which has thus been revealed, — to trace the history of the controversy in past ages, and especially so to present it as to shed a light on the fast-approaching struggle of the future.<sup>38</sup>

She was not writing history; she was interpreting it. The Spirit's illumination revealed God as active in history, and she was the agent through which the illumination came. In her exposition of history under the influence of this illumination, she became an instrument of revelation. Of this she had no question.

Anyone who is convinced that he has received divine revelation will inevitably be asked some form of the ancient question, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" Ellen White's answer: "I know that many have called me a prophet, but I have made no claim to this title."<sup>39</sup> This sentence is part of a larger statement that indicated the reasons why she consistently refused to assume the title of prophet. First, some who boldly claimed to be prophets discredited the cause of Christ, and she did not wish to be classed with them. Second, her activities were so diverse that she did not feel the term prophet was descriptive of her work. "I cannot call myself other than a messenger, sent to bear a message from the Lord to His people, and to take up work in any line that He points out."<sup>40</sup> When one person wrote to her that he believed every word she ever spoke in public or private and everything she ever wrote was "as inspired as the Ten Commandments," she publicly and vehemently denounced this viewpoint and denied that she or any of those who had been associated with her from the beginning ever made any such claims.<sup>41</sup>

#### REVELATION BY INTERNAL SUGGESTION

Both Old and New Testaments abound in illustrations of revelation by internal suggestion, as in visions and dreams. "If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision, I speak with him in a dream."<sup>42</sup> Paul regarded "visions and revelations of the Lord" as cause for an apostle's "boasting;"<sup>43</sup> and his own life was radically altered by a "heavenly vision."<sup>44</sup>

Belief in the divine origin of visions and dreams was basic to the entire ministry of Ellen White. She did not attempt, however, to give a technical description of the psychological means of contact between the human faculties of cognition and the supernatural world, except to say, "The brain nerves that connect with the whole system are the medium through which heaven communicates with man."<sup>45</sup> She reported these processes as experiences she had had. To her, these visionary activities were as real as those in which she was consciously engaged. She could recall what she had seen, heard, said, read, thought, felt, imagined, written, acted upon, and wished for during a vision. Even though the symbolism of a dream might arise out of a recent experience of her own, and although her understanding necessarily was conditioned by her own apperceptive mass, she felt completely dependent on divine action for the reception and understanding of a dream or vision and for subsequent recollection, description, and interpretation.

She did not differentiate essentially between the vision and the divinely

inspired dream. For her, the relationship between the natural and the supernatural was so close that within a matter of one evening she could pass from her ordinary conscious experience into a natural sleep, awakened to the awareness of the divine presence physically perceptible, and then lapse into the divinely inspired dream of sleep without astonishment or feeling of mystery.<sup>46</sup>

Although she warned against mistaking an ordinary dream for a prophetic vision, she never felt any confusion herself. She explained simply that a genuine communication from God carries its own evidence of validity. During both sleep and trance she had experiences in which she apprehended specific knowledge that she otherwise would not have gained.

REVELATION BY COLLABORATIVE ACTION  
WITH THE HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS

If revelation can be induced during natural sleep or during the ecstatic trance, is unconsciousness an essential condition for the reception of revelation? If divine agencies are able to present images to the human mind during its passive state, is it not possible that they also may influence mental images during periods of conscious activity? The Bible, recognized as a product of revelatory activity, must have a positive answer to this question, for by far the larger part of the materials of both Old and New Testaments came from sources other than visions and dreams.

Ellen White's belief in revelation by concursive action with the human consciousness was expressed in frequent and numerous contexts. She recognized this kind of action in the writing and understanding of Scripture, in the work of the Holy Spirit, in spiritually induced mental impressions, in the practice of prayer, and in the exercise of faith.

She cited Paul as a specific example. Although Paul was an inspired apostle, the Lord did not keep him constantly informed of the spiritual condition of his churches. This information the apostle received frequently from other members of the church. Neither did the Lord give a new revelation for every situation. On the basis of the information he obtained from common sources and the revelation of God's will that he had previously received, Paul "was prepared to judge the true character of these developments," and on the same grounds he knew how to deal with them. The counsel that Paul gave the churches in these various circumstances was stated "just as much under the inspiration of the Spirit of God as were any of his epistles."<sup>47</sup>

Concursive action is necessary to achieve understanding of previous reve-

lation, for only as one experiences the deep movings of the Spirit of God during prolonged and intensive study can he apprehend Bible truth and experience its power. Without the enlightenment of the Spirit, the human mind is unable to discern truth from error and is subject to demonic deception even in the study of the inspired record.<sup>48</sup> But, on the other hand, the little knowledge that man boasts could be a hundredfold greater if the mind and character were enlightened by the Spirit of God.<sup>49</sup> The honest inquirer, sensitive to impressions of the Holy Spirit, may be assured of obtaining a clearer knowledge of truth and an unfolding of divine mysteries, assisted by angels who "pour light and knowledge into the darkened understanding."<sup>50</sup> Ellen White regarded truth learned through intelligent, prayerful study of the Bible by one who is in living connection with God as new light and new revelation.<sup>51</sup>

In her ministry she frequently was conscious of specific mental impressions that she attributed to the action of the Spirit of God on her already active mind. Often these came while she was speaking at religious services and were simply concerned with what she should say or do next; sometimes, in fact, they were contrary to what she had planned. But the experiences were so real, and at times affected her so completely, that they seemed to involve her entire person: "I felt the power of God thrilling me through and through."<sup>52</sup>

Occasionally she relied on such impressions as confirmation for the rightness of some course of action in which she was involved. For example, when she was asked by the General Conference Committee to make an extended visit to Europe, she did not feel that the invitation was in harmony with the will of God. However, she made preparations and finally boarded the train to begin her transcontinental and transatlantic journey. Speaking of it later she said that, although she had prayed for months for guidance in this matter, her thinking was not clarified until the moment she sat down in her railway coach. "But when I had taken my seat on the cars, the assurance came that I was moving in accordance with the will of God."<sup>53</sup>

When asked how she could be sure that she had divine authority for matters on which she spoke so positively, she once replied: "I speak thus because they flash upon my mind when in perplexity like lightning out of a dark cloud in the fury of a storm. . . . At such times I cannot refrain from saying the things that flash into my mind, not because I have had a new vision, but because that which was presented to me perhaps years in the past has been recalled to my mind forcibly."<sup>54</sup>

She frequently expressed concern that Christians should learn to think

for themselves and receive their enlightenment from God firsthand, and she held that prayer is an effective means to this end. The guidance and wisdom thus received is "not through the channel of some other man's mind, but wisdom that is unadulterated from the Source of all power."<sup>55</sup> She believed that God would thus reveal his will in regard to the daily concerns of life. "We must individually hear Him speaking to the heart. When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God."<sup>56</sup>

The mind can be disciplined to make concursive action with the Divine possible. Both thoughts and imaginations are employed in the development of communion with God. One may develop the habit of a divine-human conversation. The question "What will the Lord have me to do?" should be addressed to all the purposes and pursuits of life. The constant inquiry as to how one can serve God is a prelude to a continual walk with God. The conscious development of love for that which Christ loves is to grow into oneness with him.<sup>57</sup> But the reception of divine revelation is impossible without earnest human effort. The usual mental processes must change from concern with the things of the world to contemplation of the divine. By deliberate mental effort, one should make real in the human imagination great scenes depicting acts of God recorded by inspired writers. Even the scenes of otherworldly glory portrayed by prophets should become a part of one's habitual mental imagery. The words and character sketches of Christ should be the frequent subject of thought and a part of one's thinking vocabulary.

Because man has the opportunity of direct communion with God, Ellen White regarded it as one of the great defects of the human race that this direct communion is experienced to so slight a degree. There was no doubt in her mind that God will enter into such communication with any man who sincerely and faithfully seeks it. "Invisible agencies will work through the visible; the supernatural will cooperate with the natural, the heavenly with the earthly; unknown things will be revealed through the known."<sup>58</sup> While the mind is seeking a cognitive grasp of recorded revelation, or while it is engaged in the culture of spiritual interests, consciously seeking union with the Divine, believing in its reality, and deliberately obeying to the extent of its understanding, the Holy Spirit acts on the mind by expanding its powers, enlightening its understanding, impressing it with flashes of insight and conviction, guiding it into attitudes, and impressing upon it a character. By such concursive action God reveals himself to man and man apprehends God.

## REVELATION THROUGH THE CHURCH

Throughout history God's revelation has been bound up closely with a special community: prophets spoke for God in the context of the covenant with Israel, and apostles witnessed to the redemptive act as members of the body of Christ.

Probably no concern bore more heavily upon Ellen White throughout the years of her service than did her anxiety about the revelatory nature of the relationship of God and his church. She spoke of every child of God as "a letter" sent to his respective family, village, street, and acquaintances. Often those who do not read the Bible or see God through nature will learn of his character through his living representatives, who are to show forth the divine glory. Even the truths of Scripture are given a living significance through living men.<sup>59</sup> "Human agents are God's appointed channel to the world."<sup>60</sup> In acts of love and mercy the church and its members are to represent the character of God and demonstrate the principles of divine law.

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The church has been appointed the channel of light through which God communicated his will and purposes for mankind. Although God reveals himself to individuals, he does not give "to one of His servants an experience independent of, and contrary to, the experience of the church itself."<sup>61</sup> Nor does he commit to any one man the knowledge of his will for the church as a whole while the church itself is left in darkness. All those to whom God speaks are placed in close connection with the church, that they may be interdependent as well as dependent upon God.<sup>62</sup>

God's representatives today are the links that connect the church of history with the living church of the present. In every age God has revealed himself through the church. He is continuing to do so now. Past revelation is to be incorporated with that of the present so that the continuing church will possess and display an ever-increasing light of God in the earth.<sup>63</sup> As the channel of his revelation, the church is God's agency for salvation.

## CHRIST IN THE PROCESS OF REVELATION

The identification of Christ as the Word who was with God in the beginning, who was God the Creator, who became the true Light that enlightens every man, who became Flesh, who came into the world to dwell among men, who as the only Son has made the Father known, indicates the uniqueness of the place Jesus holds in Christian concepts of revelation.<sup>64</sup>

Ellen White regarded Christ as the Eternal Revelator and attributed to him all revelation in history and in nature. Inasmuch as historical and general revelations suffer from the limitations of sinful man and corrupted

creation, the character of God as communicated through these means had been completely misunderstood before the Incarnation. God could manifest himself adequately to man only by the personal appearance of Jesus the Christ.

Ellen White spoke of Christ as God's thought made audible. He lived the character of God among men who had never before seen anyone not in rebellion against God. Although this same Christ had endeavored to communicate through types, patriarchs, prophets, theophanies, and acts in history, he had been unable to break through with the complete truth. Although man had learned many things about God, man had never been confronted by God personally, and he did not know him. To make such an acquaintance possible God became flesh and lived among men.

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In nature, in the events of human life, and in the human conscience, Christ had been mediating the revelation of God. That God was recognizable in nature was demonstrated in Jesus' own learning process: he learned about God by means of the natural revelation seen in the light of the special revelation recorded in Scripture. Yet nature, being impersonal, could show only the handiwork of God. Christ, as a person, could reveal the personality and character of God with a fullness impossible by any other means. And although he is no longer visible on earth, he continues as the mediator of all divine blessings to man, and he offers to be a guide, a teacher, a counselor, a friend to humanity.

Christ remains the only source of intellectual enlightenment available to man; he is the source of all knowledge man learns by any means. In him the revelation in nature is united with the revelation in history and man is confronted personally by God. He speaks to man with the authority of God; he speaks to man as God; he does the acts of God; he is God. In Christ, the Creator gave himself in and to his creation. In Christ, fallen creatures not only can see God, but also they may find a union with him. Christ stands as a bridge between the human and the divine in all relationships. He manifests to man the truths, the attributes, the character, the very person of God.

#### THE CONTENT OF REVELATION

To summarize Ellen White's concepts of the kinds of knowledge that are revealed may be easy or difficult. The simplest way is to state that her concept of God as the source of all knowledge and as the sovereign of all processes excludes no knowledge from the realm of revelation. On the other hand, what knowledge *may be* revealed and what *actually is* revealed are not necessarily the same. The differentiation is determined not so much



by the content as by its purpose and by the recipient's readiness. Any knowledge that might contribute to a person's salvation and that he would not learn otherwise may properly be expected to be revealed.

The glory, the character, the will of God have been revealed. So have the degradation, the character, and the selfishness of man. The purpose of these revelations is to turn man from his evil, reconcile him to God, and unite him with God and with his fellowmen in the love relationship.

Revelations of future events which concern the destiny of man and the judgments of God, events connected with God's saving acts, or specific things that man should do are granted. These contribute to man's understanding of God's redemptive work and help him to locate himself in the progress of history preparatory to the establishment of the kingdom of God. Revelations about the mission of the church, its structure, and its modus operandi are given to contribute toward the advancement of God's redemptive work through the church. Similarly, revelations concerning the objectives and procedures of education; relationships within the family; the use of leisure time; and attitudes of individuals toward themselves, toward others, and toward the church are all relevant to the divine-human relationship.

Excluded from special revelation is such knowledge as is unnecessary to salvation and such knowledge as might detract from the importance of revealed knowledge by making man satisfied in his lost condition or by encouraging selfishness and pride.

#### REVEALED AND ORDINARY KNOWLEDGE

Basic to Ellen White's understanding of the workings of the human mind was the idea that man is not intellectually autonomous but is subject either to God or to Satan. He has the freedom to choose which of these masters he will serve, but he cannot escape the consequences of that choice. If man submits to the control of Satan, he is unable to receive the spirit of truth. If man allows God to control his intellect, he is open to the revelation of God, which is never opposed to knowledge and intellectual attainment in any field, and may attain true wisdom.<sup>65</sup>

It is God's will that man should exercise his power of reason, but he must guard against deifying reason. Reason must ever acknowledge the authority of the great I AM as superior to itself.<sup>66</sup> The craving for broadening horizons and new knowledge, when rightly directed and properly limited, is commendable. God never hampers man's inquiry, intelligence, or acuteness. Man's danger lies in mistaking arrogance for greatness or conceit for knowl-

edge. Unduly to exalt reason is to debase it. "To place the human in rivalry with the divine, is to make it contemptible."<sup>67</sup>

The disposition to exalt human reason above its proper sphere is one of the greatest evils attending man's investigations into science. When man attempts to judge the Creator by his own limited knowledge and to speculate in theories concerning the Omnipotent and his works, man is pursuing a course that imperils his soul.<sup>68</sup> Mysteries of the divine being may be penetrated only by a humble reception of the revelation that God is pleased to give and by conforming to his will thus revealed.

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Ellen White differentiated between what she termed *true experience* and experience as commonly understood. "True experience" is always in complete harmony with natural and divine law. Whenever the knowledge gained through experience contradicts the knowledge of revelation, it is also out of harmony with "true science." It must be branded false.<sup>69</sup>

Truth is never self-contradictory, regardless of the source from which it comes or the methods by which it is apprehended. Ellen White advocated the testing of experience by the revelation of the Bible, yet she recognized the necessity of having one's faith in the validity of revelation confirmed by personal experience. A genuine experience in faith establishes the veracity of God's word, which then becomes the criterion by which other experience and ideas may be tested.<sup>70</sup>

Inasmuch as both science and the Bible have the same author, there can be no conflict between them when they are both understood correctly. Scientific research opens vast fields of knowledge that make new perceptions of truth possible. Nature and the written word both reveal the laws and character of God. They shed light upon each other and lead man to God.<sup>71</sup>

Science and revelation witness by different methods and in different languages to the same truths. Science is continually making new discoveries, but it brings nothing from research that, correctly understood, contradicts divine revelation, for it *is* revelation. Special revelation is not at odds with general revelation. "Rightly understood, both the revelations of science and the experiences of life are in harmony with the testimony of Scripture to the constant working of God in nature."<sup>72</sup>

There is no question about the priority Ellen White accorded special revelation in education. She recognized the power of science and declared it was in the purpose of God that it should be taught in Adventist schools as a preparation for carrying to the world the final message of hope. However, she repeatedly insisted that the science which reveals the character of God — the science of salvation — is without equal among the other sciences.<sup>73</sup>

An illustration of the way in which ordinary and revealed knowledge were intermingled in her own writing is to be seen in an article she wrote a few weeks after the Battle of Bull Run, which was fought July 21, 1861. On August 3 she had a vision about the sin of slavery. In the vision she was shown the bondage of Israel in Egypt. She saw the effect of the plagues on the Egyptians, the release of Israel, the pursuit by the Egyptian army, and its destruction in the Red Sea — scenes presented, she said, to illustrate the selfish love of slavery and the fact that God alone could wrench the slave from the hand of his relentless oppressor. This presentation was followed by a view of the recent Battle of Bull Run, which she described as a most exciting, thrilling, and distressing scene. She saw the Southern army prepared for a dreadful battle; but as the two armies engaged in action, she saw an angel descend and wave his hand backward. Instantly, confusion broke out in the Northern ranks: to the Union soldiers it appeared that their armies were retreating when actually this was not true. An immediate rout followed. It was then explained that this nation was in the hand of God and that the progress of the war would punish both sides in proportion to their responsibility in the sin of slavery.<sup>74</sup>

She was already well acquainted, of course, with the story of the Exodus from Egyptian bondage, and it is most likely that she had read newspaper accounts of the Battle of Bull Run. Probably the vision added nothing to her historical knowledge of these two events; what was added by revelation was the action of God. Obviously, such knowledge is not an object of human research. The history was learned by ordinary means, but the activity of God in the historical situation was seen by revelation.

Although Ellen White did not regard the Bible writers as infallible in the thought patterns and language they used, she insisted that the truths they conveyed are indeed the truths of God. In her own work she used thought patterns common to her contemporaries. Her revelatory experiences were concerned primarily with the acts of God in natural events and through natural laws. She did not always distinguish between the divine principle and the objective fact or event which disclosed it. Perhaps this was due to the fact that she did not sharply distinguish between the acts of God and natural events. For is God not the creator of all objects and the founder of all laws? And when it is remembered that she regarded all knowledge as coming ultimately from God, her hesitance or inability to draw a dividing line at any point in the learning process separating knowledge by revelation from knowledge by other means is understandable. Generally, ordinary knowledge is concerned with objective things and observ-

able processes, and revelation is concerned with explaining these things and processes in relation to the acts of God. Primarily, revelation is concerned with the personal relationship between man and God, but it is not excluded *per se* from operation in the learning of objective facts and processes.

#### THE VALIDATION OF REVELATION

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The question of validation arises in connection with every means to knowledge. Research is largely concerned with the testing of that which is supposed by some to be true. Can the knowledge received through revelation be validated? Are there criteria by which the genuineness of a claim to revelation may be tested? These questions have been asked both by skeptics and by those who have experienced spiritual phenomena profoundly. Indeed, the questions are imbedded in the assurance that the prophetic office should be a prominent medium for God's revelation to man. "If you say in your heart, 'How may we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?' — when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously, you need not be afraid of him."<sup>75</sup> This tests an individual message. It does not say that the Lord has never spoken by that prophet or that he will never do so again.<sup>76</sup>

Ellen White held that God asks faith from no one without giving sufficient grounds for it. She differentiated between evidence and demonstration; faith must rest on the former, not on the latter. For those who desire to know God's truth, the evidence supporting faith is sufficient. God has not removed all possibility of doubt, however, and those who desire to doubt will find ample opportunity.<sup>77</sup>

Doubts about revelation may be eliminated by a sympathetic comparison of one revelation with another. Investigation brings the light of understanding, and the Holy Spirit will impress the human consciousness with the clear and simple truth presented in the messages.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, the very greatness and exalted nature of the themes of revelation inspire faith in its infinite origin.<sup>79</sup> On the other hand, one who approaches the study of revelation with a pride of opinion, a cherishing of sin, a stubbornness of will, can find ample cause for doubt. Indeed, his very condition renders him unable to discern truth from error and inclines him to accept falsehood.

Whether or not one finds adequate evidence to validate revelation is largely a matter of his decision for obedience or disobedience. He who wills to know the will of God and submits to it as he learns it, will find increasing evidence for the certainty of revealed truth; he will find reason and revela-

tion in perfect harmony. Conversely, he who refuses to surrender his carnal nature will not recognize the evidences implicit in revelation; he will not admit their validity regardless of the quality or quantity of any additional evidence that might be amassed.

The ultimate confirmation of revelation is found in the person-to-person relationship that results from a reception of the revelation of God in Christ. Such an experience surpasses mental assent and formal affiliation. It is a truly personal relationship, fervently sought by man and graciously fulfilled by God in Christ.

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The foregoing have been largely subjective criteria. According to Ellen White, primary among the objective criteria for the validation of knowledge by revelation is the Bible. She regarded the Bible as beyond the need for validation and accepted it as *the standard* of truth. No demonstrations of supernatural power can supersede the authority of Scripture as a test of any claims to revelation. Satan, the most disobedient creature in the universe, is also one of the most powerful. One who is living in disobedience and at the same time is demonstrating supernatural power thereby brands himself an agent of the adversary. He who is truly a medium of divine revelation may also manifest supernatural power. But his life of obedience to the scripturally revealed will of God, not his power, differentiates him from the agent of Satan. Any revelation which itself has passed the biblical test thereby becomes helpful in the testing of subsequent claims to revelation.

A supposed revelation may also be confirmed or invalidated by its effect on human experience when put into practice. Although Ellen White believed that Christ's claim to divinity was proved by his miracles, she regarded the fact of his revelatory life — in which the character, the work, and the words of God were made manifest — as the greatest miracle of all. Therefore, the nature of his life and its effect on other lives are the greatest proofs of his claim to be the revelation of God.

When God sends a message by a man, he gives evidence both of the genuineness of the message and of the commission to the man: the messenger will be Christlike, and the message will lead to a renewal of mind and life in those who accept it. This renewal of life is a miracle second only to the miracle of the Christ. There is no middle ground for anyone who claims revelation; either he is of God, or he is of Satan. The results in the life of one who proclaims a message and in the lives of those who accept it will demonstrate the source from which it originated. Ellen White asked that her own work be submitted to this test: "You will know them by their fruits."<sup>80</sup>

She also recognized the church as an important element in the evaluation of claims of revelation. The Holy Spirit does not work in a manner that will be offensive to godly people. The church collectively is a channel of divine communication superior to that of any individual. Although Ellen White recognized the guidance of God manifested in individuals for the reproof and the correction of the church, she insisted that the individual should exercise his mission only in counsel with other experienced and godly churchmen. It would seem that she regarded the relation of the collective church body to the divinely led person as one of checks and balances.

This concept has been common to Christians of nearly all persuasions: Roman Catholics and Protestants, liberals and conservatives. However, it should be noted that conservative Protestants usually do not acknowledge this criterion beyond the period in which the Bible was written. In this regard the concepts of Ellen White seem closer to those of Catholics and neo-orthodox Protestants. The latter place much emphasis on the importance of the dynamic tension between the experience of an individual and that of the collective body of believers in both the reception and the validation of revelation.

In her dealings with specific claims to revelatory experiences which she regarded as spurious, Ellen White applied the above principles. Practical Christianity in the life (not emotional excitement) and conformity to scriptural principles (not miraculous performances) were the results she demanded of genuine revelation. Dreamers who belittled former revelation, visionaries who regarded impulse as superior to scriptural guidance, ecstasies who offered to exhibit their peculiar experiences, prophets who were concerned with trivia, messengers who enjoined prohibitions far beyond those of Scripture — all these Ellen White unhesitatingly branded as sheer pretenders who tended toward fanaticism. Her counsel was "Beware!" Even when everyone acts according to the best light available, she believed, some errors and misjudgments will still be made. Her position was that it is better for these errors to be made on the side of conservatism rather than on the side of fanaticism.

Claims to revelation may be validated by the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit, by comparison with the records of former tested revelation, by the resulting fruitage in the lives of messenger and recipients, and by judgment of the church. However, these criteria are available only to one who will test the claims sympathetically and with a willingness to obey the will of God as it is revealed. He who refuses to accept this discipline has no criteria by which to judge any claim to revelation, be it true or false.

The inclusiveness of Ellen White's concepts of the nature, processes, and content of revelation must be attributed to her belief that for the man of faith and obedience, the line between the natural and the supernatural may become almost nonexistent. God is one; his truth, all truth, forms a unity. The natural universe is an expression of the power, the nature, the character of God. To be sure, there is much ambiguity in this natural manifestation because of sin; and for the same reason, man's perception and understanding are clouded. To overcome these handicaps to the discovery of truth, the seeker has access to guidance from the word of God, which is communicated by methods less subject to the distortions of sin. However, even here, in order to arrive at understanding, one must be led and enlightened by the same Spirit which inspired the writing of that word in the first place.

#### ADVENTISM AND THE DOCTRINE OF REVELATION

There is reason to be apprehensive about the current status of the doctrine of revelation among Seventh-day Adventists. A tendency exists to place on it limitations that could cause a rejection of its relevance, as has happened within much of Protestantism. To blame Darwin and Wellhausen for the demise of this doctrine in many churches is an exercise in historical naïveté. The main cause is rather the disappearance of a living faith in and a vital experience with the supernatural; these form the strongest bulwark against crass naturalism. Unfortunately, the doctrine among nineteenth century Protestants had become so narrowly defined and so inflexible that it crumbled before emerging scientism. Yet Seventh-day Adventism not only withstood but prospered in the face of the same forces that were destroying the vitality of other communions. Unquestionably, this was due largely to the important place accorded the experience — not merely the dogma — of revelation.

Protestantism had splintered the doctrine into rather strictly defined categories such as revelation, inspiration, and influence. The process had been reduced to the transmission of propositions and dictums. Isolation of revelation (as propositionally embedded within an ancient book) from inspiration, illumination, enlightenment, and indwelling of the Spirit (as experientially available to every devout Christian) left the Bible vulnerable to charges of obsolescence and irrelevance. There was a refusal to recognize the reality of revelation outside the Bible. Relegating the prophetic vision to past ages, while regarding it as the only authoritative revelatory device, left the church without a contemporary divine Head who could speak to his followers within the context of their lives.

Is Seventh-day Adventism moving toward a similar position? Is the present course in any way different, except that the church has more books with more propositional truths from a prophet who, in the judgment of some, has been "a long time dead"? Must a recognition that degrees of directness of revelation vary (as they certainly do) necessarily crystallize into a closed, brittle doctrine such as was in vogue among Protestants a century ago? May it be that an undue emphasis on the truly important role of visions is narrowing rather than expanding the significance of the prophetic office? Can the church not retain a unique place for the Bible and a special place for the Ellen White writings (as they both surely deserve) without demeaning the continuing conversation and communion between God and living people?

Faith in a revelatory book or books is of no consequence, nor will it long endure, without living personal and communal experiences. But these experiences will not be sought or cherished if the body of believers shrugs them off as being of little importance in comparison with what was written long ago. On the other hand, nurtured spiritual communion, whether individual or group, has no defense against fanaticism or demonic possession apart from a high regard for the tested revelatory records of the past. In other words, a doctrine of divine revelation can effectively survive only in its entirety — not in fragments. It will be embalmed soon after any of its parts are downgraded, ignored, or inordinately exalted.

If Ellen White's inclusive and flexible concepts of revelation were known and practiced, the doctrine could be rescued from possible emasculation into a sterile dogma. Instead of debating ideas, church members would be comparing experiences. They would have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to the church; they would know the current commandments of God and be empowered to keep them. They would have the living testimony of Jesus, and the spirit of prophecy would be, in truth, an abiding gift.

In a world in which the recipients of knowledge are of limited ability and experience, no perfect communication is possible. Yet the revelation of God can change and perfect those who are obedient to his truth into the likeness of God and can unite the creature with his Creator in an eternal union. Although the consummation of this experience is still future, a progressive growth toward it may begin immediately, and it may be enjoyed in increasing measure throughout life.



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# A Textual and Historical Study

OF ELLEN G. WHITE'S  
ACCOUNT OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

57

WILLIAM S. PETERSON

Despite the preeminent position of Ellen G. White<sup>1</sup> in the theology and history of the Seventh-day Adventist church, and despite the many articles and books that have been written about her, we still know remarkably little about her or her literary work, for the church's scholars have not yet examined closely and systematically her numerous publications. I believe that if we are ever to understand Adventism, as it is today and as it was in the nineteenth century, we must undertake this study, which will surely be of ultimate benefit to the church.

What I propose to do here is to provide, somewhat hesitantly, an example of the method that I think Adventist scholarship might profitably adopt in this examination of Ellen White's writings. I have selected from her book *The Great Controversy* the chapter entitled "The Bible and the French Revolution." I have brought to bear on that chapter the textual and historical evidence available, much in the way that other religious literary documents are studied by Christian critics and historians. Any conclusions that I reach obviously ought to be tested against the other chapters in *The Great Controversy* and against all her other books, which I have deliberately excluded from consideration here.

I do not mean to imply, of course, that I am the first to treat in detail the composition of *The Great Controversy*. But I know of only two essays on the book that are worth serious attention, and both of these, unfortunately, do not ask the questions I propose to consider.

The first essay is a chapter in *Ellen G. White and Her Critics*, in which the late Francis D. Nichol attempts to refute the charge of plagiarism in

*The Great Controversy* and *The Acts of the Apostles*.<sup>2</sup> I have no quarrel with Nichol's arguments, though I feel he is on shaky ground when he defends Mrs. White by showing that certain other nineteenth-century Adventist writers also plagiarized extensively. Actually, Nichol seems to me to be beating a dead horse with his usual charming vigor. Plagiarism, at least as restrictively defined by him, is not the real issue in *The Great Controversy*.

The other treatment of the subject which I have found useful is a mimeographed paper entitled "Ellen G. White as an Historian," by Arthur White, secretary of the Ellen G. White Estate. This paper was delivered at the Quadrennial Council on Higher Education at Andrews University in August 1968. Arthur White covers somewhat the same ground I do, and he provides several valuable quotations from unpublished letters by Ellen White and her son. Again, although I seldom disagree with what White says, he largely ignores the issues that interest me.

What historians did Ellen White regard most highly? Do they have in common any particular social or political bias? How careful was she in her use of historical evidence? Did she ever make copying errors in transcribing material from her sources? Is there any particular category of historical information which she consistently ignored? Did she make use of the best scholarship available in her day? What do the revisions in successive editions of *The Great Controversy* reveal about her changing intentions? These are the questions — and not the traditional ones about whether she plagiarized and whether only certain passages are inspired — that ought to receive our attention.<sup>3</sup>

Before I can discuss any of these matters, however, I must trace, as briefly as possible, the genesis and development of the text of *The Great Controversy*, particularly the chapter on the French Revolution.

## I

Ellen White reported having experienced her first supernatural revelation while engaging in morning worship in December 1844. In an account of it published the next year she wrote: "While I was praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell upon me, and I seemed to be rising higher and higher, far above the dark world." She told of being lifted up to heaven, where she saw the sea of glass, the tree of life, and the throne of God.<sup>4</sup> Other visions followed, dealing with biblical history, the rise of Christianity, and future events, particularly the second coming of Christ. In 1858, abandoning her practice of publishing separate reports of the visions, Mrs.

White brought together much of this material in the first volume of *Spiritual Gifts*, which presented a panoramic view of human history from the fall of Adam to the Second Advent. This book constituted the nucleus of what was later to become *The Great Controversy*, but at this point it was a slender volume and contained little historical material except for occasional comments on the motives of important religious figures of the past. There was no mention of the French Revolution.

As the fourth volume of a set published under the general title of *The Spirit of Prophecy, The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan, From the Destruction of Jerusalem to the End of the Controversy*, appeared in 1884. The earlier book was considerably amplified, with a few quotations from secular historians (though the sources were not identified). The French Revolution was now treated for the first time in a chapter entitled "The Two Witnesses," which was primarily an exposition of biblical prophecy and made no pretense of dealing adequately with the Revolution. The chapter was five and a half pages long.

The book sold well, especially to non-Adventists, and Ellen White began to lay plans for revising and enlarging it once again. In 1885 she found an opportunity to do so, for she and her son William, having been asked by the church leaders to visit the European missions, moved to the Adventist publishing house in Basel, Switzerland, where she remained until the autumn of 1887. During this period she had access to the library, well stocked with historical works, of the late J. N. Andrews, who had been the first Adventist missionary in Europe until his death in 1883.

When the new edition of *The Great Controversy* was published in 1888, it was liberally sprinkled with long quotations from historians, but again the sources were not identified. "In some cases where a historian has so grouped together events as to afford, in brief, a comprehensive view of the subject, or has summarized details in a convenient manner, his words have been quoted," Mrs. White explained in her preface. "Except in a few instances, no specific credit has been given, since they are not quoted for the purpose of citing that writer as authority, but because his statement affords a ready and forcible presentation of the subject." In 1888 the chapter, now retitled "The Bible and the French Revolution," filled twenty-four pages, and, in addition to biblical prophecies and general moral reflections, it included full descriptions of the persecution of the Albigenses,<sup>5</sup> the St. Bartholomew Massacre, the worship of the "Goddess of Reason," and the Reign of Terror.

Later, in 1911, Mrs. White stated that the major modifications in the

book were the result of new visions. "While writing the manuscript of *Great Controversy* I was often conscious of the presence of the angels of God," she said. "And many times the scenes about which I was writing were presented to me anew in visions of the night, so that they were fresh and vivid in my mind."<sup>6</sup>

The 1888 edition went through numerous printings until, in 1911, when new plates were required, Mrs. White contributed some final revisions. Mainly these were notes identifying the sources of quoted material (though some of the quotations could no longer be traced and thus remained unidentified) and a few corrections of historical facts. The basic structure of the book, however, was not changed from 1888, and this 1911 edition remains the standard text of *The Great Controversy*.

## II

It should be evident from even this sketchy summary of the book's publication history that the most crucial period in its development was 1885-88, during which time it was expanded by nearly a third of its 1884 length through the interpolation of large amounts of historical material, much of it quoted verbatim. Fortunately, at least some of these quotations could still be identified in 1911, and so it is possible for us now to retrace Mrs. White's steps in the revising of "The Bible and the French Revolution" and to examine the sources she used for this particular chapter. The 1911 notes list the following:

- Sir Walter Scott, *The Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*;<sup>7</sup>
- George R. Gleig, The Great Collapse, *Blackwood's Magazine*;<sup>8</sup>
- James A. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism*;<sup>9</sup>
- L. A. Thiers, *History of the French Revolution*;<sup>10</sup>
- Philippe Buchez and Pierre Roux, *Collection of Parliamentary History*;<sup>11</sup>
- J. H. Merle D'Aubigné, *History of the Reformation in Europe in the Time of Calvin*;<sup>12</sup>
- Guillaume de Felice, *History of the Protestants of France*;<sup>13</sup>
- Henry White, *The Massacre of St. Bartholomew*;<sup>14</sup>
- Archibald Alison, *History of Europe from the Commencement of the French Revolution in M.DCC LXXXIX to the Restoration of the Bourbons in M.DCCC.XV*.<sup>15</sup>

The question I wish to raise is this: Do these historians have any attitude or bias in common which might explain why Ellen White was attracted to them?

Sir Walter Scott, upon whom, more than any other historian (judging by the frequency and length of the citations), Mrs. White leaned heavily in this chapter, was not primarily a historian, of course, but rather the author of enormously popular historical novels. The biography of Napoleon was

undertaken during the final years of Scott's life in order to offset large debts, and accordingly it was written in great haste and with a minimum of accuracy. In a one-year period Scott was able to produce the massive nine-volume work (printed in small type), thereby earning for himself 18,000 pounds. His secretary, then an inexperienced young man, later described how he and Scott both wrote for twelve hours every day in the latter's library, even eating meals at their desks to save time. Occasionally Scott's writing hand would tire, and he would then dictate rapidly to his companion, hardly interrupting the flow of words as he plucked various books from the shelves.<sup>16</sup>

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The resulting biography, marred by both careless research and Scott's strong Tory bias, was very poorly received by reviewers. The *Eclectic Review* observed that Scott had "an extremely superficial knowledge" of his subject and "marks of haste are everywhere manifest" in the book. The *Monthly Review* found it to be "a signal and palpable failure."<sup>17</sup>

Mrs. White's other major source in "The Bible and the French Revolution," James A. Wylie, was a Scottish writer and editor who, in his own words, devoted his life to "the exposure of papal errors and the clear and fervid counter exposition of the principles of the Reformation."<sup>18</sup> Among his other works were *The Papal Hierarchy: An Exposure of the Tactics of Rome for the Overthrow of the Liberty and Christianity of Great Britain* (1878) and *The Jesuits, Their Moral Maxims, and Plots against Kings, Nations and Churches* (1881). If his hatred of the papacy was marked, Wylie's admiration for Protestantism was so pronounced that he could not write on the subject without becoming lyrical. Consider this passage from the first chapter of his first volume of *History of Protestantism*:

Protestantism is not solely the outcome of human progress; it is no mere principle of perfectibility inherent in humanity. . . . Protestantism is a principle which has its origin outside human society; it is a Divine graft on the intellectual and moral nature of man, whereby new vitalities and forces are introduced into it, and the human stem yields henceforth a nobler fruit. It is the descent of a heaven-born influence which allies itself with all the instincts and powers of the individual, with all the laws and cravings of society, and which, quickening both the individual and the social being into new life, and directing their efforts to nobler objects, permits the highest development of which humanity is capable, and the fullest possible accomplishment of all its grand ends. In a word, Protestantism, is revived Christianity [p. 2].

Clearly, here is a man not to be trusted when he describes the Catholic persecution of French Protestants.

George Gleig, the author of the *Blackwood's* article, also possessed a strong conservative bent. His chief contribution to British public life was

an attack on the Reform Bill of 1832, which extended voting privileges to the middle class.<sup>19</sup> (*Blackwood's* itself, incidentally, was one of the leading Tory quarterlies in Britain.) The passage from Gleig's article quoted by Mrs. White (a sweeping moral condemnation of the French people: "France is the only nation in the world concerning which the authentic record survives, that as a nation she lifted her hand in open rebellion against the Author of the universe.") is part of a violently anti-French diatribe. Specifically, Gleig was urging British military or diplomatic intervention against the French on the Continent, and his low opinion of French morals appears to be the natural outgrowth of a firmly held political conviction.

Similarly, Sir Archibald Alison, an uncompromising Scottish Tory who believed in the necessity of Negro slavery, retired from public life in 1830 in order to warn the world through the pages of *Blackwood's* of "the many evils impending from democracy and the Reform Bill."<sup>20</sup> In the preface to his *History of Europe*, a book which Mrs. White quoted twice in "The Bible and the French Revolution," Alison explained his philosophy of history, which accounted for France's turmoil by attributing it to "the consequences of democratic ascendancy." Nevertheless, he said, "the principal actors were overruled by an unseen power" — which means, as *The Dictionary of National Biography* has remarked, that he wished "to prove that Providence was on the side of the Tories."

Another monarchist, antirevolutionary (albeit somewhat more impartial) historian to whom Ellen White turned was Louis Adolphe Thiers, who near the end of his life served as president of the French Republic. "The faults of the book [Thiers' *History of the French Revolution*]," declares G. P. Gooch, "are that its view was external, that its author never realised the importance of obtaining new material, and that it was conceived and executed as an incident in a political campaign."<sup>21</sup>

The other historians quoted by Mrs. White — Buchez, White, D'Aubigné,<sup>22</sup> and de Felice — need not be discussed here, since her citations from their books are brief and primarily factual. The ones mentioned previously are cited at length, and their political, social, and religious attitudes (as revealed in the passages she quoted) seem to receive her approval.

It is significant that to a man they possessed strong antipathies against Catholicism and democracy. All of these historians (with the exception of Gleig, whose article in 1870 is unmistakably an anachronism, and Wylie, who had a special Protestant ax to grind) belong to an earlier "romantic" historical school whose work had been largely discredited by the time Mrs. White was revising *The Great Controversy* in 1885. It is not helpful, there-



fore, to repeat the familiar assertion that she was merely illustrating her generalizations with quotations from the best historical scholarship of her generation. The fact is that she appears not to have been familiar with any of the important work that had been done on the Revolution in the latter half of the century and that she relied instead on older historical treatments that were strong on moral fervor and weak on factual evidence.<sup>23</sup>

### III

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On the other hand, it is fruitless to point out the many discrepancies between facts and interpretations in *The Great Controversy* and our present knowledge of the French Revolution, for we cannot demand that Mrs. White should have written in 1888 from the perspective of the late twentieth century. Suffice it to say that if she were writing her book today, her view of French history would probably be considerably less simplistic.<sup>24</sup> But I think it is not unreasonable to ask how accurately and fairly Mrs. White used the materials which were actually available to her in J. N. Andrews' library.

First, there is the old question of plagiarism, which I decline to regard as a major issue (at least in connection with this chapter). I fully agree with Nichol that Mrs. White's unacknowledged borrowings were not done with dishonest intent and probably reflect the looser literary ethics of the nineteenth century. The following is an example of the close paraphrases which one finds occasionally in the chapter:

For seven days the massacre was continued in Paris, the first three with inconceivable fury. And it was not confined to the city itself, but by special order of the king, was extended to all the provinces and towns where Protestants were found.

*Great Controversy* (1911), p. 272.

For seven days the massacres were continued in Paris, and the first three especially with unabating fury. Nor were they confined within the walls of the city. In pursuance of orders sent from the court, they were extended to all provinces and cities where Protestants were found.

Wylie, volume two, p. 604.

However, on the larger question of Mrs. White's intellectual, rather than verbal, indebtedness to her sources, it must be said that she followed them very closely and drew most of her material from only a few pages in each. It is difficult, therefore, to know how to interpret Mrs. White's statement that these scenes are based primarily on visions.

It is true that the early part of the chapter is a discussion of the prophetic significance of the French Revolution and that the final pages offer moral

generalizations on the decline of France. But the central section of "The Bible and the French Revolution," which is entirely historical, I have compared line by line with her sources — where they are known — and I do not find a single detail which is not also present in them. Even her moral perspective is shared by the historians she consulted. Except for a few broad generalizations about the Albigenses, Mrs. White provided no connected historical narrative in 1884; this appeared only after she had been reading in Andrews' library, and then every fact, every observation, came from printed sources. I do not know, of course, whether the same pattern of literary development would hold true for the other historical chapters in *The Great Controversy*.

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Another matter which Arthur White has discussed at great length is the factual errors in the 1888 edition that were corrected in 1911. An example which he cites is the statement made in 1888 that the beginning of the St. Bartholomew Massacre was signaled by the tolling of "the great palace bell." It was pointed out to Mrs. White that this was inaccurate, and in 1911 the phrase was changed to "a bell" (p. 272). One must certainly agree with Arthur White that the mistake is a trivial one and not worth becoming agitated about; but his treatment of this particular revision is, in a sense, misleading, because he implies that the change was made as a result of new information on the subject which became available between 1888 and 1911.

In fact, the error was a result of a simple misreading by Mrs. White of her original source before 1888. Wylie (volume two, p. 600), upon whom Mrs. White was drawing at this point in the chapter, wrote that "the signal for the massacre was to be the tolling of the great bell of the Palace of Justice." Two pages later in his book, Wylie explained that in the event it was the bell of St. Germain l'Auxerois which was rung. Obviously Mrs. White had read the first statement but not the second, for she displayed confusion also about the time of night when the bell sounded.

This is not the only instance I have found of carelessness by Mrs. White in transcribing material from her sources. I am not speaking, of course, of minor changes in wording or punctuation, for these are not worth our notice; but obvious inaccuracies of fact, in their cumulative effect, undermine the historical basis of the chapter. In 1888, for example, Mrs. White wrote of "the breviaries of the Old and New Testaments," a statement which was later corrected to read "breviaries, missals, and the Old and New Testaments" (1911 edition, p. 276). This is an error in transcription which would be made by someone unfamiliar with the nature of breviaries.

Most of her errors, however, are in the direction of exaggeration. In 1888 she had spoken of the "millions" who died in the French Revolution; in 1911 this was scaled down to "multitudes" (p. 284). An even more revealing inaccuracy is one which was never corrected. In the sixteenth century, she wrote, "thousands upon thousands of Protestants found safety in flight" from France (1911 edition, p. 278). Then the following paragraph is a lengthy quotation from Wylie. Had she read Wylie more carefully, she would have noticed, immediately preceding the statement which she quoted, this sentence: "Meanwhile another, and yet another, rose up and fled, till the band of self-confessed and self-expatriated disciples of the Gospel swelled to between 400 and 500" (Wylie, volume two, p. 212). Wylie himself is given to hyperbole in discussing Catholic persecutions; and when one compounds his exaggerations with Mrs. White's, the distance from historical reality is very great indeed.<sup>25</sup>

Still another issue that must concern us is whether Mrs. White consistently omitted or suppressed certain kinds of evidence which she found in her sources. She stated repeatedly, of course, that she was not writing balanced history but only a theological interpretation of history. So it should hardly surprise us that she treated the French Revolution entirely from a religious standpoint; she did not take into account any political, social, or economic forces operating in the Old Regime. It might be pointed out that such a vision of history is as incomplete, in its own way, as a complete denial of the importance of religious and moral factors in human affairs would be. However, I am not competent to enter into a general discussion of Mrs. White's theory of history, and therefore I will restrict my remarks to two specific cases in "The Bible and the French Revolution" in which I find significant omissions, the effect of both being to exaggerate the role of Catholic clergymen in the attack on religious institutions and ideals.

To give a striking example of the irreligious spirit of the Revolution, Mrs. White quoted a blasphemous remark by a person she called "one of the priests of the new order." The clear implication is that this individual is one of the "apostate priests" to whom she had referred earlier on the same page. Yet Alison (volume two, p. 90), from whom she borrowed this anecdote, merely identified the speaker as "the comedian Monort." A cleric he was not, except perhaps in some extravagantly metaphorical sense.

Another story, which she found in Scott, was altered basically in its significance by a similar omission of an important detail. The Scott quotation as printed in *The Great Controversy* (1911 edition, p. 274) is as follows:

[The] constitutional bishop of Paris was brought forward to play the principal part in the most impudent and scandalous farce ever acted in the face of a national representation. . . . He was brought forward in full procession, to declare to the Convention that the religion which he had taught so many years was, in every respect, a piece of priestcraft, which had no foundation either in history or sacred truth. He disowned, in solemn and specific terms, the existence of the Deity to whose worship he had been consecrated, and devoted himself in the future to the homage of liberty, equality, virtue, and morality. He then laid on the table his episcopal decorations, and received a fraternal embrace from the president of the Convention. Several apostate priests followed the example of this prelate.

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And here are the sentences deleted by Mrs. White: "It is said that the leaders of the scene had some difficulty in inducing the bishop to comply with the task assigned him, which, after all, he executed, not without present tears and subsequent remorse. But he did play the part prescribed" (volume one, p. 172). Certainly our attitude toward the bishop is transformed by the knowledge that he performed the act under duress and wept as he did it; yet Mrs. White, probably because she wished to underline the apostasy of the Catholic Church, did not reveal these crucial facts to us.

#### IV

I am sure that I do not understand all the implications of the evidence which has come to light in this study of a chapter in *The Great Controversy*. For my part, I will hazard only a few cautiously phrased conclusions and leave the larger issues to the theologians.

*First*, it was not mere modesty that led Mrs. White to disclaim any credentials as a historian; we must take her at her word in this matter.<sup>26</sup> To treat *The Great Controversy* as history is to ignore the book's fundamentally theological character.

*Second*, the traditional Adventist understanding of the nature of her inspiration does not adequately explain the processes we have seen at work in this chapter. It simply will not suffice to say that God showed her the broad outline of events and she then filled in the gaps with her readings. In the case of the French Revolution, there was no "broad outline" until she had read the historians.

*Third*, I hope that this study has demonstrated the great need in our church for a serious, concerted reexamination of the writings of Ellen G. White. It is not an exaggeration to say that, in a scholarly sense, we know next to nothing about her books. More than fifty years have passed since her death. Surely it is time for us to recognize that the author of the books we have all read since childhood was a very human, godly woman who lived in a particular age and interpreted history with a particular set of assump-

tions. She did not, one must conclude, escape the intellectual influences and limitations that are experienced by every man and woman. But these are part of what it means to be a human being. And one suspects that most Seventh-day Adventists could more readily respect and understand a fallible, imperfect Ellen White than the superhuman saint that the church has often given them in the past.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

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- 1 An extended treatment of Ellen G. White's career would be outside the scope of this article. There is no adequate biography of her; but see *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1915), based primarily on her autobiographical writings.
- 2 Francis D. Nichol, *Ellen G. White and Her Critics* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1951), pp. 403-428. His two following chapters also take up other aspects of the "plagiarism" issue.
- 3 There are other potentially useful lines of inquiry that I have been unable to pursue: (1) a comparison of the manuscript drafts and the proofs of *The Great Controversy* (the White Estate may well possess these); (2) an examination of Mrs. White's diaries and correspondence during the periods when she was writing and revising the book (this material is also owned by the White Estate); and (3) an exhaustive study of the diaries, correspondence, memoirs, autobiographies, and biographies of Mrs. White's acquaintances.
- 4 Reprinted in *Early Writings of Ellen G. White* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1945), pp. 14-20.
- 5 Mrs. White's glorification of the Albigenses is puzzling. They abolished the sacrament of marriage, rejected the divinity of Christ, and had little in common with the Waldenses (with whom she invariably compares them) except that both groups were persecuted religious minorities. See John McClintock and James Strong, *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature* (New York: Harper 1874), volume one, p. 133: "That the Albigenses were identical with the Waldenses has been maintained by two very different schools of theologians for precisely opposite reasons: by the Romanists, to make the Waldenses responsible for the errors of the Albigenses, and by a number of respectable Protestant writers (e.g., Allix) to show that the Albigenses were entirely free from the errors charged against them by their Romish persecutors." (I have deliberately quoted from a well known Protestant religious encyclopedia which was available during Mrs. White's lifetime.)
- 6 Quoted in Arthur White, *Ellen G. White as an Historian* (unpublished manuscript), p. 10.
- 7 Sir Walter Scott, *The Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*, two volumes (Philadelphia: J. and J. L. Gihon 1858). The bibliography of *The Great Controversy* cites an 1854 edition of the book which I cannot find in either the *Library of Congress Catalog of Printed Cards* or the *British Museum General Catalogue of Printed Books*.
- 8 George R. Gleig, *The Great Collapse*, *Blackwood's Magazine* 108, 641-656 (November 1870). Like most nineteenth-century British journalism, Gleig's article was published anonymously but is attributed to him by Walter E. Hough-

- ton, editor, *The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals* (University of Toronto Press 1966), p. 133.
- 9 James A. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism*, three volumes (London: Cassell, Petter and Galpin 1874-77).
  - 10 L. A. Thiers, *History of the French Revolution*, two volumes; G. T. Fisher, translator (London: C. Daly 1846). Wrongly given in *The Great Controversy* as "M. A. Thiers."
  - 11 Philippe Buchez and Pierre Roux, *Collection of Parliamentary History*. A forty-volume work published in Paris in 1834-38. I can find no information about the English translation which Mrs. White evidently used.
  - 12 J. H. Merle D'Aubigné, *History of the Reformation in Europe in the Time of Calvin*, eight volumes (London: Longmans 1863-78).
  - 13 Guillaume de Felice, *History of the Protestants of France*; P. E. Barnes, translator (London 1853).
  - 14 Henry White, *The Massacre of St. Bartholomew* (New York: Harper 1871).
  - 15 Archibald Alison, *History of Europe from the Commencement of the French Revolution in M.DCC.LXXXIX to the Restoration of the Bourbons in M.DCCC.XV*; second edition, five volumes (Edinburgh: Blackwood 1835-36).
  - 16 J. G. Lockhart, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea, and Blanchard 1838), volume two, pp. 573-574.
  - 17 For a list and summaries of contemporary reviews, see James C. Corson, *A Bibliography of Sir Walter Scott* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd 1943), pp. 282-283.
  - 18 *The Dictionary of National Biography*, volume twenty-one, p. 1152.
  - 19 *Ibid.*, volume seven, pp. 1303-1304.
  - 20 *Ibid.*, volume one, pp. 287-290.
  - 21 G. P. Gooch, *History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Longmans, Green 1913), p. 201.
  - 22 D'Aubigné was Mrs. White's favorite historian and is quoted frequently in *The Great Controversy* chapters treating the Reformation.
  - 23 For a survey of nineteenth-century studies of the French Revolution, see Gooch, pp. 226-254; for a bibliography, see James W. Thompson, *A History of Historical Writing* (New York: Macmillan 1942), volume two, p. 227n.
  - 24 One of the most important of modern works on the subject is that of Georges Lefebvre, *The Coming of the French Revolution*; R. R. Palmer, translator (Princeton University Press 1947).
  - 25 This particular error by Mrs. White is an interesting one, because it is possible to reconstruct how she misread Wylie. Wylie cites the 400 or 500 "self-expatriated disciples of the Gospel" and then goes on to assert: "The men who were now fleeing from France were the first to tread a path which was to be trodden again and again by hundreds of thousands of their countrymen in years to come. During the following two centuries and [a] half these scenes were renewed at short intervals." Mrs. White reduces all of this information to one sentence and thereby distorts it: "Thousands upon thousands found safety in flight; and this continued for two hundred and fifty years after the opening of the Reformation." In other words, Mrs. White removes Wylie's "hundreds of thousands" of Protestant exiles from "the following two centuries and [a] half" and instead places this enormous group in the sixteenth century.

- 26 In a letter officially approved by Mrs. White, her son wrote: "Mother has never claimed to be an authority on history. The things which she has written out, are descriptions of flash-light pictures and other representations given her regarding the actions of men, and the influence of these actions upon the work of God for the salvation of men, with views of past, present, and future history in its relation to this work. In connection with the writing out of these views, she has made use of good and clear historical statements to help make plain to the reader the things which she is endeavoring to present." (Arthur White, *Ellen G. White as an Historian*, appendix, p. 4.)

## The "Spirit of Prophecy"

RICHARD B. LEWIS

While I was a book editor at the Pacific Press, I eliminated from manuscripts the expression *Spirit of Prophecy* as applied to Ellen G. White or to her writings, and I continue to refrain from this usage in all personal discourse. Here are the reasons.

The expression commonly used to mean the writings of Ellen White, as in "We study the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy," is a logical anomaly in that the words for cause or source are used for the result. That is, the Spirit of Prophecy, the Holy Spirit, which inspires prophetic utterance, is not the *books*; it is the cause or source of the books. At times we err in associating the expression with Ellen White as a *person*. Obviously Ellen White was not the Spirit of Prophecy but was inspired by it.

Again, the expression "Bible and writings of the Spirit of Prophecy" is ambiguous and confusing, because the Spirit of Prophecy, the Holy Spirit which inspires the prophet, did not confine this animation to Ellen White alone but included Moses, Malachi, John, and all the rest. Thus, the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy include the Bible *and* the works of Ellen White — in short, the literary products of all inspired writers.

If we are after precision of expression, we must use the term Spirit of Prophecy to refer to the Holy Spirit or, by a sort of metonymy, to the Spirit-

inspired writings — all of them. The only precise and clear way to refer to the writings of Ellen White is simply to say “the writings of Ellen White” — “I read the Bible and the writings of Ellen White” or “My ideas of religion come from the Bible and Ellen White.”

It is true that Ellen White herself applied the term *Spirit of Prophecy* to her writings, that is, to *some* of them — specifically to the four volumes that were an enlargement of the original four volumes of *Spiritual Gifts* and that ultimately became the Conflict of the Ages series. But this title was of editorial origin, the same as were *Messages to Young People* and *The Triumph of God's Love*, book titles that Ellen White never saw. It is now evident that the *Spirit of Prophecy* title was a poor choice. It is fortunate that the volumes, though available in facsimile, are no longer in general circulation. I find no example of Ellen White's use of the term for her writings except as just mentioned.

In addition to the reasons which have been given, there is another, more powerful reason why the title was unfortunate as applied to the old four-volume set, and doubly unfortunate as applied to all the writings of Ellen White. This stronger reason lies in the opening we thus give adversaries for accusation of, at best, verbal trickery and, at worst, theological chicanery.

Consider the following sequence:

*Revelation 14:12*: “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.”

*Revelation 12:17*: “And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the *remnant* of her seed, which keep the commandments of God and *have the testimony of Jesus Christ*.” Here we have a “last event” which ends one of the prophetic cycles of the Book of Revelation and coincides with the similar passage in chapter 14 quoted above. The expression “testimony of Jesus,” coupled with “keep the commandments,” is obviously parallel to “faith of Jesus.” But what does “faith of Jesus” or “testimony of Jesus” mean?

*Revelation 19:10*: “I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that *have the testimony of Jesus*; . . . for the *testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*.”

How much more clearly could it be said? The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Who, then, are the remnant people of God? Why, those who have the spirit of prophecy. Who have this? The Adventists, of course, in the person of Ellen G. White.

Now let the adversaries have a word.

Again, the Adventists use a specious exegesis to prove themselves the



remnant people of God. By use of the so-called Authorized Version of Revelation (12:17; 14:12; 19:10) they equate the term "remnant" to "have the testimony of Jesus" and the latter term to "spirit of prophecy," claiming not only (1) that their "prophet," Ellen White, is here proved indeed to be a prophet but also, by a question-begging circularity, (2) that here is the proof that the Adventists are *the* remnant people. To crown the trickery, they show how they have long referred to the writings of their revered leader as in verity *the* spirit of prophecy.

How wrong they are can be exposed in a moment by reading the key texts in other, more modern translations.

*Revelation 14:12:* (New English Bible) "in keeping God's commands and remaining loyal to Jesus."

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*Revelation 12:17:* (Revised Standard Version) "who keep the commandments of God and bear testimony to Jesus;" (Phillips) "who keep the commandments of God and bear their witness to Jesus."

*Revelation 19:10:* (Phillips) "This witness to Jesus inspires all prophecy;" (New English Bible) "Those who bear testimony to Jesus are inspired like the prophets;" (Weymouth) "For the truth revealed by Jesus is the inspiration of all prophecy."

If adversaries were to enunciate such a statement — as far as I know, no one has — they would by no means have a perfect case. But they would have shown the precariousness of a theological argument based on the term "spirit of prophecy."

If the translations of these Revelation passages refer to an attitude toward Jesus and the gospel, no reference to a modern prophet is implied. If the term "spirit of prophecy" refers to the agency of the Holy Spirit in instructing the prophets, no exclusive reference to a modern prophet is implied.

The application of the term "spirit of prophecy" to the writings of Ellen White is an intruding habit that has no bearing whatever on the identification of a "remnant." That is, assuming that the "remnant" *has* the "spirit of prophecy" in the sense of a modern prophet, only our own post facto application of the term "spirit of prophecy" to the writings of Ellen White is available for identification — and that is no reason at all.

Precise use of terms — *Spirit of Prophecy* to mean the Holy Spirit or the prophecies which the Spirit inspires, all of them; *Ellen White* to mean Ellen White; *testimonies* or *writings* of Ellen White to mean any of her writings obviously intended for counsel to the church or its members — would improve communication with Adventists and others alike. College courses might be entitled "Writings of Ellen White" or "Testimonies to

the Church," rather than "Gift of Prophecy" or "Spirit of Prophecy," unless the latter terms referred to courses dealing with the prophetic gift to the church throughout the ages, in some proportional fashion. In conversation and in the pulpit, the speaker should say, "Ellen White says — " or "We read from Ellen White — "

I believe that the terms I recommend come naturally from a realistic assessment of Ellen White's work and place. She received messages from God in the same manner as did the ancient prophets. Presumably God communicated to her, by the prescribed methods, messages as true and as divine as those he communicated to the biblical prophets. As a human being at first quite uneducated, Ellen White wrote out the messages as best she could, but with no more infallibility than that exhibited by the biblical writers. She was a person, a minister, no more nor less perfect or infallible than Elijah or Peter.

We rely on the Holy Spirit to teach us truth from all the sacred writings. We must have a consuming desire for truth and a willingness to forfeit every personal desire in order to find it if we are to read any of the inspired writings accurately.

## Book Selections

*Food for Everyone: The Mittleider Method: Reporting Dramatic Food-Production Demonstrations in the United States and South Pacific.* By Jacob R. Mittleider and Andrew N. Nelson. College Place, Washington: College Press 1970. pp. 608. Illus. \$16.70.

Mr. Mittleider is international agricultural consultant of the extension division at Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, California.

*Freedom in Two Centuries.* By Otis B. Edwards. New York: Pageant Press 1969. pp. 121. \$5.00.

The author is chairman of the division of social sciences at Oakwood College, Huntsville, Alabama.

*Die Frühgeschichte der Siebenten-Tags-Adventisten bis zur Gemeindegründung 1863 und ihre Bedeutung für die moderne Irenik.* By Konrad F. Mueller. Marburg, Germany: Elwert Verlag 1969. pp. 206.

The author is professor of church history and systematic theology at Marienhoehe Missionary Seminary, Darmstadt, Germany. He has written a well-documented work on the origins and early history of the Seventh-day Adventist church.

*Die Gemeinschaft der Siebenten-Tags-Adventisten in volkskundlicher Sicht.* By Irmgard Simon. Münster, Germany: Verlag Aschendorff 1965. pp. 228.

This book, based on a doctoral dissertation, is written by a non-Seventh-day Adventist. It presents the history and doctrines of the early Adventist church, comparing them with the present beliefs of the church. The major part of the book discusses the structure and activity of individual churches in Germany. Special attitudes and modes of living are discussed, such as health reform, fashion, and relationships of the church members to their fellowmen, and culture in evangelism, literature, theater, and art. This is a scholarly work in which the author entered significantly into the life and feeling of the church groups she studied so intensively.

*The Stature of Christ: Festschrift: Essays in Honor of Edward Heppenstall.*

By twenty-four colleagues and former students. Collected and published by Vern Carner and Gary Stanhiser. Loma Linda, California, 1970. pp. 225. \$3.00 (\$2.50 to SPECTRUM subscribers) plus \$.15 postage [request from Vern Carner, Division of Religion, Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, California 92354] (paper).

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### RECENT BOOKS BY ADVENTIST PUBLISHERS

Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association.  
Nashville, Tennessee: Southern Publishing Association.  
Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association.  
East Berlin (Stollberg), East Germany: Gemeinschaft der  
Siebenten-Tags-Adventisten.  
Hamburg, Germany: Saatkorn-Verlag.

*The Chronology of Ezra 7.* By Siegfried H. Horn and Lynn H. Wood. Second edition, revised. Review 1970. pp. 192. \$5.95.

*The God-Man: His Nature and Work.* By Roy Allan Anderson. Review 1970. pp. 160. \$2.95 (paper).

*John Harvey Kellogg, M.D.* By Richard W. Schwarz. Southern 1970. pp. 256. \$5.95. The author is chairman of the department of history and political science at Andrews University.

*The Lord's Day on a Round World.* By Robert Leo Odom. Revised edition. Southern 1970. pp. 254. \$5.95.

*A Search for Meaning in Nature: A New Look at Creation and Evolution.* By Richard M. Ritland. Pacific 1970. pp. 320. \$4.50, \$2.95 (paper).

The author is director of the Geoscience Research Institute at Andrews University.

*Unsere Welt — Zufall oder Schöpfung?* By Martin Glöckner. Saatkorn 1969. pp. 272. DM7.80 (paper).

*Wege und Irrwege der Christenheit von der Urgemeinde bis zur Vorreformation.* By Walter Eberhardt. Gemeinschaft der STA 1968. pp. 438.

This book discusses the history of the Christian church from the Apostolic period to the pre-Reformation. The emphasis is on the effect the church had on the world in which it found itself, and also on how the church was affected by cultural, religious, and philosophical environments during this period. There are 120 pages of references, notes, and quotations.

## REVIEWS

# Assurance of Salvation?

JAMES E. HOOPER

LET ME ASSURE YOU

By Edward W. H. Vick

Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1968

176 pp paperback (Dimension) \$1.95

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The question "Will I be saved?" perplexes too many Adventists. This conviction grew on me as I led discussions, counseled old and young people, and compared notes with pastors and teachers. It was confirmed by a survey of urban Adventist academy students who had experienced a revival. The twenty questions asked included such questions as "How can I get along better with my parents?" "What occupation should I choose?" "What is the meaning of life?" The student was asked to indicate whether he thought about each question often or seldom. The only questions nearly everyone answered "often" were the six variants of the question "Will I be saved?"

To accept assurance of salvation often comes hard for Adventists because of the emphasis on keeping the law. By cautioning against falling off the narrow path on the side of antinomianism, occasionally the church backs off the other side into legalism in the process. Avoiding both at the same time is difficult.

The difficulty is not peculiar to Adventism, of course. The perplexity in Christian life is that one's assurance of salvation is contradicted by his experience. Guilt feelings confirm his fears that he must be lost, not saved. Although legalism, the belief that one has to earn his salvation by something that he does, makes the sense of the assurance of salvation impossible, it is much more acceptable to human nature than acceptance of righteousness by faith, which does give one assurance.

If Vick's title, *Let Me Assure You*, leads one to think that his book is a study on the doctrine of assurance, the table of contents may be puzzling. The topics there appear to be those suitable for a systematic theology, without doctrines of God, Christ, or revelation. The choice of chapters — Grace, the Atonement, the Experience of Salvation, Law and Covenants, the Church, and Eschatology — can be explained by the purpose of the book indicated in its title. Chapter three is the core of the book: the Christian would not write theology unless he had experienced salvation. The chapters on grace and the atonement describe God's initiative, which the man of faith knows to have been prior to his faith. The last three chapters describe the way of life that results from the adoption of the stance of faith. The topics are selected and arranged in a way to help the reader accept the assurance of salvation, with all that that makes possible and all that it implies.

This is a book of pastoral theology, written to nourish Christian life in the church. An academic theologian who looks to the book for discussions of contemporary theological options will be disappointed. The book is full of biblical references, expositions of passages, and studies of biblical words and concepts. A reader who dips into

it anywhere will get some new insight into a biblical idea. See, for example, the explanation of Matthew 16:18-19 on Peter as the rock (p. 126), or the resolution of the apparent contradictions between Paul and James (pp. 65-69).

The author is especially adept at word studies. His discussion of "law" is a good example. It is often hard to tell what the word means in New Testament passages, but Vick lays out the range of meanings clearly. Careful attention to this section of the book (pp. 113-124) would help to clear up confusion about how the law is related to salvation. Here and there in the text aphorisms express insights beautifully; for example, "prayer is a way of getting what God wants us to have" (p. 96), or "righteousness is not something you can work up — it is something that God must send down" (p. 51).

There are almost no technical theological terms, and the author's philosophical competence does not show through. The sentences are short; difficult ideas are expressed in more than one way. This book in pastoral style is one to read and study and ponder. The occasional footnotes and additional notes are highly valuable. Most of them are references to the history of an idea in Christian theology, and all are concise and lucid. The exposition would have gone further toward filling the need for an Adventist doctrine of assurance had the author referred to the teachings of Ellen White. Nevertheless, this is a book rich with insight for the Christian life, and as such, deserves a wide and careful readership.

## Contraband

STANTON B. MAY

### GOD'S SMUGGLER

By Brother Andres (with John and Elizabeth Sherrill)

London: Hodder and Stoughton 1968

New York: New American Library 1970 224 pp \$ .75

"Lord, in my luggage I have Scriptures that I want to take to your children across this border. When you were on earth, you made blind eyes see. Now I pray, make seeing eyes blind. Do not let the guards see these things you do not want them to see."

Brother Andres (a pseudonym) prayed, and the guards allowed his car bulging with Bibles to cross the Yugoslav border in 1957. He began his mission to bring the Word to worshippers cut off from their religion. It was a mission fraught with peril and pathos, financed by faith, supported by miracles.

This paperback tells the thrilling story of a young Dutchman, his World War II life in occupied Holland, his tough army service in Indonesia, and his most unlikely conversion. His life is one of complete dedication, complete dependence on God for even the minutiae of daily living — most refreshing in this age of skepticism.

He starts smuggling Bibles after attending Communist youth congresses behind the Iron Curtain, where he sought out Christians and saw that they needed Bibles

and encouragement. He takes Bibles, packed into every possible space in his trusty Volkswagen, into such Communist countries as the USSR, Cuba, and China. He sees the joy this brings to deprived Christian church members and clergy. He is able to preach and to bring his own radiant, ringing testimony to churches east of the Iron Curtain.

This book provides an excellent three hours of pleasurable, suspenseful, inspirational, and unforgettable reading, ideal for a Sabbath evening.

## LETTERS

The review of Coffin's *Creation — Accident or Design?* by Ian M. Fraser [autumn 1969] is of interest for what it portrays of Adventist attitudes toward the study of geology and related sciences — the wide range of opinions about creation, chronology, and earth sciences. The church has perhaps not been truly polarized into conservative and liberal camps on this subject, but it does seem that there is a danger of developing a hagiology composed of the writings of Price, Marsh, Coffin, Clark, Booth, and others, with partisans for a variety of factions and subfactions adhering dogmatically to the views of their particular patron saint.

Fraser has made a good suggestion in the last paragraph of the review — that a symposium be held to consider significant new findings and to discuss problems faced by students and others attempting to reconcile the Scriptures and [writings of Ellen White] with seemingly contrary evidence and assertions from extra-denominational and even denominational spokesmen. The outlook for such a program is good, in view of what seems to be a weakening of evolutionary foundations in some areas. Furthermore, what biblical or [White] statement has ever been disproved when taken simply, as it stands, without reading human interpretation into the revealed record? Any retreat or recantation by a creationist or diluvialist has always resulted from dogmatic and opinionated amplification and extrapolation beyond the tantalizingly meager details of the biblical record. If Christians understood that Holy Writ was not intended by God as a scientific textbook (even though many of its statements have been upheld by science) how many Canossas might its well-meaning advocates have avoided?

Some Christians have felt that the creationist faces a dilemma in trying to defend his faith and be objective at the same time. While it is perhaps impossible for anyone to be completely objective and forgo all personal opinion and background influences, need this deter the Christian from study of earth science in an attempt to corroborate biblical accounts? What is wrong with having a conviction that the Bible is true, and then approaching the study of nature in the spirit of Job 12:7, 8? Is not this passage in full accord with the highest principles of objective research and scholarship? I

feel that humility would be a more rewarding approach here than a so-called "open mind" — and a more exact term for a true scholarly attitude.

There are those in our ranks who are willing to jettison faith in Ellen White's statements in order to admit an age for the earth in excess of 6,000 years. Are not these young turks (and some not so young) perilously close to a priori reasoning when they try to establish this greater age in an attempt to fit certain events into the 6,000-year period? Here is another area where thorough scholarship is needed — to enlighten both the avant-garde and the reactionary.

Fraser makes a significant comment in regard to Coffin's attribution of most of the Tertiary and subsequent strata to postdiluvial action. This point disturbed me somewhat when I read Coffin's book, but Coffin does appear to have a case here, and of course he is entitled to an opinion. Fraser suggests that limitation of Flood activity to the later Cambrian strata up to and including early Tertiary beds represents the "major contribution of the Geoscience Institute to date." Is Fraser serious here, or is he making a wry comment on what some see as reticence of the Geoscience Institute staff to break into print prematurely?

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At any rate, part of the work of the symposium suggested by Fraser should be to inform Adventists and others that developments in this field come slowly, and that caution ought to be one of a scientist's instruments. It has been suggested that Gentry's work has been ignored by some because of his willingness to express opinions and report research promptly. Both haste and caution have their proper place in science, to be sure, but whatever else may be said concerning Gentry, it is certain that his work *has* attracted much interest both in and out of Adventist ranks, and anyone of his attainments who champions the cause of creationism deserves serious consideration in any works intended for Adventist use in this field.

After surveying the publications and influence of Adventist writers in the field of geological apologetics during the past decades, I cannot escape the conclusion that the church ought to be cautious about rejecting the commonsense approach of Price in an effort to repudiate what appear now to be obvious errors in his writings. It seems to be proper today to express scorn for Price but reprehensible for Price to have scorned the teachings of men who were attacking the faith *he* had espoused. Perhaps Price should have been more temperate, but we should view him in the light of an earlier era, when a growing church welcomed aggressive champions. This is not to say that Price never made mistakes. We should be careful, however, that we do not become so sophisticated and genteel that our efforts lose their thrust in an attempt to be cool and detached when discussing points of our faith.

There are two accounts in the biblical record that are especially controverted by scientists today: the Creation story and the record of the Flood. A Christian who accepts these two events as fact and who searches for direct evidence for them is unable to find any for Creation. This is one area in which he must rely on faith and indirect evidence. The matter of the Flood is somewhat different: here we may handle and study materials which all scientists agree were laid down as aqueous deposits. Should not Adventists study the strata as thoroughly in an attempt to learn what happened at the time of the Flood as we have studied biology in an effort to establish the truth of the account of Creation?

After all the geologists' efforts, there is much yet to explore in the earth's crust. With increasing interest in deep wells for waste disposal and oil exploration, much more data on sedimentary strata — down to the basement complex in many locations — are being made available daily. If it is true that "there are any number of scientific tests for determining the mode of formation of [a] rock and evaluating the plausibility of its having been formed by a flood" [Edward N. Lugenbeal, "Might" Never Makes Right, spring 1969, p. 71], should not Adventists direct much more attention to geology in order to establish probabilities for diluvial origins of the strata? This would call for a positive approach to the study of diluvial phenomena, not a simple attack on others' positions. How are we ever going to influence geologists favorably if we do not attempt to find common areas of understanding?

After cursory examination of Mars and the moon has been made, a number of scientists have inferred that the presence of Earth's vast water covering and sedimentation are unique in the solar system. That this water played an essential part in deposition of the strata is undisputed. May we not emphasize this uniqueness and the biblical statement that an entire world was flooded and perished [2 Peter 3:6]? If dead men do tell tales, then buried continents may yet have many tales to tell as they "teach" us. The future may well hold many surprises for the creationist-diluvialist, and Lugenbeal's appeal for probabilities rather than simple possibilities in Flood geology [spring 1969, p. 70] is particularly pertinent in view of Fraser's call for extended research and analysis directed toward satisfying Adventist interest in this fascinating field.

RICHARD RIMMER  
Madison College

*How Is Earth History Revealed?* by Stidd [summer 1970] continues the analysis of inadequacies in Coffin's book, *Creation — Accident or Design?*, initiated by Fraser [Problems of Creation and Science, autumn 1969].

Coffin's initial attempt is commendable, despite shortcomings, because he was undoubtedly influenced by many pressures to conform to the traditional doctrine of the church. He has succeeded, among other things, in consolidating and documenting more sensitive areas and problems than have been heretofore seen in one volume. In so doing, he has provided the springboard for Fraser and Stidd to pursue controversial issues in open discussion.

Stidd states, "It is commonly assumed that Coffin's positions are required if one is to defend the integrity of the Sabbath and preserve respect for the Bible and the value of the writings of Ellen White. But this is not necessarily so." I concur with Stidd. Although my theology is centered within the basic doctrines of the church, I have had to suspend some of its detail dogma pending further clarification in these controversial areas in order to be intellectually honest with revealed fact.

It is believed the position "this is not necessarily so" is held by many others who for sound reasons dare not express or hint it openly. If this is a fact, the situation is deplorable, because it makes hypocrites of those who may be in the teaching, publishing, or preaching professions and must strictly follow the doctrinal line. It must have shocked many of the hyperfundamentalists when the *Review and Herald* [Sep-



tember 3, 1970] pointed out in one of its editorials, as I understand it, that the conventional Daniel 12:4 "many shall run to and fro" should possibly have been translated "many will be at their wits' end."

It seems to me that the foregoing indicates, among other things, that our theology as well as our view of science should be reviewed for harmonizing. Furthermore, I simply cannot believe that a technology that can put a man on the moon can be so far wrong in the many areas that our apologists are trying to convince us to believe. It is very strange to me that only where religion encounters science do the apologists object. They seem to be perfectly satisfied with the scientific method elsewhere.

Please publish more on this subject.

ARTHUR J. PETERSON  
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## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

**JOHN D. GRIFFITH** (photograph), who holds the master's degree in physics from California State College at Los Angeles, teaches physics at Los Angeles City College. A portfolio of his photographs appeared in the summer 1970 issue of *SPECTRUM*.

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**MAX G. PHILLIPS** (The Orphanage) received the bachelor of arts degree from Loma Linda University in 1964 and the bachelor of divinity degree from Andrews University in 1966. He is assistant book editor at Pacific Press Publishing Association, Mountain View, California, and a consulting editor of *SPECTRUM*. His poetry appeared in the spring and summer 1970 issues.

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**ROY BRANSON** (Ellen White: A Subject for Adventist Scholarship) is a graduate of Atlantic Union College (bachelor of arts), Andrews University (master of arts), the University of Chicago (master of arts), and Harvard University (doctor of philosophy in ethics). He is assistant professor of Christian ethics at Andrews University. His particular interests are American religion and the problems of the contemporary city.

HEROLD D. WEISS (*Ellen White: A Subject for Adventist Scholarship*) was born in Montevideo, Uruguay, and completed his secondary education in the public schools of Argentina. He earned the master of arts (1957) and the bachelor of divinity (1960) degrees from Andrews University and the doctor of philosophy degree in religion and biblical studies from Duke University (1964). He is assistant professor of New Testament at Andrews University. An article by him appeared in the autumn 1969 issue of *SPECTRUM*.

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FREDERICK E. J. HARDER (*Divine Revelation*) is dean of the School of Graduate Studies, Andrews University. He holds the bachelor of arts and master of arts degrees from Andrews University (1940 and 1951) and the doctor of philosophy degree from New York University (1960). He has published books, booklets, and articles in periodicals.

WILLIAM S. PETERSON (*A Textual and Historical Study*) is associate professor of English at Andrews University. He earned the bachelor of arts degree cum laude from Walla Walla College (1961), the master of arts from the University of Wisconsin (1962), and the doctor of philosophy from Northwestern University (1968). He is particularly interested in the religious backgrounds of Victorian literature.

RICHARD B. LEWIS (*The "Spirit of Prophecy"*) holds the bachelor of arts (Pacific Union College 1927), the master of arts (University of Southern California 1937), and the doctor of philosophy (Stanford University 1949) degrees. He is professor of English at Loma Linda University and is the author of two books and articles in periodicals, including the summer 1970 issue of *SPECTRUM*.

JAMES E. HOOPER (*Assurance of Salvation?*) is studying for the doctor of philosophy degree in the philosophy of religion at Claremont Graduate School. He holds the bachelor of arts (Loma Linda University 1964) and the master of arts and bachelor of divinity (Andrews University 1966) degrees.

STANTON B. MAY (*Contraband*) maintains a dermatology practice in Glendale, California, and teaches on a voluntary basis at Loma Linda University (associate clinical professor of dermatology). He earned the bachelor of science degree from Pacific Union College and was graduated from Loma Linda University School of Medicine in 1937.

Four references were omitted from the end notes of the article by Martin D. Turner, *Project Whitecoat* (summer 1970), pp. 55-70. EDITOR.

33 Quoted in *Seventh-day Adventists and Civil Government* (National Service Organization 1940), pp. 11-12.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 18.

35 See reference 30.

36 Seymour M. Hersh, *Germ Warfare: For Alma Mater, God and Country, Ram-parts* 24 (December 1969).



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