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THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH

Change is an ever-present part of secular history, and it is equally a part of the history of God's church. As in the biological world, growth is essential to the experience of each Christian — and to the life of the corporate church as well. The alternative is stagnation, rigidity, and, finally, meaninglessness. With its world mission, our church has been a growing church, and it must continue to be so if it is to carry its message of the Good News effectually. As times and needs change, so must the church's ability to meet these needs, both in its preaching and in its administration.

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The discussion of church structure in this issue is important because it indicates that both church administrators and responsible lay members are involved and concerned with this process of growth and change. The possibilities and needs for structural and administrative change suggested in this symposium apply not only to North America but to Africa, Europe, and the Near East — where change has already begun. There are active discussions taking place in Europe for further consolidations on both the division and conference levels. It is to be hoped that adequate representation and voting privileges by the various national church groups will result in the kind of change that is likely to be synonymous with growth.

Another important feature of this symposium on church structure is the emphasis on progressive involvement of lay members in all church activities, including administrative and decision-making responsibilities. To go one large step further, participation of lay members in the election of all church officials — to and including the president of the General Conference — must be part of the structure of the church in which all its members have the privilege and responsibility to influence the growth and effectiveness of their church in its total witness about God. There is urgent need that a workable plan to realize this objective be formulated as soon as possible. A practically untapped reservoir of dedicated lay church members — with a wide variety of education, training, and experience — is available to provide immeasurably greater service to their church.

Herold Weiss has contributed an article with the provocative title "Are Adventists Protestants?" Here he touches a sensitive spot in Adventist theology — or, rather, in theological discussions, since formally

published statements on Adventist doctrines usually make no claim for the basis of our beliefs other than the Scriptures. Oral statements and written statements, however, are sometimes at variance in their relation to this Protestant principle of *Scripture only*. "The Source of Final Appeal," an article by Roderick S. Owen (an Adventist educator from 1883 to 1927), reprinted in the *Review and Herald* of June 3, 1971, makes this point:

5 "This illustrates the fact that most denominations, at least, have no satisfactory court of final appeal, that *while the Bible is infallible and is the basis of all Christian faith, it needs to be infallibly interpreted to avoid confusion and division*. . . . When we come to the place where we place no trust in man nor in the wisdom of men, but unquestionably accept of and act upon what God says through this gift, then will the spirit of prophecy, as set before us in the Bible and as witnessed in the present manifestations of this gift, be confirmed among us and become, in fact, the counselor, guide, and final court of appeal among God's people."

The gist of the article by Owen is that because Scripture can be so easily misinterpreted its inspired messages become essentially unavailable to the Bible student; therefore we need an infallible interpreter, and then we are safe from error. Other churches in the past have looked for such an infallible authority to supersede that of Scripture, for there is comfort and safety in such a position, since we are no longer required to search, pray, and agonize in the quest for greater truth. Real pleading with the Holy Spirit for an understanding of the biblical message is no longer needed, since we have already an infallible interpretation.

An uncomfortable thought comes up, however: In case I do not quite understand the infallible interpretation, do I now expect a second infallible interpretation to save me from further searching? Is it not the divine purpose that we search diligently, with the promise that we shall indeed find (Matthew 7:7)? This was the continual emphasis of Ellen White, as illustrated by the following: "When no new questions are started by investigation of the Scriptures, when no difference of opinion arises which will set men to searching the Bible for themselves, to make sure that they have the truth, there will be many now, as in ancient times, who will hold to tradition, and worship they know not what" (*Gospel Workers*, p. 298).

MOLLEURUS COUPERUS

The Gardener

BEN JACQUES

The gardener comes
with a new red hose.
He sets up the sprinklers
under the magnolia tree,
waters the zinnias, the roses, the iris ;
smooths the gravel in the path.

Perhaps he didn't actually see it happen,
I mean the opening of the stone.
But then few have actually seen a seed open.
Perhaps, at the time, he was touching the broken
stem of a rose.

Ellen G. White the Person

ARTHUR L. WHITE

7

EDITOR'S NOTE: Ellen G. White emerges as a person in this article partially from the memory of acquaintances, but primarily from documentary sources, those of her own composing and those of her contemporaries. The memory of the author, a grandson, figures lightly, for he was but a child at her death in 1915. Arthur L. White, however, was closely associated with his father, William C. White, who, after the death of James S. White in 1881, traveled with his mother and assisted her in the publication of her writings.

Ellen G. White the person steps right out of a "Biographical Information Blank" furnished to the General Conference in 1909. We see her — five feet two inches tall, weighing 140 pounds, with complexion rather dark, and with eyes gray and hair gray. Those who knew her earlier would tell us that her hair then was brown and her weight somewhat less than in 1909.

She was married to James S. White on August 30, 1846. He died thirty-five years later. Under children, four, all boys, were listed: Henry Nichols White, "deceased" (he died of pneumonia at the age of sixteen); James Edson White, William Clarence White, and John Herbert White (he lived only three months), also "deceased."

The entry under the item "summary of labor" reads: "From 1845-1852, New England and New York; 1853-1872, east of Mississippi; 1873-1885, California and Northern and Eastern States; 1885-1887, Europe; 1888-1891, California, Michigan, and elsewhere; 1892-1900, Australia and New Zealand; 1901-1909, California, and Southern, Middle, and Eastern States."

She was a Methodist "before accepting present truth." The answer to the question "By what means particularly were you brought into the truth?" is: "Study of the Bible, listening to gospel preachers, and by revelation."

She was born November 26, 1827, in Gorham, Maine, and "attended

public school in Portland, Maine, until nine years old; spent short times in private school when twelve years old.”

The question, “When, where, and in what capacity did you begin laboring in the cause?” is answered, “In Maine, 1842, laboring for young friends; 1844-1845 began public labors, relating visions, etc.”

A simple “X” is the only mark in the two lines allotted for information “If ordained, state when, where, and by whom.” Down through the years, in yearbooks and General Conference bulletins, her name appears with the “Ordained Ministers.” On her periodically issued ministerial credentials the word *ordained* was at times neatly crossed out, at other times standing. Her brethren were faced with a dilemma. Since she was uniquely and unquestionably ordained by God as he had laid his hand upon her, it would be anticlimactic were men to set her apart to the ministry by “the laying on of hands.” At no time did she perform those functions reserved to the ordained minister.

But the two-page biographical blank could hardly reveal the whole story.

I

What kind of person was this little woman who had three years in school, at the age of seventeen was called to the prophetic office, married, reared a family, wrote and published books, traveled as a speaker and church leader the world over, and died at the age of eighty-seven?

In partial answer we could employ a number of adjectives: cordial, outgoing, resourceful, persevering, sympathetic, economical, discerning, open, trustful, dedicated. We would expect to see reflected in the life of a prophet those qualities, virtues, and characteristics which she extolled and urged the dedicated, joyous Christian to emulate.

In 1909 she was eighty-one years of age and had lived at Elmshaven in northern California for nine years. It was her own house, and she loved it. She believed in home ownership. She and her husband had owned first a little cottage in Battle Creek in which they initially invested \$500; but with additions and accrual in value in early Civil War days, they had seen its market value rise until they could sell it and acquire something a little better and a little more convenient to the publishing house. While never speculating in real estate, yet alert to opportunities as they came, the Whites had owned several properties through the years. Financial gains they had enjoyed had placed in their hands means that could be used in building up the cause of God.

The Elmshaven home in 1909 was surrounded by a vineyard, a garden,

and two orchards — one a family orchard and the other a 2,000-tree commercial prune orchard. Nearby there was a stable and barn for the horses and cows. Ellen White took an active interest in all of the features of the farm and garden. The flower beds close to the house she especially delighted in. And so it had been at her Sunnyside home in Australia, and before that her Healdsburg home in California (near the college), and the Battle Creek homes. Well into her sixties, she was often an active participant in the agricultural activities — planting, nurturing, and harvesting the crops that supplemented the food supplies for an ever-large family that included some of her helpers.

9

Ellen White had a good working knowledge of soils and gardening. As she looked over a piece of land, in her mind she would assign appropriate crops to the different areas. She was conscious of the proper timing of agricultural procedures. She had a good working knowledge of animal husbandry. She could select a good cow or horse. She knew how to feed and treat such animals with affection to gain their fullest cooperation, whether she was milking the cow or driving the team. She abhorred any practice that brought pain or discomfort to animals, and she had firm words of disapproval for anyone who misused a horse or abused a cow.

The home was ever open to visitors, and it was seldom that the Whites did not have guests. As they traveled, they stayed in the homes of the believers; and when these believers came to the centers where the Whites were located, it was but natural that they should stay with them. To run a "free hotel" was a strain on the family, from the standpoint of finances and from that of surrendering the privacy and relaxation a home usually provides, but guests were always welcome, and as a hostess Ellen White was alert to their needs and comforts. James and Ellen were careful, however, to reserve a little wooded place of seclusion to which they could escape for prayer.

Of course under these circumstances, and with her traveling and writing, Ellen White had to have some domestic help. They had no daughters on whom to rely, and so this help usually came from young women who were drawn in as part of the family. But not until her family members were grown and gone did she surrender the close supervision of the day-to-day activities of the home.

II

Making believe that we are guests of the Whites in Battle Creek, let us observe closely what is going on. Joining the family at the noon meal, we

find the food simple and appetizing, but carrying out well the principles set before Ellen White in the visions. Here is a statement in which she describes the circumstances:

I have a well-set table on all occasions. I make no change for visitors, whether believers or unbelievers. I intend never to be surprised by an unreadiness to entertain at my table from one to half a dozen extra who may chance to come in. I have enough simple, healthful food ready to satisfy hunger and nourish the system. . . . No butter or flesh meats of any kind come on my table. Cake is seldom found there. I generally have an ample supply of fruits, good bread, and vegetables. Our table is always well patronized, and all who partake of the food do well, and improve upon it. All sit down with no epicurean appetite, and eat with a relish the bounties supplied by our Creator.¹

10

It had not been easy for her to change her own dietetic habits to this simpler way of living, as she had determined to do a few years earlier when the health reform vision was given to her in 1863. She had enjoyed meat, and she badly missed it; but she had been shown the disadvantage of its use, and she would put into practice in her own life the light God had given to her. When she came to the table, she was unable to relish the simple, meatless meal and excused herself without eating. After the second or third such attempt, she put her hands on her stomach and, addressing it, declared, "You may wait until you can eat bread!"²

While there were times in travel that this program could not be wholly adhered to, Ellen White found that through the last two decades of her life there was no need to compromise, and in 1909 she wrote: "It is reported by some that I have not followed the principles of health reform as I have advocated them with my pen; but I can say that I have been a faithful health reformer. Those who have been members of my family know that this is true."³

So different from many who are inclined to be fanatical on the subject of food, she was careful to recognize that not all would enjoy and thrive on the same articles of diet. Within the broad outline of healthful nutrition, she found her way and she granted others the same privilege. She explained this in 1904: "Other members of my family do not eat the same things that I do. I do not hold myself up as a criterion for them. I leave each one to follow his own ideas as to what is best for him. I bind no one else's conscience by my own. One person cannot be a criterion for another in the matter of eating. It is impossible to make one rule for all to follow." Expanding the matter a little more, she added two specific examples: "Butter is never placed on my table, but if the members of my family choose to use a little butter away from the table, they are at liberty to do so. Our table is

set twice a day, but if there are those who desire something to eat in the evening, there is no rule that forbids them from getting it."⁴

She might have eaten some butter when traveling, but refrained, saying, as reported by a neighbor and close acquaintance, "If I eat a little butter, some people will take it as an excuse to eat a lot of butter." The absence of butter from her table did not mean that she either called for or followed a fat free diet. She explained: "As for myself, I have settled the butter question. I do not use it. This question should easily be settled in every place where the purest article cannot be obtained. We have good milch cows, a Jersey and a Holstein. We use cream, and all are satisfied with this."⁵

11

In the course of a visit, Ellen White might pick up some knitting or sewing. She grew up in the setting of the textile industry, her father being a hatmaker. On close observation one would see that the materials with which she worked and from which her garments were made were of good quality. She knew how to select good fabrics, and there was no place in her experience for anything shoddy, whether dress goods, suit materials, building materials, or character.

Life was not strained in the White home. There was no place for a long-faced, smileless religion. Instead, religion was a very practical element that entered into every activity, and it was a joyous religion in a joyous home.

Ellen White would join in a hearty laugh at an amusing or awkward situation or a nice turn of words. She was anything but moody or morose. With her inspired insight, and in her own personal struggles, there was sufficient to sadden her heart, but she determined to be cheerful, and this was observed in her smiles. Once she wrote: "Do you ever see me gloomy, desponding, complaining? I have a faith which forbids this. . . . It is the want of genuine religion that produces gloom, despondency, and sadness. . . . A hearty, willing service to Jesus produces a sunny religion. Those who follow Christ most closely have not been gloomy."⁶

In Sweden in the mid-1880s a friend translated for her an amusing little jingle printed on the back of the boxes of a popular brand of matches. Hearing it, she burst into a hearty laugh, and on several occasions she called for a repeated translation, each time by her laugh showing her reaction. Youthful Dores Robinson, who had been employed as one of her copyists, was shocked at his first meal at the White table at her Cooranbong home. Sara McEnterfer, Ellen White's traveling companion and nurse, offered her the greens, saying, "Mother, here is your horse feed." Glancing over the food on the table, she quickly retorted, "I don't know that my horse feed is any worse than your cowpeas!"

Although inclined to feelings of depression, she steadfastly resisted. "I can sympathize with you in your feelings of doubt and perplexity," she wrote to an acquaintance in 1912, "for there are times when Satan seeks to bring to me the same trouble of mind, and I have to guard myself, that the tempter may not gain the advantage."⁷ Earlier she declared, "I am determined to bring all the sunshine into my life that I possibly can."⁸

If our visit to the home were in the early Battle Creek days, we would find quite well-disciplined boys. As a mother, Ellen White endeavored to avoid crises and sought constantly to lead the minds of her children in such a way as to strengthen character and develop willpower. Suitable, simple rewards encouraged obedience and good behavior. The inducements outside the home were often offset by innocent pleasures in the home. Seldom was corporal punishment administered, and then only after a quiet talk and earnest prayer.

Of course problems arose. The boys were not model children. But issues were dealt with promptly and decisively, yet also with restraint: "I never allowed my children to think that they could plague me in their childhood. Never did I allow myself to say a harsh word. . . . When my spirit was stirred, or when I felt anything like being provoked, I would say, 'Children, we shall let this rest now; we shall not say anything more about it now. Before you retire, we shall talk it over.' Having all this time to reflect, by evening they had cooled off, and I could handle them very nicely."⁹

Having to be away from home much of the time, she kept in close touch with her children by frequent letters; but at best the situation was a difficult one. Not many mothers are called to make such special sacrifices. Some have conjectured that it would have been better had she not married or had she remained childless. But if this were the case, how effective would her counsel to parents have been? She knew a mother's problems, joys, and sorrows — she knew them well.

III

The Whites knew what affliction and bereavement meant. Two children were buried in the family plot in the Oak Hill cemetery at Battle Creek. But the great loss came when James White died in 1881 at the age of sixty. Were we to crowd into the Battle Creek Tabernacle on the early August afternoon for the funeral — and 2,500 people did — we probably would be a bit surprised during the closing moments of the service to see Ellen White arise from her cot (for she was ill and had been carried to the Tabernacle), walk over to the casket, and then address the audience for ten

minutes in a clear, strong voice. She expressed her bereavement, reaffirmed her confidence in her Saviour, and declared that with his help she would pick up her burden alone. "My husband has found rest," she said, turning toward the coffin; "but I have yet to battle. I cannot yet lay off the armor of the Lord. When I fall, let me fall at my post of duty; let me be ready; let me be where I can say as he said, 'All is well. Jesus is precious.'"¹⁰

Her fortitude was shown in a conversation with her husband's older brother, John, a Baptist minister, just before the funeral service.

"God help you, my dear sister, God help you on this occasion," he said.

She replied, "Brother John, you do not know me. The more trying the situation, the more fortitude I possess."

And she continued:

13

I shall give way to no outbursts of grief if my heart break. I serve God not impulsively but intelligently. I have a Saviour who will be to me a very present help in time of trouble. I am a Christian. I know in whom I have believed. He expects from me implicit unwavering submission. Undue grief is displeasing to God.

I take up my appointed cross and will follow the Lord fully. I will not give myself to abandonment or grief. I will not yield to a morbid and melancholy state of feeling. I will not complain or murmur at the providence of God. Jesus is my Saviour. He lives. He will never leave me nor forsake me.¹¹

Her fortitude came especially into play twelve years later. Having just nicely started her work in Australia, she was stricken with a long-drawn-out, painful ailment, sometimes referred to as neuritis and sometimes as inflammatory rheumatism. Having done all she could do to bring relief, she called in the leading ministers to anoint her and pray for her healing. She fully expected that God's blessing would free her for the work she had traveled 8,000 miles to accomplish. She was greatly helped by the prayer season, but she was not healed. She traced her thoughts in her diary: "I have done all that I can to follow the Bible directions, and I shall wait for the Lord to work. . . . I shall hold fast to the assurance then given me: 'I am your Redeemer; I will heal you.'"¹²

The healing process was slow and gradual. At the end of eight months of suffering she wrote Ole A. Olsen, president of the General Conference:

When I first found myself in a state of helplessness I deeply regretted having crossed the broad waters. Why was I not in America? Why at such expense was I in this country? Time and again I could have buried my face in the bed quilts and had a good cry. But I did not long indulge in the luxury of tears.

I said to myself, "Ellen G. White, what do you mean? Have you not come to Australia because you felt that it was your duty to go where the conference judged it best for you to go? Has this not been your practice?"

I said, "Yes."

"Then why do you feel almost forsaken and discouraged? Is not this the enemy's work?"

I said, "I believe it is."

I dried my tears as quickly as possible and said, "It is enough. I will not look on the dark side any more. Live or die, I commit the keeping of my soul to Him who died for me."

I then believed that the Lord would do all things well, and during this eight months of helplessness, I have not had any despondency or doubt. I now look at this matter as a part of the Lord's great plan, for the good of His people here in this country, and for those in America, and for my good. I cannot explain why or how, but I believe it. And I am happy in my affliction. I can trust my heavenly Father. I will not doubt His love. I have an ever watchful guardian day and night, and I will praise the Lord; for His praise is upon my lips because it comes from a heart full of gratitude.¹³

14

Thus she lifted herself above suffering with a determination to trust firmly in God and press on in her work.

IV

If we were visiting at the White home in Battle Creek before she went to Australia in 1891, she might invite us to accompany her to an auction sale. She had to have some breaks in her pressing work, and she enjoyed attending auctions. She would look over the items to be sold, pick out a good bedstead or table or chair, and make up her mind what she would be willing to pay for each item. When the sale got under way she might be a successful bidder. She did not personally need what she bought, but she would have it sent home to the shed; and when she found a family in need, she could help in a substantial way.

She was sensitive to the needs and suffering of those about her, and from early years the family shared food, clothing, bedding, and money with the destitute. She studied how to help people in a way that would not embarrass or demean them. She would often employ an out-of-work head of the family, or a widow, pointing out how much she needed their help. She had a way of making people feel that they would be doing her a favor by accepting what she had to offer in helping them.

While she was in Australia (in depression years when to accept the Sabbath often meant the loss of employment), her help reached out in many ways. She would buy bolts of dress materials in several textures and colors, and when she found a family in need she would send an attractive dress piece as a serviceable gift. If the woman of the house could not sew, Ellen White might dispatch a secretary and a sewing machine for a day or two, to see that proper garments were made. She gave a number of such dress

pieces to several young women in school, helping to fill out their scanty wardrobes. To one she gave a piece of red material, telling the girl that, with her complexion, she should always have a red dress in her wardrobe. "I can't wear red," she said, "but you can, and it will look well on you."

To be able to meet the needs of her own family, to entertain as she was called on to do, and still have something to give to those in need, called for strict economy and a careful study of what would be bought and what would not be bought. During the stringent days in Rochester, New York, James White and his associates were getting under way with the publication of Adventist literature on their own new printing press. The *Review and Herald* was sent out gratis and supported by donations that were sometimes slow to come in. Unknown to her husband, Ellen White had hung, behind a cupboard door in the kitchen of their rented house, a stocking into which she periodically slipped a few coins carefully saved from the weekly household allowance. She had determined to put away something each week, for she knew that one day there would come an emergency.

And it did. James White came home from the office saying that the shipment of paper needed for the next issue of the *Review* was at the express office, but he did not have the money to pay for the COD charges. Without comment, the eyes of her husband following her, Ellen went to the cupboard, opened the door, and took down the hidden stocking. The eyes of James grew big as she emptied it and counted out money sufficient to meet the emergency expense. The next issue of the *Review* came out on time.

She counseled young housewives, as she did my mother, to save a little something every week, no matter how little. By diligent care they could save something for a financial emergency that was bound to come. All down through the years Ellen White kept an eye on family purchases, saving all she could. "I do not profess to be the owner of any money that comes into my hands," she wrote in 1895. "I regard it as the Lord's money for which I must render an account."¹⁴ This is illustrated by an order to the Pacific Press: "Please pay to the order of _____ \$100.00 (One Hundred Dollars) as a gift from the Lord who has made me His steward of means. [Signed] Ellen G. White."¹⁵ While building her Sunnyside home in Coorabong, she explained: "I study every pound which I invest in buildings for myself, lest I shall in any way limit the resources which I can invest in the upbuilding of the cause of God. I do not regret that I have done this. We have seen some trying times, but amid all we say, 'It pays.'"¹⁶

To an old friend, Uriah Smith, she once confided: "If I should relate to you the experiences I have had in regard to money matters since I returned

home, you would laugh, I know. I can laugh now, but I assure you in the pinch it was no laughing matter.”¹⁷ On another occasion when money was in short supply she philosophized: “To be restricted for want of means is, as I can testify, a great inconvenience, but prosperity too often leads to self-exaltation.”¹⁸

Many an Adventist youth was helped through school by Ellen White; and before the days of sustentation, there were aged or infirm workers whom she helped in a time of special need.

V

Ellen White received a salary from the General Conference commensurate with that paid an ordained minister, and in her later years it equaled that paid an officer of the General Conference. At the time of her death this was \$22 per week.

As an author she received a royalty on her books. This fluctuated. Had it been income without expense, she could have become quite well off. But she personally met most of the expense of the operation of her office and the preparation of her books. This called for the employment of several secretaries, and the outgo eventually came to exceed the income. At one time this led her to contemplate dismissing her helpers and ceasing book preparation; but she could not lay aside the responsibility of getting her message before the church and the world. Her alternative was to accept loans from Seventh-day Adventists who were willing to invest in her books.

At the time of her death she was quite heavily in debt. This has been the cause for some criticism, but perhaps no more than if she had died in possession of a great estate. In 1904 she wrote:

Sometimes it has been reported that I am trying to get rich. Some have written to us, inquiring, “Is not Mrs. White worth millions of dollars?” I am glad that I can say, “No.” I do not own in this world any place that is free from debt. Why? — Because I see so much missionary work to be done. Under such circumstances, could I hoard money? — No, indeed. I receive royalties from the sale of my books; but nearly all is spent in missionary work.

The head of one of our publishing houses in a distant foreign land, upon hearing recently from others that I was in need of means, sent me a bill of exchange for five hundred dollars; and in the letter accompanying the money, he said that in return for the thousands upon thousands of dollars royalty that I turned over to their mission field for the translation and distribution of new books and for the support of new missionary enterprises, they regarded the enclosed five hundred dollars as a very small token of their appreciation. They sent this because of their desire to help me in time of special need; but heretofore I have given, for the support of the Lord’s cause in foreign lands, all the royalties that come from the sale of my foreign books in Europe; and I intend to return this five hundred dollars as soon as I can free myself from debt.¹⁹

After mentioning a gift for a thousand dollars to help young men train for the ministry she wrote, "This is how Sister White is becoming rich. I have been laying up my treasure in heaven."²⁰

The debt on her estate, as she anticipated, was cleared by the sale of assets she left and by royalty income. This amount was not incurred by reckless spending and accruing debts with no provision for their retirement. She was the proprietor of a going business enterprise — one for the Lord, it is true — which called for investment. According to her expectations, it paid itself out. Managing matters in this way left her free to press hard with her literary work while she could care for it.

17

Royalty income on the White books today goes entirely to the General Conference, which in turn provides an annual budget for support of the office of the Ellen G. White Estate. With all foreign language books excused from royalty obligations, such income meets about one-half the total White Estate budget.

There were times when Ellen White, in attempting to please her brethren or to accommodate their urging, was overpersuaded and yielded her best judgment. Such instances in no way involved the messages she bore; they merely revealed human traits. On one occasion she set out to secure a comfortable chair for her husband during his convalescence from severe stroke. Looking around, she found the chair which she felt exactly met the need, but the price of \$17 seemed a little too high to some of her brethren, and they persuaded her to shift her choice to one for \$14 which they assured her would be adequate. But it came woefully short of being the article of furniture that would fill the important place she saw for it in contributing to the recovery of her husband. "Had I the same to do over again," she wrote, "I would rely upon my own judgment, and purchase a chair costing a few dollars more, and worth double the one I got."²¹

Another instance of overpersuasion that she was to regret occurred when, under pressure from those who were leading in the newly established sanitarium in Battle Creek, she released only a portion of the instruction God had given to her as to that work. At the time she was unable to write out fully what God had revealed to her in vision, for the care of her partially paralyzed husband made very heavy demands on her time and strength. But the brethren insisted that her written message was needed to lead the church members to see the importance of giving financial support to the new enterprise, and she allowed an incomplete presentation to go into print. She explained this in the *Testimonies*: "Under these circumstances I yielded my judgment to that of others and wrote what appeared in No. 11 in regard to

the Health Institute, being unable then to give all I had seen. In this I did wrong. I must be allowed to know my own duty better than others can know it for me.”²²

VI

Both her writing and her speaking brought Ellen White before the public. There were large demands for the services of both James and Ellen White at the campmeetings held from year to year in the various states. She developed into an eloquent and much-sought-after public speaker, both inside and outside of Seventh-day Adventist circles.

Her usual schedule included eight, ten, or twelve campmeetings each summer. On invitation she occasionally spoke in other Protestant churches, as she did in the Methodist church in Portland, Oregon. We find her also in the state prison in Oregon addressing the convicts. She spoke at the Sunday afternoon evangelistic street meetings held in the resort town of Calistoga, nine miles from her Elmshaven home. In 1870 she spoke on a Mississippi riverboat on the subject “Heaven, the Reward of the Faithful.”

In Battle Creek in 1877 she was invited by a committee of prominent citizens to be the speaker at a mass temperance rally Sunday evening, July 1. The meeting was held in the Michigan Conference campmeeting tent borrowed for the occasion, and an audience of 5,000 gave almost breathless attention as she spoke for ninety minutes. This was her home town. This was where she reared her family and did her shopping.

In those days before the electronic amplifiers, she developed a firm, sustained speaking voice that carried out over the crowd. People who heard her speak thirty-two years later at the General Conference session in Takoma Park reported that those who sat in the front rows in the big tent heard her comfortably and easily. She was just as easily heard by those in the back rows and even beyond the bounds of the tent. Such a speaking voice was one which she developed as she complied with instruction God gave to her in vision.

She once recounted that in her younger days she used to talk too loud, but the Lord showed her that she could not make the proper impression on people by getting the voice to an unnatural pitch. Christ’s manner of speaking was presented to her: “There was a sweet melody in His voice.”²³ She learned to use her abdominal muscles in breathing to support her voice and to avoid straining her vocal chords. Thus she was able to speak for long periods to very large audiences without undue weariness. A report published in 1878 said:

As a speaker, Mrs. White is one of the most successful of the few ladies who have become noteworthy as lecturers, in this country, during the last 20 years. Constant use has so strengthened her vocal organs as to give her voice rare depth and power. Her clearness and strength of articulation are so great that, when speaking in the open air, she has frequently been distinctly heard at the distance of a mile. Her language, though simple, is always forcible and elegant. When inspired with her subject, she is often marvelously eloquent, holding the largest audiences spellbound for hours without a sign of impatience or weariness. . . . She has frequently spoken to immense audiences, in the large cities, on her favorite themes, and has always been received with great favor.²⁴

VII

19

James White was a publisher and administrator, a man of deep convictions, strong will, and forceful personality. There were characteristics and traits, together with the conviction of a strong call of each to his own work, that could have laid the foundation for friction and conflict between husband and wife. But both were determined that this should not be. For thirty-five years, they worked closely and harmoniously, and they shared a very tender relationship. Evidence of this crops out spontaneously in correspondence between them.

In early October 1860, just three weeks after the birth of their fourth child (a boy who remained unnamed for a month or two), and, in spite of the fact that his wife was suffering from malaria, James left to meet appointments at conferences to be held in the Midwest. Three days after his departure Ellen wrote: "You may be assured I miss your little visits in my room, but the thought you are doing the will of God, helps me to bear the loss of your company."²⁵ A few days later she reported her steps toward recovery, announced the weight of "nameless one," as eleven pounds and three-quarters, and then (after expressing gratitude that she could again take her place in the family), she wrote, "but your place at the dining room table is vacant."²⁶

On November 19 she wrote: "Dear Husband, the time of your absence is nearly ended. One week more brings you home. We shall all be rejoiced to see you home again." The letter reports that the "babe is fat and healthy, weighed last Thursday 15 pounds. He promises to be a very rugged boy." Then the nursing mother added, "I'll tell you one thing, he is so hearty it will cost you quite a bill to keep me and him. . . . My appetite is good. Food sets well."²⁷

Near the close of his life the husband could write, "Marriage marks an important era in the lives of men. 'Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord,' is the language of wisdom. Prov-

erbs 18:22. . . . We were married August 30, 1846, and from that hour unto the present she has been my crown of rejoicing."²⁸

A few weeks after his death, as Ellen White sought a little rest and retirement in a cabin they held as a retreat in the Rocky Mountains, she commented in a letter to her son William: "I miss father more and more. Especially do I feel his loss while here in the mountains. I find it a very different thing being in the mountains with my husband and in the mountains without him. I am fully of the opinion that my life was so entwined or interwoven with my husband's that it is about impossible for me to be of any great account without him."²⁹

Her understanding of the proper relationship between husband and wife stands out in a letter written to a friend in her early married life: "We women must remember that God has placed us subject to the husband. He is the head and our judgment and views and reasonings must agree with his if possible. If not, the preference in God's Word is given to the husband where it is not a matter of conscience. We must yield to the head."³⁰ She would not stand in the pulpit to speak at the Sabbath morning worship service if James White was present. He would take the Sabbath morning service, and she would speak in the afternoon. Only when he was stricken with paralysis in 1865 and for some time could not take his place in public work did she depart from this procedure.

It might be easily assumed that in this very tender and close relationship the strong will and firm opinions of James might have influenced Ellen in her writing. But this was not so. They both took great pains to see that her work was not influenced by him. For a short time in the late 1870s when she sensed a threat in this respect, she chose to work for a time in California while her husband carried responsibilities at Battle Creek. She wrote to him:

Although I miss you very, very much, and love you, yet I feel at present I belong to God to wait for and do His will. I tell you freely it is a great sacrifice to my feelings to have you separated from me as you are, and yet it seems to be that it is as God would have it, and I must be reconciled. It has been hard, so hard.

I wept and prayed and pondered and wept again, and the steady conviction forces itself upon me that it is right as it is. God's work is great. It demands our first attention. Separated as we are, we shall not be influenced by each other but we shall look to God separately and do our work in His fear and to His glory.³¹

And looking back two decades after her husband's death, she wrote on this question of the possibility of her being influenced and of how she must stand alone:

I have not given anyone — man or woman — any right to have the least control over my work the Lord has given me to do. Since twenty-one years ago, when I was deprived of my husband by death, I have not had the slightest idea of ever marrying again. Why? Not because God forbade it. No. But to stand alone was the best for me, that no one should suffer with me in carrying forward my work entrusted to me of God. And no one should have a right to influence me in any way in reference to my responsibility and my work in bearing my testimony of encouragement and reproof.

My husband never stood in my way to do this, although I had help and encouragement from him and oft his pity. His sympathy and prayers and tears I have missed so much, so very much. No one can understand this as myself, but my work has to be done. No human power should give the least supposition that I would be influenced in the work God has given me to do in bearing my testimony to those for whom He has given me reproof or encouragement.

I have been alone in this matter, severely alone with all the difficulties and all the trials connected with the work. God alone could help me. The last work that is to be done by me in this world will soon be finished. I must express myself plainly, in a manner, if possible, not to be misunderstood. I have not one person in the world who shall put any message in my mind, or lay one duty upon me.³²

But the aloneness which she felt so severely never led her to be aloof or to be withdrawn. She engaged in the normal activities of the church, the home, and the community. She took particular pains to speak to children whenever she might meet them.

VIII

In the spring and summer Ellen White often worked in the garden with her husband, tending the flowers and cultivating the vegetables. We find them setting out strawberry and raspberry plants. We find her trading roots and plants with neighbors. We find her on shopping trips downtown often accompanied by Adventist neighbors who greatly admired her good judgment in making purchases and valued her practical counsel. We find her busy with her sewing, making clothes for her own family and for neighbors who were in need.

But also, she believed in recreation. Her first writing on this subject points out that "Sabbath-keepers as a people labor too hard without allowing themselves change or periods of rest. Recreation is needful to those who are engaged in physical labor and is still more essential for those whose labor is principally mental."³³ But she drew a line between "recreation" and "amusement." One she saw as beneficial, the other at times fraught with peril.

We find her attending a day of recreation planned for the employees and guests of the Battle Creek Sanitarium at nearby Lake Goguac. She commented on the good midday meal and noted the improvement on the grounds with the addition of swings for the children. She wrote of the peo-

ple assembling to hear her husband speak "in regard to Colorado and California." She herself addressed a crowd of 200 on one such occasion.

She always found it easy to relax in the mountains. On several summers she and her husband took working vacations in the Rocky Mountains in the vicinity of Boulder, Colorado. On such occasions she might be seen in the saddle riding along a mountain trail with her husband and relatives or friends, or she might be found stretched out on a blanket or buffalo robe on a grassy spot, where she would read and then doze off in restful sleep. She enjoyed the wild flowers, the rushing streams, the towering rocky cliffs, the lofty trees, the varicolored sunset. In nature she saw the majestic work of the Creator.

She loved the water and was a pretty good sailor. As a young woman she had often journeyed by coastal boat on trips between Portland, Maine, and Boston or New York City, and on the canal boats of New York state. Later she sailed twice between San Francisco and Portland, Oregon, then across the Atlantic, and later across the Pacific.

On one day dedicated to recreation in northern California in the early days of the Pacific Press, the time was divided between the beach and a sailboat trip. Invited to join the group, she took her helpers and her nieces, for whom she was caring, leaving her writing behind and joining wholeheartedly in the activities. An Adventist captain, owner of a sailboat, entertained the large group by taking them out through the Golden Gate for a trip on the open ocean. In the absence of a favorable wind they were towed by a steam tug through the Golden Gate and to the open sea. Some were seasick. But not Ellen White.

She had just reached the point in her writing on the life of Christ where she was to deal with the stilling of the tempest on Galilee, and the experience on the open ocean made a deep impression. The captain looked at her and commented, "She doesn't say a word to anyone." What she wrote her husband in Battle Creek reveals what was going through her mind:

The waves ran high, and we were tossed up and down so very grandly. I was highly elevated in my feeling, but had no words to say to anyone. It was grand. The spray dashing over us, the watchful captain giving his orders, the ready hands to obey. The wind was blowing strong and I never enjoyed anything so much in my life. . . .

I was filled with awe with my own thoughts. Everything seems so grand on the ocean, the waves running so high. The majesty of God and His works occupied my thoughts. He holds the winds in His hands, He controls the waters. . . . In the sight of God [we] were mere specks upon the broad, deep waters of the Pacific. . . . Yet angels of heaven were sent . . . to guard that little sailboat that was careening over the waves. O the wonderful works of God. . . .

How vividly before my mind was the boat with the disciples buffeting the waves. . . . I'm glad I went upon the water. I can write better than before.³⁴

IX

Perseverance characterized Ellen White from her childhood to the sunset years. It was evident in her earnest labors for the conversion of her teen-age friends when she was a girl. All except one gave their hearts to God.

Perseverance was also evident when her son Willie (twenty-one months old) nearly drowned in a tub of dirty washwater. Cutting the garments off the seemingly lifeless child, she took him out on the front lawn and, against the protests of neighbors, who felt that she was mauling a dead baby, rolled little Willie on the grass until the water gurgled out of his lungs and he finally gasped for breath. His life was saved.

23

Perseverance was evident in her efforts to reclaim her stricken husband when at the age of forty-four he suffered a paralytic stroke so severe that the doctors said they had never seen a case of this kind make a recovery. But the message from God was that his mind and body could be restored only if the faculties were brought into use. In defiance of the physicians, who counseled that her husband should not exercise either mind or body, she dedicated her time and strength for nearly two years to working toward his restoration. During this period they retired to a little farm, where she devised ingenious means to lead him to engage in daily walks, to harness the horses, to work in the garden, to get the hay in. Depressed, he preferred to be withdrawn from people, but she drew him into positions where he had to converse with others, answer questions, give counsel.

Speaking to a group of medical workers in St. Helena in 1902, she described the final victory:

After eighteen months of constant cooperation with God in the effort to restore my husband to health, I took him home again. Presenting him to his parents, I said, "Father, Mother, here is your son."

"Ellen," said his mother, "you have no one but God and yourself to thank for this wonderful restoration. Your energies have accomplished it." After his recovery, my husband lived for a number of years, during which time he did the best work of his life. Did not those added years of usefulness repay me manyfold for the eighteen months of painstaking care?

Perseverance manifested itself again in connection with a journey to the Williamsport, Pennsylvania, campmeeting in June 1889, the year of the Johnstown flood. She and Sara McEnterfer left Battle Creek in a pouring rain. The nearer they approached Pennsylvania, the more disturbing became the reports of the devastating flood. At Elmira, New York, they

heard that no trains would leave for Williamsport, for bridges were washed out, embankments had crumpled, and the floodwaters were rising, causing destruction and death. They were advised to stop over at a hotel; but when they learned the train was to proceed as far as it could go, they got aboard. After a few miles the train crawled to a halt on a siding. The track ahead was gone. Retreat they could not, for the track was washed out behind them. Food was growing short, and the Sabbath was drawing on. They spent the day in an unoccupied coach.

After the Sabbath they attempted to find anyone with a team who would take them through. Someone suggested that they might get through on a mountain road. One man they approached declared that he wouldn't do it for \$100. Another said that if someone gave him \$1,000 he might consider it. But the two women didn't give up. Finding some Adventists with a team, they proceeded on the mountain road. They decided, "When we should come to an insurmountable obstacle, we would return . . . but not before."³⁸ They prayed for God's protection and pressed on. The wagon broke down in an attempt to pull over fallen trees, but with makeshift repairs they pressed on.

Finally a swollen stream seemed to bring an end to the journey. The bridge was gone, and local bystanders declared the stream could not be forded. But Ellen White replied, "Do what you can for us. We must be put across the river." From the floating debris a raft was built to ferry the wagon. With a swimmer at the bridle, one horse was taken across, and then the other, the animals swimming the stream and finally gaining foothold on the other side. The passengers were then rowed across in a little boat — and they were on their way.

They reached the campmeeting a day late. The camp had been repitched on higher ground, the tents were soaked, the bedding was wet, the clothing was damp, and the food supplies were limited. But Ellen White reported, "We had no disposition to murmur." She spoke thirteen times, and the people declared it to be the best campmeeting they had ever attended.

Perseverance led to the opening of the new school in Australia on the advertised date. Although the land was being cleared, and the buildings were going up, it was evident from the rate of progress that school would never open on the day announced. Sensing the importance of following the schedule to maintain the morale of the people, Ellen White called an early morning meeting in the church and declared that the school must open on time. She pledged the assistance of all her helpers. For a few days Sara McEnterfer nailed floorboards in the dining hall, the wife of the school

principal assisted, and the whole community pitched in with zeal. School opened on time. Ellen White wrote that "you must work with perseverance, constancy, and zeal if you would succeed."³⁷

X

25

People enjoyed conversing with Ellen White. She kept abreast of world happenings; she was alert to the historical significance of places she visited on her journeys; she was intensely interested in every facet of the advancement of the cause; and she loved people and was interested in their welfare, physical and spiritual. She conversed freely on the activities in and about the home, the members of the family, the trips to town, the welfare of the animals on the farm, the weather. But she was not one to engage in gossip. In her conversation she watched for opportunities to drop a word that would encourage or help.

Those who visited with her were quick to discern that being favored with the gift of prophecy did not divest her of her natural abilities of reasoning, devising, reading, or communicating. As anyone, she could engage in a discussion of ordinary matters, and neither she nor those she conversed with understood that her words in these circumstances were inspired. The many visions surely had a bearing on her reasoning and decisions, but she was not shorn of the use of her ordinary faculties, nor was she relieved from responsibility for their use.

And also in her letters, those portions dealing with everyday matters carried no special weight of inspiration. She would report on the weather, the happenings in the family, her feelings, and the plans for journeys. She noted that

there are times when common things must be stated, common thoughts must occupy the mind, common letters must be written and information given that has passed from one to another of the workers. Such words, such information, are not given under the special inspiration of the Spirit of God. Questions are asked at times that are not upon religious subjects at all, and these questions must be answered. We converse about houses and lands, trades to be made, and locations for our institutions, their advantages and disadvantages.³⁸

But sometimes in her conversation and often in her letters she would present instruction and light given to her by God. Where, then, did she and her contemporaries — and where do we today — draw the line? In the same manuscript just quoted, she established the criterion: the line was drawn between the "common" and the "sacred."³⁹

She constantly exercised diligent care to avoid setting forth her own

ideas in such a way that they could be taken as being of divine origin. Time and again when she had no light from the Lord in regard to a matter on which she was questioned, she refrained from giving an answer. In 1914, when a doctrinal question was placed before her, she replied, "Please tell my brethren that I have nothing presented before me regarding the circumstances concerning which they write, and I can set before them only that which has been presented to me."⁴⁰

XI

26 A noticeable quality of Ellen White was her confidence in people. The special work to which God called her often gave her a knowledge of the inmost character of men and women who made up the church and constituted its working force. At times secret sins known only to those involved were clearly portrayed to her, and she was called on to be the channel through which messages of reproof and correction were given. Such insights could easily lead to a great impairment, or a total loss, of confidence, and arouse suspicion and bring about rejection. But not so with Ellen White. She saw the individual as a fallible human being fighting the battle of life — with the Holy Spirit prompting to high motives, firm purpose, and a righteous life, and with the great adversary endeavoring to undermine, to discourage, to lead into ill-advised moves, errors, and sometimes gross sins. She saw the messages which exposed and reproved sin, calling for a change of life, as omens of God's grace and love to save discouraged, wayward, or misled souls.

So Ellen White kept before her mind the potentially victorious experience, with the individual walking the streets in the city of God. She treated those with whom she communicated in the light of their "gaining the victory." She had insights into the experience of strong men who sometimes yielded under temptation — whether in regard to misleading philosophies, their relationship to their fellow men, or a violation of the moral code — and she saw them as succumbing in the great controversy between Christ and his angels and Satan and his angels. But to the close of her life she could still relate herself to the individuals involved with confidence, and at the same time she could encourage confidence in them on the part of others.

Clarence C. Crisler, her leading secretary and the one who in the last months of Ellen White's life conducted family worship in her home, stated it well to her son William soon after her eighty-seventh birthday:

Even when exceedingly brain-weary, your mother seems to find great comfort in the promises of the Word, and often catches up a quotation and completes it when we

begin quoting some familiar scripture. . . . I do not find her discouraged . . . over the general outlook throughout the harvest field where her brethren are laboring. She seems to have strong faith in God's power to overrule, and to bring to pass His eternal purpose through the efforts of those whom He has called to act a part in His great work. She rises above petty criticism, above even the past failures of those who have been reproved, and expresses the conviction, born, apparently, of an innate faith in the church of the living God, that her brethren will remain faithful to the cause they have espoused, and that the Lord will continue with them to the end, and grant them complete victory over every device of the enemy.

Faith in God's power to sustain her through the many weaknesses attendant on old age; faith in the precious promises of God's words; faith in her brethren who bear the burden of the work; faith in the final triumph of the third angel's message, — this is the full faith your mother seems to enjoy every day and every hour. This is the faith that fills her heart with joy and peace, even when suffering great physical weakness, and unable to make progress in literary lines. A faith such as this would inspire anyone who could witness it.⁴¹

This was Ellen White the person — known to her family, to Seventh-day Adventists, and to the world.

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Heshbon — A Case of Biblical Confirmation or Confutation?

LAWRENCE T. GERATY

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Archaeology has done much in this century to make the Bible once more a trustworthy source for the reconstruction of ancient history. Bygone scholars doubted the existence of Belshazzar, the Babylonian king mentioned several times in Daniel 5 — until archaeologists discovered numerous contemporary cuneiform documents that make his place in history secure. Historians once questioned the reality of any such people as the Hittites (often mentioned in Scripture) — until archaeology provided abundant attestation not only that they were present in the ancient world but that they had an empire whose might even Egypt could not conquer. Example after example demonstrates how “archaeology has silenced the critics,” to use a familiar phrase.

Throughout Seventh-day Adventist history, evangelists, pastors, and teachers have made liberal use of the data of archaeology to confirm a conservative interpretation of the Bible. It was natural, then, that Adventists should become interested not only in borrowing the results of other archaeologists but also in achieving some of their own results through actual fieldwork. That Adventists have been able to muster enough funds and technical knowhow to mount a full-scale excavation of a major Palestinian *tell* (a hill built up artificially through successive settlement) is due almost solely to the vision and determination of Siegfried H. Horn, of Andrews University. It was my privilege to be associated with the project, in both its first and second seasons (the summers of 1968 and 1971).

The site chosen for the dig was Tell Hesban, an ancient mound of about fifty acres lying at the edge of the rolling Moabite plain, forty-five miles

due east of Jerusalem and sixteen road miles southwest of Amman. Because of its location and name, Tell Hesban has long been identified with biblical Heshbon. But why was this site chosen from among the scores of biblical sites yet undug? There were several factors, naturally, but it would be fair to say that of utmost importance among them was the hope that the findings would throw light on the vexing question of the date of the Israelites' Exodus from Egypt and entrance to Canaan.

I

THE PROBLEM. Almost without exception, among those who make an honest endeavor to treat the biblical data positively, modern scholars place these formative events in Israel's history in the latter half of the thirteenth century B.C.¹ — despite the Bible's own chronological statements fixing them two hundred years earlier.² The reason for this (among other cogent reasons) is that an intensive surface survey of Transjordan between 1930 and 1940 (by the late archaeologist Nelson Glueck) yielded evidence that the ancient kingdoms of Ammon, Moab, and Edom within this territory were not founded or indeed even inhabited before the thirteenth century B.C.³ How then could the events of Numbers 21, including the taking of Heshbon from King Sihon, have transpired before this date? The only way to solve the problem of Heshbon's age, therefore, was to find the site of Heshbon and by excavation see how far back its history could be traced.

THE BIBLICAL EVIDENCE. What do literary sources say about the history of Heshbon?⁴ The earliest reference is in Numbers 21. From this account and the ballad imbedded in it⁵ one can conclude that unless Sihon founded Heshbon it was a Moabite city before it became the capital of the Amorites. In any case, the specific information is that Israel took Heshbon from the Amorites and resettled it at the time of that conquest. Though Heshbon appears to have been assigned to the tribe of Reuben at first, subsequently it became Gad's, and then Levi's.⁶ Many references indicate that David and Solomon controlled this territory,⁷ though Heshbon itself is not mentioned except in a Song of Songs passage (7:4 RSV) in which Solomon praises his Shulammitte: "Your eyes are pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bathrabbim." It is probable that Heshbon reverted to the Moabites and finally the Ammonites by the eighth-sixth centuries B.C., since it figures prominently in the oracles of Isaiah and Jeremiah against these nations.⁸ Although the Bible furnishes no further evidence, the city's history can be traced through Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine times in references by such ancient historians as Josephus, Ptolemy, and Eusebius. After the seventh century A.D. the

name Eshbus (as Heshbon was then called) disappears from the literary sources, reappearing only in the Middle Ages in its Arabic form *Hesban*.

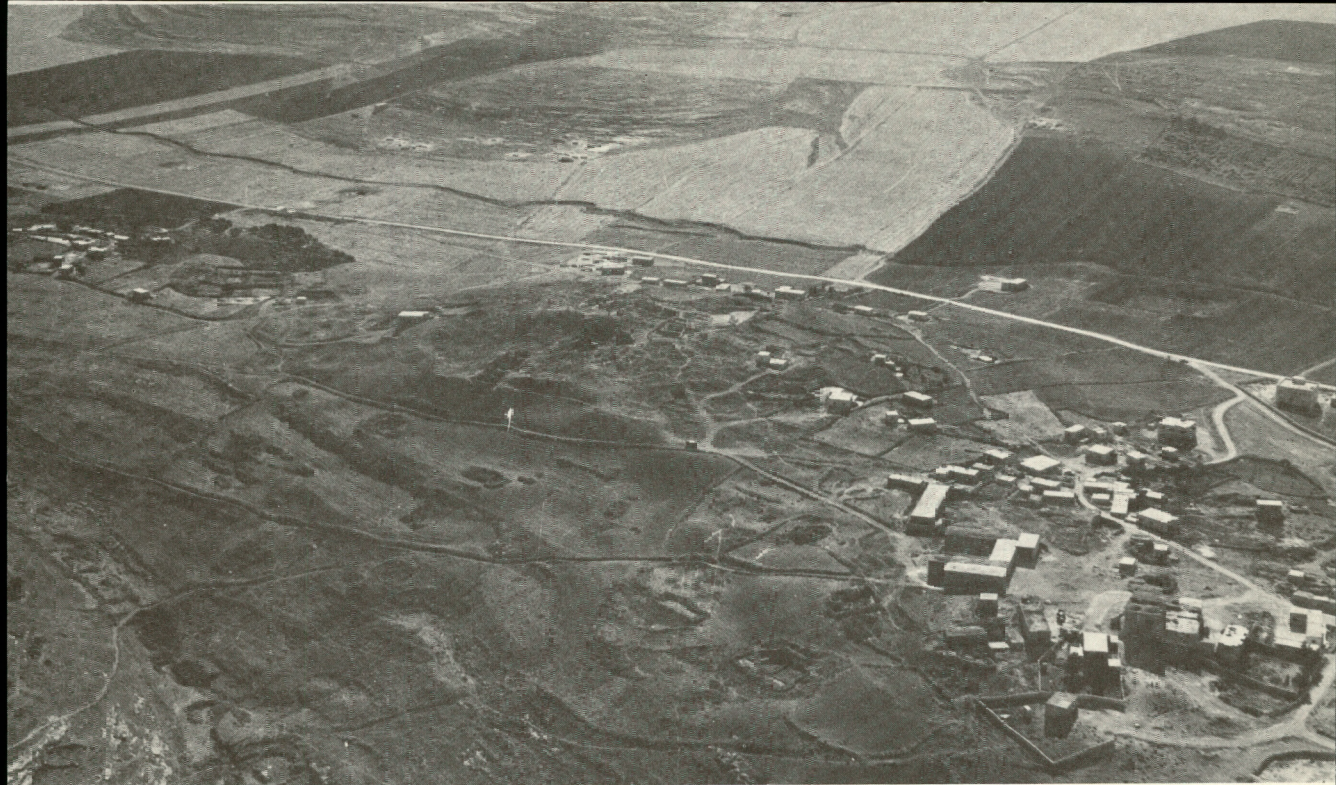
THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE. An international ecumenical staff of about fifty persons, augmented by approximately 150 local workmen, set to work in 1968, and returned in 1971, to provide as much information as possible about Tell Hesban's archaeological history.⁹ In summary, the excavation of four areas on or about the acropolis, plus the ancient cemetery, exposed extensive remains of the late Arabic period, thus confirming what literary sources from the twelfth-fourteenth centuries A.D. seem to indicate. Prominent among these remains were two well-preserved rooms (one with a collapsed vaulted roof), a kiln, an elaborate courtyard drainage system, and a number of associated cisterns — most of which were probably reused from an earlier period.

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Abundant evidence of the site's importance in the Byzantine period was provided by tombs and many remnants of once-impressive architecture, not the least of which, crowning the acropolis, was a large church complex replete with several mosaic-patterned floors in various successive phases.

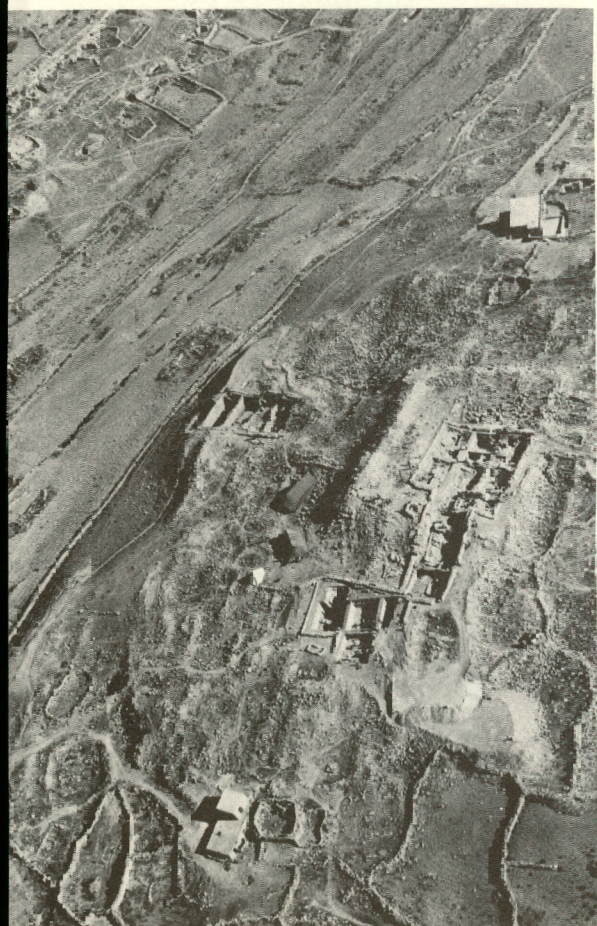
Several major walls (their foundations dug down to bedrock) testify to their defense nature in the Roman period. It is likely that a number of the cisterns on the mound — including one whose capacity was greater than 60,000 gallons — were first carved out of bedrock during this period. Of major interest were two tombs found in the Roman cemetery. The heavy stone door of one still swung on its vertical pivots. The door of the other was sealed by a large rolling stone. This finding is important, not only because the tomb is one of the few surviving examples similar to the one in which Jesus was buried, but because so far it is the only example discovered east of the Jordan River.

But the major surprise of the 1971 season was to find that the Roman stratum just above bedrock was apparently the earliest stratigraphically attested occupation of the site! It is possible that the Hellenistic period will still be represented in a cave in one area. But on and around the acropolis there appears to be nothing earlier, despite a bountiful supply of seventh/sixth century B.C. potsherds mixed in with those of most later periods — except in one area where they were found unmixed, but only in layers of fill, and therefore without associated seventh-sixth century B.C. surfaces or architecture. These sherds, however, provide a basis for conjecture that somewhere on the mound there must have been a seventh/sixth century B.C. city. But that is as far as present evidence (which represents a good sampling of the site) goes.



ABOVE: Aerial view of *Tell Hesban* looking east toward the "King's Highway" — the historically important thoroughfare through Moab and Edom. The northern summit of the ancient mound, the "acropolis," is in the center (the excavation's trenches are here). On the southern summit are the scattered dwellings of the modern village of Hesban. The wadi on the left eventually empties into the Jordan Valley. Photograph by ALVIN TRACE.

BELOW, LEFT: Aerial view of *Tell Hesban's* acropolis, with the excavated areas clearly visible. Elsewhere, under the rock-strewn surface, ancient walls can be traced. Across the wadi to the west (upper left) a portion of the ancient cemetery serves the modern villagers as a series of animal pens. Photograph by ALVIN TRACE.



BELOW: The excavated acropolis of *Tell Hesban* is east of *Wadi Hesban*, the valley in the foreground. Lying between is a limestone ridge that undoubtedly served as one of the chief quarries for the extensive building operations on the mound. Photograph by GEORGE UNGER.



THE ALTERNATIVES. Disagreement apparently being the case, how can the biblical and the archaeological evidence for Heshbon be correlated? Where is the city of Jeremiah, Isaiah, Solomon, and David — let alone the city of Moses and Sihon! The results confirm neither the fifteenth nor the thirteenth century B.C. dates for the exodus and conquest. *What, then, are the alternatives?*

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1. *The Bible is wrong.* This is a case where archaeology confutes the Scriptures. Scholars who doubted the historicity of the exodus-conquest account were right after all, especially when one puts this new Heshbon evidence with the negative evidence uncovered at Jericho and Ai (the next two towns taken by Israel, both of which have been extensively excavated, yet appear not to have been occupied in the late Bronze Age, the era of Moses). But this alternative is entirely unacceptable to one who has seen the historicity of the biblical account vindicated with increasing frequency. One must say, rather, that not all the evidence is in yet. Having come to trust the biblical record at other points, one is confident that again it will prove reliable when the complete archaeological context is available.

2. *Understanding of the Bible is wrong.* Perhaps more is demanded of the Bible than can be required. For instance, Sihon could have been a semi-nomad who would have left little evidence of his presence. The Song of Songs may have used a poetic formula that need not imply concurrent occupation of Heshbon. Furthermore, who can say for sure when the Song was written? Isaiah and Jeremiah might have used the name in much the same way — stock phrases to refer to the territory east of the Jordan River, though the sites themselves had long since lain uninhabited. Although some such interpretation might be admissible for a reference or two, it would be stretching a hermeneutical principle to apply it to every mention of Heshbon. No, the biblical traditions pertaining to Heshbon are too strong to make this alternative suitable.

3. *Interpretation of the archaeological evidence is faulty.* This alternative is often suggested by the nonarchaeologist. He asks, "How can you be sure of your pottery typology and whether your techniques for absolute dating are accurate?" There is certainly room for error here, but usually such error is in the magnitude of decades, not centuries. Through comparative stratigraphy from scores of ancient sites that have been dug, the dating methods of Palestinian archaeology have become extremely accurate. This alternative is easily dismissed by at least the "initiated."

4. *Then surely the site must be wrong.* Tell Hesban is not Heshbon.

Despite the linguistic equivalence of the ancient and modern names, the biblical evidence does not match the archaeological evidence (there appears to be no problem with regard to the postbiblical literary evidence). Though this may appear to be an attractive alternative at first, it becomes less so when one considers that Tell Hesban's precise location and prominence make it the most likely possibility for Heshbon — indeed a likelihood unquestioned in the history of scholarship. Furthermore, the stratigraphic and numismatic evidence from the medieval Arabic period coincide well with the literary sources of the period, making it probable that the site was Heshbon that far back at least. The position on the old Roman Road plus the extensive Roman fortified remains make it highly likely that the site was Eshbus of Jesus' day. This leads to the next alternative.

5. *Biblical Heshbon is at Tell Hesban but must be sought further down the slopes.* More likely it is on the more southern (but less elevated) of the mound's two hills — not on the acropolis to which the Roman and later periods expanded. This alternative is naturally favored by an expedition that has already invested many thousands of dollars and more than three months in the field to achieve its goals at this site. Hence the next season will see the expedition expand its work to other sectors of the mound in order to provide an even wider sampling of its history. Although always hopeful, I personally doubt that this alternative will provide the solution. Not only does surface survey fail to indicate earlier ceramic evidence, but (more telling) the regularity with which bedrock seems to peek through the surface soil indicates a lack of depth of occupation on the mound that leaves one skeptical.

6. *Tell Hesban is the Heshbon of Jesus' day and later, but the name was moved to this site when the Old Testament site somewhere else in the vicinity was abandoned for some unknown reason.* If the previous alternative does not prove correct, this one (on analogy with such a well-known site as Jericho) is surely the most likely. Tell Hesban is on the edge of a *wadi* (dry stream bed) of the same name that leads to ʿAin Hesban, a perennial spring about three miles to the west. The spring's copious flow forms at least one pool, and sometimes more, known locally in Arabic as "the pools of Heshbon." Since this spring is the only natural water source in the whole vicinity, could these pools be the ones referred to in the Song of Songs? A preliminary surface survey of this area (not in any way exhaustive) disclosed other ancient sites nearer the spring, though no other is as impressive as Tell Hesban and no other appears to predate it. But proximity to a dependable water supply was perhaps the first consideration in the choice of

a site for an ancient town. Hence a thorough survey of all sites within a limited radius of 'Ain Hesban would appear to be a high priority goal for a future season of excavation.

III

TOWARD A SOLUTION. Until the last two alternatives are acted on, it would be premature to say whether the archaeological evidence from Heshbon confirms or confutes the Bible. In the meantime, one can and should raise the more general question of what archaeology can and cannot be expected to do with regard to the problem posed.¹⁰ It must be remembered that, at best, archaeological evidence is only partial — among other reasons, because of the accident of preservation and discovery — and therefore cannot really prove anything except the existence of the artifacts actually found. Questions may be asked of this evidence, of course, and answers will be forthcoming according to the presuppositions of the questioner.

In other words, archaeological evidence is useful in structuring a hypothesis but can hardly prove the hypothesis. Nor can the evidence prove the Bible in the sense that the Bible's historical validity can be demonstrated — much less its religious validity, which must always be accepted by faith. Rather, since the Bible is a text, archaeological evidence can only confirm or confute an *interpretation* of that text, and not the text itself. Therefore, to relate archaeological evidence to biblical evidence, one must start with the actual text. After one arrives at an interpretation based on the use of all available literary tools, then it is this *interpretation* of the Bible that may be tested by the critically sifted evidence provided by archaeology. If one is an honest biblical interpreter, he will naturally attempt to find a solution to his problem that best suits *all* the evidence available to him at the time.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

- 1 A good summary of this position may be found in George Ernest Wright, *Biblical Archaeology*, revised (Philadelphia: Westminster Press 1962), chapters four and five.
- 2 I Kings 6:1; compare Judges 11:26.
- 3 Nelson Glueck, Explorations in eastern Palestine I-IV, *Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 14 (1934), 15 (1935), 18-19 (1939), 25-28 (1951). A more popular account is contained in Nelson Glueck, *The Other Side of the Jordan*, revised (Cambridge, Massachusetts: American Schools of Oriental Research 1970).
- 4 Heshbon's history from the literary sources available to us (including the Bible) is discussed by Werner Vyhmeister, The history of Heshbon from literary sources, *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 6:158-177 (July 1968).

- 5 The best treatment of this Amorite victory song is by Paul D. Hanson, *The song of Heshbon and David's Nir*, *Harvard Theological Review* 61:297-320 (July 1968).
- 6 Numbers 32:37; Joshua 13:15-21, 24-28; 21:34-40.
- 7 Among them II Samuel 8:2; 24:4-5; I Kings 4:7, 19.
- 8 Isaiah 15:1-4; 16:6-11; Jeremiah 48:1-2, 34-36, 45-47; 49:1-6.
- 9 A full preliminary report of the 1968 season appeared in *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 7 (July 1969) and the report for the 1971 season is scheduled for publication in *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 10 (July 1972). A more popular account by Siegfried H. Horn appeared in the article *The 1968 Heshbon expedition*, *The Biblical Archaeologist* 32:26-41 (May 1969) and in a number of Seventh-day Adventist church periodicals.
- 10 Compare the recent discussions of this issue by Roland de Vaux; George Ernest Wright, *Biblical Archaeology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press 1962), pp. 70-76; and in *Near Eastern Archaeology in the Twentieth Century*, edited by J. Sanders in honor of Nelson Glueck (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc. 1971), pp. 64-80.

Comments

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The basic position from which my comments on Geraty's observations are drawn is that of chief archaeologist for the 1968 and 1971 seasons of the Andrews University expedition to Heshbon. Essentially, this involved (a) being in charge of training the staff in general field procedures and recording, (b) supervising the field excavation, (c) offering instruction in specific field procedures, and (d) drawing up the initial draft of an integrated preliminary report on the excavation results from each season's work.

The most significant point of view from which my comments are made is this: *I had no special predisposition to any particular historical conclusions concerning the data in advance of our excavation and examination of the archaeological data.* As any scholar attempts to do in preparation, I included a review of the literary evidences possibly pertaining to the site under inquiry; but I had no precommitment as to how the specific archaeological data would relate to the literary evidence.

My initial comment has to do with the general archaeological context of the selection of the site. Relatively little work relating to biblical history has been done on east bank locations in Jordan. There is currently a considerable amount of activity under way, by both British and American expeditions, but our basic knowledge of east bank history in archaeological terms is still minimal. It is increasingly apparent that the Tell Hesban excavations will provide a major contribution of new knowledge in this matter, whatever the relation of that knowledge may be to particular issues or episodes in biblical history.

Geraty quite adequately summarizes the problem, the biblical evidence, and the archaeological evidence to date. I would simply amplify the latter point (from the perspective of the present state of preparation of the preliminary report on the 1971 season) to say that there is (a) clear ceramic and numismatic evidence of seven major stages of occupation history and (b) stratigraphic evidence indicating at least fifteen discernible strata of occupation history on some portions (if not all) of the *tell*.

The chronological identifications possible from comparative studies of the numismatic and ceramic evidence allow the following date ranges for the periods indicated.

Islamic	12th-16th centuries A.D.
Islamic	7th-8th centuries A.D.
Byzantine	4th-5th centuries A.D.
Roman	3rd century A.D.
Roman	1st century A.D. - 1st century B.C.
Hellenistic	2nd century B.C.
Iron Age	7th-6th century B.C.

As to alternatives discussed, I have the following comments:

1. The option that *the biblical record is in error*. Even though one may accept for the moment the general historicity of the biblical account, it would seem that a general dependability about historical conditions does not prove accuracy in every particular instance. Errors on the part of biblical tradition formation or transmission can be quite particular, in spite of a general pattern of dependability. There is danger in stating sweeping alternatives that the Bible is always entirely right or that the Bible is never right. It's quite possible that the Bible is right many times without being right every time.

2. The option that *our understanding of the Bible is wrong* must always be allowed. We may claim a general accuracy in our sense of what biblical literature involves, but yet allow the possibility that our errors may also be particular. We may have specific gaps in knowledge of the nature of bibli-

cal history, or of biblical literature reporting that history. It would seem reasonable to assert that the biblical traditions may convey to us generally accurate information about the history of a given place, but that we may still be mistaken in our conclusions about the implications of this information for a particular period or for a particular episode.

Anyone who works with the diverse, and frequently fragmentary, nature of archaeological evidence must honestly acknowledge that his interpretations may stand at fault. The archaeological task is a combination of detective work and jigsaw puzzle work, and one knows frequently, as he starts working toward a solution, that he may have only a very few pieces of the puzzle from which the pattern may be discerned in the first place. The development of hypotheses about the meaning of the archaeological data may seem far more esoteric to one outside the practice of the craft than to one inside. As one with ten years of exposure and experience in fieldwork and interpretation, I believe that considerable humility in the claims of the adequacy of hypothetical reconstructions of history is always in order. Separating conclusions from possibilities — and then proceeding further to probabilities and to reasonable certainties — is a task in which individual judgments frequently differ. The way to the truth is through the vigorous crossfire and examination of professional colleagues in the task.

3-5. As to the option that *the site identified is not biblical Heshbon*, a casual survey of the immediate surroundings of modern Tell Hesban indicates that within comparatively short distances there are sites that may have been occupied at other periods than those uncovered in the evidence thus far. But we know too little about the modes in which place-names “move” to draw any quick conclusions about other adjacent sites’ having had the traditional name. Soundings would have to be conducted at those sites on a rather thorough survey pattern.

In this connection, Geraty’s fifth option, having to do with the need to explore other portions of the *tell*, is certainly in order. Whether or not the schedule is feasible remains to be settled, if one’s aims in doing a major expedition include thorough scientific completion of work begun. But this is a matter for the excavators’ administrative decisions. Although Geraty has every right to adopt a personally “doubtful” stance on the likelihood that other portions of the *tell* might provide the missing data (and although the judgment even of a majority of the core staff might sustain such doubts at the moment), it is a principle in archaeological fieldwork that one does not write the results of future evidence before investigating. On this matter, therefore, caution is appropriate until soundings to bedrock

have been conducted in scattered locations. In the archaeology business it is a cliché that “the answers lie below.”

6. Consideration of ʿAin Hesban as a possible alternative to Tell Hesban as the biblical city is certainly well worth exploring. It seems in order, however, to say that this is no easier an attempt at a solution than would be soundings conducted at the other adjacent sites which might provide occupation evidences in the “gaps” evident so far, matching literary evidence expectations to archaeological data in hand. While water supply no doubt figures in the consideration of the locations of ancient cities, the extensive cistern constructions already found on the acropolis and the surrounding slopes of Tell Hesban show that an immediately available source of fresh water was not the only way to arrange for such needs. The point would seem to be that exploration for “surrounding site evidence support” need not limit itself to those sites in an immediate proximity to an obvious dependable source of fresh water.

Geraty’s discussion leading *toward a solution* suggests the alternative of concluding that the archaeological evidence either “confirms or confutes the Bible” with reference to Tell Hesban. It would seem to be a reasonable possibility that the evidence might confirm in some respects and refute in others. Although any discussion of the meaning of the evidence still in the process of excavation is necessarily tentative, and much more detailed analysis (particularly, of the ceramic evidence) is needed to firm up what conclusions are possible from the archaeological data, this would not be the first instance in which the archaeological support might be positive toward some aspects of biblical testimony and negative toward others.

This leads to the final comment on the relation of archaeological evidence to biblical text. Geraty prefers to begin with the actual text in an assessment of related archaeological and biblical evidence. I would argue that this option is *one choice*, and a very legitimate option. I would also add that it would seem not necessarily the only option. It is similarly possible to start from the accumulation of archaeological data to explore what knowledge of history can be reconstructed from that data. Such knowledge will depend on the range, precision, and mesh that the varied data allow in any given instance. That this knowledge is subject to all the limitations of fragmentary excavation (and the unpredictable risks of what evidence survives and in what condition it survives) is evident.

It is quite possible to proceed to interpret the text and then to test the interpretation by critical application of archaeological evidence, and it is also possible to proceed to construct a view of the apparent historical occu-

pations of a site from the archaeological data, and then to incorporate what light literary evidence may shed on those periods in which occupation seems archaeologically evident. In either alternative, I would agree with Geraty's statement that one would seek a solution to the problem that best suits *all* the evidence. But one is not arbitrarily bound to start from one side any more than from the other in coming to such conclusions.

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Although I believe that what was accomplished at Heshbon deserves a more thorough elaboration and should inspire greater excitement than Geraty's discussion leaves me with, I am generally in accord with his summary of the work that has been done and his analysis of the results to date.

There are four specific reasons, I believe, for emphasizing the importance of archaeological excavations at Tell Hesban:

1. The dig at Heshbon is especially important in light of the prevailing controversy about that site's relation to the knottiest problem with which biblical archaeology has attempted to deal: the dating of the Exodus from Egypt.¹

2. Heshbon is important from a purely archaeological point of view, as it is the first site in which fine seventh/sixth century Ammonite pottery has been discovered in a stratigraphically controlled excavation.²

3. The expedition to Jordan is politically a very favorable gesture for four reasons: *First*, the workers are excavating stratigraphically and carefully saving the Arabic remains which in another country in Palestine are being bulldozed away. *Second*, the presence of an expedition maintains a tradition which was about to die out — American-sponsored excavations in Transjordan. Third, the forty foreigners, who automatically became tourists in a country where tourists are still scarce, are somehow especially suited as an elect audience for "consciousness raising" in the Arab cause. *Fourth*, the money poured into the comparatively modest national economy of Jordan — through general operating expenses for the dig, through wages amounting to over \$10,000 each season for almost 150 workers, and through the private spending of staff members — is not a negligible sum.

4. Perhaps the most significant result of the efforts at Heshbon, however, is that Adventists have been initiated into the archaeological community

and have finally begun the long overdue payment of the debt owed to hundreds of biblical scholars whose labors no successful Adventist evangelist would regard as trivial. Now, at last, a substantial contribution is being made to scholarship, and valuable contacts with many different people and universities are being made. (The majority of the expedition's staff members are non-Adventists from more than a dozen universities around the world.)

Having cited some of the reasons why I believe Heshbon to be a valuable enterprise, I would like to focus on Geraty's observation that "until the last two alternatives are acted on, it would be premature to say whether the archaeological evidence from Heshbon confirms or confutes the Bible."

I believe that we need to act soon, in order to have the wherewithal to work, especially now that the political situation is stable and relations between Jordan and the United States are friendly.

A dig in the summer of 1973 has been guaranteed by the administration of Andrews University. I recommend that all who by now have become interested in the Heshbon project consider the reasons for an undelayed return to Jordan and participate in this project by sending contributions for its realization.³ The question of whether or not Heshbon confirms or confutes the Bible is answered not only by the archaeologist's spade, but by all who have given in order that it might be put to use.

REFERENCES

- 1 Herbert F. Hahn, *The Old Testament in Modern Research* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1954), p. 196.
- 2 Siegfried H. Horn, *The second season of excavations at Heshbon summer 1971* (unpublished manuscript), p. 8.
- 3 Contributions should be sent to the director of the Heshbon expedition, Dr. Siegfried H. Horn, at Andrews University.

ORGANIZATION: A Discussion of the Structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

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JAMES S. BARCLAY, WILBER ALEXANDER,
WILLIAM A. ILES, FRANK L. JONES, WINSLOW B. RANDALL,
CHARLES S. STOKES, AND NEAL C. WILSON

James S. Barclay (who served as moderator of the 1971 discussion presented here) is a Certified Public Accountant, management and investment consultant, and former president of the Andrews University alumni association. Wilber Alexander is professor of systematic and pastoral theology at Andrews University (Michigan). William A. Iles is executive vice-president of Herndon, Iles, and Scott Insurance Agency in Orlando, Florida. Frank L. Jones is secretary of the Lake Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Winslow B. Randall is also a Certified Public Accountant, former regional inspector for the Internal Revenue Service, and former member of the executive committee of the Nebraska Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Charles S. Stokes is professor and chairman of the department of economics at the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut. Neal C. Wilson is vice-president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Washington, D. C.

BARCLAY: Today is not 1870. It is not even 1967. And we must deal with the problems in the church by moving forward, not by hanging onto the past. Truth is never threatened by changes in procedures or methods.

In order to expedite our discussion, we will have a few short presentations to help us understand our church structure. I have asked Elder Wilson to describe the General Conference, the North American Division, a union conference, and a local conference, and the purpose of each. Following this, Doctor Alexander will describe the local church and its purpose. Next, Mr. Randall will describe the constitutional relationships of the General Conference, the Lake Union Conference, and the Illinois Conference.

WILSON: Right at the outset I would like to make a brief clarifying statement. Some have suggested that it might be better if I personally did not get involved in a discussion like this. But I have done so very willingly, because I think it is important to understand one another in regard to what God has for us to do and how we can best do it. Perhaps one of the greatest dangers that confronts the church today is that the organization becomes the focus of our attention while we forget what our real mission is — our mission becomes secondary and that which is only a means to accomplish our mission receives our greatest emphasis.

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We could have changed slightly the direction of our discussion and concentrated on the growth and development of the church, and the miraculous, providential leading of God. However, merely to have progress, merely to make advances, merely to have success — this is not the mission of the church. The mission of the church is to carry the understanding of the love of Christ and his reconciling power, under the guidance and blessing of the Holy Spirit preparing men and women for the coming of Christ. And so I think it is appropriate for us to consider how we can really do the job. If this requires some changes and adjustments in our thinking or organization, then let's be willing to make them.

Back in the 1840s, small groups of Adventist believers were scattered in many different places. They were isolated. Many of them were mocked. But they had a conviction that had been born out of an understanding of God's Word; and when a few of them would get together, they would talk about the mission of the church. Although they were few, with no resources and no organization, they had a great vision of something that could be done — something that God had said *would* be done.

But they strongly resisted organization. Many of them had been in situations where organization was misused — substituted for the gospel — and they didn't want to see this repeated. But they wanted fellowship. They wanted to worship. They wanted to study God's Word. They wanted to witness, because they believed that time was running out and that Christ would soon come. How were they going to do these things?

It wasn't long before they realized that even in their own little groups they would have to have some organization, although the idea was still resisted to some extent. They got together in meetings to express their views, their hopes, their burdens. They noticed that some groups had strengths that others didn't have, and they wondered how they could pool their resources. And so, out of conferences as occasions for discussions they

developed conferences as organizational structures. In 1861, just a year or so after the first Adventist church was organized, the Michigan Conference was organized; and in the next couple of years, there were five more such conferences.

The purposes of these conferences were to preserve the unity of the faith, to rally the combined resources to accomplish their mission, to develop common guidelines and policies, to give counsel in unusual situations and difficulties, and to coordinate activities so that there wouldn't be a lot of overlapping and duplication.

For these same reasons, the General Conference was organized in 1863 with just six conferences and with three members making up the executive committee. This arrangement continued for some time, during which the departmental work developed. There were also various institutions, and many of these, you might say, were unilateral thrusts that were not very solidly tied in to the General Conference program.

In 1901 came the big change in structure. By that time it was felt that the departments and institutions should be brought into some happy relationship, without each going on its own independent course. Furthermore, it was realized that this was a world mission, to "every nation, kindred, tongue, and people." Thus, to enable the General Conference to take on a world task, union conferences were organized, each made up of a group of local conferences in a given territory, to carry out the same functions that the General Conference had been set up to do in 1863. And so the General Conference became, and still is, an organization made up of union conferences.

Now what about the "divisions"? There is no such thing as an independent division with its own constituency. A division is merely the General Conference operating in a certain geographical area, and all its officers, staff members, and employees are actually General Conference personnel. Because the General Conference headquarters is located in North America, it guides the work in this geographical area more directly.

The purposes of all the organizations are identical: coordination, guidance, pooling of resources, and unifying the faith — to care for the growing, expanding, and, we hope, soon-to-be-completed task. But there would have been no need for these organizations without the local church.

ALEXANDER: A church is a spiritual entity, in that it is a group of people who have been gathered by the Holy Spirit into a community of faith, to minister mutually to each other for upbuilding in the faith, as the Holy Spirit, through the gifts of the Spirit, operates in the congregation. A church is also a group of people who have been given a commission to preach, teach, and baptize.

Whatever organization is here exists for pastoral care and the nurture of individuals, so that every person will feel that he is part of the church body and will find himself being prepared to do the work assigned to him by God. Time has taught us that we need some kind of structure, where the gifts designated by the Spirit of God — pastors, teachers, apostles, evangelists, and all the rest — can function.

So there is an organization and an organism, and it is the combination of these two that makes up the local church. The church, in this sense, is the church in the world. In its building, it is building people, preparing them personally for the kingdom of heaven. In the world, it is the witness of the gospel and the power of the gospel in the human life.

RANDALL: Before we can consider how to use the present organizational structure more effectively, or how the structure could be changed, we need to understand the existing structure. This structure is controlled by constitutions.

The constitution of the General Conference provides that its membership shall consist of (a) the union conferences and (b) certain other (minor) entities; and that the voters of the General Conference shall be (a) the delegates representing the union conferences, and (b) the members of the General Conference Committee. Thus the voting control rests with the delegates selected by the union conferences, together with the officials of the General Conference who were previously elected by this union conference representation.

The General Conference officials, including the vice-presidents for the various divisions, are all elected by the General Conference. Each division does not separately elect its own chief executive. The vice-president for North America works under the direction of the General Conference Committee, which is the top executive authority for both the world organization and the North American Division.

The General Conference Committee now has 148 members resident in North America, elected by the General Conference in session. It is not unusual for a large organization to have a large board of directors for general direction; but it is unusual for such a large board to be active in day-to-day administration. In practice, this committee keeps close control over current operations, holding weekly meetings of the available members and processing a number of routine matters, such as personnel transfers and travel authorizations. Thus the church does not have a single officer who is respon-

sible for administration, but a 148-headed creature. It is only natural that such an entity sometimes has trouble keeping its heads coordinated, and sometimes appears slow, unwieldy, and inefficient as a top executive.

The General Conference president is specifically limited to do only what the General Conference Committee directs. The entire provision of the constitution pertaining to the president reads: "The President shall preside at the sessions of the Conference, act as Chairman of the Executive Committee, and labor in the general interests of the Conferences as the Executive Committee may advise." In the constitution and in practice, there is no delegation of administrative authority, temporary or permanent, to the president or any of the vice-presidents. The executive head of the church is a committee.

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To such a costly and inefficient situation has the church come, in deference to arbitrary interpretations of various warnings against "kingly power." If the union conferences deliberately sought to have a weak superstructure over them, they could hardly have devised a more cunning plan, for there is no General Conference official who is not, in effect, merely an errand boy for the delegates who elected him. A General Conference official may not even travel officially to any union conference without an invitation; and if and when he does get there, he does not have any administrative authority. His effectiveness is limited to his capacity as a persuader; and for any effective action to occur, the persuasiveness must be exerted on a whole committee, not just a local administrator. On the other hand, if the local officials ask for help of any kind, the General Conference is not authorized to give assurances of anything more than that he will take the request to the General Conference Committee for consideration.

The General Conference does not "direct" or "order" any union conference or other organization to take any action. It only recommends such action. There appears to be no requirement that the union conferences actually follow the recommendations, and in practice the recommendations are sometimes (though not generally) ignored. And there is no provision for a General Conference officer to call a union conference official to account for his official performance. Rather, the union conference officials can require the General Conference president and other officers to explain their actions.

Having guaranteed that their "superiors" in the General Conference are safely under their control, what have the union conferences done in regard to the power structure at their own level and below? As a typical operation, we will consider the Lake Union Conference.

The constitution of the Lake Union Conference provides that its con-

stituency shall be the local conferences in its territory, and that the voting delegates shall be appointed by the executive committees of the local conferences. The constituency also includes the members of the Lake Union Conference Committee, and any members of the General Conference Committee who may be present. At the constituency meeting in May 1967, 209 delegates were seated. Of these, 83 percent had been selected by the executive committees of the local conferences, and the other 17 percent were officials of the Lake Union Conference, the General Conference, and various institutions. Only 16 of the 209 delegates were laymen, and they were delegates by virtue of their membership on the Lake Union or local conference committees.

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The Lake Union Conference Committee, which includes the local conference president, has 22 members, of whom two are laymen. This committee has full administrative power (including authority to fill any vacancies that may occur before the next constituency meeting) with only the requirement that a report be made to the constituency at the regular quadrennial meetings. There is no constitutional authority for any General Conference official to sit on the Lake Union Conference executive committee.

The structure of the local conferences may be exemplified by the Illinois Conference. Its constitution provides that its membership shall be the Adventist churches in its territory and the voters shall be the delegates from the various churches. At the biennial constituency meeting in 1969, 317 of the 388 delegates were laymen, and the 71 others were pastors and various officials of the Illinois, Lake Union, and General Conferences. In the Illinois Conference, the delegates elect the two officers of the conference — the president and the secretary-treasurer — and the seven to nine additional members of the executive committee. This committee has full administrative power between the constituency meetings, and consists of the two officers, four ministers, the administrator of Hinsdale Sanitarium, and three laymen.

The president of the union conference usually sits with the local conference executive committee, and often dominates its performance, although there is no constitutional provision for his membership on it, or even his attendance.

Here is a system which is frequently described as "democratic," but which in practice eliminates the effective voice of the laymen after the biennial local conference constituency meeting and permits almost total control by union conference officials without any effective restraint.

The union conferences control the official access of the local conferences

to the General Conference, and also control the contacts between conferences. In these and other ways the union conferences dominate the local conferences, which theoretically should be controlling the union conferences. One result is that the line of authority goes around in a circle, instead of proceeding in a straight line from one administrative level to another. In practice, both the local conferences and the General Conference are subservient to the union conferences, where the administrative power has tended to concentrate.

This kind of organization gives the union conferences a large degree of independence; and historically this was desired in order to avoid a hierarchy that might tend toward administrative absolutism. But there is no built-in provision for check and balance. The church in North America now has ten centers of control instead of one. Whether this is good or bad depends on one's viewpoint. It may also depend, at least partly, on the size of the organization: what was sufficient in 1902 for 63,000 members may be inadequate now for 426,000.

If all went well — that is, if all the managers were all-wise — this system might be satisfactory, for it provides a tight circle of authority, well fortified against attack of every sort — even suggestions for improvement. But as a matter of history, all has not gone well. At the present time there is a great deal of unrest — among conference workers, educational personnel, business and professional persons among the laity, and others. And there is no effective way to voice complaints to an independent monitor who can command respect and ensure compliance with the policies laid down by local conference constituencies or the General Conference. Urgently needed is some way to appeal the actions of the established circle of command.

The present challenge is fourfold: (1) Can we strengthen and modify the central authority of the church to operate more efficiently and economically? (2) Can we provide a check-and-balance for the union conferences? (3) Can we provide an effective route of appeal apart from the established circular lines of authority? (4) Can we make these modifications without setting up an undesirable absolutism?

III

JONES: I have just come to the union conference level, and I cannot support many of the statements by Mr. Randall. In the Lake Union Conference there are no local conferences where the union conference president or any other staff member dominates the executive committee meetings. We serve as advisers and that alone.

As to lay representation on the local conference committees, there are at least four laymen on each executive committee in the Lake Union Conference. There are also four laymen on the union conference committee. We feel that this gives adequate checks and balances.

ILES: In the Southern Union Conference the president's office had a revolving door for a couple of years, with presidents coming and going. And they were accountable to the General Conference and to the constituency.

RANDALL: I don't know the details of what happened there, although I heard rumors about it in Nebraska. But I understand that when the General Conference officials came to the Southern Union Conference, they had to come, not as officials directing what should be done, but as pleaders urging the local constituency to make certain changes. The authority to make the changes remained entirely with the people. Now maybe this is desirable. I am not contending that it is wrong. I am merely pointing out the situation that exists.

STOKES: One of the things we must do in analyzing any organization is to compare the "blueprint" organization with the informal organization. Almost every organization operates in terms of personalities and circumstances, shortcutting the official procedures. Thus, to describe the General Conference or a local conference without describing particular events and particular people, and the way particular decisions were made, does not show how things really work. We see on one hand the theory, but quite a different thing in practice. It is very difficult to describe something that is alive unless you describe what the live people do, not what they are supposed to do.

RANDALL: I would say that it is a weakness to rely on personalities for procedure. We can get ourselves into trouble with that kind of thing.

WILSON: You must remember that beyond the constitution, we have a "working policy," which is far more detailed than most people suppose. The most recent edition of the General Conference working policy came out after the 1970 General Conference session in Atlantic City. Now we are developing a North American Division policy book, which will apply the principles of the General Conference working policy to a North American setting.

These policy books should be available for purchase at our conference Book and Bible Houses. There's nothing mysterious about them. There's nothing to hide. They are well prepared. They are well thought through. They have been sifted and combed and refined. I'd just as soon let anybody have them any time.

The working policy spells out some of the relationships that are given very briefly and in a technical way in the constitution and bylaws. Furthermore, practice establishes certain relationships. And when it comes to practice, the office of the General Conference president is not as weak as it may sound in the constitution. There are much greater powers given to an individual than you might assume. However, should one abuse the authority that is given to him by the General Conference Committee, the committee and the constituency can withdraw it. So the constitution is a safe one. And personally, I think this is a very wise type of organization.

As to a union conference president dominating a local conference committee — this may take place in very isolated situations, but it is not the general practice. No union conference president can dominate any committee if the members of that committee will truly fulfill their responsibility and exercise the authority that the constituency vested in them. If they do not have the wisdom and the conscience to stand up and say, “This is what I believe, and this is the way I am going to vote,” I don’t think they ought to continue as members of that committee. One of the greatest weaknesses of the church is that those who are constitutionally asked to carry a responsibility will allow somebody else to do it. Somebody will say, “Well, he may find himself out of a job.” So what? There are plenty of other jobs in this world, and I would be very discouraged if I felt that a committee member, purely to hold on to his position, would allow someone to come in and dominate a meeting.

When it comes to the General Conference being controlled by the union conferences, this is not really correct. It’s true that they choose the delegates to the General Conference session, but they do not dominate the General Conference or its personnel. They have a voice, and that voice should be heard. But let me remind you that the constituency of every union conference always includes all of the General Conference Committee members who may be present at a union conference session. If some union conference were going completely off course, the full General Conference Committee could move in at the next session and could probably swing the constituency in any direction it wanted to take it.

It is true, however, that there is resistance to change. While people should not be so gullible as to swallow every suggestion for change, we should not be so staid and so protective and so cautious and defensive that we can’t see that some changes may be desirable. I think we have come to a time when some modifications should be made.

ALEXANDER: In the beginning, many of the people coming into the

church were of the lower middle class, and the pastors were the "hierarchy type." Where the people have not been helped to understand how the church is structured and how it functions, so that the local church selects the right kind of delegates to the meetings where the business of the church is done, the church automatically falls into the hands of ministers who have been prepared largely to preach. This is a historical problem that perhaps we can't quite solve at this point.

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ILES: If we would give the pastors the opportunity — in fact, require them — to have an understanding of the organization of the church, we would be taking a large first step toward having a more effective organization. And I think a young man going into the ministry should have an understanding of management — how to conduct a meeting, how to set up bank accounts, how to keep a set of church books and analyze a balance sheet, how to transfer real estate. Sometimes a fine young man comes into a local church and is immediately propelled into the position of chairman of the board, and then brings contempt upon himself and his education by his complete lack of understanding. His total experience is what he learned in the dormitory men's club.

WILSON: This type of education should not be limited to pastors. The church ought to develop an ongoing program of education in group dynamics and leadership not only for pastors but also for administrators — conference and union conference presidents — and everyone else who deals with people. It is true that some individuals have natural ability in the art of leading people and maximizing the strength of organization, but this can always be enhanced by summer courses, workshops, and the like.

STOKES: One of the sins of the church in North America is that we have developed a civil-service mentality. We have made it appear that unless a man is promoted first to a better church (whatever that means), then to a conference position, then up the line, he really isn't successful.

WILSON: I want to assure you that there are a great many men in North America who are not seeking a conference office. There are too many who are, but a great many are not. Unfortunately, the church has hurt itself by making it appear that it's a reward or promotion to be given a particular responsibility, and people think that if they are ever going to "succeed," they must get appointed to an office. We have probably given the wrong emphasis, and we ought to develop new perspectives and values.

IV

BARCLAY: Let's move now to the subject of authority in the church, and whether it comes from the top down or is generated from the bottom up. We are told that a General Conference in session is the highest authority; but then we say that the authority in the church rests in the church membership, with the executive responsibility delegated to representative bodies and administrative officers. Can we clarify or reconcile these two concepts?

WILSON: Personally, I see no real conflict. The basic authority (which is the constitutional authority, since we are talking about organization) comes from below. But that authority is delegated by the constituency to organizational leaders because that appears to be the best way for the constituency to carry out its objectives. Thus it sometimes appears that this authority is coming from the top.

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Something that has concerned me a good deal is the matter of understanding what responsibility and authority resides on the various levels. We have been guilty of almost carelessly insulting people by calling them to a constituency meeting without giving them any information about the items that are going to be discussed. We are really asking them to come and just sit and listen and nod their heads and applaud and go home. I think the delegates should know, well in advance, what issues may be coming up at the meeting, and they should have a paragraph or two of background information on each item so that they can do a little personal research if they want to. Furthermore, I think they ought to have a copy of the constitution and bylaws, so that they will know what their authority is, what their limitations are, and what possibilities are open to them. And after the meeting, they ought to be kept informed on what progress has been made on these matters which they determined should be given priority. These things could greatly strengthen the constitutional base of authority.

Some of us really want to see greater participation by laymen who are knowledgeable, interested, and willing to get involved. At the last session of the Central Union Conference, the constituency amended the constitution so that the delegations to the next session will have to include at least twenty percent laymen.

ILES: I know of churches where we have to go out and turn over rocks to find people willing to be delegates.

JONES: For a recent constituency meeting, one conference in the Lake Union sent out the entire program booklet and the constitution at least two weeks ahead of time. And the union conference has done the same thing.

RANDALL: But in a still different area, one conference sent out a letter instructing the delegates not to have any meetings among themselves, or give any thought as to what should be considered or what their position should be; they were to wait for the Holy Spirit to guide them at the time of the meeting. That infuriated many of the folks, because what the letter apparently meant was that they should let the president decide what was to be discussed and get his program approved before anybody else had a chance to think about it.

But evidently this is not the case everywhere. In fact, it is my opinion that the quality and manner of conference administration is not the same in all parts of the country. A number of policies are being administered quite differently in different places. This is one of the things that ought to be straightened out. But I don't know of any way to bring this about.

BARCLAY: Should the recommendations of the General Conference be followed by all the local conferences? How should these policies be enforced?

WILSON: I think the recommendations should be followed, but I would hate to see machinery set up to enforce them. Unless the local people can be persuaded that the General Conference policy is the better way, we accomplish very little in the end. The strength of the church is its dedication to a world mission and the loyalty of individuals to common objectives and goals. Machinery to enforce policies would take the spirit out of the church. I have found that where the church leadership levels with the people, gives them all the facts, and tells them what the alternatives are, about eighty percent of the people see the light and say, "It makes sense. Let's go with it."

There have been union and local conferences that have taken a rather independent attitude: "Well, we're on our own. We're financially independent. We don't have to follow those antiquated policies. We're an enlightened group here." And they have gotten themselves into some serious difficulty. With proper counsel it is good to experiment with changes in a given location, but an independent course by a union or local conference can give the wrong example to the churches. Some local churches are saying, "Well, we're independent too. After all, we're supplying the finances and looking after ourselves, and we don't have to listen to the conference." If this attitude were to take hold, we would defeat the very purpose of our church organization.

RANDALL: This is one of the most delicate issues confronting the church. I agree with the importance of voluntary cooperation, with everybody having his heart in the work. But it is very uneconomical to spend thou-

sands of dollars having a Fall Council make recommendations that are then ignored in certain places. It seems to me that there should be some way in which the people — the laymen, the local pastors or teachers — could get redress if their conference administration is not following the official church policy. This would increase the unity that is so desirable.

To have the basic authority in the local constituency is fine. But then we could elect delegates to a top authority, such as the General Conference, which would then see that its official policies were carried out in the union and local conferences. If they were not, we could have the proper constitutional means to deal with the situation without having to wait two or three years for a constituency meeting.

STOKES: We have stressed the structure of our local and union conferences and the General Conference. Yet we are, after all, a group of local churches. And it seems to me that it is precisely here that we are weakest. Is it any wonder that the power has tended to migrate elsewhere?

There are problems at the local church level that make it difficult for authority to rest where it ought to. For example, the frequent change of ministers means that in many churches there is no continuing leadership except that provided by laymen; and frequently the laymen, because of this change, are left uninstructed and wonder what comes next. The smaller the church, and often the smaller the conference, the more likely this is to be the case. And we have a large number of churches that do not have a regular minister at all; the average conference has only about half as many pastors as it has churches. I see no reason why we could not provide a pastor for every church in North America — we could well afford it — and continue pastors for much longer periods, making changes far less frequently than we do. Though the top looks quite impressive, the bottom of the pyramid is weak indeed.

JONES: This reminds me of a story about two fellows who wanted to drive a big tractor-trailer truck. But they didn't have the right kind of license. They went to the ICC office and asked why they couldn't drive the big trucks, since they had driven all the other kinds. One of the examiners said, "Well, what would you and your pal do if you were in a truck going down a hill, with the truck going as fast as possible, and all of a sudden someone pulled out in front of you?" "Well," one of the fellows said after he had thought a while, "I wouldn't do but one thing. I'd wake up my partner and say, 'You ain't never seen a wreck like we gonna have now!'"

From what I have seen recently, I think that if we don't make a turn, the Adventist church is "gonna have a wreck like we ain't never seen." I believe we have to start at the bottom and strengthen the people to believe that they are part of this program — partners with the ministers.

ALEXANDER: We have been stressing the relationship of the pastor to the local congregation — where, I think we have stated, the authority really lies. One of the biggest problems facing the church is that individuals see themselves brought into the church and recognize some spiritual relationships here, but do not know what it means to be *the church*. If they would see this responsibility, even if they never had a pastor, they could still be a functioning group, taking seriously what it means to be a church.

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This may sound a bit protective of ministers, but we have asked the ministry to do just about everything that everybody else does. If there is going to be a change, there must be a division of labor here, in which the lay person (and he is a lay person in the sense that he is not professionally trained and ordained to preach) does his part.

ILES: That is all too true. We are asking our ministers to be architects, fund raisers, contractors, baby-sitters, and handholders; and I am afraid that some of them are leaving the ministry because they are having to do all these things when they really entered the ministry so that they could be preachers and pastors. One of the things we have failed to teach our ministers is to recognize the talents in the churches and make use of them by delegating authority.

ALEXANDER: Is it possible that the reason this happens is that the lay person still doesn't know his responsibility in the church? The pastor has been asked by the conference committee to be the leader of the church. He has been taught, we hope, to delegate responsibility. But when he steps into the church situation and finds the saints so busy that they are not able to take that responsibility except here and there, he has to take over some things himself. And when he does, they seem to be glad to let him do it.

ILES: The whole world is made up of those who turn the wheel and those who let others turn the wheel. But I say again that there are more who could become wheel turners if the pastors would give them the opportunity and then encourage them along. The laity is not going to come forward spontaneously to do the job. The pastor has to be the catalyst.

RANDALL: It would be very helpful if the conferences, back of the pastors, would encourage this sort of attitude.

STOKES: There is a problem here to which we need to refer: What is the mission of the church — not just overall, but in Berrien Springs, Michigan,

or in Bridgeport, Connecticut? Does our overall structure really permit enough differentiation so that we can look at the mission of the individual church? With all the programs that come down the line, we need to be thinking very seriously about reaching the people in the next block, about meeting specific needs in specific areas.

I recognize that this is not entirely the job of the pastor. My plea was that the pastor remain long enough to become familiar with the needs and learn how to meet them. But beyond that, it seems to me, the conference should help draw out the lay leadership. Perhaps with constant training sessions, our conference sessions would be more meaningful in terms of what needs to be done in particular places. In effect, this is already going on in South America. One of the reasons for the success of the church in Brazil is the concentration on specific problems in particular places and the alerting of the laymen to their responsibility. In North America we have a good organization at the top, but the job must be completed at the local level — by the pastor and all the members. If that's where the authority really is, that is also where we have been failing as a church.

One other element in the church organizational structure (and another source of our problems) is the institution — the school, the hospital, and the like. In the Southern New England Conference, one in every four dollars received by the conference goes directly or indirectly into the institutions. These institutions have very definite roles to play in the development of the church. Some see them as dangerous; some see them as great sources of strength. In any case, they are very important seats of power — whatever that means.

VI

BARCLAY: The next question is, What is the role of the ministry in church organization and administration?

ILES: I would like to repeat that a pastor should be a catalyst in his church. Even in a small church the laity should be assigned chores, and I think lay persons can be depended on to do these chores. People come up to what is expected of them. I don't think we are giving to our young men coming into the ministry a sufficient understanding of church administration.

On the other hand, our administrative processes lack a way to evaluate ministers. Are they producers or nonproducers? If they are nonproducers, how can they become producers? And if they refuse to become producers, how can we move them on? It seems that ordination is tantamount to job security for the rest of one's life.

STOKES: I am wondering just what we mean by "production." We can

look at the amount of tithe received from a church, or the number of baptisms there, or the Ingathering report. I agree that there must be some measure for evaluation, but I am afraid that we are using only statistical measures. As an economist I could hardly reject these, but they are only the beginning. We need to rethink the task of the church in each place, or its "productivity" tends to become a matter of one report after another. I don't think that we have really prepared our pastors for the most important task they have — the ministry of the gospel.

ALEXANDER: The role of the minister is changing from what it was when our church first began. His role as spiritual leader has not changed a great deal; but with the local, union, and general conferences preparing and promoting various programs, his role in the church organization has become that of a pastoral director. He is also a liaison person between the church members and the conference, representing the church to the conference, and is also responsible to the conference committee for the various programs of the church. He is, in a way, "caught" between the conference and the people to whom he ministers; and in preparing him for this ministry, we have to take account of both sides.

One way in which we could use the developing organization of the church to help the pastors is to have the various departmental secretaries — youth activities, stewardship, Sabbath School, and so on — serve as resource persons who would go to the various churches to help the people meet their responsibilities. Then the pastor could do more of his own work.

STOKES: I hope I can say this with love and understanding. There are very few local departmental men who really take their responsibilities as seriously as they ought to. I think we could remove many of them and not miss them.

When we have a sick teacher, I have called the educational superintendent and said, "What shall we do?" And he said, "That's your problem, brother, I'm busy. You get someone locally and take care of it." Or when we are in trouble in the Ingathering campaign, what we get is, "I'm awfully sorry, but my schedule is filled up, and I can't make it down to Bridgeport. But we'll be praying for you." Or there is a serious problem coming up with respect to our dealings with another church. "I hope you come out all right, but we can't make it there. You are a little out of the way, you understand." That happens over and over again.

People resent being left alone. If you are going to say to the laymen, "This is what you ought to do," then you have to help them, you have to guide them. You have to know what will actually work in Dowagiac, or in

South Bend, or in New York City, so that you make sense when you say, "This is what you should do." And you have to stay with them a little bit.

If that were happening, I think there would be a little more satisfaction, and a little more success. If we have this wreck to which Elder Jones referred, it will occur at the local level. And it will occur in spite of our sincerity, despite our hard work, partly because we have very, very difficult assignments given to us. Carrying the gospel to the central city, for example, is a very tough task.

ALEXANDER: As to statistics, I hope there will be a swing to a whole new philosophy, as we have had in regard to stewardship. At first we looked at Madison Avenue, and we got some money out of our people; but we hurt our churches. Then we moved to the principles of stewardship we had all the time, voiced by Ellen White, and we have had great revival.

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RANDALL: Along with this, we ought not to overlook Mrs. White's statement that the administration of business matters in the church should be turned over to business people. In a small church a pastor has to do all of these things himself; but in large churches we need to divide the responsibilities between ministers of the gospel and administrators. Let's keep in mind that our primary mission is spiritual work, and that's what the ministers are ordained to do. When they are looking after the church books and fixing up the lights and the plumbing, they are not doing their main work. Wherever possible, we should free them from that sort of work by providing competent administrators to whom they can turn over these responsibilities.

STOKES: There are some crucial issues here. Let's take a medium-sized church and suppose that we need a business manager. No layman could do this job without some financial assistance. Should we use the tithe for this purpose? Should we use these funds to build the kind of staff that a pastor needs so that he can do his work? Should all the staff be ordained? If the conferences can exchange tithe funds for nontithe funds to support institutional and other programs, shouldn't the local church have this same option to exchange funds? This would make it possible for some churches to strengthen their administrative staff.

VII

BARCLAY: The next question concerns the role of the laymen and their responsibilities and rights in the church structure.

RANDALL: The laymen have the responsibility of doing the best they can to support the church. But different laymen have different capacities. In some churches there is not very much lay capacity, and so the laymen there

are not going to have very much responsibility or very much authority. But in other churches there is a good deal of lay capacity, and the laymen there should be responsible for a lot of things. They have a duty to help the church, and they should have some authority to go with it.

This brings up the related question of the organization's attitude toward these laymen, and here administrative flexibility is extremely important.

A conference president, for example, might deal with a church of a thousand members differently from the way he would deal with a church of sixty-three members. Also, some laymen, by virtue of their education and experience, are entitled to be listened to. It's our policy now that at all levels of organization laymen are included in committees, and that's good. The organization men should see to it that the laymen are given the responsibility and authority for which they are competent. Surely the writings of Ellen White are clear that we should turn over as much work as possible to persons other than the preachers.

ALEXANDER: There is sometimes a fear on the part of lay members that may stop them from exercising either their responsibilities or their rights. "We should not touch the Lord's anointed. He's ordained, he's been called to speak the word to us, and we must listen." It's hard for some laymen to perceive the minister as another member of the body in which they too are members.

A process of education is needed here, so that every person coming into the church — not after he gets in, and begins to wander around and wonder who he is and what his rights are — understands what church membership means, in terms of its structure and its work. Here, I think, the ministry may have failed, for we have taken our own role too seriously.

RANDALL: I would like to say that the little book *Christian Service* is a gold mine of instruction for laymen's activities. Its message, basically, is that the ministry will never finish the work of the church; the work will be finished by concerned, dedicated, working laymen, with the ministry guiding them in the various areas of their work.

Now, as lay activities leader in our little church I took this idea to our advisory group, made up of our minister (who is an older man) and some young seminary graduates (who are studying at the University of Chicago) and said, "Do you think this is a credible plan?" They said, "Definitely. We will buy it." I said, "Okay, if you will buy it, will you act as counselors to help every one of our laymen know how he can use his ability in his own working, social environment to be a more practical Christian witness?" They said, "Stop right there. We have never been trained to do this kind of

counseling.” I was flabbergasted. I hadn’t realized that we have in the church an army of officers who are unable to train the troops. We must come to grips with this problem. We must come to a point where the ministry has the capacity and the time to train every individual layman to do his job according to his ability.

Thinking of the responsibilities and the rights of laymen, some time ago I worked on this subject to see what I could develop. I will read off to you the results, for whatever value they are. The responsibilities of a layman: (1) to strive consistently to improve his relationship with Christ; (2) to make a total commitment to the soul-winning objective of the church; (3) to qualify himself in at least one service area for the church; (4) to advance God’s cause through the judicious use of his time and money, applying the principles of economy and sacrifice; (5) to participate actively in the decision-making processes of the church at whatever level he is qualified.

In the area of the rights of the layman, I concluded that (1) he should have free access to information about the church, including (*a*) financial matters, (*b*) major problems and proposed alternative solutions, (*c*) working policy, and (*d*) committee actions; (2) he should have freedom of speech and the opportunity and time to respond to the information he receives; (3) there should be representation by qualified laymen at all policy-making levels, in equal numbers with qualified church administrators; (4) he should be able to expect denominational employees at all levels to accept, follow, and teach the principles set forth in the Bible and the writings of Ellen White; (5) he should be taught how the church structure actually functions.

VIII

BARCLAY: The next question is whether there should be a reduction or an increase in the number of levels of church administration in North America. Should the present sixty-one local conferences and ten union conferences be continued as they are now structured? Could the union conferences be eliminated? Could the local conferences be eliminated?

STOKES: My overall proposal is that we pretty well scrap the local conferences and replace them with smaller, more local units that would bring churches together for the discussion of local problems. We could have perhaps a thousand such conferences in North America, without very much authority and with more temporary personnel. The job of president would be only for a year or two, and might circulate among the pastors in an area; but it would have no great honor and no great power and would not be something to be sought after. The union conferences would perform the

essential administrative functions; and it would have the role of guiding, setting the pace, and providing technical direction. Since there would be relatively few union conferences and many, many local conferences, presumably there wouldn't be the struggle to get on top, and we could focus on the task which we have to do. As it is, the local conference is a fifth wheel — basically unnecessary in carrying on the task of the church, and it has complicated the problem of evangelism. We have developed an organization that has become top-heavy and has shifted us away from our basic task. Therefore, I am prepared to make a radical suggestion: we should downgrade the local conference to the minimum essentials.

Now in order for this to happen, we have to do something about the handling of funds, because this is the source of power. What happens to our money? Where does it go? We must face the problem of what we do with the tithe. We also have to face the problem of the institutions. We have too many colleges in North America. Possibly we have too many of many kinds of things. We cannot afford them at the current level, and they are not essential to the performance of our task.

WILSON: There are many, many things that could be said on the other side of this question. But this is a very real issue, which we must not shrug off or take lightly. We are becoming almost muscle-bound with organization. There is perhaps too much superstructure, and it is going to topple one of these days if we are not careful.

At present we have a task force reviewing and assessing the entire church program in North America — the geographical and numerical size of various units, their financial strength, their efficiency, their interrelationships, their problems of communication and transportation. All of these things are being looked at, and we have asked this task force to come up with several options.

Personally, I am very reluctant to see the conference weakened in any way. There needs to be a point of reference to which the local churches tie. There needs to be a combat unit big enough, strong enough, effective enough to pull together the various elements needed to do the job. It may be that some of these combat units are now much too small, and we may be able to enlarge these conferences considerably.

There are other areas that we ought to look at. The union conferences came into existence for a particular purpose, and I think that purpose might be accomplished with less than ten of them. And there may be areas of overlapping or duplication in departmental work that can be trimmed. If you have any ideas, share them; we need all the help we can get.

IX

BARCLAY: To close our discussion, I have asked Doctor Alexander to talk about the role of the Holy Spirit in church organization.

ALEXANDER: In the preface of his translation of the Book of Acts, J. B. Phillips says that before the church was fat and muscle-bound from over-organization, a group of people were open to the Holy Spirit in such a way that even their enemies had to say, "These men have turned the world upside down."

A Baptist preacher once said to a group of his fellow ministers, "Ninety-five percent of what the church is doing could go on if there were no Holy Spirit, and we would still be building a vast institution and getting the credit. But what we must be concerned about is that other five percent."

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We have talked about solidarity and unity, about authority, about the life and vitality of the church. Historically, whenever something other than the Holy Spirit has brought these things, the church has suffered and its mission has not been accomplished. The Catholic church had institutional authority; the Protestant Reformation found its authority in Scripture, but soon transferred it to doctrine. The enthusiasts and Pentecostals, tired of organization and institution, have gone for experience. I think that we can see that something has happened in our own church; we have tried by organization and education and promotion to carry on the work of the church.

The church is an organization, but it is also an organism that depends for its life and vitality on the Holy Spirit, to whom every church member and every committee should come for guidance. We have nothing to fear for the future except as we forget how the Spirit has led in the past.

The Apocalyptic Overtones in Rock Music

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RAJMUND LADYSLAW DABROWSKI

I'm gonna listen to the cries
From the people
Who make this
Worlds End.

ANDWELLA, "Worlds End."

I

When the WHO, a British rock band, first came to America, its members could hardly play instruments. "They put on an apocalyptic stage show to cover up."¹ Today, six or seven years later, the WHO still puts on an apocalyptic stage show, but its function is not to make up for inadequacies of technique. It is the representative of the counterculture, announcing through its compositions that this world is about to die.

To many Christians, rock music is itself a sign of the world's end; it is a fulfillment of the prophetic revelation that strange things will occur at the "end of time." And to many, the WHO still represents the degenerate, sex-and-drug-ridden, young-and-angry men of the counterculture. But the WHO is more than just a product of reaction to the establishment. It offers the world not merely a symptom of a problem, but a solution.

To consider in detail rock music's apocalyptic preoccupation, one should have the background of certain general observations. Often both the films and the music of today are evaluated in Christian circles for their recreational and moral values rather than for the message that they try to communicate. This approach is a mistake, really, because many (if not most)

rock compositions are commentaries on the modern scene. A few rock songs succeed on sound alone, but the majority that are strong are so because of their lyrics. Whether the music is combined with words or not, however, most rock compositions are serious attempts at communicating.

A number of articles and books have been written on rock music's influence in the spreading cultural revolution. But relatively little has been written by Christians about the messages that effectively mirror American society. Some of these messages have a certain apocalyptic significance, but this aspect is generally ignored by both qualified and unqualified critics. For Seventh-day Adventists, the strong apocalyptic overtones in rock music ought to be more relevant than its various other themes.

The idea that apocalyptic concepts belong exclusively to ecclesiastical circles is no longer valid. Not only churchgoers sing about fire and brimstone. Nor are ministers in their pulpits alone in proclaiming the "end." Today's "secular man" often talks about doomsday as much as the nominal or dedicated Christian does; and rock songs contribute heavily to the universal (both geographic and ethnic) awareness of the approaching end of the present world.

II

The rock music scene, with its starry "age of Aquarius," its en masse events like Woodstock and Altamont, and its individual idols like Bob Dylan and John Lennon, is very much involved with the apocalyptic. The wide use of narcotics in the rock culture can be interpreted as an attempt to experience a different-than-present reality — a world without violence, greed, and hypocrisy. There is also among rock fans a revived interest in comic books in which the climax is the deliverance — often on a cosmic scale — of the oppressed from the tyrants. And, in the words of Leon Russell, a rock hero, a "master of space and time," "The only way to stay with it is to read science fiction, because if you study contemporary science, you're constantly in the past."²

Some talk about the destruction of the world, others talk about better days ahead, and still others simply warn the world that *the end is at hand*:

Just like the Seneca,
I have lost my place.
And where I've been planted now,
Soon will be shakin'
Too soon tomorrow will come.

BREWER AND SHIPLEY, "Too Soon Tomorrow."

Bob Dylan, probably the greatest minstrel of our times, and sometimes regarded as the John-the-Baptist of the rock apocalypse,³ predicted a few things about the future of this poor world, but was relatively vague about the particulars of the end.

Among those who talk of the end of the world in terms of destruction, there is a two-way development. On the one hand, there are some who strongly suggest that the end will be caused by the direct intervention of a supernatural force. On the other hand, a majority say that it is man who is destroying the world by his irresponsibility toward this earth and its inhabitants:

What have they done to the earth?
 What have they done to our fair sister?
 Ravaged and plundered and ripped her and bit her,
 Stuck her with knives in the side of the dawn,
 And died her with fences,
 And dragged her down.

THE DOORS, "When the Music Is Over."

Adventists are reminded here of John the Revelator, who linked both ideas: "Thy wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, for rewarding thy servants, the prophets and saints, . . . and for destroying the destroyers of the earth."⁴

In the rock compositions, however, the coming destruction can usually be avoided; mankind still has a possibility of survival, and even a better life on this earth. Some songs encourage us to believe that if we "give peace a chance" (Lennon), there will be brighter days ahead, while others warn us to "get on the right road" today, because tomorrow might be "too late to get started" (Gary Wright).

Since one of the causes of the approaching end is ecological negligence, some of the rock musicians urge mankind to get involved in an endeavor to "save the planet" (Edgar Winter) in order to avert "the end" (The Doors) on "doomsday afternoon" (Earth Island). For others, the crucial issue is man's lack of love — violence, crime, hate — that is "about to destroy the human race." So they sing:

Flame of love is about to die.
 We're gonna fan the fire,
 Come on along.

EARTH, WIND, AND FIRE, "Fan the Fire."

There is admonition, hope, and determination:

We can change this world. . . .
Please, let's make it happen.
For our children,
For our women,
Change the world.
Please make it happen.
Come on.

Can't stand it no more.
The people cheating,
Burning each other.
They know it ain't right.
How can it be right?
Better end soon, my friend.
It better end soon, my friend.

CHICAGO, "It Better End Soon."

66

But the apocalyptic outlook in rock music also includes despair and violence. Some rock compositions, for example, depict an individual struggle for survival in a world of boredom, pessimism, hate, and self-destruction — a struggle that is something like a "dance of the lemmings" (Amon Duul). From the nightmare of "fire and rain" (James Taylor), many seek a pathetic way out in drugs and suicide: "Isn't It a Pity?" (George Harrison). Other compositions portray the end in terms of revolution, in which the hero is the "street fighting man" (Rolling Stones).

In turning toward the East a few years ago, some participants in the counterculture found apocalyptic significance in the appearance of Meher Baba, an avatar from India, who proclaimed himself a messiah, and whose following is still strong both in the Western hemisphere and in India. Among other devotees, Peter Townshend of the WHO dedicated two privately produced albums to promoting the message of a returning Messiah.

And rock music has by no means isolated itself from the traditional Christian expectation of the Second Coming of Jesus. Besides the "Jesus rock" music produced by the "Jesus people" within the rock culture, a few other musicians have used the biblical theme of Jesus' return at the end of the world: "Oh, Happy Day" (Edwin Hawkins Singers), "The Lord Is Back" (Eugene McDaniels).

III

What do we Adventists have to say about this apocalyptic emphasis in the rock culture? What does it mean — in itself and for an Adventist?

An unusual article entitled "The Apocalypse of Our Time Is Over," notes that "properly used, apocalyptic always demands attention. Which is a major reason for its recent popularity. We are passing through terrible times, when everybody wants attention, but nobody quite knows how to command it." The article insists, however, that "the apocalypse of our time is over. And no veil was rent, no revelation deciphered. No antichrist led us astray. No messiah delivered us. Nor did we check into the New Jerusalem." Instead, the doomsday awareness developed into a "popular hysteria," and what we have left is a generalized paranoia about the future.⁵ According to this analysis, rock music doesn't look for the end of the world, or wait for a messiah, any more.

But Adventists still do. Their apocalyptic anticipation is based on their belief in the Word of God. And it is not merely the expectation of the end of the present world, or the hope of mankind learning to love, but the confidence of being "heaven bound" — destined for eternal life. If their message is better than that of recent rock music, one would suppose that Adventists would want to give it to the world all the more vigorously.

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- 4 Revelation 11:18.
- 5 Junker.

It Is Insane
I Beat
My Plowshare

ALAN DAVIES

It is insane I beat my plowshare
 at a stone until it turns to sword
 in the stiff grip of my armed fist.
 I have planted at the furrowed turf
 for all the years there are from twelve
 to middle age, and just beyond,
 and know with certain certainty
 the pull of plow against the fallow ground.
 I know, as others do who till from time
 to time, from that year to this other
 summer, gold in its iniquitous harvest,
 I know the ox out in front
 and the plow behind from end to end
 and back again up the long hot field,
 and back, and again, till the plow stops
 and the summer begins its stint
 as fertilizer and as god of growth.
 I've seen the thistle, as it were,
 of wheat grown solid into air,
 have felt rain moistening the earth
 from brown to black, and have fled
 the house, angry, to see cracked soil
 drink at the well in the sky.
 I know the crop grown full for harvest.
 I know the curl of fingers at a scythe,
 and its low sweep through the field
 and its work of righteous devastation
 as it flattens the wheat to obeisance
 at the feet of the creator-sun.
 And the harvest in the bins, I know also.
 This chapter in the lives of men, this farm journal,
 I know as I know not the bitter taste of war.
 I take the word of others gone before
 that slaughter and slow harvest are not one.

Are Adventists Protestants?

HEROLD D. WEISS

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From its very inception, the Adventist church has claimed to be carrying the torch of Protestantism, fully sharing the Protestant Christian tradition. We trace our ancestry through Wesley, Luther, and the Waldenses, to the earliest Christian Church and to Jesus himself. Therefore Adventists dislike very much being classified among the cults on the fringes of Christianity. In the 1950s the church put forth a serious effort to refute once and for all the charge of "cultism" that had bothered us for some time. The dialogue with "evangelicals" at that time may not have convinced them of the Adventist claim to be the unique inheritors of the Reformation; but it succeeded, at least to some degree, in defending the authenticity of our Christian heritage. The legitimacy of the church's mission was recognized and the possibility of genuine dialogue with other Christians was established on a more solid foundation.

We Adventists see ourselves as reformers who, not quite satisfied with what the Reformation of the sixteenth century accomplished, wish to extend the spirit of the Reformation to its logical limits in order to prepare a people for the Second Coming of Christ. But reformers must keep in mind that they must remain inside the tradition while they wish to reform. Those who attack from outside are not reformers but invaders. In the zeal for reform, it can happen that a person or a group goes beyond the limits established by the foundations for reform. It is indeed legitimate to carry out a reformation to its logical conclusions, but that must be done standing on the foundations originally set forth. If we wish to see ourselves as carrying out the Protestant Reformation, we Adventists must remain true to the axioms of that reformation. Otherwise, no claim can be made to be working from within.

It is no idle pastime, therefore, to review the axioms of the Reformation of the sixteenth century. Protestantism stands squarely on four affirmations: "Faith alone," "Grace alone," "Christ alone," "Scripture alone." These are the criteria by which Protestantism has historically been measured. Any of the four has veto power over any claim to belong to Protestant Christianity. In this essay I would like to concentrate on one of these criteria, because I believe that, while no Adventists would openly challenge any of these axioms today, in practice some are denying their Protestant heritage. There was a time when, in practice and even in theory, some Adventists stood in judgment under the axiom "Faith alone." But the battles over "righteousness by faith" and "grace and law" are over; the ghost of the "Galatian heresy" has been laid to rest.

Today the church must face up to the challenge of "Scripture alone." This confrontation has become unavoidable because of the way in which some Adventists misuse the writings of Ellen G. White. I am convinced that Mrs. White herself would rise to the challenge if she knew of the role her writings are being forced to play in the church.

I

In order to put this challenge in perspective, we must first establish what "Scripture alone" meant as a basic axiom in the Reformation. And this includes understanding what "tradition" meant as that to which "Scripture alone" was opposed. It is easy on a superficial basis to dismiss the word "tradition" as non-Protestant, and to react negatively at the very mention of the term. But it has different meanings in different contexts. Some historical considerations, therefore, are in order.

First of all it must be said that until the time of the Renaissance no clear distinction had been made between *Scripture* and *tradition*;¹ the possibility that the two could be in tension had not been conceived. The early Christian fathers were aware of the existence of apostolic tradition in Holy Scripture and in oral form, but the matter was not a serious concern. From the fathers, the medieval Church inherited a theological understanding in which "sacred page" and "sacred doctrine" were seen as one indivisible whole. Either could serve equally well to establish truth, for the Scriptures meant what the Church believed. It was the Reformation that made it necessary to formulate with some precision the relationship between Scripture and tradition. This was done by the Roman Catholic church when it formally defined the canon of Scripture for the first time at the Council of Trent.²

But tradition did not become a Catholic monopoly. The Reformers also

used tradition and in turn created several variants. Some of these took a rather definite configuration when they were embedded in the Protestant Confessions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Melancthon showed great concern for tradition and allowed it to play an important role in the formation of what he viewed as Protestant orthodoxy.³ When controversies arose between Reformers, the legitimacy of a particular view was defended by appeals to the early Church. This clearly indicates that it is a misunderstanding to think that those who affirm the priority of Scripture thereby deny the value of tradition. "Scripture alone" is not in itself hostile to tradition. It cannot be. But it must be understood that in this context "tradition" means the form taken by the faith when it is expressed in terms of the ongoing cultural development of Western man. History conditions the expression of the Christian faith. And these various expressions are not only valid for their own time but may also play a legitimate role in informing future expressions of the faith.

In a different context, one could ask the question, "What is Scripture itself, if not a form of tradition?" By their appeals to Scripture, Protestants have correctly emphasized the exclusive authority of the original tradition: the body of information and teaching contained in the Old and the New Testaments. It is original and irreplaceable. The gospel reaches man today in the form of a history at the center of which is Jesus the Christ; and if that history is to serve as a guide to the lives of men today, not only the shaping of the original tradition but also the transmission of that tradition till this day must be given serious consideration.

At times it has been claimed that concentrating on "Scripture alone" gives undue weight to the letter of Scripture, without regard for the fact that before the written word there was the oral word. Biblical scholarship today is very much aware indeed of the historical priority of oral transmission carried on by living witnesses. Even the Reformers, when they spoke of "Scripture alone," knew of the oral as well as the written transmission of the word.⁴ It is impossible to think that Christianity began with the New Testament. It cannot be repeated enough that the fundamental fact of revelation is not a book. The New Testament is the deposit of previous preaching; it is the result of revelation. The whole pattern of the New Testament makes clear that its origin was in oral tradition. In the middle of the second century, Papias spoke of the written gospels as second best to the oral reports of the disciples of those who had been disciples of the Lord.⁵ The "word of the Lord" was originally the word of preaching and only secondarily the written word.

II

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At the time of the Reformation a controversy arose as to the nature and the function of the living word. At issue was the question of whether the word could transmit to believers more than mere conceptual information. There was no question that the word could give instruction, orders, exhortations, understanding. But could it transmit the Holy Spirit? Could it transmit grace? The Catholic hierarchy claimed that for the transmission of grace the sacraments were the only means. The Reformers challenged this, especially because the Church claimed a monopoly over the sacraments on the basis of apostolic succession. To the Reformers "Scripture alone" meant to oppose the claim that the living activity of grace, operative in the sacraments of the Church, was what gave the Roman hierarchy its authority. They were not denying the historical priority of oral tradition or setting up the written over the oral tradition. They were denying that the activity of grace operating through the sacraments gave the Church its authority. They found authority for themselves in the gospel, in the power of the word, so that even Scripture was to be submitted to the exclusive authority of the gospel. It was on this basis, for example, that Luther could judge the Epistle of James to be "a rather strawy epistle"⁶ in comparison to the more substantial letters of Paul; Christ is not in it with as resplendent a force as he is in Romans. This means that the authority of Holy Scripture rests, paradoxically, on the gospel — that is, essentially on the living, the spoken, word.⁷

It was only later (in the seventeenth century, when Protestantism experienced a hardening of the arteries) that, in order to buttress itself against the advances of historical research on the biblical traditions, Protestant orthodoxy carved out the doctrine of verbal inspiration. But this timid attempt to safeguard the word of God by freezing it in the words of a book, seen from today's perspective, only serves as a further indication of the loss of vitality suffered with the passage of time. To be sure, verbal inspiration was a doctrine developed in order to defend the principle of *Sola Scriptura*. But defend this principle, it could not. In fact, it quite soon became a threat to it. Thus before historical science could affect the word of God, it finished with the doctrine of verbal inspiration.⁸ Protestantism thus returned to its historical position of not identifying the word of God with letters on a page, be these even the letters written by the hand of Paul himself on the original parchment that had his signature.

After these preliminary considerations it may now be understood clearly what the Reformers were denying when they affirmed "Scripture alone." They were not denying the fact of tradition, nor were they denying the im-

portance of tradition in either of the two contexts discussed above. Implicitly they recognized the origin of Scripture in tradition, and explicitly they took recourse to the historical tradition of the faith. What they were denying was the right of tradition to set forth the meaning of Scripture. They were denying to tradition hermeneutical mastery over Scripture. They were defending the right of Scripture to be its own interpreter.

For Scripture to be the only source of revelation it must also be the only source for its own interpretation. When in his debates with representatives of the Roman hierarchy Luther insisted that he be proved wrong from Scripture, his opponents insisted that the fathers they were quoting were rightly interpreting the Scriptures. And *there* is where Luther planted his flag and refused to recant: he denied the authority of any tradition that sets itself up as the interpreter of Scripture. Historically speaking, it cannot be said that Luther's appeal to Scripture was his desperate attempt to save face after all other foundations had crumbled under his feet.⁹ It was not the case that between 1517 and 1520 Luther suffered a collapse of authority and then as a last resort made his appeal to Scripture. Luther had been constrained by the Scriptures under the influence of his Augustinian teacher, Trutvetter, who had already used the "Scripture alone" principle, even if not in the same way Luther later employed it. It was because Luther was apprehended by Scripture and its power that he found himself free from all other authorities and was able to consider them as subordinate to Scripture.

Luther was the first one to make it clear that the question of the authority of Scripture in relation to other theological authorities is dependent on the question of the interpretation of Scripture. Although he was indeed defending the uniqueness of the word of God in Scripture, his appeal to "Scripture alone" was not primarily a battle cry to defend inspiration or revelation. Luther was denying that anybody or anything outside Scripture could exercise hermeneutical control over Scripture. He was determined to test the prevalent ecclesiastical attitude toward Scripture, which in effect was driving people's attention away from Scripture and toward the authorized interpretation of it. If the people are told that the meaning of Scripture can be gotten immediately from an authorized interpreter of Scripture, the inevitable result is the neglect of Scripture. It does not take long before the Scriptures are no longer able to speak with their own voice.

The Church buttressed its position by claiming that Scripture cannot be privately interpreted. It was generally agreed that the willful interpretation of Scripture by one individual was the root of heresy. One man's interpretation was the affirmation of one's own will, and Luther as a monk had

renounced his own will when he took monastic orders. Luther knew all this, of course; and the possibility that his theological battles were only a battle for the affirmation of his own self never ceased to torture him. But soon he became aware that the danger of individual interpretation was not avoided by acceptance of a traditional interpretation.

If one were to accept the interpretation of Saint Augustine, who guaranteed that Saint Augustine had not been guilty of individual interpretation? Besides, even if one were to accept Saint Augustine's interpretation as authoritative, how could one be sure that he was not interpreting Saint Augustine in his own individual way? Luther insisted that the tradition could not guarantee the meaning of Scripture. Rather, Scripture was to exercise authority over the meaning of the tradition. The only way to safeguard oneself against Saint Augustine's individual interpretation was to interpret Saint Augustine according to Scripture, and not Scripture according to Saint Augustine.

So if there is danger in individual interpretation of Scripture, the thing to do is to turn to the text of Scripture itself and not to other writings. It is *only* in Scripture that one may draw upon the Holy Spirit in order to judge all other commentaries, pagan or Christian.

What is at issue is the nature of Scripture itself. If Scripture is considered a difficult, strange, ancient, opaque book that lets itself be understood only stingily, then it might be argued that other lights are needed in order to throw light upon it for its treasures to become more easily accessible. In the process, however, these other lights will attract attention to themselves, since the nature of their light becomes important. But if Scripture is a true light itself, if it is lucid and transparent, then its light is what illumines every other source of light. Then the study of the text of Scripture itself becomes imperative because all others are to be judged on the basis of it.

"Scripture alone" means that Scripture is its own only interpreter. It speaks for itself. It does not need to seek elsewhere for sources of understanding. The word of God is in Scripture. The Holy Spirit and grace are not an ecclesiastical monopoly. The word of God is the subject of Scripture and is illumined by it.

In the search for God's word, all other sources are subordinate, and under the judgment of Scripture. For the study of Scripture all the tools of research are to be used conscientiously and with the rigor the discipline demands. But no preconceived ideas may be brought to Scripture in order to validate it, or to be validated by it. Methods of research may be brought to it, but Scripture must be allowed full control over its own meaning. It must

have full sway in its own interpretation. The interpreter must surrender all his own notions to the mind of Scripture so that the Holy Spirit may work.

III

75 There is no question that Ellen G. White stands squarely in agreement with this classic Protestant understanding of "Scripture alone." Her appreciation of the Scriptures as the only source of Christian access to the word of God is well documented throughout her writings. Her understanding that the Scriptures are their own best interpreter is amply demonstrated.¹⁰ It would be preposterous to suggest that she considered herself the one called upon to exercise hermeneutical control over Scripture. Never did she wish to become the one who stands over the word of God and judges it as to what it means. Her words in these matters are quite explicit. In no way did she envision becoming a distraction from the study of the word of God. She never claimed that her writings were a shortcut to the meaning of Scripture.

Thoughtful investigation and earnest, taxing study are required in order for this word to be understood. . . . The evidence of the truth of God's word is in the word itself. Scripture is the key that unlocks scripture. The deep meaning of the truths of God's word is unfolded to our minds by His Spirit.¹¹

Mrs. White did not see herself as a guarantor of the meaning of Scripture, in this way drawing people away from Scripture to her own writings, where the meaning of Scripture, supposedly, could be obtained more easily. On the contrary, she insisted on the necessity to study the Bible, because only there are the treasures of God available. She said: "There are truths in the word which, like veins of precious ore, are hidden beneath the surface."¹² "These Scriptures are a treasure-house of precious pearls, and all need them."¹³ "Precious treasure will be secured by those who study God's Word with earnestness, for heavenly angels will direct the search."¹⁴

Anyone familiar with her writings knows Mrs. White's position on the principle of "Scripture alone." It is ironic, therefore, that her writings have come to be used by some as a means of drawing students away from the Scriptures and of establishing the meaning of a certain passage. "Scripture alone" demands, rather, that the meaning of the writings of Mrs. White be determined by the biblical word.

There is no shortage of people who feel that if Mrs. White has interpreted a text of Scripture in a particular way, that is the *only* meaning of the text, and that anyone who interprets the text differently is thereby challenging the authority of Mrs. White. Nothing could be more contrary to her

own spirit and practice, and nothing could paralyze Seventh-day Adventism more effectively. At no time did Mrs. White think that when she commented on a passage of Scripture she was declaring its meaning once and for all. This is clear from the fact that she gave different interpretations to the same passage on different occasions. An example of this practice is her interpretation of the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13): in *Christ's Object Lessons* she interprets it in terms of the Second Coming of Christ;¹⁵ but in *The Great Controversy* she applies it to the period before the 1844 disappointment, saying that it "illustrates the experience of the Adventist people."¹⁶ This indicates that as far as she was concerned the application of a passage of Scripture she had made at one time in no way was to be considered the *only* meaning of the passage.¹⁷

Mrs. White repeatedly encouraged students of the Scriptures to dig deeper in order to find further meaning. She promised that earnest students would be further illumined by the Holy Spirit and given a deeper view into the mysteries of God.

Those who dig beneath the surface discover the hidden gems of truth. The Holy Spirit is present with the earnest searcher. Its illumination shines upon the Word, stamping the truth upon the mind with a new, fresh importance. . . . The preciousness of truth is realized as never before. A new, heavenly light shines upon the Word, illuminating it as though every letter were tinged in gold. God Himself has spoken to the mind and heart, making the Word spirit and life.¹⁸

The worship of the living God is to be continually assisted by an ear that is open to the words "Holy, Holy, Holy," when these are spoken in a new voice. The Scriptures themselves already said it well: "Every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old" (Matthew 13:52). This means that there can be no conflict between what Mrs. White may have brought out of a passage of Scripture in her time and what an earnest student of the Scriptures may bring out today. And if with the tools of scholarly research a biblical student establishes the meaning of a passage of Scripture in its original setting, he is in no way contradicting or challenging the meaning that Mrs. White may have given to the same passage. Nor was Mrs. White contradicting herself when she gave a second meaning to a passage of Scripture by considering it from a different perspective.

IV

It is imperative for the church that wishes to carry the Protestant Reformation to its logical limits to strictly enforce in its practice the principle of

"Scripture alone." The Adventist church must therefore insist that Mrs. White is to play the legitimate role for which she was called of God. She was not called to draw people away from an earnest study of the Scriptures, or to offer herself as a shortcut to its meaning. Rather she was a witness to the necessity of earnest and prayerful Bible study so that new meaning, new veins of precious ore, may be tapped to the glory of God. She is in no way to be considered the guarantor of the meaning of Scripture that makes all further searching unnecessary, and that exercises hermeneutical control over the Bible. No book, in either black covers or red covers, can control the word of God.

The Holy Spirit is still active to energize the mind and the heart of one who diligently searches the mysteries of God's word. The Spirit alone can guide a man to the presence of the Eternal. As Mrs. White herself said it: "Only by the aid of the divine Teacher can we understand the truths of God's Word."¹⁹

NOTES AND REFERENCES

- 1 From a historical point of view, it was humanism that made the distinction necessary. See W. Maurer, *Luther's Verständnis des neutestamentlichen Kanons, Fuldaer Hefte*, XII (1960), p. 53.
- 2 See Josef R. Geiselman, *Das Konzil von Trient über das Verhältnis der Heiligen Schrift und der nichtgeschriebenen Traditionen in Die mündliche Überlieferung; Beiträge zum Begriff der Tradition*. Edited by Michael Schmaus. (Munich: M. Hueber 1957), pp. 123-206.
- 3 See P. Fränkel, *Testimonia Patrum: The Function of the Patristic Argument in the Theology of Philip Melancthon* (Geneva: E. Droz 1961).
- 4 See Gerhard Ebeling, *The Word of God and Tradition*. Translated by S. H. Hooke. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1968), p. 110.
- 5 Papias *Exposition of the Lord's Oracles*. Quoted by Eusebius *Ecclesiastical History*, III, 39, 3-4.
- 6 Martin Luther, *Werke* (Weimar edition 1883), *Die deutsche Bibel*, volume six, p. 10.
- 7 Luther, volume ten, part 1-1, p. 17.
- 8 A good example is provided by Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, revised edition (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company 1965).
In a review of this book in *Christianity Today*, April 15, 1966, pp. 34-36, Gleason L. Archer, rather than recognizing "a demonstrable error in the original autograph of Holy Scripture," prefers to suppose a "textual emendation" for which, however, there is no textual support whatever. Thus the proper designation for what he suggests is "textual conjecture."
- 9 This rather common Roman Catholic argument, although inadequate in view of the evidence, is still presented at face value. See, for example, James T. Burta-chaeall, *Catholic Theories of Biblical Inspiration since 1810* (London: Cambridge

University Press 1969), p. 285: "The first Reformers, once they had thrown off the authority of Rome, had to cast about for some new authority of last resort; they located such in the Scriptures."

- 10 Among the numerous references that could be given here, see Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Teachers, Parents, and Students* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1913), p. 462; and *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1923), pp. 105-106.
- 11 White, *Testimonies for the Church*, nine volumes (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1948), volume eight, p. 157.
- 12 White, *Testimonies for the Church*, volume eight, p. 157.
- 13 White, *Counsels to Teachers, Parents, and Students*, p. 456.
- 14 White, *Evangelism* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1946), pp. 214-215.
- 15 White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1941), pp. 406-407, 414.
- 16 White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1911), p. 393.
- 17 The fact that the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, seven volumes (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1953-1957), volume five, pp. 508-509, follows the interpretation given in *Christ's Object Lessons* and makes no mention whatsoever of the interpretation in *The Great Controversy* can in no way be construed as an attempt to challenge Mrs. White's role in the church. For reasons of his own, and taking into account the purpose for which he was writing, the commentator preferred one interpretation over the other — perhaps because he felt that it had better support in the context of Matthew's Gospel.
- 18 White, *Selected Messages*, two books (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1958), book two, p. 39.
- 19 White, *Sons and Daughters of God* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1955), p. 68.

REVIEWS

Parallels and Divergences in Christianity and Science

IAN M. FRASER

THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND SCIENCE

Edited by Richard H. Bube

Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company 1968

318 pp \$5.95 (paper \$2.45)

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In its ranks the Seventh-day Adventist church now has a modest number of scientists, nearly all of whom have been raised in the church but have taken their advanced training in public universities or in private universities with no particular religious emphasis. Although few have attained great scientific distinction, Adventist scientists represent a technically competent group capable of experiencing their own encounter between Christianity and Science. The early development of Seventh-day Adventism took place during a period when this encounter was proceeding with great vigor. Consequently, it is not surprising that the inspired counsels of Ellen White include a significant body of material that has served as a basis for the church's historical position in this area.

In the course of their education and experience, today's Adventist scientists have found that this historical position is not always adequate to meet the challenges of current scientific thought and knowledge. Scientists of other relatively conservative or evangelical groups have faced or are facing similar problems. Although published several years ago, *The Encounter between Christianity and Science* represents a response of current interest from one group of competent scientists who are also convinced Christians.

I

Bube (recently appointed editor also of the *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation*) is an able spokesman for the viewpoint that he represents. He contributes the book's four opening chapters — "The Nature of Science," "The Nature of Christianity," "Natural Revelation," and "Biblical Revelation" — and in them presents his view of the nature of Science and of Christianity and their relation to revelation.

I enjoyed particularly his discussion of the nature of Science. He says something I have tried many times to say about the so-called "scientific method," but he manages to phrase it much better than I ever have: "A mythology of the scientific method has developed in which 'the method' is pictured as a kind of efficient machine. If observations are poured into one end and the crank is turned, the method automatically produces valid and useful results from the other. There *are* scientific methods. Of more

importance, however, is the scientific attitude or frame-of-mind. The work of science is done by people and not by some automatic process. It is carried on with liberal doses of intuition, frustration, hard work and dogged persistence" (p. 20).

Bube views Science as a way of life that must be lived to be understood fully. He draws a parallel between the scientist as a member of his community and the Christian as a member of his community; and he bases a call for mutual understanding on the many similarities he finds in these experiences. Perhaps one of the most striking parallels noted is that of the constant exercise of faith. The individual scientist accepts much information by faith and many concepts on the basis of trust in the testimony of others. The proposition that the natural world can be described in an orderly fashion through the application of precise language is also viewed by Bube as an article of scientific faith.

Bube challenges the air of finality and assurance often conveyed by the assertion that something is a "scientific fact" or a "scientific law." He emphasizes the tentative and transient nature of some scientific "facts," but claims that this is not an argument against the general validity of scientific endeavor. Further, he makes the point that "normally science is not advanced by the discovery that a whole field of knowledge must suddenly be discarded as completely unreliable" (p. 35). However, he recognizes that a new model may need to be constructed; this is the approach suggested by some Adventist apologists in dealing with several problems in Science and Christianity.

In discussing the nature of Christianity, Bube clearly reveals himself as an evangelical Protestant with a deep personal commitment to Christ: "Success in science is achieved by coming to know things, whereas 'success' in Christianity is the result of knowing a person, that unique person, Jesus Christ" (p. 43). Bube believes in a Jesus Christ who provides deliverance from the power of sin and forgiveness for the guilt of sins — a Jesus who came as God and who died and rose again that man might be restored to fellowship with God.

Bube also discusses what he calls caricatures of Christianity. Among them his discussion of the "God of the Gaps" particularly interested me. "It has been natural for man to assign God as the direct and immediate cause for all the unknown and unexplainable phenomena of his experience. . . . As time passes and knowledge increases, the number of phenomena that defy natural explanation decreases. Thus there is a tendency to push the relevance of God and His activity into ever decreasing orbs of influence, to confine God to the gaps of ignorance" (p. 60). Bube believes that the biblical view is quite contrary to this and that God's power is manifest in every aspect of nature: "If we know that a force called gravity keeps the planets in their orbits, this does not remove God from the picture; it adds the how to the Who" (p. 61). (Ellen G. White's comments are in harmony with this view.¹) He goes on: "If we suspect that God worked through processes interpreted as evolution by biologists to accomplish His purposes in creation, we have not minimized the creative power of God" (p. 61). Obviously, Mrs. White and Seventh-day Adventists in general would not find this extension of Bube's viewpoint acceptable.

In the third chapter Bube addresses himself to the question of what kind of understanding of God can be obtained through a study of the natural world. Starting from Paul's statements in Romans 1:20-22, he develops what he believes to be a Christian

approach to natural revelation: that there is indeed strong evidence for the power and existence of God in the natural world, but that such evidence may be interpreted otherwise by one who has not yet met God in Jesus Christ. Consequently, he returns to an emphasis on knowledge of God obtained through the Bible and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as the true basis for an understanding of natural revelation.

Part of the groundwork for Bube's resolution of conflicts between natural revelation and biblical revelation is also laid out in the third chapter. Science — the investigation and communication of natural revelation — is held to be "concerned primarily with the immediate or secondary causes of events. The Biblical revelation on the other hand speaks primarily of the ultimate causes of events. Apparent conflicts between the interpretation of the natural revelation (science) and the interpretation of the Biblical revelation (theology) have often arisen because of an attempt to find ultimate causes in nature (i.e., to subordinate the Biblical revelation to the natural revelation) or of an attempt to find secondary mechanisms in the Bible (i.e., to subordinate the natural revelation to the Biblical revelation). The two revelations *are* different in purpose, in scope, and in means of apprehension. Failure to recognize, however, that the two revelations are complementary and not contradictory is a constant source of confusion" (pp. 69-70).

How miracles relate to natural revelation also receives Bube's attention: "The proper way to think of miracles is not as a suspension of natural law by God, but rather as the utilization by God of a mechanism about which we are ignorant" (p. 77).

Bube argues that man does not possess a soul or a spirit that is independent of his body. Rather, man's spiritual capabilities are viewed as the result of complex interactions of the many parts of which man is composed. Although this view has some elements in common with Adventist theology, his further use of it does not. For example, this suggestion is regarded as resolving the question "If man's body was formed through an evolutionary process, when was man's spirit created?"

In his fourth chapter on biblical revelation, Bube comes to the heart of some of the great issues inevitably raised in the encounter between Christianity and Science. Leading men to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is presented as a principal purpose of biblical revelation. To reveal much about the nature of God and the nature of man, and their interrelationships, is also, he believes, the intent of the Bible. Adventists can hardly fault him thus far.

On the nature of biblical inspiration, his position is not much different from that generally adopted by Adventists on the basis of Ellen White's statements.² Bube believes that "no single mechanism of inspiration seems to suit all instances of Biblical writing. . . . A kind of dynamic inspiration seems most suitable, a special guidance by God without violation of the individuality or personality of the author" (pp. 89-90).

In arriving at his solution to the major problems of the encounter between Christianity and Science, Bube diverges from general Adventist viewpoints: "Understanding the revelational content of the Bible means getting out of the Bible what God put there by inspiration. Understanding the revelational purpose of the Bible means asking the right questions to find out what God put there. . . . The right questions are essentially theological questions, taking that term in its broadest sense to include ques-

tions about the nature of God, the nature of man, the relationship between God and man, and the relationships between man and man in the fulfillment of the God-to-man relationship. The wrong questions are those that seek to establish natural mechanisms for God's activity by looking for these mechanisms in the Bible; there is no information in the Bible, for example, that is either in favor of or opposed to theories of organic evolution" (p. 97). How a man of Bube's apparently strong Christian convictions can make this last statement is doubtless mystifying to most Adventist-oriented minds. However, we must remember the major impact Ellen White's writings have on Adventist thought on these matters. Of course, our arguments for Sabbath-keeping are also based in no small measure on an interpretation of the revelational intent of Genesis 1 and 2 and Exodus 20, which Bube obviously does not accept.

Inevitably, Bube discusses the classic conflict between biblical revelation and Science involved in Galileo's defense of the concept of a heliocentric universe. "It is clear to us today . . . that the mistake of the church fathers was to ask the wrong questions of the Biblical revelation. Having asked the wrong questions and received a false concept of the revelational content, they were forced to the paradoxical impasse of facing a contradiction between God's Natural revelation and God's Biblical revelation" (p. 100). It is tempting to speculate where Seventh-day Adventists would have stood in this controversy had they been around at the time. However, we should be careful not to exaggerate the significance of this controversy. To my mind, it does not afford a very good parallel to the evolution-creation controversy — either in terms of the extent of the biblical reinterpretation necessary to resolve it or in terms of the implications of such reinterpretation.

Bube concludes this chapter by summarizing his views on the general issues of evolution and creation. He simply accepts what he believes to be well-established scientific positions on the great age of the earth and the special theory of evolution. He is less convinced about the general theory of evolution, which he considers a speculative working hypothesis, and discounts evolutionism as not being a scientific position. He regards any apparent disagreement between his views and biblical revelation as due to failure to ask questions consistent with the revelational purpose of the biblical author involved. Thus, for example, he asks (on Moses): "Is it really consistent with the testimony of the Bible about the purposes for which it was written to demand that the Genesis accounts be intended to convey information about the mechanisms of creative activity? Is it not much more in keeping with the whole tenor of Biblical revelation to see in these accounts the triumphant proclamation of God as Creator and Sustainer of the universe, and of man as the highest creation of God, destined for a life dedicated to serving God but fallen into the depths of sin by substitution of self for God at the center of life?" (p. 107).

Bube closes with a rather specific statement of his position: "The answers to evolutionary questions are not to be found in Genesis. Present interpretations of the paleontological record may or may not accurately describe the mechanisms involved in the origin of man. But such answers as will be forthcoming on these problems will come from scientific studies. The Christian must not react in fear to the fossil record. The reliability of the Bible and the vitality of a life with Jesus Christ do not depend in any way on the proof or the disproof of even the general theory of evolution" (p. 107). This posture for an evangelical Christian is an intriguing one that easily pro-

vokes various lines of thought leading to vigorous rebuttals, particularly among those of us who hold historical Seventh-day Adventist views.

II

I have devoted a disproportionate amount of this review to Bube's portion of the book, because he deals in general terms with the major issues which the other authors then amplify in various areas of science. For this reason (though not wishing to do them an injustice), I will not attempt to review the discussions of the other authors in detail but will only comment on some of them.

In the chapter on *astronomy*, Owen Gingerich deals with the problems of the nature and origin of the universe. Adventist thought has developed some solutions in this area, but Gingerich discusses some problems that Adventists have not considered very seriously. Evangelists have often used the wonders of the starry heavens in an effort to impress audiences with the majesty and power of God. This device may be quite appropriate, but usually it ignores interesting questions about God's creative activity which can be raised by many details of our knowledge of astronomy, at least in certain idealized versions of a perfect creation.

The chapter on *geology* by F. Donald Eckelmann is disappointing. There is little real analysis of the geological evidence for evolution; the author tends to appeal largely to scientific authority. He does discuss the evolution of man and concludes that "organic evolution has been verified with sufficient evidence to justify scientific acceptance . . . and applies to man. . . . Adam is representative of all men. The fall represents universal sin and imperfection in humanity. . . . Acceptance of paleontological evidence bearing on mechanisms of organic development in no way conflicts with our personal confidence that the Biblical records are completely trustworthy in all matters of 'faith and practice' " (pp. 168-169).

Again, Walter R. Hearn's chapter on *biological science* is largely uncritical of current evolutionary thought in biology. Rather, it is devoted to a brief and (in my view) unconvincing exposition of the validity of the theory of evolution by natural selection. "In the opinion of the author of this chapter, opposition on Biblical grounds to the theory of evolution by natural selection is unwarranted and actually harmful to Christianity" (p. 220). He regards Henry M. Morris, coauthor of *The Genesis Flood* and author of *The Twilight of Evolution*, as a well-meaning and intelligent Christian who has become convinced by his own arguments that evolutionary thinking is completely contrary to science as well as to biblical revelation. Without necessarily implying endorsement of Morris's arguments, one might suggest that Hearn is also a well-meaning and intelligent Christian — but that he uncritically accepts evolutionary arguments that go considerably beyond the demonstrated facts, and he disregards many major scientific problems of the evolutionary hypothesis.

In addition to the four general chapters, Bube contributes a chapter on *physical science*. He points out that common sense may be adequate as an approach to both the physical and the spiritual world, and he finds interesting relationships between physical scientists and theologians in the way in which they attempt to use ordinary words or phrases to express ideas that transcend common sense. Bube analyzes the collapse of classical determinism and then proceeds to relate the new indeterminism to the questions of chance and providence. A successful analysis of these questions

(in Bube's view) is that of W. G. Pollard in *Chance and Providence*. Bube surveys this book briefly and agrees with Pollard that God's providential activity as commonly viewed by Christians can be better reconciled with the modern evidence for statistical processes in nature than with the viewpoint of classical determinism. In the physical concept of complementarity (particle and wave are complementary when applied to light, for example), Bube finds a parallel to some of Christianity's apparent paradoxes.

The chapters on *psychology* and *social science* also offer some useful thoughts on the relationship of these areas to Christianity. Since I feel much less secure in these sciences, I do not propose to review these chapters. (This should not be construed to imply that I consider myself an authority in the areas I have chosen to examine.)

III

This review is not the place to elaborate my own views on the general issues raised in this volume, but let me make a point or two in conclusion. Adventist scientists who have looked at the facts and issues raised in this volume are well aware of the many problems raised in the encounter between Christianity and Science. Two types of reactions usually occur, one frequently labeled conservative and the other liberal.

The "conservative" viewpoint tends to accept biblical revelation as being as literally scientifically true as possible within reason and common sense. The approach to apparently conflicting scientific data is to attempt to prove it wrong in some way. This approach is not as unscientific as the "liberals" would tend to suggest — as even Bube more or less concedes (p. 106). Those who have concerns and ideas in these areas should be encouraged and supported as long as they follow sound scientific principles in testing their hypotheses. There is nothing unscientific about testing a hypothesis developed on the basis of an interpretation of biblical revelation. Many scientific hypotheses have been developed on a much flimsier basis!

The "liberal" viewpoint tends to move to various degrees in the direction followed by Bube and his colleagues. Perhaps the greatest significance of his book is to show that such movement does not necessarily require the abandonment of basic Christian convictions. But those who choose to move down this path must surely be concerned about the impact on their own personal Christian experience. It seems to me only appropriate that they should maintain also a frankly critical attitude to the scientific evidence rather than what sometimes appears to be an overzealous espousal of current and possibly transitory scientific views. It should be possible to develop a viewpoint considerably more compatible with current Adventist theology and well-established scientific facts than that offered by Bube's book. In fact, a few such suggestions have been made, but not generally discussed nor adequately analyzed yet.

My greatest concern is that both groups and those who stand somewhere between (where I place myself!) be tolerant of each other in the best spirit of Christian love. Let each man seek truth, but not disparage or disregard the insights of another. And may God guide us all.

REFERENCES

- 1 Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, volume eight (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1948), p. 259.

- 2 White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1948), pp. v-xii.
White, *Selected Messages*, book one (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1958), pp. 15-23.

Theology and Comedy

ROY BRANSON

85

THE FEAST OF FOOLS

By Harvey Cox

Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press 1969 204 pp \$5.95

More than anything else Harvey Cox wants to get several theological and social movements to sit down at his *Feast of Fools*. He wants the death-of-God theologians to break bread with those propounding the theology of hope, and he wants the neo-mystics or hippies to celebrate with the militants or radical-revolutionaries. He thinks that festivity and fantasy will bring the death-of-God theologians and hippies, who are absorbing the present, into fellowship with the theologians of hope and the militants, who are busy creating a new future.

Because festivity draws men away from their ordinary lives into a new existence, it appeals to the hippies. Because festivity inevitably puts value in the uncommon, the unprescribed, and the disorganized, it undermines authority and so should appeal also to the militant. If the two groups can celebrate together, the hippies will learn to "transform celebration into a way of being *in* the world, not a way of getting out of it" (p. 112), and the militants will learn that "in certain festive and fanciful moments history allows us to taste in the present the first fruits of what we hope for in the future" (p. 119).

Cox glories in the fact that his feast is a *Feast of Fools*. He lectures to the death-of-God theologians that "it is the very oddness, incredibility, and even at points weirdness of traditional faith that makes it interesting to us today" (p. 132). The clash of symbols precious to the past with experience of the present and visions of the future creates incongruities that are the essence of the comic. Cox suggests preserving these incongruities through juxtaposing symbols of the past and future with the activities of present experience. He realizes that fostering discontinuities and incongruities may result in chaos and silliness and that "the juxtapositional approach is a method for theological jesters" (p. 133). He admits there are dangers in a juxtapositional theology, just as there are in any comic style — "when comedy fails it becomes ridiculous." Still, "when comedy succeeds it shakes us into a new stance, it prepares us for new experiences" (p. 137). So Cox invites theologians announcing

the death of God and those propounding hope to join him at the *Feast of Fools*, where theologians, as jesters, will perform Cox's juxtapositional method.

Cox is a virtuoso at showing everything that festivity and fantasy can do. But after the performance is over, one realizes that he has left his audience confused as to what festivity and fantasy are — especially festivity, his more important category. Cox would justify his exercise in showing us the benefits of festivity if he held to his statement that “festivity is never an end in itself. It expresses our joy *about* something” (p. 46). But forty pages earlier, Cox has said, “Festivity, like play, contemplation, and making love, is an end in itself” (p. 5). If it is, then Cox would have a difficult time showing that it is of the essence of festivity to achieve social change.

Cox discusses festivity inconsistently. When he describes the nature of festivity, he tries to describe too much of human experience with the one term. His description refers to human experiences that can be regarded as ends in themselves, but also includes aspects of festivity that are instrumental.

Cox says, “A festive occasion has three essential ingredients: (1) conscious excess, (2) celebrative affirmation, and (3) juxtaposition” (p. 22).

Conscious excess is that “overdoing it” and “living it up” that we call revelry. The discharge of energy implied conforms to analyses of play found in many contemporary psychologists and those theologians building on their work (notably Johann Huizinga, Ralph Neale, and David Miller). According to these men, play can be instrumental but can also be engaged in for its own sake. It can lead to a freer future or it can be a frolicking in the present.

Celebrative affirmation, according to Cox, is “saying yes to life,” and “includes joy in the deepest sense” (p. 23). For Langdon Gilkey, to experience joy is to encounter ultimacy. For Peter Berger, it is a sign of transcendence. For both men, and surely for anyone who has experienced it, joy is an end in itself. It does not depend on future events to make the present a delight. Instead of using his omnibus word “festivity,” Cox would have been clearer if he had said that play sometimes and joy always are ends in themselves, and if he had analyzed each as clearly distinct from his third aspect of festivity, juxtaposition.

Juxtaposition actually describes the comic. Festivity as juxtaposition is the contrast and incongruity of special occasions with everyday life. “Festivity, however, cannot be reduced merely to the unusual. It is not *just* not working; . . . the reality of festivity depends on an alternation with the everyday schedule of work” (p. 23). Juxtaposition is the essence of comedy. It is never one thing soaring by itself, but one element or incident or quality encountering another in surprise and the resulting clash leading to a laugh. Comedy is instrumental; it does aim at a target; it can undermine pomposity and authority; it can contribute to social change, to the making of a better future.

Cox performs a service by showing that contemporary theological and social movements emphasize the present or the future. He succeeds in showing how the comic relates to the theologians of hope and to the political radicals who wish to undermine present authority to create an improved future. But before he can use the idea of festivity to bring these groups into closer proximity with the death-of-God theologians and the hippies, more thinking needs to be done. First, on the distinctive nature of play and joy, and then on their relation to the comic.

Kinematics of the Sabbath

WILLIAM BLYTHE

THE LORD'S DAY ON A ROUND WORLD

By Robert Leo Odom

Nashville, Tennessee: Southern Publishing Association 1970 (revised edition) 254 pp \$5.95

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Anyone who has bothered, or dared, to consider the problems associated with the definition of the biblical Sabbath will be familiar with most of them. One class of problems, of course, is *theological* and includes those questions posed by "higher criticisms." Another class is primarily *historical*, and deals with the preservation of the weekly cycle. Other questions can be classed as *kinematical*. Some examples in this class are: (a) How is the Sabbath to be defined in the extreme northern and southern latitudes? (b) How is the Sabbath to be defined by the astronaut or the space colonist? (c) What is the significance of the international date line and longitude 180 degrees?

Those who consider such questions to be of the "chicken and egg" variety, or too legalistic to merit attention, will have little interest in Robert Leo Odom's book, *The Lord's Day on a Round World*. Those who consider that such questions merit attention, and who seek rational and ethically satisfying answers, will likewise have little interest.

Odom attempts, and indeed purports, to provide logical answers to many questions of the kinematical class. Herein he fails. In his determination to produce explanations and to establish the rationality of these explanations, unintentionally he succeeds only in establishing the absurdity of the attempt. Beyond this basic flaw, the book is not pleasant reading. The text consists largely of quotations. Their relationship to the principal theme is often obscure at best; if these quotations are pertinent at all, they would be better treated as footnotes.

Early in the first chapter Odom points out that the day, month, and year are basically *natural* time periods and that the week, hour, minute, and second are *unnatural*. After explaining the basis of the natural time periods, in the third chapter he develops his first solution to the kinematical problem:

Let us designate as X the unknown meridian at which nightfall first occurred on earth and thus marked the beginning of creation week's first day. Furthermore, let us remember the fact that evening — or sunset — does not now, and did not then, happen simultaneously at all meridians of the globe. For example, when night was falling at meridian X, day was breaking on the extreme opposite side of the world. Hence, any given meridian, except meridian X, had to wait until the rotation of the globe turned it to the dividing line between light and darkness in order for the first *complete* day of creation week to begin at that specific locality. It did, however, experience an incomplete day before its first evening occurred to mark the beginning of its first *full* day. The length of the partial day depended on the distance the meridian happened to be from the terminator.

Was the partial day counted as the first day or as the second day for such regions? Neither. It was not counted at all in the time reckoning. God started the time count

for the world with the beginning of the first *whole* day that came to any given meridian. The description of the first day of creation week — “The evening and the morning were the first day” — proves it [p. 23].

Now if such a problem really requires an answer, it would seem only fair to point out that there may be other answers than the one suggested. With some control over the extent and intensity of the illumination (which I presume Odom would not deny the Creator), no “partial day” would ever have had to occur. This is especially so if the source of the illumination were not the sun, but some other “light” provided by God. Further, if the sun is meant to be implied as the source of the illumination, Odom does not reconcile this with the biblical record, which is variously interpreted within the Seventh-day Adventist church to state that the sun was either created or “revealed” on the fourth day of creation week.

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More interestingly, in Odom’s terminology, X must equal 180 degrees, to make the book’s thesis complete, even though he states that “the Holy Scriptures do not reveal it [the meridian of the first nightfall]. God has not considered it essential that we know it.” This would seem to be a conclusion consistent with Odom’s acceptance (although more implied than explicit) of longitude 180 degrees as the *natural* location of the international date line:

The reason for the date line goes far back in history. After the Noachian Flood the human family began to multiply in the Middle East and to spread both toward the east and west. Because of the world’s spherical shape, naturally the two waves of people would eventually meet. And they did [p. 65].

Adam’s descendants spread both eastward and westward over the globe. . . . Starting from the mountains of Ararat, the descendants of Noah spread eastward and westward until the two streams of migrants finally met [p. 87].

In spite of the implications apparently intended by the above statements, the history of the permanent setting of the initial meridian (longitude zero), through the center of the transit instrument at the Royal Astronomical Observatory of Greenwich (proposed in 1884), and the resulting confirmation of longitude 180 degrees as the international date line, is fairly well documented. In fact, the political origin of the international date line is explicitly noted in chapter eight: “The date line, which runs north and south in the Pacific Ocean, is the point on the earth’s surface where the world’s governments consider the day to officially begin and end” (p. 90). “Not a law of God, but rather an agreement between the nations, fixed the date line’s precise location” (p. 91). The implication is still present, however, that at least the *general* location of the international date line is a natural phenomenon.

Although Odom points out in chapter seven that “the nations agreed to make the date line swerve a little either to the west or to the east as the case should demand, to avoid crossing any populated land masses” (p. 78), the primacy of longitude 180 degrees in his thinking seems obvious when he discusses the situation in the Tonga Islands. Situated between longitudes 174° W and 176° 10’ W, these islands nevertheless lie *west* of the international date line, which swerves, in those latitudes, to follow longitude 172° 30’ W. This deviation from longitude 180° — so that the Tonga Islands, a part of the United Kingdom, would lie west of the date line — is

probably related to a desire to simplify commercial relationships with Australia and New Zealand, as Odom points out. Seventh-day Adventists on Tonga, however, do not accept the governmental agreements relating to the location of the date line, preferring to use longitude 180° as their reference. The result is that Adventists worship on the same day as other Protestants and Catholics — the day officially recognized as Sunday.

Odom considers the Adventist position in Tonga justifiable and correct, and resorts to some slight distortion of the facts to support this position. In chapter fifteen are the following two statements: "The time count in the Friendly Islands [Tonga] [is] out of kilter in relation to that of *all other peoples east of the 180th meridian* [Odom's emphasis]. . . . We should not be surprised to see the Tongans of the Friendly Islands rectify their time count and fall into line with other Christian peoples in their relationship to the international date line" (p. 167).

Neither of these statements is strictly correct. Portions of Siberia on the Bering Strait lie east of the 180th meridian, but the date line there swerves east to longitude 169° W, so that this portion of Siberia bears the same relationship as Tonga to the 180th meridian and the international date line. As for the second statement, the Tongans *are* in accord with all other peoples in their relationship to the international date line; it is the Adventists who are not.

For those travelers puzzled by the time adjustment required when crossing the date line, Odom offers in chapter eight, a set of "how-to-do-it" examples that illustrate most clearly the impossibility of any rational definition of the Sabbath, although that certainly was not his intention. In apparent recognition of the difficulties, however, he states that "the logical thing to do is to *keep the Sabbath at a given place when it comes there*" (his emphasis) (p. 97). Unfortunately, he fails to note at this point that *when it comes* depends on accepting (a) the international date line, or (b) the 180th meridian, or (c) some other reference. And he seems unable to state clearly and without ambiguity that, as far as we mortals know, *any* such reference, although necessary, is *quite* arbitrary.

Where does this leave us? The recognition of inability to define rationally the Sabbath, and thus the Sabbath commandment, paradoxically, just may help to clarify our relationship to the Sabbath and to the God who commands that we keep it. Seventh-day Adventists believe that the Sabbath will be a crucial issue — or perhaps more correctly, the *symbol* of a crucial issue — in last-day events. "The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty."¹ Isn't it possible that the very irrationality of the Sabbath commandment enhances its ability to be *the* great test of loyalty? If we could answer with irrefutable argument all the kinematical objections to Sabbath observance, and lay to rest with geometric certainty all lingering doubts as to its precise definition, where would be the need of faith and trust in the Creator? Did Abraham view God's command to slay his only son Isaac as rational? If God had presented Abraham with a logical justification for this act, would it have been the great test of faith that it otherwise was? As Robert Short says:

Both love and faith can never give a *reason* for their love; they can only say, "This is my beloved" (Song of Solomon 5:16). But perhaps this is just as well; for if the lover, or believer, could give us a "reason" for loving his love, such as her great

"beauty" or "charm" or "wealth," then it is quite obvious that the lover would not actually be in love with his "love," but that his *real* heart's desire would be beauty or charm or wealth or *whatever* his "reason" might be for loving the supposed object of his love. Thus it is impossible for one to have this kind of ulterior motive and remain a *true* lover, whether on the divine *or* human level; this is why the Christian faith finally is "dogmatic" on one side of the coin, "confessional" on the other.²

Can we do any more (or any less) than say: "My God, whom I love, has asked me to do this thing. I cannot explain it; I cannot otherwise justify it. But he has asked me to do it; and since I love him, I will do it to the best of my ability and understanding." This is an act of faith, and of love, and of loyalty. And by this faith we shall be justified.

Odom closes his book with the following quotation: "Do not allow your mind to wander from the main points of the truth for this time, to grasp unimportant theories and problems. If anyone gives you unessential problems to solve, tell him that God has placed in your hands a work to be done. Tell him that you are doing a great work, and cannot come down to try to solve the problem of the day line."³ One could wish that the author had followed this advice.

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- 1 Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1950), p. 605.
- 2 Robert L. Short, *The Gospel According to Peanuts* (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press 1965), p. 118.
- 3 Ellen G. White, letter 11 (written to Dr. M. G. Kellogg, January 21, 1901).

Book Selections

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- Archaeology in the Holy Land.* By Kathleen Kenyon. New York: Praeger 1970. pp. 360. \$4.50 (paper).
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- Religion and the Scientific Future: Reflections on Myth, Science, and Theology.* By Langdon Gilkey. New York: Harper and Row 1970. pp. 193. \$5.95.
- Rock Strata and the Bible Record.* Edited by Paul A. Zimmerman. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House 1970. pp. 209. \$5.95.

RECENT BOOKS BY ADVENTIST PUBLISHERS

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About Nutrition. By the Seventh-day Adventist Dietetic Association. Southern 1971. pp. 187. \$2.95 (paper).

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I Was Canright's Secretary. By Carrie Johnson. Review 1971. pp. 191. \$2.95 (paper).

Joseph Bates: Outrider of the Apocalypse. By Godfrey T. Anderson. Pacific 1972. pp. 143. \$2.25 (paper).

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Mission to Black America; the True Story of James Edson White and the Riverboat Morning Star. By Ronald D. Graybill. Pacific 1971. pp. 144. \$1.45 (paper).

Seventh-day Baptists: Their Legacy to Adventists. By Russel J. Thomsen. Pacific 1971. pp. 95. \$2.25 (paper).

Walk God's Battlefield. By Godfrey T. Anderson. Southern 1971. pp. 160. \$1.85 (paper).

The Wisdom Seekers. By E. K. Vande Vere. Southern 1971. pp. 288. \$7.95.

Irene Wakeham's discussion of the missionary wage question forms an introduction to the problem and suggests a few possible solutions. But her introduction seems superficial. It fails to state the significance of the problem to the national worker, all the financial and behavioral ramifications it has for him, and how its existence influences his eagerness to accomplish the objectives of the church; and it does not convey the viewpoint of the typical Seventh-day Adventist missionary influenced by the various financial demands made on him.

The national and the missionary have different perspectives. If their outlooks were generally the same, no problem would exist. Hence an introduction that does not consider both viewpoints is unavoidably shallow.

First, Doctor Wakeham proposes that the church consider changing its salary structure from a "communistic" to a more "capitalistic" one — that is, determine an employee's salary by the value of his contribution (p. 27). Such a policy is the one generally adopted by a profit corporation. The Seventh-day Adventist church is not aiming to give its employees a solid economic position in middle-class society. The primary objective of the church is to maximize, per dollar of investment, the number of converts to Christ. Presumably anyone working for the church holds this as his primary goal and will be satisfied with a salary that covers his family's basic needs, including education.

It is believed that as affluence increases, enthusiasm for missions often decreases — possibly because one feels less needful of God. An administrator salaried at \$35,000 a year (reasonable for an administrator of a hospital corporation) in a Seventh-day Adventist hospital in Thailand might perform an efficient managerial task; but if he does not discover how to make his hospital a means for gaining converts, the "high" salary becomes a new problem. Thus the first suggestion would be unwise to implement even if it were financially feasible.

Doctor Wakeham's second suggestion is to reduce the size of overseas staff and use the saved funds to raise the national salaries. She admits that this could cause understaffing in some areas where there is a shortage of qualified national personnel.

The solution I would advance enlarges on this second suggestion:

1. The ratio of the American missionary's salary to the cost of living for the country in which he works should be no greater than the same ratio for the person who holds a comparable job in the United States. For example, if a Seventh-day Adventist college professor receives annual pay of \$10,000 in the United States, then a missionary professor in the Philippines should receive about \$8,000, for \$8,000 has approximately as much purchasing power in the Philippines as \$10,000 has in the United States (according to the 1970 *Statistical Abstracts of the United States*, p. 809). Doctor Wakeham points out that "the missionary already takes a cut of 20-25 percent from what he would be getting if he were working for the church in the United States" (p. 26). But a 20 percent cut for the missionary is in fact no decrease

at all; in some years it might well be an increase. Thus the missionary professor in the Philippines should receive no more than \$8,000.

2. An attempt should be made to reduce the size of the overseas staff by organizing training programs with target dates for sending overseas personnel back home. This should be primary in all missionary strategy regardless of the wage problem.

3. The salary scale for all missionaries and church employees in the United States should be reduced by about 5 percent. This would involve only giving up some of the luxuries that their salaries allow — one of two automobiles, the television, etc.

4. Funds from the reduction of salary expense should be allocated equitably to the national workers in other countries. This might allow some of them not now owning cars to purchase them. Certainly many more spiritual seeds can be sown by the Bible worker with an automobile than by one who must travel on foot. In the parts of the world where the religious involvement and enthusiasm are high, the only obstacle to a greater growth rate is technical restraint. Thus, providing enthusiastic workers with salaries sufficient to permit purchase of vehicles can be seen as a policy of following where the Holy Spirit leads.

Doctor Wakeham suggests that reducing the missionary wage (as recommended here) would make difficult the recruiting of missionaries. The aim of the Seventh-day Adventist church is not to maximize the number of overseas personnel, but rather to maximize the number of *qualified* overseas workers and consequently the size of its church. Need for overseas persons is proportionately decreased as the national church increases in size, as young church members are trained by missionaries, as national technicians and existing professionals are converted, and as these people are then able to take over many of the positions held by the missionary.

The more equitable the salaries are, the more acceptable overseas personnel will be to the people for whom they labor. The degree of cooperation and success should increase. Certainly the whole problem can be considered in the light of Paul's statement to the Corinthian church: "God has combined the various parts of the body, giving special honour to the humbler parts, so that there might be no sense of division in the body, but that all its organs might feel the same concern for one another" (1 Corinthians 12:24, 25 NEB).

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With much of my estimate of Schwantes the reviewers agreed, but they ended by caricaturing me. It is true that I faulted Schwantes for making articles of faith into operational tools, true also that I commended him for recognizing the substantive uniqueness of courses taught within the framework of Christian education. Yet I do not advocate a "parochial variety" of history "for the Adventist classroom," nor answer to the "pious fraud of an overzealous Christian."

A middle ground between the tendentious historian and the pretended neutral, secured through honest disclosure of my biases in the tradition of Dilthey, Croce, and Weber, is what I seek. The awareness that I am unavoidably value-oriented, while not licensing me to "read" into history my metaphysical and theological a priori, does permit me in lesser ways to "Christianize" my courses, and if I but knew the nature

of those "lesser ways" I would be found invoking them. What Schwantes did was protreptic in nature: he unwittingly renewed the search for such solutions. For this I shall continue to applaud him.

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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