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# SPECTRUM

a quarterly journal of the association of adventist forums



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## THE COMING OF THE KING

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The parousia, or return of our Lord Jesus Christ — which has always been one of the central hopes and beliefs of the Christian Church — is based on Christ's many promises, such as the positive statement *I will come again*.

It is clear from Scripture that the early church and its leaders believed this return of their Lord was imminent, *for the coming of the Lord is at hand*. Yet the Lord did not come in their generation. There seems to have been growing awareness in the apostolic church that, after all, only the Father knew the time of the return and that, according to the Scriptures, some human history still had to unfold before that event would take place. Paul reminded the Thessalonians of this when he said: *Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled . . . as that the day of the Lord is just at hand; let no man beguile you in any wise; for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed*. But even with this awareness there was the conviction that *He that cometh shall come, and shall not tarry*, and this belief has been present in the Christian Church to a greater or lesser degree ever since.

From time to time the hope of the imminence of Christ's coming has led to the setting of definite or approximate dates for the event, such as the 1843-44 experience, in spite of the fact that our Lord had said: *But of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father*. And again: *Watch therefore, for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh*.

Less specific declarations frequently voiced about the nearness of Christ's return, such as "in this generation" or "in our lifetime," echo the same longings and hopes present in the hearts of the apostles and witness to the faith in our day that the promises of the parousia will be fulfilled.

Varied interpretations as to the nature and details of the Second Coming have developed within the Christian Church. Some of these have come and gone, mainly those involving detailed interpretations of as yet unfulfilled prophecies and the final events associated with Christ's return. Such detailed accounts of future events at best often obscure the real message of the Scriptures, and at worst directly contradict it.

The name *Seventh-day Adventist* indicates the church's commitment to the biblical doctrine of Christ's Second Coming. It is not unexpected, therefore, that one of the important subjects discussed at a meeting of representatives of the World Council of Churches with representatives of the Seventh-day Adventist church March 4 and 5, 1970, at Andrews University (Michigan) should be this belief in our Lord's return.

This issue of SPECTRUM presents (a) a shortened version of the paper in which Raymond F. Cottrell gave at that meeting a Seventh-day Adventist perspective of the Second Coming of Christ, (b) responses from Paul S. Minear and Eugene H. Maly, representing the World Council of Churches, (c) a comment on this dialogue by Jack W. Provonsa, and (d) an article on the Second Coming by Derek J. Prime, minister of the Charlotte Baptist Chapel in Edinburgh, Scotland. These presentations, prepared in a spirit of Christian fellowship to foster discussion and understanding of one of the basic doctrines and expectations of the Christian Church, inspire all of us to say with the apostle John: *Come, Lord Jesus.*

MOLLEURUS COUPERUS



*Matthew 25*

JOSEPH MESAR

At the inevitable climax  
At the last trump  
When the nod is given  
And you step forward  
Alone  
Your answers rehearsed  
To anticipate the questions

Yes Lord I have kept the law  
I have labored in your service  
I have prayed for the unconverted

Will you be surprised when he asks  
In loving disappointment  
About open housing

# The Eschaton:

A SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST  
PERSPECTIVE OF THE SECOND COMING

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RAYMOND F. COTTRELL

## PROLOGUE

Eschatology is concerned with the ultimate destiny of mankind and the world. For the individual, this is death, resurrection, final judgment, and the afterlife. For the human race, it consists of the transition from the present age to the future age and the consummation of God's redemptive purpose. We are concerned with the universal aspect of the eschaton.

## ESCHATOLOGY AND WELTANSCHAUUNG

The shape and texture of eschatology, the final component of one's world view, or *weltanschauung*, are largely determined by one's concept of the entire human event preceding it. By *world view* I mean a philosophy of human existence — its origin, nature, purpose, and destiny. In order to function intelligently and purposefully, we need to know something about where we have come from, where we are and why we are here, and whither we shall be tending in the future.<sup>1</sup>

In concert with the historical Judeo-Christian world view, Seventh-day Adventists conceive of the universe, including planet Earth, as the work of a master craftsman-Creator, omniscient and omnipotent, whose intention it was to people his universe with rational, moral, responsible beings who would voluntarily choose to cooperate with his infinite and beneficent purpose. The Creator's attitude toward and dealings with his creatures are governed by *hesed* or *agapē* — an infinite, benign, ardent concern for their well-being and happiness.

Eventually, however, an alien philosophy — a self-centered ambition to take advantage of others in order to benefit oneself — found its way into

this perfect universe. Under the leadership of Lucifer, this adventitious belief alienated the affection and allegiance of many from their Creator, and it became their fixed and irreformable policy and way of life. Converted to this philosophy, Earth people likewise revolted against their Creator.

Divine providence foresaw this predicament and provided a way by which those who had been infected by the virus of sin might return to their original state of moral health. To this end God communicated a knowledge of his will to men, and at the appropriate time deity became incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ. This intrusion by deity into the world of men identified salvation history with secular history, with the result that the latter can be fully understood only in terms of the former. The objective of salvation history is to restore man to the perfection of character with which the Creator originally endowed him and to condition him to participate in the Creator's original plan for the universe.

Although the divine will is paramount in the plan of salvation, the human will determines each person's destiny. God's dealings with men corporately are based on the covenant relationship into which a person enters voluntarily and is at once, by the grace of Christ, accepted back into the community of heaven in good and regular standing. God permits those who elect not to enter into this covenant relationship to go their own way. He took the initiative in reconciling men to himself, but he allows every man to accept or reject his gift of grace. At an appropriate time known only to God, when all have had an opportunity to make an intelligent and definitive choice, the eschaton will arrive, and God will again intervene in history to purge the universe of evil and to establish his eternal, universal reign of righteousness.

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Because the future is beyond human ken, we are wholly dependent on God's revelation. Passages of Scripture relating to the eschaton are of three general categories: prophecies of the Old Testament, prophecies of the New Testament, and apocalyptic passages in the Old and New Testaments.

Old Testament eschatological passages given within the context of God's covenant relationship with Israel were to have been fulfilled to ancient Israel, the chosen instrument of the divine purpose in Old Testament times. The fact that there will be an eschaton — that the present state of affairs will not continue indefinitely — remains valid, but the time in history when the eschaton would be accomplished was contingent on the response of Israel to its covenant obligations. Their rejection of the Messiah postponed the



eschaton and transferred the role of chosen instrument to the Christian Church. The eschaton will still come; but the time, the people, and the historical circumstances under which it will occur have all changed.

Accordingly, Old Testament prophecies concerning that event are applicable to Christian times only in principle and not in details. Such passages are relevant today only to illustrate the principles on which the divine purpose operates within history with respect to men and to illuminate analogous New Testament passages in which the writer speaks of the Christian eschaton in terms of the Jewish eschaton set forth in the Old Testament.

New Testament eschatological prophecy was given with the concept that the eschaton was imminent and would occur in New Testament times. But nineteen centuries have elapsed, and our Lord has not yet come. Nevertheless, the Church is still the chosen instrument of the divine purpose, and we therefore assume that these passages still constitute a valid preview of the eschaton. The passing of time makes the New Testament sense of imminence even more relevant today than it was two millennia ago.

Seventh-day Adventists assume that the historical process which produced the canon of Scripture reflects the divine intention that it be accepted as the authentic revelation of divine will and purpose, although they do not deny the obviously human elements in Scripture itself or in the historical process. The inclusion of the apocalypses of Daniel and John, therefore, sets them apart from the other apocalyptic literature of the day and implies that they contain information God intended his Church to have and to understand. (See below, "Intertestamental Apocalyptic Literature.") A valid interpretation of apocalyptic symbols is considered attainable on the basis of certain hermeneutical principles:

1. In some instances, notably in the book of Daniel, a symbolic vision is followed immediately by a literal explanation.
2. In other instances, especially in the book of Revelation, there is a sufficient admixture of literal language in the symbolic narrative to provide a reasonable clue to the interpretation of the symbols.
3. Key symbols are often explained during the course of a symbolic narrative.
4. The import of the symbols is often clarified by analogous literal passages of Scripture, in which case the literal passages provide an acceptable norm for interpreting otherwise obscure apocalyptic symbols.
5. In some instances, figures of speech that occur elsewhere in Scripture or that comport with the language and thought forms of the ancient cultural milieu are a guide to the meaning of otherwise obscure symbols.

In every essential respect, Seventh-day Adventist eschatology reflects that of the New Testament. Within this basic New Testament framework, additional details are provided by the writings of Ellen G. White, especially in the book *The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan*. Some points of interpretation are also drawn from this source.

#### BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

The Seventh-day Adventist understanding of the eschaton grows out of certain basic assumptions:

1. God is an infinite, yet personal, being — all-wise, all-able, all-good.
2. The Scriptures are the Word of God in the words of men; and they communicate an understanding of truth about our origin, nature, duty, and destiny that is clear enough to enable us to relate wisely to the circumstances in which we find ourselves.
3. Prophecy, including apocalyptic prophecy, is an authentic and at least reasonably intelligible expression of the divine will and purpose.<sup>2</sup>
4. The language of the Bible is literal except where context or literary form or both indicate the employment of figures of speech.
5. Seemingly divergent points of view expressed by various writers concerning important points can be reconciled when they are considered as components of a greater whole.
6. Secular history is the outworking of salvation history.
7. The writings of Ellen G. White convey information and instruction from God for Seventh-day Adventists that is designed to enable us to relate wisely to the problems and challenges of our day and to cooperate intelligently and effectively with his purpose in events leading up to the Second Coming of Christ.

#### INTERTESTAMENTAL APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

We cannot say whether every eschatological concept expressed in the New Testament reflects the influence of the apocalyptic literature of the intertestamental period. However, the New Testament picture of last events could be reproduced almost entirely by piecing together selected passages from apocalyptic works that antedate the New Testament. For example, the following concepts are expressed in various noncanonical apocalypses:

1. A great eschatological struggle between the forces of good and evil on earth involving a great apostasy; Satan as the dragon; Rome variously as a beast with seven heads and ten horns and as the harlot Babylon; severe tribulation for God's people.

2. A supernatural "Son of man" returning to earth on the clouds of heaven, accompanied by angels, with signs anticipating his coming.
3. A "first resurrection" of all the righteous of all ages and nations, who rise to immortality and reign with Christ in his kingdom.
4. A millennial reign of Messiah and the saints during which Satan is bound and at the close of which the wicked are raised and led by Satan to attack Messiah and his people; judgment of the wicked by Messiah and their annihilation by fire.
5. The New Jerusalem descending to earth, and a new heaven and a new earth.

These and other similarities between apocalyptic eschatology and that of the New Testament are noted at length by Joseph Klausner in *The Messianic Idea in Israel* and by R. H. Charles in *Eschatology: The Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, Judaism, and Christianity*. The situation is very similar to Klausner's comparison of the teachings of Jesus and Paul, point by point, with parallel passages in earlier Jewish literature.<sup>3</sup> Of special interest with respect to New Testament eschatology are 1 and 2 Enoch, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Sibylline Oracles (especially the third), 2 Baruch, and 4 Ezra.

At first glance this relationship between the New Testament and older Jewish writings might seem to indicate a human origin for the teachings of Christ and the New Testament writers, but that is only one side of the coin. Out of the similarities a significant difference emerges, as Charles notes, specifically with reference to New Testament and apocalyptic eschatology:

When we pass from Jewish literature to that of the New Testament, we find ourselves in an absolutely new atmosphere. It is not that we have to do with a wholly new world of ideas and moral forces, for all that was great and inspiring in the past has come over into the present [New Testament times] and claimed its part in the formation of the Christian Church. But in the process of incorporation this heritage from the past has been of necessity largely transformed; it no longer constitutes a heterogeneous mass of ideas in constant flux — a flux in which the less worthy, quite as frequently as the more noble, is in the ascendant, and in which each idea in turn makes its individual appeal for acceptance, and generating its little system, enjoys in turn its little day.<sup>4</sup>

New Testament writers were influenced to some degree, of course, by the thought forms and literary milieu of their time. How could they expect to communicate with men of their era except by utilizing modes of thought and expression with which their intended readers were familiar? Inspiration can operate as effectively in selecting that which is worthy and true from existing sources as in direct revelation. Is not Christianity itself a living witness to the concept that God revealed himself more fully to the Hebrew



people than to any other ancient race or people? Furthermore, there were authentic spokesmen for God whose writings did not find a place in the Old Testament canon. To grant the selective process to which Charles refers — eliminating unworthy and transient notions of apocalyptic literature while retaining that which is of permanent value — can also be to acknowledge the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the selective process. If a person prefers to say that the Holy Spirit led the New Testament writers to utilize forms of expression commonly understood at the time as a vehicle for expressing truth, very well. Either way, the value of the New Testament as the Word of God in the words and thought forms of men is unimpaired. If the Holy Spirit oversaw the historical process by which the New Testament canon came into being, he may well have participated, by a parity of reasoning, in the earlier selective process by which the individual books that compose the canon came into being.

Suffice it to note here that apocalyptic literature over the centuries of the intertestamental period does reflect a definite progression from Old Testament eschatological concepts toward corresponding New Testament concepts, from emphasis on national salvation to that of the individual, from an earthly messianic kingdom to a new heaven and a new earth, from a strictly Jewish messianic kingdom to one composed of all righteous men of all ages, from a relatively gradual process to a catastrophic transition. Christ synthesized the salvation of the individual with that of the righteous community, and the true messianic kingdom of divine grace beginning on earth in the hearts of men and in the community of the faithful with the kingdom of glory in heaven and the new earth at his second advent.

Basic to New Testament eschatology is the concept that "now is the day of salvation," that God "has fixed a day on which he will judge the world," and that "the end [of the present age] will come" when "this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations." Then, at "his appearing and his kingdom," Christ will "judge the living and the dead" and will "repay every man for what he has done." The present is thus prologue to "the fullness of time [when God the Father will] unite all things in him [Christ], things in heaven and things on earth." The transition from the present age to the age to come will not be a gradual historical process but will be an abrupt historical discontinuity in which "the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up" and replaced by "new heavens and a new earth." "The appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ" constitutes "our blessed hope," our *raison d'être* as Christians.<sup>5</sup>

A corollary to the Adventist concept of Scripture as the Word of God in the words of men is the fact that the numerous eschatological passages in the New Testament are understood to comport with each other, and what might be considered differing points of view of the several writers are understood to be either parts of a greater whole or a summary statement that speaks of a series of events as a single event.

Because in all essential aspects Adventist eschatology conforms to the New Testament pattern, it is appropriate to present Adventist eschatology as the Adventist understanding and interpretation of the New Testament.<sup>6</sup> At some points it will be sufficient simply to cite the New Testament evidence. Where Adventist interpretation of a passage is involved, or where this interpretation results from a collage of two or more passages, an explanation is given.

#### SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST UNDERSTANDING OF NEW TESTAMENT ESCHATOLOGY

##### 1. THE ADVENT PROMISE

Approaching the close of his earthly mission, Jesus repeatedly spoke of going away and returning, and at his ascension two angels confirmed this promise: "I go to prepare a place for you," but "I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also."<sup>7</sup>

##### 2. THE ADVENT HOPE

Repeated assurances of a second coming made that hope paramount in the minds of all who accepted the testimony of the living witnesses to the risen Christ, who declared that they had heard God and had seen him "manifested in the flesh" and "taken up in glory." This conviction gave force to their message and certainty to their faith in his promised return. They went forth to the world as living witnesses of the historical reality of the first advent and presented Jesus' own promise as certain evidence that there would indeed be a second advent to complete the process of salvation begun at the first advent.<sup>8</sup>

The *kerygma* of the apostolic Church consisted of an appeal to accept the benefits accruing from the first direct personal entrance of deity into the world of fallen man in preparation for the second and final such intervention. Their certainty about the first advent made the second advent equally real and certain; the prospect of a second advent, when Christ would return to judge all men, made their message concerning the first advent relevant

and coercive.<sup>9</sup> Like Mount Fuji in Japanese art, the Second Coming is the leitmotiv of the apostolic *kerygma*. It broods over the landscape of the New Testament like the Parthenon over the city of Pericles.<sup>10</sup>

### 3. IMMINENCE OF THE ADVENT

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The apostolic Church expected the return of Jesus, as he promised, in that generation. Apparently it never occurred to them that his coming might be delayed even one century, to say nothing of nineteen centuries. Jesus himself provided the basis for this expectation. Upon concluding his last day of public teaching prior to the Crucifixion, rejected by the Jewish leaders and having announced the rejection of the Jewish nation as the chosen instrument of the divine purpose, Jesus left the sacred precincts of the temple with the ominous declaration that retribution for their misdeeds as a nation, "from the blood of innocent Abel to the blood of Zecharias," would "come upon this generation." He declared as he departed from the temple, "Your house is forsaken and desolate," and he warned that the next time they saw him would be when he should return in triumph.<sup>11</sup>

The disciples interpreted Jesus' remarks about the desolation of Jerusalem, his return, and the end of the age in terms of Old Testament eschatology. The Old Testament prophets had foretold the desolation of Jerusalem and the temple in connection with eschatological events. Later the disciples came to him with the question, "Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age." In reply, Jesus quoted Daniel on the desolation of the temple and the eschatological tribulation, associated those events with his own return to gather the elect, spoke of his disciples as eyewitnesses of these events, and declared emphatically: "Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away till all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away."<sup>12</sup>

This discourse provided a positive basis for the apostles' belief that the Lord would return to earth in their generation. With no inspired caveat to the contrary, they would have been dull indeed to believe otherwise. In the aura of these remarks, they asked Jesus on the day of his ascension, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" But he parried their curiosity with the remark, "It is not for you to know the times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority." It was sufficient for them to know that his coming was near, that they should be ready, and that in the meantime they should act the part of faithful servants going about their appointed task of witnessing.<sup>13</sup>



In all the New Testament the only caution about a delay in the fulfillment of the advent promise is actually just a warning against the belief that "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our assembling to meet him" and "the day of the Lord" had *already* arrived.<sup>14</sup> There is no suggestion that the event was to be postponed, only that the specific events to be associated with the advent had not yet commenced. Paul's own emphatic statements about the imminence of the advent and those of the other New Testament writers make evident that they understood Christ's eschatological discourse in terms of a return in their day.<sup>15</sup>

#### 4. APPROACH OF THE ADVENT

When the disciples asked Jesus, "What will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?" he named the preaching of the gospel "throughout the whole world" and signs in the sun, moon, and stars as prime harbingers of the end. "Then," he said, "they will see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory." Paul later added that "the last days" would be "times of stress," decadent morals, and formal religion without the saving power of the gospel. Peter said that the last days would be noteworthy for the "scoffers" who would ridicule "the promise of his coming."<sup>16</sup>

Jesus implied that there would be some delay but that this was to be no excuse for concluding that his return would be delayed indefinitely. Eventually the proclamation would be given by land and sea "that there should be no more delay."<sup>17</sup>

#### 5. PREPARATION FOR THE ADVENT

The New Testament is replete with instructions on how to prepare for the advent. The advent hope, particularly awareness of its imminence, is a potent and effective incentive to compliance with the principles of Christian living, to development of a character reflecting the perfect life of Christ, and to concern for the well-being and happiness of one's fellowmen. Those who cherish the advent hope will be motivated by a personal sense of responsibility toward the gospel commission, especially with respect to participating in the proclamation of the return of our Lord.

#### 6. PROCLAMATION OF THE ADVENT

In view of the fact that "the end will come" when "this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations," all who eagerly await the return of Jesus will, with corresponding

eagerness, respond to the Lord's commission to "go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; . . . to the close of the age." Is it conceivable that without the advent hope the apostle Paul would have endured so many hardships and endangered his life on so many occasions in the process of carrying out his commission to the Gentiles?<sup>18</sup>

As the advent approaches, there is to be a special proclamation to the world that the event is near. This is represented in the Apocalypse by "another mighty angel coming down from heaven, . . . his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land." "With a loud voice" he "lifted up his right hand to heaven and swore . . . that there should be no more delay, but that . . . the mystery of God, as he announced to his servants the prophets, should be fulfilled."<sup>19</sup>

This proclamation of the advent is described in more detail in Revelation 14:6-11, where John says that he "saw another angel flying in midheaven, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he said with a loud voice, 'Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come; and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water.' " A second angel followed, announcing the fall of mystical Babylon, and a third angel, warning against worshiping the beast and its image and receiving its mark. As if stressing the supreme importance of this proclamation of the advent, John relates that he "saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority; and the earth was made bright with his splendor." He too warned of the fall of mystical Babylon and summoned all who honor God in their hearts, "Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues."<sup>20</sup>

This proclamation of the advent — "no more delay," "The hour of his judgment is come," "Come out of her, my people" — is the final gospel appeal recorded in Scripture, and when it has been "preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations . . . the end will come." The universal proclamation of the advent message is noted in all three passages of the Apocalypse where it is recorded.<sup>21</sup>

The fact that God "has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness" and that Christ "will repay every man for what he has done" when he "come[s] with his angels in the glory of his Father" implies that every person living on earth at that time will hear the message and will have an opportunity to make an intelligent and definitive choice about it. At that

point the character of every man will be eternally fixed. The decree goes forth, "Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy." The close of human probation immediately precedes the second advent, as the context makes evident: in verse 10 "the time is near," and in verse 12 Jesus declares, "I am coming soon."<sup>22</sup>

#### 7. THE COMING OF ANTICHRIST

Both Old and New Testaments envision a great eschatological struggle on this earth between the forces of good and evil.<sup>23</sup> Seventh-day Adventists often refer to this struggle, with its cosmic overtones, as the last battle in the great controversy between Christ and Satan. As the eschaton approaches, this conflict reaches a climax: "Then the dragon was angry with the woman, and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring."<sup>24</sup> The course of this climactic struggle is described in detail, and the issues involved are set forth in chapters 13 to 19 of Revelation.

Paul foretold a great "rebellion" preceding "the day of the Lord" in which "the man of lawlessness is revealed, . . . proclaiming himself to be God . . . with pretended signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception." He is closely allied with Satan and is "revealed," or appears, not long before the Lord Jesus is "revealed from heaven," only to be slain "with the breath of his mouth and destroy[ed] by his appearing and his coming." In this climactic struggle between good and evil, those who "refused to love the truth, . . . who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness," choose to "believe what is false" and thus stand "condemned" before God. That this contest culminates in the coming of Christ is evident from the fact that "the Lord Jesus will slay him [the lawless one] with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by his appearing and his coming."<sup>25</sup>

This last great struggle between good and evil incarnate begins before the close of human probation and brings men to a definitive decision between loyalty to God or to the Prince of evil. It escalates to even greater intensity after the close of probation — during the seven last plagues — as the religious and political forces of earth set about to annihilate the people of God, and it reaches its climax at the coming of Christ, under the seventh plague.<sup>26</sup>

#### 8. THE SEAL OF GOD AND THE MARK OF THE BEAST

With the approach of the advent, the contest increases in tempo as Satan sets out to make war "on those who keep the commandments of God and

bear witness to Jesus." This struggle for men's minds and allegiance is set forth in chapters 13 and 14. Eventually Satan "causes all . . . to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of his name" and "cause[s] those who will not worship the image of the beast to be slain."<sup>27</sup>

Simultaneously, the three angels' preadvent messages recorded in Revelation 14:6-11 are being given to the world, summoning men to "fear God and give him glory" in view of the fact that "the hour of his judgment has come," and to refuse to "worship the beast and its image or to receive its mark." Those who heed this warning have the "Father's name written on their foreheads" and are identified by the symbolic number 144,000. In chapter 7 this same group is said to receive "the seal of the living God," in contradistinction to the mark of the beast. The seal of God and the mark of the beast are symbolic badges of character and allegiance. Those who receive the seal of God are "chaste" and "spotless" in character, by the grace of Christ. They are characterized as having "come out of the great tribulation" and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. The climax of this final appeal is presented under the figure of the mighty angel of Revelation 18, with whose "splendor" "the earth was made bright." This angel announces the moral fall of mystical Babylon and summons God's loyal subjects to "come out of her, . . . lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues."<sup>28</sup>

The issue in this final conflict between the forces of good and evil incarnate, as represented by the seal of God and the mark of the beast — both figuratively affixed to the forehead, or mind — is allegiance to Christ or to Satan. The first and third angels of Revelation 14 summon men to accept the "eternal gospel" and to recognize God as the one "who made heaven and earth," to "keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus," and to avoid "worship[ing] the beast and its image and receiv[ing]" its "mark."<sup>29</sup>

The issue is clear, and every person on earth must choose for himself, under threat of death either way. The beast decrees death for those who refuse its mark and reject its authority, and God threatens death for those who comply with the beast's demand. Eventually all inhabitants of the earth take sides in this great conflict and receive either "the mark of the beast" or the seal of God. Only when all men have made this irrevocable choice does "the hour of God's judgment" come — when he takes appropriate action with respect to those who have repudiated his authority. The character of every human being has been fixed for eternity, and probation closes.<sup>30</sup>

## 9. THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES

Between the close of probation and the appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven, "the wrath of God" is poured out on the earth in "seven plagues, which are the last." This series of fearful scourges effects the final separation between the "sheep" and the "goats." In the figurative language of Revelation 14:14-20, "The harvest of the earth is fully ripe," and Christ "swung his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped." Simultaneously, the "grapes" of the evil "vine of the earth . . . are ripe" also, and an angel with a sharp sickle "swung his sickle on the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth, and threw it into the great wine press of the wrath of God," which is identified in chapter 15:1 as "seven plagues, which are the last." Thus "the wine press was trodden outside the city." Suffering from these fearful scourges, the wicked remain obdurate of heart and unrepentant, and "curse . . . the God of heaven," reflecting irreconcilable opposition to him.<sup>31</sup>

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## 10. THE BATTLE OF THE GREAT DAY OF GOD

Under the sixth plague the apostate religious powers of earth, represented by "the dragon, . . . the beast, and . . . the false prophet," "go abroad to the kings [political powers] of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty, . . . at the place which is called in Hebrew Armageddon." This battle, into which the religious and political powers of earth enter with the avowed objective of annihilating God's people, ends abruptly with all of the wicked slain by lethal radiation at the appearing of Christ. They will live again a thousand years later (Revelation 20:5), at the second resurrection.<sup>32</sup>

## 11. COMING OF THE KING OF KINGS

Christ and the New Testament writers consistently refer to his coming as an objective, palpable experience — a literal, visible, personal event that brings the present age to an abrupt and cataclysmic close and that ushers in the eternal age to come. They speak of him as appearing, being revealed, being manifested.<sup>33</sup>

## 12. DELIVERANCE AND JUDGMENT

Christ returns to earth as "King of Kings, and Lord of Lords" to deliver his beleaguered people from their foes. As King, he judges the eligibility of all men for admission into his kingdom. "The day of the Lord" is, in essence, a day of judgment. It is the "day" when divine justice, untempered by mercy, metes out to every man his just deserts. Prior to that day, every

man living on the earth will have made his irrevocable choice of loyalty and allegiance, and when the last man on earth has exercised his God-given power of choice, human probation closes and God proceeds to reward or punish every man.<sup>34</sup>

According to Revelation 19 and 20, the process of judgment — “the great day of God” — spans a thousand years. All the living wicked have been slain and the righteous dead resurrected, and the latter together with the living saints are translated and enter upon their eternal reward. During that thousand years in heaven, the righteous participate in examining the cases of the wicked and see for themselves that the lost have spurned divine love and mercy and that divine justice must take its course. At the close of the thousand years, the wicked are raised to life and appear before the Judge to receive sentence.

### 13. RESURRECTION, IMMORTALITY, AND TRANSLATION

Christ and Paul specifically declare that some of the saints will not pass through death but will remain alive to witness the coming of Christ and will experience translation. When Christ appears, the sleeping saints will be raised to life, and immortality will be bestowed upon all the faithful. They will be gathered to meet the Lord in the air and will accompany him to heaven, there to remain for one thousand years.

### 14. THE THOUSAND YEARS

The twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse presents a period of one thousand years during which Satan is “bound” and unable to “deceive the nations.” It assigns “the first resurrection” — of the “blessed and holy” — to the beginning of the millennium. Martyrs for Christ and those who endured the great eschatological tribulation all “came to life again” at the time “and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” This reign is evidently in heaven, for at the second advent Christ descends from heaven and “gathers his elect,” who are then “caught up . . . in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air” to be “with the Lord.” He takes them to be with him where he is.<sup>35</sup>

As for the living wicked, they “were [all, verse 21] slain . . . and all the birds were gorged with their flesh” at the time Christ came forth to defeat the forces of evil on earth and to deliver his faithful ones. “The rest of the dead” — all but those who came forth in the first resurrection, the wicked dead of all ages, including those slain by the brightness of Christ’s coming — “did not come to life again until the thousand years were ended.” Accordingly, the earth is emptied of its inhabitants, the righteous with Christ

in heaven and the wicked all in their graves. Satan is "bound" to this desolate earth by being confined to it, yet he is unable to carry forward his work of deception because there is no one to deceive.<sup>36</sup>

#### 15. THE BATTLE OF GOG AND MAGOG

At the end of the thousand years "the rest of the dead . . . come to life again" in the second resurrection, the resurrection of damnation, to receive sentence and be annihilated. When the wicked of all ages are raised to life, Satan is thereby "loosed from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations" again, now in number "like the sand of the sea." Evidently the New Jerusalem, "the camp of the saints, . . . the beloved city," descends to earth prior to the close of the thousand years, because Satan marshals this mighty host for battle, and they surround the city preparatory to attacking it.<sup>37</sup>

Immediately before the second advent, at the beginning of the thousand years, the forces of evil incarnate had gathered to make war on Christ in the person of his people on earth. As they prepared to strike what they supposed would be the decisive blow against God's loyal people, Christ intervened, shattered the religiopolitical alliance, and slew all of the wicked. Summoned to life in the second resurrection a thousand years later, and unaware of the lapse of time, they rally behind Satan to complete the second phase of the battle of the great day of God, designated the battle of Gog and Magog.<sup>38</sup>

#### 16. THE FINAL JUDGMENT

As the hosts of evil surround "the camp of the saints and the beloved city," Christ appears, seated on "a great white throne" in his role as Judge of all men. The resurrected dead, arrested in the very act of storming the Holy City, find themselves speechless before the Judge of the universe. "And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, by what they had done." Fire then comes down from heaven and consumes the entire host. The beast and the false prophet had already been consigned to the lake of fire at the commencement of the thousand years. At the close of the thousand years the devil himself, death and hades, and everyone whose "name was not found written in the book of life, . . . [were] thrown into the lake of fire" also.

#### 17. THE NEW EARTH

John turns immediately from the great holocaust that consumes the surface of the earth and all upon it to the new earth. "Then," he says, "I saw a

new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away." The one who sat upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new."<sup>39</sup>

Sin and evil have been eradicated from the universe. Man has been restored to his original state of perfection "in the image of God." God's original purpose for the earth and for man will be resumed at the point at which sin entered and will be carried forward without interruption throughout the ages of eternity. The new earth will be a literal place, but unencumbered by the limitations of mortality.<sup>40</sup>

## EPILOGUE

This completes my summary of the eschatology of the New Testament, in the setting forth of which I have also said what Seventh-day Adventists believe about the "last things" of this world — world in the sense of *aiōn*, *kosmos*, and especially *oikoumenē*. The organization and terminology have often been distinctly Seventh-day Adventist in flavor; here and there, at points where the evidence is not conclusive and where an alternate interpretation may have equal claim to credibility, I have construed the words of Scripture in a distinctly Seventh-day Adventist manner. But within the bounds of the assumptions postulated at the start, I submit that the composite picture I have presented does have a reasonable claim to being what the New Testament has to tell us on the subject of eschatology. I submit that it is internally consistent, coherent, and logical, and that it agrees with the world view of the Bible as a whole.

But there is a further aspect of the matter which it seems appropriate at this point to note — the eschatology of the creeds of Christendom.

## THE CREEDS OF CHRISTENDOM

Seventh-day Adventist eschatology is in accord not only with that of the New Testament but also with the historical tenets of the Christian faith as expressed in the classic creeds of Christendom, catholic as well as Protestant. (That is intentionally — and correctly — a lowercase *c*, and it implies no offense of any kind.) If asked to do so, a Seventh-day Adventist could subscribe without reservation to practically every affirmation of faith in the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Definition of Chalcedon, the Westminster Confession, the Augsburg Confession, the Thirty-nine Articles, and even the much-debated Westminster Confession for Today (what it actually says, though not necessarily all that it may imply). This is not to say that we consider their definitions of the Christian faith to be perfect, that is, com-



plete and without error; it is simply to affirm that our understanding of the Christian faith in general, and eschatology in particular, is essentially that of historical Christianity.

Among these historical beliefs is the concept that the present earthly order is destined to end at the second advent of our Lord, who will then judge the quick and the dead, restore the earth to its pristine state of perfection, and inaugurate his eternal, universal reign of righteousness. All that is historical in the Christian faith, all that was vital in the apostolic *kerygma*, comes to a focus in the second advent and is important to the Christian faith today because of the second advent. As the first angel's message of Revelation 14:6-7 implies, "the everlasting gospel" for our time *is* the advent message, the message that "the hour of his judgment is come." As the apostolic Church realized, the second advent was necessary to complete the work begun at the first advent, for without the second advent the first has little meaning or convincing power. Thus, in proclaiming the second advent, Seventh-day Adventists reaffirm the meaning and relevance of the first advent for men of our day. In declaring that "the hour of his judgment has come," we are at the same time calling men back to the "everlasting gospel" as it was proclaimed to the world by Peter and John and Paul.

The Apostles' Creed affirms that "Jesus Christ . . . shall come to judge the quick and the dead." The Nicene Creed states that Jesus Christ "shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end." The Athanasian Creed similarly affirms that Christ "shall come to judge the quick and the dead. At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies; and shall give account for their own works. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil, into everlasting fire."

The Augsburg Confession affirms that Christ "shall reign forever, and have dominion over all creatures" and that he "shall openly come again, to judge the quick and the dead." The Confession also affirms that "Christ shall appear to judge, and shall raise up all the dead, and shall give unto the godly and elect eternal life and everlasting joys; but ungodly men and the devils shall he condemn unto endless torments," and specifically rejects the idea "that, before the resurrection of the dead, the godly shall occupy the kingdom of the world, the wicked being everywhere suppressed [the saints alone, the pious, shall have a wordly kingdom, and shall exterminate all the godless]." The Thirty-nine Articles declare that Christ will "return to judge all men at the last day."<sup>41</sup> That is all their creeds have to say on the subject. But the Westminster Confession considers eschatology at greater length:

God hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ, to whom all power and judgment is given of the Father. In which day, not only the apostate angels shall be judged but likewise all persons, that have lived upon earth, shall appear before the tribunal of Christ, to give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds; and to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil. . . .

Then shall the righteous go into everlasting life, and receive that fullness of joy and refreshing which shall come from the presence of the Lord; but the wicked, who know not God, and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be cast into eternal torments, and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

As Christ would have us to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a day of judgment, . . . so will he have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come; and may be ever prepared to say, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.<sup>42</sup>

The Westminster Confession for Today deals with the resurrection and the last judgment as follows:

At the last day, such as are found alive shall not die, but be changed: and all the dead shall be raised up with the selfsame bodies, and none other, although with different qualities, which shall be united again to their souls for ever.

The bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonor; the bodies of the just, by his Spirit, unto honor, and be made conformable to his own glorious body.

God hath appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ, to whom all power and judgment is given of the Father. In which day, not only the apostate angels shall be judged; but likewise all persons, that have lived upon earth, shall appear before the tribunal of Christ, to give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds; and to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil.

The end of God's appointing this day, is for the manifestation of the glory of his mercy in the eternal salvation of the elect; and of his justice in the damnation of the reprobate, who was wicked and disobedient. For then shall the righteous go into everlasting life, and receive that fullness of joy and refreshing which shall come from the presence of the Lord: but the wicked, who know not God, and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be cast into eternal torments, and punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

As Christ would have us to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a day of judgment, both to deter all men from sin, and for the greater consolation of the godly in their adversity: so will he have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come; and may be ever prepared to say, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.<sup>43</sup>

#### EFFECT ON THE LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH

As the name Seventh-day Adventist implies, belief in the Second Coming of Jesus, particularly an *imminent* second coming, has been the master catalyst in the belief, life, and work of the church from the very first to the present. As a church and as individuals, we live under the deep conviction that the contemporary state of the world portends that awesome event in the near future, and that conviction determines every aspect of our thinking and

living in the present and our planning for the future. In the words of an early advent hymn, "We see the gleams of the golden morning," and seeing them, we believe that "the sun of righteousness" will soon "rise, with healing in its wings," as surely as the dawning light of a new day implies an imminent sunrise. One hundred twenty-nine years after 1844, it is appropriate to assess the assets and liabilities of this belief. A book might be written on this subject, but here a few paragraphs must suffice. What has been the effect of this belief on individuals and on the church?<sup>44</sup>

For more than half a century I have observed and evaluated the effect of belief in an imminent advent on my own life and thinking and that of my fellow Seventh-day Adventists. Like the inertial guidance system locked to a computer aboard a spacecraft headed for the moon, belief in the second advent programs a person's thoughts, words, and actions and conditions him to act and react automatically in keeping with that belief. I do not mean that it instantly transforms him into a sinless saint but rather that the entire life is effectively reoriented, directed, and motivated. As John wrote, "Every one who thus hopes in him [i.e., Christ's appearing] purifies himself as he is pure." It makes his life a response to Peter's question, "What sort of persons ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God?"<sup>45</sup>

#### THE PROBLEMS AND PITFALLS

Most things in life, including theology and biblical exegesis, have liabilities as well as assets. This is true of belief in an imminent second advent. With over a century and a quarter of experience as source material, no one should be in a better position to evaluate these assets and liabilities than a Seventh-day Adventist, if he takes a sufficiently detached attitude and examines them objectively, despite his personal concern and deep personal involvement. But such a study, which would be of practical value to all of us, to my knowledge has not yet been attempted.

Let us glance for a moment, then, at the debit side of the ledger, on which we might list such things as time setting, fanaticism, otherworldliness, and the protracted delay of an imminent advent, and ask how Seventh-day Adventists have related to these pitfalls and problems. Occasionally belief that the advent is imminent is accompanied by adverse side effects as the result of perverse human nature.

Seventh-day Adventists are by no means the first group to anticipate the imminent end of the age and the return of Christ. In fact, as we have seen, the apostolic Church itself set the precedent for later generations of Chris-

tians in this respect. On one occasion the apostle Paul found it necessary to write some of his converts: "Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our assembling to meet him, we beg you, brethren, not to be quickly shaken in mind or excited, either by spirit or by word, or by letter purporting to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come, unless . . ." <sup>46</sup> Evidently certain eager believers in Thessalonica had misread the signs of the times. Unfortunately, they were not the last ones to do so.

Ever since the days when the scholarly Rabbi Akiba hailed Bar Cocheba as the Messiah, down to modern times, Jews and Christians have been predicting the year of the advent. Joseph Klausner and Abba Hillel Silver <sup>47</sup> list dozens of dates that have been set and movements that have arisen anticipating those dates. In some instances these persons and groups relied on the same passages of Scripture that led William Miller to the date 1844 and on conditions in the world similar to those to which Adventists point today.

The Montanist movement among Christians of the second to the fourth centuries is one notable example of chiliastic speculation and extremism. One Montanist bishop, declaring that the last judgment would come in two years, advised his followers not to cultivate their fields and to rid themselves of houses and goods. Another bishop led his flock into the wilderness to meet Christ. Believers were urged to be strict in their habits to the point of austerity, to fast, to lead celibate lives, and to welcome martyrdom. <sup>48</sup> Church history points to numerous similar illustrations of time setting and fanaticism of various kinds among both Christians and Jews.

It is common knowledge, of course, that William Miller and others who led the advent movement of 1840-1844 did set a time, but the movement was remarkably levelheaded and free of fanaticism, fabricated reports of such things as ascension robes notwithstanding. From the start, Seventh-day Adventists have considered the advent to be imminent, but they have never set a time for the Lord to come and have taken a positive stand against every kind of extremism. As Christ implied in his intercessory prayer, it is not easy to be *in* this world yet not *of* it at the same time; it is not easy to maintain a balance between good citizenship in this world and in the world to come.

I submit, however, that Seventh-day Adventists have found a reasonable, though doubtless not always perfect, balance between anticipation of an imminent advent on the one hand and a wise and meaningful relationship to the present world on the other. In fact, they have now had well over one hundred years' experience at maintaining this delicate balance. Christ gave

the key to this balance when he counseled his disciples in the parable of the pounds: "Trade with these till I come." The Christian is not only to remain alert, waiting for his Lord to come; he is to labor diligently in his master's vineyard till sunset. While thus engaged, he is not likely to lapse into fanaticism as a substitute for the real religion of concern for and ministry to his fellowmen.<sup>49</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I submit that, granted the basic assumptions, principles of exegesis to which we could probably all subscribe lead logically to approximately the format of eschatology I have set forth. The question, then, revolves around the validity of these basic assumptions. Such a reevaluation of the evidence might prove to be profitable for all of us. If these assumptions are not valid, neither is the eschatological picture I have presented. If they are valid — as Seventh-day Adventists believe — the question resolves itself into: By what criteria may we know when the eschaton is near? A study of the basic assumptions is beyond the topic assigned for this paper, but in conclusion, it may be apropos to state briefly the reasons why Seventh-day Adventists in our day consider the advent to be imminent.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Christians generally believed that the world was getting better. But two world wars have occurred, and inability to restore peace to the world, moral decadence, and crime and other kinds of irrational behavior have reached a pitch and scale never before equaled. This is precisely the picture the New Testament writers foretold would precede the advent. As we have already noted, the advent message is being given in most countries of the world — as Christ and John said would be the case before the end. The interpretation of the Apocalypse as presented in *The Great Controversy* (which was written nearly a century ago) forecast events now transpiring in the religious world as harbingers of the advent — such occurrences as the ecumenical movement and trends and developments in the churches of Christendom, both Catholic and Protestant. Other signs of our time might be mentioned, but this must suffice. In all these things we hear Jesus saying to our generation, "Surely I am coming soon," and we reply, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!"<sup>50</sup>

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- 20 Revelation 14:6-11, 18:1-4.
- 21 Matthew 24:14; compare Revelation 14:6.

- 22 Acts 17:31, Matthew 16:27; compare Revelation 22:11-12. See also Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1971), pp. 355-390, 437-450; Raymond F. Cottrell, *Crisis and Victory* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1952), sections 3-D, 5-ABC. Seventh-day Adventists understood the messages of the three angels of Revelation 14:6-12 to constitute the essence of God's final appeal to the world prior to the second advent of Christ. In the Adventist vocabulary, "three angels' messages," "the Advent message," and sometimes "third angel's message," refer to the proclamation of the advent.
- 23 Ezekiel 37 and 38; Joel 3; Zechariah 12, 13, and 14; Matthew 24:15-27; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; Revelation 12 through 19.
- 24 Revelation 12:17.
- 25 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12.
- 26 For comment on the origin of the conflict between Christ and Satan in heaven, see Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1958), pp. 33-43; and White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 492-504. For comment on the coming of antichrist and the close of the conflict, see White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 582-592; and Raymond F. Cottrell, *Crisis and Victory*, sections 1-BC, 2-ABCD, and 4-ABC.

Seventh-day Adventists conceive of the Church invisible as including all dedicated Christians of every faith, and esteem their separated brethren, both Catholic and Protestant, as indeed brothers in Christ. But on the basis of Revelation 13, Adventists anticipate a time when, despite the best efforts of the many dedicated Christians in the various church organizations, men under the control of Satan will infiltrate these organizations and dominate them. The result will be the great apostasy of the last days, represented in the Apocalypse as Babylon the great. God then issues the final call for all of his loyal people to come out of Babylon and to unite with his remnant (Revelation 14:8, 18:1-4; compare 12:17).

Seventh-day Adventists believe that the leopardlike beast of Revelation 13, healed of its mortal wound, represents apostate Catholicism of that future day; and the lamblike beast of Revelation 13 (the "false prophet" of Revelation 16:13 and 19:10) represents apostate Protestantism. With the addition of the "dragon," who represents Satan at work through spiritualism, the "three-fold union" of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet (Revelation 16:13) is formed.

Simultaneously, the nations of the earth unite in some form of political union under the aegis of, and in conspiracy with, the universal religious union, to make war on Christ in the person of his loyal people and to obliterate them from the face of the earth. Eventually, under the sixth plague, Satan appears impersonating Christ and assumes leadership of the conspiracy (see Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 561-562, 564).
- 27 Revelation 12:17, 13:15.
- 28 Revelation 14:1-2, 6-11; 7:2, 4; 14:4-5; 7:14; 18:1-4.
- 29 Revelation 14:6-7, 9, 12.
- 30 Revelation 13:7, 15; 14:9-11; 13:3, 7-8, 15; 16:2; compare Revelation 13:17; 14:1; 7:2-4; 14:7; 22:11. See also Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 445-450, 604-605; also Raymond F. Cottrell, *Crisis and Victory*, section 5-D.

Seventh-day Adventists believe that the "mark of the beast," the authority that imposes it, and the circumstances under which it is imposed, are all *future*. The seal of God and the mark of the beast are both understood to be marks of loyalty and allegiance — to God and to Satan respectively — in the same sense that respect for a displayed national flag connotes loyalty and allegiance.

The seal of God is a token of character and acceptance with God. Down through the ages God has sealed as his those who followed Christ in sincerity of heart and chose to order their lives in harmony with his will, especially as expressed in "present truth," that is, the testing truth important for each particular era.

In apostolic times acceptance of Christ as the Messiah and God's Son was the special testing truth. In Reformation times that truth was *sola fidei*. Under the future circumstances described in the preceding paragraphs of this section, Seventh-day Adventists believe there will be a great apostasy within Christendom in which the supreme issue will be loyalty to God as demonstrated by willing compliance with all of his requirements, or to church authority contrary to the will of God. In a time of crisis, church and state will unite to compel the conscience by enforcing the observance of the first day of the week by law, as a test of submission to human authority. Then observance of the seventh-day Sabbath will become a special test of loyalty and allegiance to Christ, and the observance of the first day of the week a test of loyalty and allegiance to human authority.

Only when Sunday observance is thus enforced under penalty of death, and the issue is clearly understood by all, will anyone receive the mark of the beast. *No one has it now.*

- 31 Revelation 15:1; Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 14:14-20, 16:8, 11-20. See also Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 613-623, 628-629; and Raymond F. Cottrell, *Crisis and Victory*, section 6-ABC.
- 32 Revelation 16:13-16, 20:5. See also Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 624-627, 629-634; and Raymond F. Cottrell, *Crisis and Victory*, sections 6-C and 7-ABD.
- 33 Colossians 3:4; 1 Peter 5:4; 1 John 2:28, 3:2; Hebrews 9:28; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13; 2 Thessalonians 2:8; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; Luke 17:30; 1 Corinthians 1:7; 2 Peter 1:7, 13; Acts 1:11; Matthew 24:30, 26:64; Revelation 1:7; Matthew 24:27. Compare Luke 17:24; Matthew 16:27, 24:31; Matthew 26:64; Revelation 1:7; Matthew 24:30-31; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 5:2-3; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 6:14; Matthew 13:39, 24:3, 28:20, 24:14; 1 Corinthians 15:24. See also Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 640-644; and Raymond F. Cottrell, *Crisis and Victory*, section 7-E.
- 34 Revelation 19:16; compare 1 Timothy 6:15, Revelation 17:14, 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 2 Peter 3:10.
- 35 John 11:26; 1 Corinthians 15:51; 1 Thessalonians 4:15, 17; John 5:25, 28-29; Luke 20:35; 1 Corinthians 15:22-23, 52; John 11:25; Colossians 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14; Revelation 20:4-6; Luke 20:35-36; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; Philippians 3:20; Acts 1:11; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; John 14:2-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Matthew 24:31; Revelation 20:4, 6; Matthew 13:30, 43, 16:27, 25:21, 31, 34, 46; 2 Timothy 4:8; Hebrews 9:29; Revelation 11:18, 14:15-16, 22:12. See also Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 644-652.
- 36 Revelation 20:3-6, 1 Thessalonians 4:16, Matthew 24:31, 1 Thessalonians 4:17, John 14:2-3.
- 37 Revelation 19:11, 17-21. Compare 2 Thessalonians 1:7, 20:3-6.
- 38 Revelation 20:5, 7-9.
- 39 Revelation 21:1, 5.
- 40 Genesis 1:27; Matthew 19:28-30; Mark 10:30; Revelation 21:1, 3-5, 27, 22:3-4. See also Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 674-678.



- 41 Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom* (New York: Harper and Brothers 1919), volume two, pp. 45, 59, 69-70; volume three, pp. 9-10, 18-19, 489.
- 42 Schaff, volume three, pp. 671-672.
- 43 George S. Hendry, *The Westminster Confession for Today* (Richmond: John Knox Press 1960), pp. 247ff.
- 44 Malachi 4:2.
- 45 1 John 3:3, 2 Peter 3:11.
- 46 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2.
- 47 Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel*, translated by William F. Stinespring (London: Allen and Unwin 1956).  
Abba Hillel Silver, *A History of Messianic Speculation in Israel* (Boston: Beacon Press 1959).
- 48 Kenneth S. Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Harper and Brothers 1953), p. 129.
- 49 Luke 19:13; Matthew 20:1-16, 25:14-45; James 1:27.
- 50 Revelation 22:20.

# Response to “The Eschaton”

PAUL S. MINEAR

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I am conscious of one major difficulty in approaching this task. Whereas Cottrell and his teammates can speak with a sense of representing a quite definite and authoritative point of view on eschatology, there is no such well-defined or normative eschatology among the churches of the National Council or within the various member churches. Even if there were such a point of view on the interpretation of Daniel, of Revelation, or of the Second Coming of Christ, I would be atypical — so atypical that if there is any other scholar who agrees wholly with me, I do not know his name. In some ways I am much closer to the Adventist world than are my New Testament colleagues, but in other ways I am much farther away. I must therefore try to avoid injecting my personal and professional idiosyncrasies if this debate is to clarify the main points at issue between Adventists and the other churches.

## I

Let me first indicate four of the unrepresentative ways in which I am sympathetic with the Adventist tendencies:

1. More than most churches today, Adventists accord a very important normative role to the Bible. Moreover, this appraisal is more than an inherited or habitual lip service to a formal, dogmatic assertion of authority; rather, it indicates a readiness to stand with the Bible against the modern “Christian” outlook by allowing thought and practice to be determined by the inspired Scripture.

2. Adventist ontology and cosmology have preserved a place, a realm, for the dwellingplace of God. Adventists are not embarrassed to speak of heaven as a vital locus of action, a reality decisive for the origin and destiny of all things. By contrast, the one-dimensional this-worldliness of secularized

Christianity virtually eliminates the transcendence necessary to eschatological judgment and redemption.

3. Adventist anthropology and soteriology have retained a lively sense of the "Great Controversy" between God and Satan, along with a conviction that all men are drawn into that controversy in such a way that their moral and religious decisions have a bearing on the events of history (and vice versa). For many other Christian groups, the death of Satan, preceding and guaranteeing the death of God, has relativized human decisions and historical processes.

4. Adventist perspectives have preserved a central place for eschatology in which the expectation of final wrath and final grace are not evacuated of meaning; rather, man's whole life is seen to be placed before, under, and within the eternal purposes of God.

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Against these atypical appreciations of Adventists there are also atypical animadversions. These will perhaps become all too clear in my paper, although I have tried to focus on consensus reactions. Basically, I suppose, my deepest resistance stems from a contrary perception of that reality which is misnamed *history*. How atypical this perception is can be indicated by the fact that no reviewer of my book has yet called attention to the intended meaning of the title.<sup>1</sup> Related to this is an idiosyncratic way of dealing with "apocalyptic" thought forms, language, and literary genres in the Bible. I believe that both prevailing exegetical tendencies (Charles, Bousset, Swete, and others) and the Adventist version of nineteenth-century millennialisms misconstrue the character of biblical prophetism. Inseparable from these two issues is a conception of the Christian gospel which is at the opposite end of the spectrum from Adventists.

This is not the occasion to ventilate my own maverick propensities, however, but to attempt to isolate those elements in Adventist thought which would be least acceptable to most member churches of the National Council. The purpose is not to minimize the existing obstacles but to see and state them sharply. Given the basic attitudes of Ellen G. White as continued in current Adventism, it seems to me that the only course which would respect the integrity in faith of Adventists would be for them to shun ecclesial fellowship with non-Adventists on the Pauline principle (as adapted to this current situation): "Nothing is unclean in itself; but it is unclean for any one who thinks it unclean" (Romans 14:14).

But let me now turn to my major duty: to isolate and to define, for the purpose of discussion, those aspects of Adventist eschatology which would be most contested by other contemporary churches. As Cottrell points out,

these aspects stem mainly from a divergence between basic assumptions (see his Basic Assumptions, Conclusions subsections).

## II

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Adventists have a tacit conception of the unity of the Bible, expressed in their use of a melange of texts from the Old Testament and the New Testament to explain the same event in recent history. To me, this conception destroys the distinctiveness of the two Testaments, ignores critical attitudes toward the Old Testament which are imbedded in the New Testament, and in effect denies the actuality of the dawning of a new age in Christ. Examples of the literalistic and harmonistic use of scriptural texts can be found everywhere in *The Great Controversy* (in the prophecies asserted to be fulfilled in the French Revolution [chapter 15], in the formulation of the doctrine of the Second Coming [chapter 17], or in the application of predictions to Catholicism and Protestantism). The nonbiblical principle "One saying of the Saviour (or of God) must not be made to destroy another" is used to justify a forced harmonization of texts on a level which could not have been intended in the various original situations.<sup>2</sup> It is by isolating a text (usually a single verse) from its literary and historical context that it can be harmonized with other texts, all of them being interpreted as predicting an event which has taken place or which will soon take place. Although this practice is advanced in the name of the unity of the Bible, it is counterproductive in threatening any sounder view of the unity of the Bible. Thus the method by which Cottrell attempts to prove that Adventist eschatology conforms in all essential aspects to the New Testament pattern — the citation of catenae of texts (as in his subsections 1, 2, 3 of Adventist Understanding of New Testament Eschatology) — is not only unconvincing but does violence to the thought of apostolic authors and to the original intent and function of their writings.

## III

This observation brings into play the clash of assumptions concerning the purpose and nature of the scriptural writings. There is the assumption, for example, that in the interpretation of the book of Revelation literal meanings are to be preferred to symbolic meanings, and that every symbol must, if possible, be translated into conformity with literal passages (see Cottrell's Basic Assumptions subsection). This method accords with the assumption that God's intent in providing inspired Scripture was to provide "information" which he wanted his Church (in the twentieth, not the first,

century) "to have and to understand" (see his Sources of Information subsection).

In the name of the Scriptures I must challenge both these assumptions. They lead in the direction of evacuating all symbols of nonliteral meanings, of forcing the personal and subjective constituents of divine-human conversations into impersonal and objectified data, of turning prophetic visions of heaven into predictive oracles of earthly events, of forcing the parabolic language of Jesus (e.g., Matthew 22, 24, 25) into fantastic stage directions for the eschaton. It is this concentration on objective, literal data which underlies obsessions with the command of Jesus on divorce in preference to his commands on lust and hate, the obsessions with holy days rather than with the principles enunciated by Paul in Romans 14, the obsessions with signs of the end and with literal definitions of creed and office rather than the redefinition of all reality in the light of the death and resurrection of Jesus. To the student of intellectual history, it is amazing how recent is the development of this preference for the objective, literal meanings of a written Scripture.<sup>3</sup>

#### IV

It was the urgency of the demand to have an authorized and normative interpretation of the written Scripture, an interpretation which would distinguish one church from other churches in Western Christendom, an interpretation which would overcome the apparent anarchy of voices in the inherited canon, which prompted in nineteenth-century America the emergence of three movements — Mormonism, Christian Science, and Seventh-day Adventism. Each of these retained allegiance to the Scriptures as the primary locus of revealed truth. Each established a virtual identity between Scripture and a particular contemporary interpretation of it.

It is not strange, therefore, that the seventh of Cottrell's basic assumptions is the most obvious issue at stake between us. To non-Adventists, this assumption means that in practice the authority which is formally assigned to the Bible is actually assigned to a particular exegete, so that loyalty to God's Word becomes confused with loyalty to one interpretation of it. For example, Ellen White's identification of the demonic trinity of Revelation 13 is accepted by Cottrell as the inspired truth regarding John's message. Only by substituting Mrs. White's interpretation for John's intent could I ever come to affirm this literal interpretation of the demonic trinity as authoritative. That I am unable to do. It would freeze Christian thought and faith to a parochial stage in its development (no less than William Miller's predictions regarding 1844). It would prevent me from penetrating, to the depth,

realities of faith, hope, and love as presented in the Scripture. It would force me into brutal and inhuman treatment of the John, who on Patmos was tortured by his concern for the churches of Asia and was commissioned with a prophetic message for them. John could not have meant to say to them in Revelation 13 and 14 what Mrs. White and Cottrell insist God means to say to us.

## V

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The Adventist conception of historical events is based on a view of the temporal and the eternal in which the unity of the two appears to be based on the primacy of the temporal. Time becomes everlasting, this is, eternal. There is no change in temporality before Creation or after the parousia. God becomes chained to his own time schedule. His "time" can be — in fact, must be — calculated in terms of human calendars and chronologies. The sequence and measurements of days and years is predetermined and cannot be changed, even though men do not know the day and the hour. The lessons learned in 1844 did not affect in the least the attribution to temporal chronology of an ultimate ontological status. The dating of an event on humanly devised calendars (even such an event as Christ's entry into the heavenly sanctuary) becomes the primary determinant of meaning.

Moreover, each such event appears to be an intervention of deity into "the world of fallen man" (see Cottrell's Approach of the Advent subsection). The relations of God and the world thus become extrinsic and intermittent, since they are conceived more thoroughly in the idiom of nineteenth-century deism than in biblical theism. The decisive advents are seen to be two and only two in number (see his Imminence of the Advent subsection), thus reducing the rich biblical symbol of "coming" to a single literal chronological quotient.<sup>4</sup> It reduces the content of hope to an individual's present relation to a future event, viewed as extrinsic and impersonal (Cottrell prefers a title in the neuter, *the eschaton*, a category that never appears in the Apocalypse and very rarely in the other parts of the New Testament). It removes the future event from any primary, continuing, intrinsic relationship to the dying and rising of Jesus or to the Christian's dying and rising with Jesus. It thus effectively gives to the coming transition a much greater significance than the transition between the ages already accomplished in Christ (e.g., 2 Corinthians 5, 1 Peter 1).

Incidentally, I do not see how Cottrell's interpretation of the end preserves the sense of imminence about which he speaks so warmly. According to his reading of things, before the end certain things must happen: within Protestantism, within Catholicism, and within the political realm of modern

states. Then something must happen in terms of the legal establishment of Sunday. Then will come a universal political-religious repression of those who observe the Sabbath (see Cottrell's subsection 8). If this is true, then as long as the religious and political trends are moving in the opposite direction, as long as the legislative support of Sunday is disappearing, we need not be concerned about "the end of probation" and the nearness of the eschaton. How can the sense of imminence be preserved if the Sunday conspiracy remains a necessary sign of the end (see same subsection)? More important, how can God's presence throughout his creation, how can his will throughout human history be discerned if his relation to the world is made dependent on the fulfillment of this type of prediction regarding the future?

It seems to me that Cottrell's careful insistence on certain signs of the end, as being future only, sharply distinguishes his eschatology from the biblical prophecies and reveals how far his basic perception of history diverges from that of the Bible. The world view of Adventism appears to me to be clearly post-Renaissance in its assumed removal of God from the world, in its assumed unitary time line of history, and in its assumption that truth has to do primarily with dependable, objective information about the various interventions of God in the life of the world.

## VI

What I miss most in the frank listing of assumptions is the mention of any assumption that would indicate a christological or christocentric orientation (or anchorage or control) of thinking about the end. Let me indicate two areas in which I think this silence is disastrous.

1. Much is made of the continuing conflict between God and Satan. I find no evidence, however, that the gospel and passion story of Jesus is used as revelatory of the presence, the power, the stratagems of his satanic majesty. Consequently, there is little awareness of the subtlety with which Satan attacks servants of God by way of their loyalty to the good, or of the insistence on the part of the Messiah and his apostles that Satan's deceptions are to be discerned within the hearts of their followers. To objectify and to postpone the crucial struggle with Satan to a future attack by external enemies on the community which loyally observes the Sabbath encourages a fatal separation of the "great controversy" from the daily battles between right and wrong in the heart of the Christian and in the communal life of the church. The result is the utilization of eschatology to buttress the institutional self-interest of the religious community, to provide it with sanctions for social control, and to reduce the multiple interconnections between eschatology

and daily experience which is characteristic in the Bible of the "sons of the Day."

2. Because the message and passion of Jesus are not used to define the antagonists and the issues in the "great controversy," the pictures of the resolution of that controversy in the final judgment are not informed and permeated by the gospel of Jesus. I must confess a sense of shock and deep revulsion in reading (subsection 10): "It is the 'day' when divine justice, untempered by mercy, metes out to every man his just deserts." This explicit separation of God's grace from his wrath, this limitation of grace to the period before the day of judgment, this portrait of Christ as a judge who divests himself of his willingness to forgive after a certain fixed date, this final victory which is accorded to Shylockian convictions that in the end love and righteousness are irreconcilable, this use of the Second Coming of Christ to fulfill a function so antithetical to the purpose of his first coming, this appeal to that coming as a final vindication of the social attitudes toward the observance of the Sabbath or of Sunday — all this so flagrantly contradicts the scriptural revelation of the irresistible power of God's mercy and of the gracious character of his justice (*dikaioisunē*) that it illustrates the deceptive power of Satan himself. Any eschatology that is placed at the service of a religious community to sustain its righteousness and to assure the condemnation of its enemies becomes demonic, and the ministry of Christ, the great exorcist, again becomes necessary.

## VII

To sum up, the key issue is well stated by Cottrell in his assertion, "In all essential aspects Adventist eschatology conforms to the New Testament pattern." In all frankness, I must indicate my rejection of that assertion. As Cottrell also indicates, the basic reasons for this collision of judgment may be traced to divergent assumptions. I cannot accept his assumptions numbered 4, 5, 6, 7. Moreover, I have indicated some unlisted assumptions which are perhaps even more deep-seated and decisive — presuppositions regarding the nature of God's creation and the implications of his new creation in Christ. I have stated my conception of the issues with undiplomatic bluntness because that is the unpleasant task I was assigned. Let me assure Cottrell and his partners in this dialogue that I would be as ruthless in attacking as unscriptural the de facto eschatology implicit in the world view of American Protestantism. It is intended as a compliment to this group that I have tried to present an analysis of the issues rather than to mount an attack, although what I have said may seem to be attack rather than analysis.



## REFERENCES

- 1 Paul S. Minear, *I Saw a New Earth* (Washington, D. C.: Corpus Books 1968).
- 2 Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1950), p. 371.
- 3 W. T. Ong, *The Presence of the Word* (Yale University Press 1967).
- 4 Minear, *Christian Hope and the Second Coming* (Philadelphia: Westminster 1954), chaps. 6, 15.

## Comment

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In general, I noted the ecumenical tone of the paper and deeply appreciated Cottrell's efforts to present the views of his church as objectively as possible.

The overall eschatological perspective of the paper is one which, I believe, most Roman Catholics would have little difficulty with. We accept the view of a gradually developing "salvation history" reaching a climax in Jesus Christ and being ultimately fulfilled in the Second Coming. We also accept the significant contribution of the Old Testament prophets to the eschatological tension. It is clear, too, that the New Testament Christian community was strongly influenced by the conviction of the imminence of the parousia. I suggest that there is still room for discussion of whether the conviction of the imminence diminished in the latter half of the first century (especially after A.D. 70). But at least it is clear that the conviction of the *certainty* of the coming did not diminish.

I believe that Roman Catholic theology can profit by a greater awareness of the certainty of the parousia. Also, I believe that our eschatological perspective, at least in the manuals, tends to be too individualistic in its orientation. In the past neither community nor cosmic (or secular) eschatology has received the emphasis that both are now receiving and [that] seems to be an

important aspect of the biblical doctrine. Therefore, we can learn much from the Adventist emphases in these areas.

Most of my questions or reservations were raised, at least to some extent, in last year's ecumenical dialogue. Nevertheless, I offer the following observations:

1. While now I understand better the reasoning behind Adventists' insistence on the Sabbath, I hope that the observance of either Saturday or Sunday will not take on the (to me) extreme significance that it has in the past. I do not perceive signs of a union of church and state in enforcing Sunday observance, that is, to the extent that is feared by Adventists. Such signs seem to be diminishing, at least in this country.

2. Biblical scholarship suggests a less predictive element in the writings of the biblical prophets, especially in the writings of the apocalyptists. If the prophets were God's spokesmen to the men of their times, then it is for us to discover the underlying principles of their prophecies and apply them to our time. I realize that this predictive element lies close to the heart of Adventist teaching, but I find it difficult to accept such a precise application of the biblical figures to later generations.

3. Closely connected to the two previous points is the understanding of biblical imagery, particularly in the apocalyptic book of Revelation. While I believe that demythologization can and does take on extreme forms at times in some modern commentators, I do not believe that a literal interpretation of all biblical imagery is in keeping with what the Spirit is saying to us today, or, in fact, with what the Spirit intended for the early Christian Church.

I realize, of course, that similar observations have been made by others. I only make them because, as a Roman Catholic theologian, I have been asked for my reactions. In sum, I would say that while there are obvious aspects of Adventist doctrine with which I cannot agree, I do feel that their strong witness to the Second Coming of the Lord can be a healthy influence in the whole Christian community today. My principal hope would be that our points of difference will not be a cause for further division but a springboard to deeper understanding of God's Word.

I have read with interest the reaction of Paul S. Minear to Raymond Cottrell's paper "The Eschaton: A Seventh-day Adventist Perspective" and feel that a comment or two is in order. First, let me say that Cottrell's statement of the beliefs of most Adventists is handled with his usual thoroughness and care. He has presented the case, moreover, with considerable tact and sensitivity, especially in those areas of belief which are likely to be offensive to non-Adventists.

However, Minear makes a point that should not be taken lightly when he objects to the typical Adventist preoccupation with what he calls "history misnamed" — a "concentration on objective, literal data." I'm not certain that his amazement at how recent is the development of "this preference for the objective, literal meanings of a written Scripture" is well founded, but his apprehension that such an exegesis may prevent one from "penetrating to the deep realities of faith, hope, and love" may not be misplaced.

If Minear thinks that an objective treatment of symbolic material *necessarily* blocks such penetration, however, he is mistaken. Preoccupation with the objective and literal to the exclusion of the deeper meanings they serve is always a danger to an understanding of divine truth. But it is also the case that preoccupation with the meanings to the exclusion of the events which serve them may in the long run set such meanings disastrously adrift.

Adventists should continually ask themselves as they contemplate God's acts in history — including *this* act — What do they mean? What is God trying to tell us by acting in this manner? God's acts in history are windows to reality beyond history.

The heart of the message of the second advent concerns the very essence of the divine reality. The Second Coming concerns a God who "comes" to man. It is a picture of One who takes the initiative in redemption rather than waiting for the lost sheep to find its way home. Even in the story of the prodigal the father goes to meet his son. This is the essential difference between a largely Hellenic concept of reality, in which God is "being," and the Bible. In the biblical eschaton God "comes."

And he comes to the world. God takes his creation seriously. "It is very good," said the Genesis Creator, and that affirmation remains the divine posture. He comes to the world to redeem and restore it — not to supplant it with some other mode of existence. The doctrine of the eschaton should thus shape every Christian's affirmation of the Creation — of the world.

And man's bodily existence is also included in that affirmation. The eschaton involves the resurrection of the body. Material existence is precious to God and should be treated by man with a reverence and respect derived from his affirmation of the Creator and His creation.

In short, what I am saying is that the great event — no longer far off — toward which all creation moves is in the final analysis not just literal history, though it is also that. In it one may grasp a vision of reality itself. What God reveals through this event-window is the truth about himself that lies behind all events, all history. He comes because it is his nature to do so.

This revelation should condition the believer's response to the divine initiative throughout all our time — not just at the end of time. And that response should include expectation and anticipation just as a looked-for event lights the eyes and quickens the steps of the one who waits in hope.

Minear is justified in his concern that one may lose by a certain literalistic posture the "primary, continuing, intrinsic relationship," but that loss need not be realized — and will not be if this, like all God's acts in history, is approached with the proper question. And that question is not primarily *When?* — at least with specificity. Jesus himself said, "It is not for you to know." Nor is the question *How?* We probably wouldn't comprehend the details of that anyway. Rather, the question is *Why?* That is, what truth is God trying to convey by this revelatory act at the end of time?

History is not unimportant, but it is always secondary to the God who enters it from eternity — now as well as at the end of time. The "I will come again" must reinforce and not preclude the "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." The God who "comes" at the end seeks thereby to instill in us an awareness that he is also already here. The "looking for in hope" can create in us an open anticipation toward the One who is ever present.

# The Second Coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ

DEREK J. PRIME<sup>1</sup>

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While all evangelical Christians are agreed upon the basic truth that our Lord is to return, and that his imminent return is the great hope of the Church, there is much variation in thought and opinion concerning the order of events both before his coming and afterwards. Unfortunately, Christians have allowed themselves to be divided, and even their fellowship between one another spoiled, through the elevation of a particular interpretation to the position of a fundamental. Through fear of becoming involved in controversy, others have neglected speaking about the truth of Christ's coming altogether, to the obvious detriment of personal holiness and evangelism.

The indisputable fact that believers do have different views about the order of events, while maintaining an equal and sincere regard for the authority of the Scriptures, ought to convince us that the Scriptures do not provide as precise a timetable as many would have us believe. So much depends upon being able to recognize what is, in fact, symbolic, and what is literally to take place — the great example of this, of course, is the millennium.<sup>2</sup> There is wisdom in the caution of James Orr when he wrote, "My own opinion is that the distinction between symbol and outward fact must remain more or less an uncertainty till the time itself shall declare it."

Our purpose, therefore, will not be to put forward a particular point of view or interpretation, but to try to draw attention to those truths which it is hoped can be stated without dispute, and where there is doubt as to the order of events or intervals of time, . . . then to state the fact. No preoccupation with detail must allow us to lose the significance and excitement of "the expectation of the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ."

### CLEARLY PROMISED

Christ's Second Coming is clearly promised in the Bible. The Lord Jesus himself promised, "I will come again."<sup>3</sup> The Old Testament Scriptures which foretold his first coming also [gave] indications of his second.<sup>4</sup> The apostles bore witness to Christ's coming in their preaching and writing. Men and women were urged to repent and seek salvation in view of this glorious prospect.<sup>5</sup> Peter [declared] that Jesus will be revealed so that the full truth of his glory will be disclosed.<sup>6</sup> John likewise [declared] that Christ will appear and Christians will see him; his coming will be clear, distinct, and public; none will have any doubt about it.<sup>7</sup> Paul preached with urgency, in view of the appearing of our Lord Jesus yet to come; this definite historical event in the future gave a focus to all he did.<sup>8</sup> The Lord's Supper is intended to be a perpetual reminder of the Lord's Second Coming, for it is an "interim" measure — it is "until he comes." A common greeting among the early Christians seems to have been *Maranatha* — "the Lord is coming."<sup>9</sup> "It is the cry of the waiting and longing community for his coming again in glory — a cry which is made to the Lord of the community with particular force and fervor at the Lord's Supper — 'Lord, come.'"<sup>10</sup> As we read the New Testament, there can be no doubt that Christ's Second Coming is the central fact in the future which influences Christian activity and morality.

### SIGNS

Signs of Christ's coming are indicated in the Bible. We cannot always be sure in the Gospels whether some of our Lord's statements refer to immediate events, such as the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, or to the later events of his coming; sometimes the statements are intertwined, and may even have a dual reference. Certainly, however, his coming again will be preceded by disturbances in nature and distress among the nations; and there will be signs in the sun and the moon and the stars.<sup>11</sup> It will be preceded by concern and fear over coming events: men will faint with fear and foreboding of what is coming to the world.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, many antichrists will appear.<sup>13</sup> Antichrists are essentially adversaries of Christ — men and movements whose teaching is fundamentally against Christ and a denial of Christ. They both counterfeit and oppose Christ. Linked with the fact of antichrists is the warning that many professed Christians will depart from the faith and false teaching will be on the increase.<sup>14</sup>

## THE TIME

The precise time of Christ's Second Coming is not stated, and all efforts at calculation are to be rejected and repudiated. It is natural for us to want to know the timing of everything, as it was with the disciples themselves; but no one knows the day or the hour of Christ's Second Coming, except the Father.<sup>15</sup> The important truth to recognize is that we are not intended to know the exact time; thus it is utterly foolish to speculate. What we may be sure of is that Christ will be sent by the Father at the appointed time; and that time, so far as the world is concerned, will be at the unexpected moment — in the twinkling of an eye.<sup>16</sup>

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The twinkling of an eye is the time it takes to cast a glance, or perhaps to flutter an eyelid. Such an expression emphasizes the unexpected nature of the event, like the suddenness of lightning or a thief breaking into a house.<sup>17</sup> The world will be totally unprepared for the great event, even as it was unprepared for the coming of the Flood.<sup>18</sup> Caught up in time as we are, we need to recognize that there is no delay about the Lord's coming.<sup>19</sup> The only reason for any appearance of delay is his forbearance, in that he does not wish that any should perish, but all should reach repentance.<sup>20</sup> But the day of his return draws nearer with the passing of each day. His coming will be soon; we are always to regard his coming as being at hand.<sup>21</sup>

## THE MANNER OF HIS COMING

At the time of our Lord's ascension, the apostles stood gazing up into the sky. The angelic messengers gently rebuked them by asking, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."<sup>22</sup> We could not have a greater assurance concerning the personal, visible, and historical return of our Lord Jesus Christ; he will come in the same way as he was seen to go into heaven.

Thus he will come *from heaven*.<sup>23</sup> Heaven is the eternal dwellingplace of God and of his angels, the place from which Christ came at his incarnation and to which he returned at his ascension. *Second*, he will come *visibly* — indeed "every eye shall see him."<sup>24</sup> *Third*, he will come *openly* — there will be no element of hiddenness as at his first coming: "For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of man."<sup>25</sup> *Fourth*, he will come *personally*; his coming will mean his presence after his absence.<sup>26</sup> *Fifth*, he will come *in the clouds with power and great glory* — the glory of his Father.<sup>27</sup> Finally, he will come with his *angels and with all his saints*.<sup>28</sup>

## THE CONSEQUENCES OF HIS COMING

If we ask, "What will happen when Christ returns?" the answer we give depends much upon our views of the millennium, upon whether we feel it portrays what will lead up to the Lord's coming, or what we believe will follow it. Others, adopting the a-millennial view, hold that the millennium is nonexistent as a literal period, and apply it in a spiritual sense to the present experience of Christians, whether in heaven or on earth. Whatever view is held, there would seem to be many indisputable consequences of our Lord's coming upon which all are agreed, although ideas as to the timing of some of the consequences will vary according to convictions concerning the nature of the millennium.

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First and foremost, Christ's glory will be seen. The Second Coming will be an occasion of glory for Christ.<sup>29</sup> At his first coming his glory was veiled, and not everyone recognized his identity as the Son of God. But not so at his Second Coming; he will be seen sitting at the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven. His glory will be revealed to the world, and he will be glorified among his own and adored among all believers.<sup>30</sup> The whole universe will see and acknowledge him as Lord. As Phillips expresses [it], "It will be a breath-taking wonder."<sup>31</sup>

Then the resurrection of the dead will take place, and the transformation of all believers. Christ's grace will be revealed to believers in a manner unknown before.<sup>32</sup> The completeness of their salvation will be revealed, and a most important aspect of this completeness will be the resurrection of the dead.<sup>33</sup> At his coming, the Lord Jesus Christ will change our lowly bodies to be like his glorious body, by the power which enables him to make all things subject to himself.<sup>34</sup>

Following the resurrection, believers will be gathered together by Christ. He will send out the angels and gather his elect from the farthest bounds of earth to the farthest bounds of heaven. He will gather to himself both those who have died before his coming and those alive on the earth at the time. It will be like the ingathering of a great harvest.<sup>35</sup>

The Second Coming of Christ is consistently linked with the judgment, although those taking the premillennial view, for example, will place the final resurrection and the judgment at the end of the millennium. We shall . . . limit ourselves to the general principles about the judgment clearly found in the Scriptures. Every man and woman will acknowledge Christ as the Lord and therefore as the supreme Judge.<sup>36</sup> His coming will be a time of reckoning.<sup>37</sup> The judgment will include all men and women — the small and the great, the living and the dead.<sup>38</sup> The perfect justice of God will be



seen, and the judgment will be individual and personal.<sup>39</sup> All will be found guilty; no one will have anything to say in self-defense — all excuses will die upon men's lips.<sup>40</sup> The first part of the judgment will be the separation of those who have accepted God's way of salvation from those who have gone about to gain salvation by dependence on their own effort.<sup>41</sup> Those whose names are in the book of life shall escape the judgment of condemnation on account of sin because, having seen the folly of trusting in their own righteousness, through faith in Christ they have become the righteousness of God in him.<sup>42</sup>

The final division of men and women will come after the judgment. Men and women without the knowledge of God and who have refused to obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction and exclusion from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might.<sup>43</sup> The judgment of God will be executed by God's angels on unbelievers. Believers, however, will enter into the full wonder of everlasting life and the enjoyment of God's presence forever.<sup>44</sup> Christ will take believers to himself, that where he is they may be also.<sup>45</sup>

The end of all things as we know them will then take place. "The heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up." After the dissolution of this world, there will be revealed "new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."<sup>46</sup>

The final truth that the New Testament emphasizes is that God the Father will be glorified in all that happens. All that he ever spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets will be established.<sup>47</sup> As all men and women will be compelled to confess Christ as Lord, that act will have one great end — the glory of God the Father.<sup>48</sup> After [the destruction of] every rule and every authority and power, there will come the end of all events connected with Christ's coming, when Christ will deliver the kingdom to God the Father.<sup>49</sup> When all things are subjected to Christ, then he himself will be subjected to the Father, who put all things under him.<sup>50</sup>

#### IMPLICATIONS

While believers have tended to preoccupy themselves often with the precise details of the Lord's coming — many of which the Scriptures do not provide — the New Testament preoccupies itself with the moral imperatives which follow upon the sure fact of the Lord's imminent return. Such should be our preoccupation. Our character and conduct should be influenced continually by our glorious hope.

We are to rest the full weight of our hopes on the grace that will be ours when the Lord Jesus returns.<sup>51</sup> The fact of our Lord's coming is to have an influence on the whole of our thinking and activity, causing us to live with our hearts given to heavenly things, not to the passing things of the world.<sup>52</sup> We are to love his appearing — looking, waiting, and praying for it.<sup>53</sup> Having this hope before us, we shall find ourselves stimulated to pursue holiness.<sup>54</sup> We shall use the apparent "delay" to bring about men's salvation by the preaching of the gospel, at the same time hastening the coming of the Lord by this activity.<sup>55</sup> We shall aim at being ready for the Lord Jesus when he comes.<sup>56</sup> We shall always act and live remembering that time is short.<sup>57</sup>

We should not be surprised at the indifference of the world to the proclamation of Christ's Second Coming, for it has always been the case. Men, who prefer to follow their own passions, scoff at the promise of Christ's coming, deliberately ignoring the Word of God.<sup>58</sup> But they will be overtaken and surprised, nevertheless, by the reality of the Lord's Second Coming.<sup>59</sup> What should concern us is the indifference of many Christians to this "blessed hope," with the consequent lack of holiness and evangelistic concern. "For yet a little while, and the coming One shall come and shall not tarry."<sup>60</sup>

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# The Literary Image of Seventh-day Adventists

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Although Seventh-day Adventists have appeared infrequently in literature, the treatment playwrights and novelists have given them falls into a consistent pattern. Because many people have met Adventists only in literature, the consistency of this pattern is significant for what it reveals about the manner in which literary figures have perceived Adventism.

## I

Most of these references to Adventists are incidental and undeveloped. One of the first appears in *The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles* by George Bernard Shaw, one of the twentieth century's leading playwrights. A character asked about a sloop in the harbor replies that it is "the Pitcairn Island fleet. They are Seventh Day Adventists, and are quite sure the Judgment Day is fixed for five o'clock this afternoon. They propose to do nothing until then but sing hymns. The Irish Free State Admiral threatens to sink them if they dont [*sic*] stop. How am I to keep them quiet?"<sup>2</sup>

This image of Seventh-day Adventists as a somewhat odd lot looking for the Second Coming of Christ in strange places and times is repeated twenty years later in Rose Macaulay's novel *The Towers of Trebizond*. Father Chantry-Pigg, a Church of England priest, learns in Istanbul "that a party of Seventh Day Adventist pilgrims was journeying to Mount Ararat for the second coming of Christ, which was due to occur there this summer on the summit of the mountain." If Chantry-Pigg's party climbed Ararat they would "find the pilgrims waiting as near the top as it was possible to get, collecting pieces of the ark, singing hymns and preparing their souls against

the Coming."<sup>3</sup> All the while the BBC was recording their hymn-singing "for a Home Service Programme."<sup>4</sup>

The characters in Macaulay's novel comment on Seventh-day Adventists several times. A British consul refers to the group on Ararat as "part of the strange and ignorant life that goes on, and has always gone on, round about there," and a Greek student calls Adventists "insane."<sup>5</sup> Father Chantry-Pigg, who does not want to talk to an Adventist himself,<sup>6</sup> "said, with hostile contempt, that the Seventh Day Adventists were the busiest missionaries in Turkey and the Levant, and met, he feared, with only too much success."<sup>7</sup>

The pictures Shaw and Macaulay give are examples of the view that appears in most fiction.

In several works by Sinclair Lewis, Pulitzer and Nobel prizewinning American novelist, Adventists receive more than a passing mention. In *Main Street* Carolyn Kennicott looks out the window of her house and sees "the side of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church — a plain clapboard wall of a sour liver color,"<sup>8</sup> symbol of all that is austere and unimaginative in the smalltown Midwest. In *Arrowsmith* Lewis describes one character as "a socialist, a Swedish Seventh Day Adventist, a ferocious arguer, and fond of drinking aquavit."<sup>9</sup> An argument over religion in *Elmer Gantry*, Lewis's novel about a hypocritical evangelist, results in one person's telling another: "It's fellows like you who break down the dike of true belief, and open a channel for higher criticism and sabellianism and nymphomania and agnosticism and heresy and Catholicism and Seventh-day Adventism and all those horrible German inventions!"<sup>10</sup> Finally, Lewis portrays Fort Beulah, Vermont, a small town in *It Can't Happen Here*, as "a community where to sport a beard was to confess one's self a farmer, a Civil War veteran, or a Seventh Day Adventist."<sup>11</sup> One of this novel's main characters, the folksy fascist Berzelius Windrip, writes an autobiography in which he describes Adventists as zealots whom he would like to unite with Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and Unitarians into a "whole glorious brotherhood."<sup>12</sup>

Windrip's — or Lewis's — association of Adventists with mainline Protestant groups is unusual, for most writers group them with fringe sects. In *Balthazar*, the second work of his experimental *Alexandria Quartet*, Lawrence Durrell connects Adventists with sects concerned with the hermetic philosophy (involving alchemy and magic) — namely Steinerites, Christian Scientists, and Ouspenskyists.<sup>13</sup> In Peter Matthiessen's *At Play in the Fields of the Lord*, a novel about missionaries in South America, one character distinguishes Adventists from Protestants, Catholics, and Jews.<sup>14</sup> And a Jewish rabbi who has a synagogue in a New York ghetto in Jerome Charyn's

*On the Darkening Green* replies to a questioner that, although black Jews do not attend his synagogue, he has "Seventh Day Adventists and Abyssinian Baptists up here for [his] sermons. And occasionally a Holy Roller. They all come in wearing skullcaps."<sup>15</sup>

## II

The incidental references to Adventists noted thus far present no developed view. However, Adventists serve as major characters in at least three works — Richard Wright's *Black Boy*, Upton Sinclair's *Another Pamela*, and Ralph Allen's *The High White Forest* — and these books flesh out the image.

One of the best known examples of black American autobiography, Richard Wright's *Black Boy*, tells how one man met and overcame the twin evils of poverty and racial prejudice while growing up in the South during the 1920s and 1930s. Wright, who became a leading black novelist, lived for several years with his Seventh-day Adventist grandmother because his mother was chronically ill and unable to care for him. Gifted with a strong imagination and keen sensibilities, he felt emotionally pulled toward Adventism as it was expressed in the sermons he heard. He describes vividly the impression these sermons made on him:

[The ministers] expounded a gospel clogged with images of vast lakes of eternal fire, of seas vanishing, of valleys of dry bones, of the sun burning to ashes, of the moon turning to blood, of stars falling to the earth, of a wooden staff being transformed into a serpent, of voices speaking out of clouds, of men walking upon water, of God riding whirlwinds, of water changing into wine, of the dead rising and living, of the blind seeing, of the lame walking; a salvation that teemed with fantastic beasts having multiple heads and horns and eyes and feet; sermons of statues possessing heads of gold, shoulders of silver, legs of brass, and feet of clay; a cosmic tale that began before time and ended with the clouds of the sky rolling away at the Second Coming of Christ; chronicles that concluded with the Armageddon; dramas thronged with all the billions of human beings who had ever lived or died as God judged the quick and the dead.<sup>16</sup>

Wright also felt a connection between the life presented by the church and the life he lived outside:

Many of the religious symbols appealed to my sensibilities and I responded to the dramatic vision of life held by the church, feeling that to live day by day with death as one's sole thought was to be so compassionately sensitive toward all life as to view all men as slowly dying, and the trembling sense of fate that welled up, sweet and melancholy, from the hymns blended with the sense of fate that I had already caught from life.<sup>17</sup>

Yet, he says, when "I walked out of the church and saw the bright sunshine and felt the throbbing life of the people in the streets I knew that none of it was true and that nothing would happen."<sup>18</sup>

But the strongest impression that Adventism made on Wright was through his grandmother, his aunt, and the church school he attended for a short time — all of which added up to a loveless, unimaginative, and legalistic existence. His grandmother forced her strict dietary practices on him (although she apparently did use lard), with the result that he was hungry and suffered from indigestion most of the time. Prayers were required at sunup, meals, sundown, and before bed. "Long, rambling Bible readings" were also required daily, and Richard often had to attend all-night prayer meetings.<sup>19</sup> His grandmother called fiction "the Devil's work" and told Richard he was going to burn in hell for liking such stories.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, she would allow no one who lived under her roof to work on the Sabbath, a point that became a major source of conflict between her and Richard.<sup>21</sup>

At the church school Richard attended, baseball, marbles, boxing, and running were forbidden; but pop-the-whip was acceptable. He said the teacher (his aunt) "was determined that every student should know that [he] was a sinner of whom she did not approve, and that [he] was not to be granted consideration of any kind."<sup>22</sup> His fellow pupils "were a docile lot, lacking in that keen sense of rivalry which made the boys and girls who went to public school a crowd in which a boy was tested and weighed, in which he caught a glimpse of what the world was. These boys and girls were will-less, their speech flat, their gestures vague, their personalities devoid of anger, hope, laughter, enthusiasm, passion, or despair. . . . They were claimed wholly by their environment and could imagine no other."<sup>23</sup>

In short, the Adventism Richard Wright encountered was a narrow, bigoted religion. After he fought with his aunt over some unfair punishment at school, she seldom spoke to him again, although they "ate at the same table and slept under the same roof."<sup>24</sup> Once it was clear that Richard would not become an Adventist, his grandmother and aunt gave him up for lost. "They told me," he says, "that they were dead to the world, and those of their blood who lived in that world were therefore dead to them. From urgent solicitude they dropped to coldness and hostility."<sup>25</sup> Richard's grandmother also became angry and disgusted when his mother began attending the Methodist church.<sup>26</sup>

Even between his grandmother and aunt, both Adventists, the same hostility existed. They fought "with each other over minor points of religious doctrine, or over some imagined infraction of what they chose to call their moral code." He concludes that wherever he found religion in his life he "found strife, the attempt of one individual or group to rule another in the name of God. The naked will to power seemed always to walk in the wake

of a hymn."<sup>27</sup> In another place he said ironically, "God blessed our home with the love that binds."<sup>28</sup>

Two exceptions to this view of Adventism as a legalistic, loveless religion appear in similar autobiographical books dealing with poverty and prejudice, and these should be noted. Malcolm X recounts in his autobiography that his mother began attending Adventist meetings while she was living in Michigan. Adventist dietary practices probably attracted her, for she followed similar ones. Malcolm attended the meetings with her and enjoyed the food served at the potluck dinners. He states that although Adventists believed the world would soon end, "they were the friendliest white people I had ever seen."<sup>29</sup>

This favorable view is also expressed in Piri Thomas's *Down These Mean Streets*, an autobiography of a Puerto Rican growing up in New York. Thomas's Adventist mother attempted to prevent bad language in her home,<sup>30</sup> tried to teach her children to turn the other cheek,<sup>31</sup> and never argued. Adventist dietary customs and attitudes toward smoking and drinking also made a strong impression on Thomas.<sup>32</sup> He did wonder, however, just how long it would be before Christ came, "'cause ever since I was a little kid I'd heard he was coming."<sup>33</sup>

### III

Upton Sinclair, the prolific socialist novelist who wrote *The Jungle*, created an Adventist character in one of his last works, *Another Pamela*. Patterned after Samuel Richardson's eighteenth-century novel, Sinclair's Pamela tells the story of a poor Adventist girl who goes to work as a maid in the home of Mrs. Harries, a wealthy woman in Southern California in the 1930s. This novel is in the form of letters Pamela writes to her sister, who was a student at La Sierra College, and to her mother. The plot revolves around Pamela's attempts to preserve her virtue despite efforts by Charles, Mrs. Harries's nephew, to seduce her. Pamela becomes Mrs. Harries's instrument to save Charles from a life of drunken debauchery. By preserving her virtue, Pamela marries Charles and presumably lives happily ever after.

Pamela is an innocent, good-hearted, well-meaning girl whose religion pervades her existence. She sees the world as completely under God's control, except for the people whom Satan rules. She meets Mrs. Harries when the connecting rod of the wealthy woman's automobile breaks near Pamela's house in the country, an incident that Pamela calls as providential as any in the Sabbath school lessons, though she does admit that God has a strange way of working.<sup>34</sup> Pamela also believes that under God's guidance there can



be no such thing as an accident. She says, "If I ask him to guide me and then open the Book with my eyes shut, it will be what he wishes me to read."<sup>35</sup>

This view of God results from a literalistic reading of the Bible, which Pamela must believe is God's Word or her "soul will be lost in everlasting hell fire."<sup>36</sup> At one point she asks her sister to look up the term "paper money" — a subject of discussion among Mrs. Harries's socialist friends — in a concordance so that she will know what to think about that problem.<sup>37</sup> Her interpretation of the Bible, however, comes from Ellen White. She tells her sister that she "studied every word of the First Angel's Message and checked every word of its prophecies by the interpretations in 'The Great Controversy.'"<sup>38</sup> Sermons also have their effect on Pamela, for she remembers "Rev. Tucker" had preached that "we must never forget that the evil one is after us everywhere and all the time."<sup>39</sup>

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However valid Sinclair's overall picture of Adventists may be, clearly he misunderstood Adventist theology of death and hell. As noted earlier, Pamela speaks of "everlasting hell fire." At another point, when Charles is acting as if struck dead for blaspheming God, she says, "the most awful horror seizes me; God has taken him at his word, and his soul is gone to hell and is even now in everlasting fire!"<sup>40</sup>

Because Pamela believes that the Devil is constantly out to deceive and that she must always be on guard, her theology controls her relationship to other people. Most important is that she stay clear of "Papists." On first meeting Mrs. Harries, Pamela "could only pray she was not a Papist."<sup>41</sup> Later, at Mrs. Harries's home she meets a priest who "is kind in manner, which [she supposes] is one of Satan's wiles." When he says nothing about religion, she is happy, for "his is merely idolatry."<sup>42</sup> Then when she meets a Unitarian and learns that he does not believe that Jesus is the Son of God, she decides that he is "worse even than the Papists, for he has had his chance and has rejected it."<sup>43</sup>

Even apart from the Catholics, most of the people in the world, according to Pamela's Adventist mother, "are damned souls who will be gathered up like chaff from the threshing floor and cast into everlasting fire." Although Pamela believes this statement is true, "that does not make [her] want to hear it so many times." Because of the evil influences all around, she has to promise her mother before going to work for Mrs. Harries "that never, never, will [she] permit any trace of false doctrine to find lodgment in [her] mind." These ideas culminate in the belief that although everyone is equal in the sight of God, "those of us who have the true faith are better."<sup>44</sup>

Pamela is not exclusive about her faith, though, for she tries to convert

anyone who will listen, including a fellow maid, a young man in prison, a young folk poet — and Charles, of course. Yet, a real human concern motivates her missionary zeal. She writes of “trying to speak only love to the people in this house where it is so much needed,”<sup>45</sup> and tells Charles that “the kingdom of heaven is within you. You make it there or you make hell. You love people and you have love, or you hate people and you have hate.”<sup>46</sup> To the young man in prison she says that “in believing in God he does not have to cease believing in the working class, or trying to help them to build a world in which there are no more poor and no more rich idlers.”<sup>47</sup>

It is this very idealism and missionary zeal that helps get Pamela involved with Charles. When he holds her hand while driving, and she enjoys it, she thinks: “This is temptation, this car is temptation, and this lovely ride; the devil is after me. But if I can save this young man from getting drunk again, will that not be a victory over Satan?”<sup>48</sup> As she becomes more involved with Charles, Pamela says, “I have the fear that if I do not keep him happy he might order a drink right at this place. . . . In short, it is the awfulest confusion I have been in yet.” Then later, “I fear I am in love with him, and I want so to save him, but I know that I cannot, and I think, Oh, but I must try!”<sup>49</sup>

When Charles finally asks Pamela to marry him, she forces him down on his knees and prays as she has never done before: “‘O God, dear God, good God, help two lost children to find the light! Help us to keep our vows of love! And no more drinking of liquor!’” She continues, “I made him say it; I made him repeat every sentence after me, like a child. It could not have failed to touch him, because he saw how much it meant to me. ‘No more cocktail parties! No more night clubs! No more ladies of any sort!’ . . . He swore that he meant it, he swore it on his knees before God. And then, when he got to his feet, I made him promise it on his honor as a gentleman — meaning to bind him both ways, for safety.”<sup>50</sup>

Pamela’s reference to night clubs and cocktail parties indicates something of the social standards she feels are so important. She does not eat meat,<sup>51</sup> believes that dyeing one’s hair is a sin,<sup>52</sup> will not wear makeup or jewelry,<sup>53</sup> and feels that reading fiction is wrong, though she does rationalize that Richardson’s *Pamela* will not harm her, for it “is like history; at the same time it does not fail to strengthen [her] virtue, being full of moral sentiments most uplifting.”<sup>54</sup> Also, for most of the book she refuses to go to a movie.<sup>55</sup> After her marriage, however, she attends the theater, explaining to her sister: “I searched my conscience, and remembered what I had been taught on the subject of the stage and screen; the main point seems to be the

corrupting of the young. But I am no longer young in that sense; I have learned the difference between good and evil, and it can do me no harm to know how much of the latter there is in the world. . . . I have to balance the evil of breaking our church's rule against the evil of managing my husband too strictly and so losing my hold on him."<sup>56</sup>

Pamela's religion has taught her to take life seriously, not frittering it away in idle play. She attempts to shun luxury — it is one of "Satan's devices"<sup>57</sup> — and prays that worldliness and pride will not turn her head.<sup>58</sup> So no one will think she married Charles for his money she intends to go on working for his aunt,<sup>59</sup> and concludes she will do her "best to see that [she and Charles] do something more than playing with [their] lives."<sup>60</sup>

This image of Adventism is similar to the austere and somewhat fanatical religion of *Black Boy*, but it is nevertheless humanized by a simple, rather ignorant girl, who looks on people with genuine love and concern. Whether this love exists because of her religion or in spite of it, however, Sinclair does not make clear.

#### IV

*The High White Forest*, by Canadian newspaper editor Ralph Allen, is the most recently published novel with an Adventist as a major character. It tells the story of three men — George Ballantyne, a Canadian newspaperman; Franz Koerner, a German-American who goes to fight for Hitler; and Dave Kyle, a Seventh-day Adventist from Battle Creek, Michigan, who gradually leaves his faith and joins the army. As the plot develops, these three men come together at the Battle of the Bulge, with Koerner killing Ballantyne and Kyle killing Koerner.

As in both *Black Boy* and *Another Pamela*, Adventism's social standards are significant. Adventists teach strict dress standards in Battle Creek, for Mrs. White had counseled them to dress soberly. Because "physical attraction was not supposed to count with decent people," Dave Kyle feels self-conscious about holding hands with his girl friend.<sup>61</sup> After Dave joins the army he remains a nonsmoker, a fact that makes him well-known in his company.<sup>62</sup> He does begin swearing, however, finding the experience "exhilarating" the first time he uses coarse language.<sup>63</sup>

Adventist theology, though, affects Dave most significantly. His father, Samuel Kyle, is an intensely religious man whose faith is built on the authority of the Bible and Mrs. White. "He seized on every possible pretext and, if no pretext came forward, invented one, to introduce some essential article of scripture or one of the interpretations or canons of Sister White." He quotes Mrs. White's statement that "there are true Christians in every

church. But when the decree shall go forth exploring the counterfeit Sabbath, the line shall be clearly drawn between the false and the true." He believes that because of the Adventist way of life "anybody with eyes could see that Adventist children were almost automatically healthier, happier, better-mannered, better-schooled, better-nourished, and in better company than other children."<sup>64</sup>

The "soul" of Samuel Kyle's belief is that "Christ did live, Christ did die, Christ would return, at his Advent the righteous would be borne to eternal bliss and the unrighteous would be devoured in flames." Dave regards his father as so "securely rooted in and insulated by his religion" that he cannot be damaged and is beyond the reach of tragedy.<sup>65</sup>

Dave's problems with this religion arise when he goes to the University of Michigan to study pharmacy. During his junior year he writes to his father, "I know the Bible says we're right, but this friend of mine and this girl friend of his keep asking how I'm sure the Bible's right." In answering, his father only asserts the Bible's reliability; and because he had never encouraged any reading except of the Bible and Mrs. White, "David could only grope."<sup>66</sup>

Dave's relationship to Adventism comes to a crisis point when he decides to join the army. His father wants him to be drafted into the Medical Corps, but Dave replies, "If I'm going to be in the war at all, I'm going to be all the way in. The excuse I could use doesn't fit my case any longer, that's all."<sup>67</sup>

Dave's decision to go into combat causes "aching sorrow" for his father. "For the first time he perceived that his father neither saw nor leaned upon his gospel of salvation as a gospel mainly of self-preservation; it was a gospel of pity and concern, and Samuel's concern now was not for forms and observances and rules and his own unflawed performance of his duty, but for the immortal soul of his only son."<sup>68</sup>

Samuel takes very seriously the apostasy of his son, entering the most difficult test of his life, concluding that he would not see his son in heaven. Nevertheless, he writes Dave that "all our love is with you." He even accepts responsibility for Dave's unbelief, recognizing that he has asked his son to take too much on faith, a situation he belatedly tries to rectify by giving Dave some pamphlets that answer rationalist objections to the Bible. When Dave's minister refuses to treat him as a betrayer, Dave feels betrayed himself. Mary Egan, his girl friend, tells him, "All you've believed in, all you've been taught, it's all gone, but you're still most highly brave."<sup>69</sup> None of the bigotry of Richard Wright's grandmother and aunt appears here.

But Dave is unable to discard Adventism completely, for the vision of the "deep and bottomless terror of the lake of fire"<sup>70</sup> — important also in both *Black Boy* and *Another Pamela* — stays with him and returns to his consciousness during times of crisis. At times doubting his doubts, he is not sure where he stands. Somehow he wants "only a cunning little hedge bet on the forsaken, seedy, ludicrous, insane, but still terrifying faith of his fathers; a stand-by foxhole in case by some wild fantasy the lake of fire turned out to be the well of truth."<sup>71</sup>

Needing something to justify himself and his actions, he returns to a secular version of the fatalism his religion had once provided. As the book closes, Dave meets Koerner making his way through the snow-filled forest. He finds out who Koerner is and faces his crisis. Raising his gun, he wonders whom he is really aiming at — his father, Mary, or himself.

Was this where damnation became final, when the lake of fire flooded over and became irrevocable and beyond escape? He had wondered enough already, he told himself in this irrevocable, irreplaceable split second, there was no time left for further wondering. He must do what he was compelled to do and hope that at last this high white forest would release him and allow him to make his peace on earth with Samuel Kyle and claim his life on earth with Mary Egan. He corrected his aim.<sup>72</sup>

## V

All of these writers view Adventism as a peculiarly intense religion that puts considerable emphasis on outward forms. The incidental references tend to associate Seventh-day Adventists with fringe sects, often indicating inadequate knowledge of actual Adventist beliefs. The more developed viewpoints of *Black Boy*, *Another Pamela*, and *The High White Forest* emphasize the emotional impact of Adventism on its adherents — largely legalism, self-righteousness, and fear of the lake of fire. Significantly, the person of Christ goes virtually unmentioned.

Although the number of references discussed here are too few to support generalization, it appears that works written during the 1960s — *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, *Down These Mean Streets*, and particularly *The High White Forest* — view Adventists more sympathetically and knowledgeably than earlier works. Nevertheless, the literary image of Seventh-day Adventists presents them as a people far removed from the social and intellectual mainstream of the twentieth century.

## REFERENCES

- 1 Because this article does not purport to cover every reference to Seventh-day Adventists in literature, I would appreciate learning of any additional references readers may have come across. I have not included references to Seventh-day Ad-

ventists in the works of G. W. Target, an Adventist novelist. Neither have I included those found in the sociological works of Oscar Lewis or the account of the Lucille Miller case in Joan Didion's *Slouching Towards Bethlehem* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux 1968), pp. 3-28. It should also be noted that Horton Davies incorrectly identifies the major character of A. J. Cronin's *Grand Canary* as a Seventh-day Adventist (see Horton Davies, *A Mirror of the Ministry in Modern Novels* [New York: Oxford University Press 1959], pp. 123-128).

[Note: In the following references, the page numbers refer to the edition cited in the note.]

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- 17 Chapter 4, pp. 123-124.
- 18 Chapter 4, p. 113.
- 19 Chapter 4, pp. 68, 123; see also chapter 2.
- 20 Chapter 2, p. 48.
- 21 Chapter 5, p. 139.
- 22 Chapter 4, p. 115.
- 23 Chapter 4, pp. 115-116.
- 24 Chapter 4, p. 121.
- 25 Chapter 5, p. 135.
- 26 Chapter 6, p. 166.
- 27 Chapter 5, p. 150.
- 28 Chapter 4, p. 121.

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- 30 Piri Thomas, *Down These Mean Streets* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Incorporated 1967), chapter 3, p. 20. [References 31-33 are all from Thomas's *Down These Mean Streets*. EDITOR.]
- 31 Chapter 4, p. 27.
- 32 Chapter 31, p. 290.
- 33 Chapter 5, p. 44.
- 34 Upton Sinclair, *Another Pamela, or Virtue Still Rewarded: A Story* (New York: The Viking Press 1950), letter 1, pp. 3-11. [References 35-60 are all from Sinclair's *Another Pamela*. EDITOR.]
- 35 Letter 12, p. 55.
- 36 Letter 9, p. 43.
- 37 Letter 6, p. 32.
- 38 Letter 2, p. 11.
- 39 Letter 86, p. 296.
- 40 Letter 31, p. 133.
- 41 Letter 1, p. 7.
- 42 Letter 14, p. 60.
- 43 Letter 23, p. 96.
- 44 Letter 1, p. 10.
- 45 Letter 18, p. 77.
- 46 Letter 57, p. 212.
- 47 Letter 75, p. 265.
- 48 Letter 20, p. 85.
- 49 Letter 27, p. 114.
- 50 Letter 88, p. 302.
- 51 Letter 9, p. 25.
- 52 Letter 1, p. 7.
- 53 Letter 90, p. 305.
- 54 Letter 61, p. 226.
- 55 Letter 27, p. 111.
- 56 Letter 93, pp. 311-312.
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- 58 Letter 89, p. 303.
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- 64 Chapter 2, pp. 41-43.
- 65 Chapter 2, pp. 48, 52.
- 66 Chapter 2, p. 47.
- 67 Chapter 2, p. 53.
- 68 Chapter 2, p. 52.
- 69 Chapter 2, p. 49.
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# Factors in Vegetarianism

ISAO HORINOCHI

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The Seventh-day Adventist church has emphasized healthful living, including vegetarianism, as part of the gospel message. Because I was curious about the extent of vegetarianism practiced by members of the church, I surveyed Pacific Union College students in a school assembly in the spring of 1969. A total of 916 students, 70 percent of the student body, responded. The survey questions covered a broad spectrum of health-related topics, but this article will be limited to one aspect of the survey — vegetarianism and the use of “meatless meats” as a protein substitute.

Thirty-eight percent of the students claimed to be vegetarians in response to the question, “Do you eat meat products in any form when you are at home or outside the college setting?” Of these, about 1 percent were strict vegetarians who did not use eggs or dairy products, and the remainder were lacto-ovovegetarians. Twenty-six percent stated that they are occasional (once a month or less often) meat eaters, that they usually follow a lacto-ovovegetarian diet, and that only under some social and travel conditions do they eat meat. The final 37 percent responded that they eat meat frequently (every day, more than once a week, or once a week) outside the college setting.

## SOCIAL PROFILES OF RESPONDENTS

The social backgrounds of respondents who eat meat and those who do not is significant, and further analysis would no doubt be useful. There is essentially no difference between the number of male and female vegetarians or meat eaters. However, classification by racial or ethnic background reveals that cultural patterns affect eating habits. The lowest rate (14 percent) of vegetarians and the most meat eaters (44 percent) are among Oriental students. I come from this background, and can perhaps at least partially explain the proportionately high incidence of meat eating among



the Oriental students. A high percentage (25 percent) of the Oriental students are new converts to the church who come from families who eat meat; only half come from homes in which both parents are members of the Seventh-day Adventist church, and even more significant, 29 percent of the Oriental students come from non-Seventh-day Adventist homes. Also, meat is used differently in Oriental cooking than it is in American cooking. Rather than centering the meal on a large cut of meat, such as the American steak and baked potato pattern, Oriental people use smaller amounts of meat as seasoning or a garnish with many vegetables. They also tend to eat less beef and more fish and chicken than Americans.

Black students and Spanish-speaking students do not include as high a proportion of meat eaters as the Oriental students. However, according to some of these respondents whom I have interviewed, the survey statistics do not reflect the pattern of the whole subculture. The respondents have unanimously indicated that the real rate of meat eating is higher among their groups than the survey suggested and that the rates represent a selective group of students.

There is a significant drop in the frequency of meat eating as the generation increases — that is, those who come from a long line of membership in the church tend to eat less meat and conform to a more completely vegetarian diet than recent converts. Among students whose parents are both members of the Seventh-day Adventist church, 40 percent are vegetarians and 32 percent eat meat frequently. In homes where only one parent is a Seventh-day Adventist there is much more significant conformity to church dietary habits when it is the father who is the member. The father's influence is also great when he is not a member, reflected in the fact that 51 percent of students from such families eat meat, as opposed to 31 percent of students from families in which the father is a church member.

The number of years in a Christian school also influences dietary habits. A student who has spent several years in Seventh-day Adventist schools is more likely to be a vegetarian (42 percent) and less likely to eat meat (31 percent).

Approximately 245 of the 347 students who claim to be vegetarians or lacto-ovo vegetarians said that they come from homes where no meat is served. Eighty percent of this subgroup had twelve years of precollege education in Seventh-day Adventist schools, and both parents of 92 percent are members of the church. Forty-seven percent are third-generation Adventists (both parents and grandparents are church members), and 27 percent have had great-grandparents who were members.

When the respondents are classified according to majors, as expected, theology or religion majors have a high incidence of vegetarianism (63 percent) and a low frequency of meateating (17 percent). This trend is followed by the majors in home economics. For unknown reasons, the business and secretarial science majors have the highest (50 percent) meateating percentage and also the lowest (22 percent) percentage of vegetarianism. The social science majors, who rank next to the business and secretarial science students, have the highest ranking (22 percent) in everyday use of meat.

Dietary norms are not usually established after students come to college, at least for the respondents of this survey. Most (71 percent) claim that their vegetarian eating habits were formed before they came to Pacific Union College. It seems that socialization in early childhood and youth is essential in the establishment of vegetarian dietary habits.

When we examine the relationship between meateating habits and the occupation of each student's father, we learn that students whose parents are employed by the Adventist church have the lowest ranking (12 percent) in meateating habits. The children of medical and dental practitioners tend to be in the middle (34 percent). Students from families in which the father is classed as a white-collar or blue-collar worker have the highest percentage (45 percent) of meateating.

Students from missionary families seem to eat meat the least frequently (16 percent) and conform most to a vegetarian diet (55 percent). Perhaps this reflects their position as "witnesses" for their religion in a foreign country. A high percentage (86 percent) of these families are vegetarians.

A significant finding that supports the concept of the influence of the home and parental example is the similarity of students' dietary habits to those of their families. When all the vegetarian students (347) were measured against their family dietary norms, it was found that 71 percent of the families were also vegetarians. The same pattern was also true of students who eat meat; 85 percent of their families also served meat frequently in their homes. These findings show that examples are more influential than preaching.

#### ETHICAL AND VALUE JUDGMENTS

The survey also included another question that is relevant to dietary norms: "Do you feel that the Spirit of prophecy counsel on diet is relevant to our times and applicable to our generation?" Sixty-nine percent of the respondents affirmed the relevancy of Ellen G. White's advice on diet to this generation. Another 21 percent accepted some of the counsels as applicable

today. Two percent completely rejected the value of Mrs. White's writing on diet, and 8 percent were undecided.

Perhaps the most significant findings on this matter are reflected in a separate category of frequency of meateating. Of those who eat meat often, only 45 percent accepted the relevance of Mrs. White's counsels on diet. The students who are vegetarians overwhelmingly (89 percent) accepted all the Ellen White writings as applicable to our time. These responses indicate that traditional acceptance of these writings is highly correlative to conforming behavior on dietary regulations.

Meateating is evidently measured by vegetarians as an important indication of religiosity in the Adventist subculture. A high proportion (59 percent) of this group expressed the opinion that people who eat meat are less consecrated; 23 percent of this group was not sure. But 311 frequent meat-eaters overwhelmingly (86 percent) said that meateating is not a measure of religiosity. This latter percentage is closer to the whole group's generally negative response (75 percent) to the suggestion that vegetarianism is a sign of "religiousness."

This strong standard expressed by the vegetarian group is reflected in their own value judgment of dietary deviancy. When they were asked if they feel guilty when they deviate from church dietary standards, 31 percent said "sometimes," and 25 percent said "all the time." Only 21 percent responded that they felt no guilt. Of those who eat meat frequently, the same percentage (30 percent) feel guilt "sometimes," but only 5 percent feel it "all the time."

When the respondents were asked if they feel that they have sinned when they deviate from church dietary rules, the same contrast exists between the vegetarians and the meateaters, although there is a noticeable drop in the percentages.

The frequent meateaters would fare better in a situation where eating "unclean" meat (pork, shellfish, and so on) is a test of survival. Fifty-nine percent of those who eat meat frequently said they would eat "unclean" meat under certain hardship conditions, but of the vegetarian group, only 29 percent were willing to eat it, and another 29 percent were not sure. This latter group represents ardent adherents of the church who are willing to stand for their convictions under extreme conditions, although their reasoning under the problematical situation is difficult to understand.

## THE MEAT SUBSTITUTE PROBLEM

I believe that a contributor to deviancy from ideal health practices is the manufacture of so-called meat substitutes. My hypothesis is that meat substitutes, which are imitations of flesh foods, contribute to some degree to meateating because they admit the desirability of flesh foods. The meat substitutes may perpetuate a desire for meat.

I would like to suggest a coined phrase, "meatless meat," to describe all the various types of meat substitutes. On this basis, it may be that the church does not encourage a wholesome vegetarian diet but an imitative meatless meat diet. The dietary reform envisioned and counseled by Ellen White includes a "simple diet" and "plain food, prepared in the simplest manner." The many varieties of meatless meats are probably an antithesis to her concept of the ideal diet.

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There is no doubt that these meatless meats help new converts transfer from meateating to vegetarianism, but a reversal of this transfer of diet is also possible, if the meatless meat strengthens a person's desire for meat. At the least, the imitation of meat may be a concession that in order to taste good, food must be in the form of flesh food.

The food manufacturers have been successful in producing these meatless meats. Many of the products have texture, color, appearance, and flavoring similar to meat, and even their names indicate meat products. These manufacturers have even gone beyond the imitation of "clean" meat and have also produced imitations of "unclean" meat. Perhaps the producers of these meatless meats, motivated by a desire for profit, have outstepped reasonable boundaries in the manufacture of these substitutes.

An examination of the sixty-eight different forms of meat substitute products produced by church institutions and independent companies operated by Seventh-day Adventists reveals that twenty-seven, of the meatless meat products have meat-type labels; the balance have nonmeat labels. The following are some examples of both types:

### MEAT-TYPE LABELS

Wham (ham-style loaf, ham-style slices)  
Stripples (hickory-smoked flavor imitation bacon)  
Prosage (use like sausage)  
Vegetarian Luncheon Slices (corned-beef-like)  
Holiday Roast (turkey-style dinners)  
Vegetable Skallops (imitation shellfish)  
Terkettes (mock turkey)  
Little Links

### NONMEAT LABELS

Dinner Rounds  
Nuteena  
Proteena  
Protose  
Fry Sticks  
Big Pat  
Dinner Morsels  
Cheze-O-Soy  
Cho-Pats

There is ambivalence about some of the recent meatless meat products highly imitative of flesh foods. Many people have expressed delight because the new products have a better texture and flavor than the older, somewhat spongy, gluten meat substitutes. The "fibroprotein" product, manufactured from specially processed soybeans, has a texture similar to many meat products, such as the white meat of chicken and roast beef slices. Other persons have had reservations about the new products, expressed in such remarks by shoppers in the college market as: "Yes, I like it very much, but I don't think they should make it taste and look so much like meat." "What bothers me is the name 'Wham,' when we don't even eat ham." "I feel guilty about eating substitute ham and bacon."

Sixty-six percent of the respondents were in favor of a meat substitute as part of a vegetarian diet, but 7 percent said that meat substitutes reminded them of eating real meat, and another 11 percent felt that the "meatless meat" was a poor substitute for meat protein. A much higher percentage (19 percent) believed that another approach to providing protein in diet should be developed.

I feel that further research should be done on whether meat substitutes are a detriment or a support when used to supplement a vegetarian diet. The recent trend toward meat-type labeling and vegetable protein products that imitate meat, especially those that copy "unclean" meat, may not contribute to the ideal dietary norm. Perhaps we should seek to develop more nutritious and less costly meat substitutes in place of the expensive meatless meats.

#### SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

If we were to generalize about the dietary habits of Seventh-day Adventist students at Pacific Union College, slightly over a third of the students are vegetarians, another slightly over a third eat meat frequently, and just over a fourth are occasional meateaters. Perhaps the correlation of home eating habits to the student dietary norm is the most significant finding of this research. Those who are frequent meateaters come from families that eat much meat, and the vegetarians come largely from vegetarian families. Most students thus strongly reflect their parents' values on diet. Further research, especially a comparison with the parents' responses to a similar questionnaire, would be an invaluable study.

The dietary habits of Seventh-day Adventist church members may reflect another aspect of a changing, contemporary church-growth. As the children of the church adherents are socialized to practice the same faith, and as others are "evangelized" into the church, the consequence is more members,

all of whom have different personal preferences and habits of all types. Accommodation to these preferences and habits and the compromise of traditional teachings thus occasionally result. The controversy over dietary regulations within the church is thus a natural consequence of a changing church.

Dietary preferences might also be related to social class; upward social mobility might involve greater association with secular society, involving possibly a compromise of dietary habits. Affluence might also influence the style of life, changing eating practices from simple, healthful food to rich or expensive delicacies such as steak. The promotion of greater educational achievement among the members might ultimately develop church leaders who dictate a religious mood that is not in harmony with traditional Seventh-day Adventist customs.

I conclude with the following recommendations to the Seventh-day Adventist church:

1. If vegetarianism is to be encouraged in the church, early socialization of the children by parents is essential; the example of parents has special importance.
2. Healthful and economical protein products that are within the reach of the average member should be developed; vegetarian products should not imitate meat; meat-type labeling should be replaced with labels that do not suggest meat.
3. Vegetarianism should not be considered a measure of consecration of members, but it should be encouraged as a contributor to good health, which affects spiritual development. It is only one of many variables that reflect one's alternatives in religious norms.
4. The polarization of members into factions over dietary preferences may lead to a divided fellowship. We should not seek to judge others but instead should express our opinions in a spirit of loving, accepting Christianity.

# Hazards of Rearing Children in Foreign Countries

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SIDNEY L. WERKMAN

This presentation was read by Dr. Werkman at the 124th annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association, Washington, D. C., May 3-7, 1971, and subsequently appeared in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* (volume 128, number 8, pages 992-997, February 1972). Dr. Werkman is Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Colorado Medical School, Denver. He was formerly a lecturer at the Foreign Service Institute of the U. S. Department of State and senior psychiatric consultant to the Peace Corps. Both he and the editor of the *Journal* have given permission for SPECTRUM to reprint the article.

If Matthew Arnold's statement "Change doth unknit the tranquil brow of man" is correct, it is doubly so for children living overseas. Though opportunities for vivid experiences and healthy character development abound for the approximately 250,000 American children living outside of the United States,<sup>1</sup> so do psychological hazards for these dependents of businessmen, missionaries, military personnel, and members of the U. S. Foreign Service. This paper describes clinical psychiatric problems seen in such children living overseas.

Overseas living may foster a mixture of fears, unusual child-care practices, special problems in sexuality, and a sense of alienation in childhood. This highly important area of developmental concern is represented only modestly in the clinical and research literature.<sup>2</sup> For example, Useem and others,<sup>3</sup> in encompassing studies of Americans in Asia, stated:

We found that termination of participation of Americans in any particular binational situation is more highly correlated with unsatisfactory family adjustments than with unsatisfactory work relationships. . . . Americans . . . find they spend so much time and energy on trying to find solutions to these pressing problems that they have little time to devote to their primary work role.<sup>4</sup>

Though the clinical views and vignettes presented here obviously reflect my particular experiences in Asia, Europe, and practice in Washington, D. C., and, as is the case with most psychiatric studies, exhibit a greater concern with psychopathological problems than with the large number of developmentally healthy outcomes of overseas living, they are offered as a beginning step in mapping a relatively new area of psychiatric practice. We simply do not possess accurate data on the prevalence and incidence of childhood psychiatric disorders — in the United States, much less in foreign countries — that would permit us to probe the validity of these clinical hypotheses.

It seems to me, from my experience in treating children in Washington and in observing many more overseas,<sup>5</sup> that a single pivotal factor often makes the difference between a well-adjusted child in America and an unhappy or psychiatrically disturbed one overseas. This factor is the change in family valences that places the child overseas in the orbit of a caretaker and the environment rather than that of the family.

In the United States, typically, a mother cares for her children and knows their environment and entire range of activities only too well. Though the involvement of fathers with their children in the United States varies, there is an expectation that fatherhood implies at least a supportive role in parental functions. Upon arriving at an overseas post, a father is often swallowed up in his career and disappears from his family, substantially, for good. Mothers are offered the opportunity of having servants and fulfilling their fantasies, whether social, artistic, creative, or indolent. Because of the availability of servants, even devoted mothers find themselves ambivalent about caring for their children. Social obligations and the need to establish a new home in a strange country may be overwhelming and leave very little time for child concern. Children regularly become dependents of caretakers and "the economy," in the military phrase, rather than of their own parents.

The relinquishment of parental responsibility would complicate a child's development in the United States. The idiosyncratic child-care practices of individual countries add a unique element to the growth and psychological difficulties of children. I am touching here on the sensitive and uncertain subject of national character and the utility of various child rearing practices for a specific culture. Obviously, I can make no judgments on these questions, except as they bear on the adjustment of American children returning to live in the United States.

The following example will illustrate a number of the generalizations I have made.



## CASE REPORT

*Case 1.* A ten-year-old girl whose presenting problems were an unusual fearfulness and depression spent the first nine years of her life living outside the United States with her parents, who were on official business. The first child of a young and vivacious couple, ambitious in their careers, she was placed in the care of a 21-year-old nursemaid, a foreign national. Carol did well in many ways but sucked her thumb constantly. The nursemaid encouraged this, saying it was a good thing for the child since it gave her comfort. Most children in this Middle Eastern country were encouraged in this practice. Carol's mother was in a quandary. Carol was her first child. The nursemaid was far more experienced in caring for children than she, and the mother was out of the house a good deal. As a result, Carol continued thumbsucking and other infantile behavioral patterns until she was ten years old.

When Carol was nine her parents, secure in their feeling about the nursemaid who had been with them a long time, went away on a three-week trip and left Carol and her brother in the total charge of the nursemaid. The parents returned from their trip to find their daughter and her younger brother extremely frightened. Carol, particularly, wanted her parents to stay with her constantly, refused to go out and visit other people's houses, and continued to be extremely uncomfortable about being alone for an entire year following her parents' trip. She complained in a cryptic way that "Al-kisti locked the door." The parents questioned the nursemaid about the matter, but she said she didn't know anything about it. Carol never explained it any further either. Not until the end of their tour did the parents learn, by a complicated coincidence, what had happened when they were away.

The nursemaid's boyfriend had moved into the house during this period. The nursemaid, previously an open, warm person, during this time locked the children's bedroom doors when they went to sleep. She then furtively spirited her boyfriend in and out of the house and swore both children to secrecy about the events under pain of terrible punishment and loss of love. Carol was frightened, excited, perplexed, and, in a word, panicked by the experience.

Many aspects of child development practices in general and of basic trust, sexuality, and conflicting loyalties are seen in this vignette of a child whose presenting psychiatric problems were inhibitions and depression. The presenting symptoms in such cases vary, but the underlying issues stem from a common theme.

Let us examine some of the recurring problems complicating general caretaking practices for American families overseas.

In Thailand a nursemaid frequently carries an infant or young child in her arms everywhere. The child is picked up out of bed in the morning, sits in the nursemaid's arms during breakfast, and is carried around during chores or activities. The child is always played with, protected, and cared for. However, he rarely gets the opportunity to have accidents, hurt himself, or learn by experience. Instead, even at the age of four, many children in

this culture are fearful of moving about, exceedingly close to their nursemaids, sweet-tempered, and unaggressive. These may be adaptive traits for a Thai child, for he has other experiences later in life that tend to counteract this "overprotectiveness." However, the American child is often brought back to the more turbulent American scene at school age. In the United States such children may be extremely dependent and fearful of the active, rough-and-tumble ways of their peers.

### SEXUAL PROBLEMS

Many sexual practices that are aberrant in the United States occur frequently in other countries. Unfortunately, parents do not learn about them because they leave their children entirely in the care of other people. Only when the child returns to the United States and clinical work begins do we find that Freud's theories about fantasy seductions of his patients have been played out in the form of actual seductions of children who have lived in unusual overseas environments.

*Case 2.* A five-year-old boy was referred for evaluation because of regressed behavior and the use of idiosyncratic, highly symbolic language. Until the age of three he had developed well, living in Asia with his parents, who were there on a military mission. His parents then found a male caretaker for him, thinking that the sex of the caretaker would make no difference and that a male companion would be helpful for this boy, since his father was away a great deal. It was apparent [later during work with this family as a clinical problem] that at a certain point John had become more secretive and withdrawn from his parents. The family left the country when John was five, taking what they thought was a pleasant leave from the male caretaker.

John became increasingly withdrawn. He began to use odd, symbolic words in his speech. When he started school, it was apparent to his teacher that he was a markedly disturbed, frightened, and inhibited boy. On clinical investigation, it developed that John and his caretaker slept in the same room and had become involved in regular masturbatory and fellatio experiences. The young child was sworn to secrecy and told he would be punished if he gave away the secret. His symptoms developed only when he was separated from his caretaker and began to reality test for himself the meaning of his idiosyncratic introduction to overt sexuality. (Though this case may seem grotesque, I have dealt with others in which caretaker and child were actually surprised in direct sexual activities. These are not fantasies on the part of the child. Rather, they are experiences that occurred because naked impulse could be expressed directly and without the usual limits present in most households in the United States).

Many variations in the development of sexuality and sexual identity can be seen geographically and historically. Though often adaptive for a particular country, these practices may result in serious character deformation in children who will return to the United States to live. For example, care-

takers in a number of countries play openly with the penises of male children. They laugh over this manipulation and delight in comparing penis sizes among their charges. On the other hand, girls find it difficult to grow up in certain Muslim countries in which boys are highly favored. If there is any mystique of masculine superiority in the United States, it is certainly present in countries where the answer to the question "How many children do you have?" is invariably, for example, "Three," meaning three boys. Girls are simply not counted.

Ghosts and witches are no strangers to bedtime in America, but they don't seem to be as awesome here as they are in other countries. A colleague of mine once commented: "I spent my entire childhood dreading the nightly story from the gloomy 'Ring of the Nibelungs,' and I've been scared by it ever since. I think the key to the German character is there and not in Prussian militarism." Though an offhand comment, this recollection reflects a view common to many people reared on frightening or bizarre fairy tales and myths.<sup>6</sup>

In India and other Asian countries children are sometimes terrorized into obedience by threats of being carried away. Many stories in the folklore of India describe babies being carried off by witches, wolves, or people who appear stealthily in the night and steal children. These stories encourage great docility in children, but at the expense of crippling fearfulness.

#### ALIENATION

American parents are concerned more overtly about a different group of difficulties centering around their children's involvement in the host country. Mothers worry about the frequent phenomenon of polarization of attitudes. They find that when overseas their children either come to hate the United States and everything it stands for or become "superpatriots." Service children, certainly a special group, are particularly susceptible to xenophobia and express this attitude by wanting to "storm the walls of the Soviet Embassy" or engage in other destructive acts. Parents may encourage polarization by their own attitudes. One father told me, speaking of children of the host country: "They are tough, spiteful, dishonest. Many kids are unbelievably obscene, rude, and selfish. They call you a son-of-a-bitch and much worse if you reprimand them. They throw rocks at you as soon as your back is turned. Everyone pushes; courtesy is unknown."

Perplexed by the numerous value conflicts inherent in raising children in a foreign culture, parents often retreat from responsibility for molding their children, only to find their children's manners and lifestyles abhorrent when

the whole family returns to the United States. An alternative, equally unfortunate, is for the child and family to withdraw to the confines of the "golden ghetto" of sleek foreign nationals' housing seen in so many Asian cities. Such families might just as well never have left home.

Perhaps that is the key issue in living overseas: What is the motivation for leaving home? Unless that issue is faced and understood one hears such comments as the following, from a young American reared overseas:

There is always the feeling that you don't belong anywhere; the fear that you will become attached to your friends and then have to leave them. The large majority of children growing up overseas are unhappy Americans. They are neither one nor the other. Unhappy away or unhappy in the United States, unless they enter foreign work themselves.

Motivations of parents differ. Businessmen may take a short overseas assignment to make more money, advance their careers, or lighten taxes. They will not set down roots in the host country, and their children may experience an overseas tour as an extended holiday. Service personnel, assigned without choice from place to place, may encourage children to put their greatest trust in the military organization itself rather than the host country, the United States, or their own sense of identity. The Foreign Service family, particularly vulnerable because of currently transitional conditions, may well encourage a "Flying Dutchman" syndrome of eternal wandering in their children.

All of these motives, and there are myriads of variations, may result in healthy or distorted senses of identity in children reared overseas. What is certain is that overseas living will have a powerful effect on the life view of an American child.

#### SEPARATION

The most poignant pathological outcome of overseas living seen clinically is that of the child wrenched without explanation from an overseas caretaker and returned to the United States.

*Case 3.* A five-year-old girl was brought to me because of depression and lack of interest in her family and life in the United States. Her mother first became curious about Karen during the long return boat trip to America, because her daughter spent hour upon hour in the seemingly aimless pursuit of opening all manner of doors throughout the large ship. Karen had lived most of her life in India under the care and love of a devoted and playful ayah, or nursemaid. When it became necessary for the family to return to America, Karen's mother couldn't bring herself to explain that the ayah would remain in India, her home country.

Instead Karen's family went about all the packing and planning involved in leaving, while the ayah not only left her belongings unpacked, but became quiet and

morose. Karen asked her mother about this. Her mother became irritated and gave an evasive answer about ayah's needing to visit her relatives in Amritsar. "Will she meet us at the boat?" asked Karen. This question and others were parried with increasing ambiguity, frustration, and finally anger. Never given a clear, direct explanation for the separation, this child felt her "true" mother had been stolen from her. This theme dominated psychotherapeutic work with her for a long period of time and may well distort the experiences of the rest of her life.

If this example seems overdramatic, we might note that Rudyard Kipling suffered the same kind of loss, though in reverse. As the story is masterfully recounted by Edmund Wilson in *The Wound and the Bow*,<sup>7</sup> Kipling grew up in India with his parents and adoring native servants until he was six. His parents then decided to send him "home" to England for schooling and to live with his uncle, but did not explain the reason for their plan. Kipling became morose in England and spent endless hours staring out of the window of his uncle's house. He developed partial blindness and had a "severe nervous breakdown."

Wilson quotes Kipling's sister as follows:

I think the real tragedy of our early days [in England] sprang from our inability to understand why our parents had deserted us. We had had no preparation or explanation; it was like a double death, or rather, like an avalanche that had swept away everything happy and familiar. . . . We felt that we had been deserted, almost as much as on a doorstep.

This experience of unwitting abandonment is pointed out by Wilson as the most significant psychological event of Kipling's life and helped form the theme, mostly expressed in indirect ways as a swaggering defense against a feeling of helplessness, of much of his writing.

These case histories and anecdotes illustrate the great opportunity available for the work of preventive child psychiatry and informed child rearing practices. A subsequent paper will describe methods that have proved useful in helping children master the unusual challenges of overseas living.

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## Comment

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These comments appeared with the Werkman article in the *American Journal of Psychiatry*.

The intriguing title of this paper brings into focus an important aspect of child development and preventive psychiatry on the international and trans-cultural level. A need exists for further *detailed* clinical and epidemiological studies of this virtually unexplored territory.

Dr. Werkman very briefly reports psychopathological reactions of some children who have lived overseas, emphasizing the possible effects of: (1) leaving the child completely in the care of a caretaker, (2) unusual child-care practices in the host country, (3) a lack of feeling of belonging to either country, and (4) separation from the caretaker and return to the United States.

I am generally in agreement with Dr. Werkman's observations and would particularly like to underline his suggestions for prevention and management of the problems inherent in this potentially traumatic situation. However, to accurately assess the frequency and validity of these psychopathological reactions, further elaboration of the dynamics of the child and the

family is necessary along with a brief statement of the child's developmental lines<sup>1</sup> both before and after the traumatic experience.

Dr. Werkman speaks of the problems engendered by the differences between American child rearing practices and those of other countries. But, aside from a few books such as Dr. Spock's *Baby and Child Care*, our knowledge of specific child rearing practices in this country is very limited. Sears, Maccoby, and Levin stated, "Curiously enough, anthropologists have secured more complete information about child rearing in at least seventy other cultures than they have about child rearing in the United States."<sup>2</sup> Specific information on child rearing patterns in the United States is needed to adequately assess whether there has been normal development or a psychopathological tendency in these children before their departure from the United States. Then, it would be possible to differentiate existing psychopathological tendencies from a severe traumatic reaction to overseas living.

In most of the case reports, I would question the quality of the mother-child relationship before the family's departure. I have some doubts whether "because of the availability of servants, even devoted mothers find themselves ambivalent about caring for their children." The availability of servants is very tempting but when a mother in a strange and new culture leaves the total care of her child to a stranger I would like to explore further the mother's intrapsychic dynamics, her relationship with her husband, and her feelings toward her child.

I am in agreement with Dr. Werkman when he emphasizes that under no circumstances should mothers leave the majority of mothering of their children to anyone else. Caretakers can be used judiciously but under the careful and watchful eye of the mother. We know that in the absence of mothering some form of maternal deprivation occurs even with the help of the best caretaker. Bowlby stated that "when deprived of maternal care the child's development is almost always retarded — physically, intellectually and socially — and that symptoms of physical and mental illness may appear."<sup>3</sup>

We cannot assume that moving to a new country would affect the quality of mothering so drastically that most of these mothers would leave the *total* care of their children to a caretaker. We know that some children suffer from maternal deprivation even though they live with their own mothers. Again, I stress the need for detailed information assessing the quality of mothering in the cases reported.

In comparing the patterns of child rearing in two cultures one needs to keep in mind Ruth Benedict's comment that an "observer will see the bizarre

developments of behavior only in alien cultures, not his own. . . . There is no reason to suppose that any one culture has seized upon eternal sanity and will stand in history as a solitary solution of the human problem.”<sup>4</sup>

When the family leaves the host country, the problems of separation of the child from the caretaker and his surroundings along with the child's new adjustment in the United States is of prime concern. It is not infrequent to notice that young children do develop deep attachments to their caretakers and to their friends in the host country. Without adequate preparation at the time of their departure, feelings of great loss and of being uprooted can and often do lead to mourning and depression. Children simply cannot understand the joy and excitement of the parents about returning to the United States and they become quiet, morose, grouchy, and often picky eaters. These behaviors anger and irritate the busy and excited parents, and this response of the parents adds to the child's feelings of estrangement and alienation and contributes to his future difficulties in school and to peer relationships after his return to the United States.

In summary, I hope that this very interesting and exciting paper will open a door to the study of the transcultural aspects of child development and to the problems of the psychological growth of the children of two cultures. There is a great need for more detailed and comprehensive studies in this area, along with the exploration of the positive and rewarding aspects of living in two cultures.

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My experience serving overseas and, more recently, counseling with many postadolescent children of overseas workers leads me to agree with many of Werkman's observations. I share his enthusiasm for seeking ways to improve the quality of growth experiences for overseas children. Like his, my sampling of the population may be biased in the direction of maladjusted individuals.

Werkman reports that research material on childrearing in alien cultures is modest. The amount of material specifically applicable to mission personnel is even more modest and is twenty-five or more years old.<sup>1</sup> It would probably be unfair to assume that children of missionaries are any less well adjusted than their counterparts at home, but the potential for maladjustment is apparent if one looks at the problems of mission life from the standpoint of developmental psychology. In the absence of sufficient data I will look at the problem from a theoretical viewpoint, in the process probably raising more questions than I answer. My comments are offered in the hope of stimulating someone to use them as points of departure for further investigation.

#### SELECTION AND ORIENTATION OF MISSION PERSONNEL

The unique pressures inherent in service in a foreign country require exceptionally well-adjusted and well-informed persons, the more so if the parents are rearing children at the same time. Consequently, it is essential that the motivation, life patterns, family background, and quality of family interaction be investigated carefully before an appointment is made. Observations indicate that the selection process frequently allows enthusiasm and devotion to outweigh sound judgment and emotional stability.

Since the degree to which the children in the family have successfully carried out the tasks of adjustment up to the time of the appointment may well be a significant predictor of future adjustment, this factor should be carefully considered. The chances of poor adjustment in a foreign country are multiplied for children who may not adjust well even in their home country. Encouraging progress is being made at Andrews University in the development of orientation programs for new and returning missionary appointees. Those responsible for such programs would undoubtedly welcome empirical knowledge based on well organized scholarly research. When we attempt to assess emotional adjustment and family interaction, or when we attempt to give people advice concerning the raising of their children, we are entering a very delicate area. But the rewards may be worth it.

## EDUCATION OF MISSION CHILDREN

Werkman's major concern with respect to caretakers centers on the use of servants. I believe, however, that the critical focus in the case of Seventh-day Adventist missionaries is on the education of the children. Although a variety of patterns of education exists, two extremes should be mentioned: (a) the education of the child or children at home by the mother, with relative isolation from other children; or (b) handing the child over at a relatively early age to a boarding school frequently hundreds or thousands of miles away from the parents. Although these are often the only alternatives available, they nevertheless have hazardous implications that should be noted.

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Most psychologists agree that children pass through a number of critical periods or stages in the course of their development and that at various stages they face specific tasks by which they accomplish the transition.<sup>2</sup> Difficult enough in one's home culture and where the parent is aware of the developmental process, the transition becomes quite another matter in a foreign environment, with some of the essential elements changed or missing, and with the parent perhaps naive about the dynamics involved. Consider the preadolescent at age 9-12. According to Sullivan, at this time the child is setting the stage for future interpersonal intimacy by forming a close relationship with a chum of the same sex.<sup>3</sup> This is the first period of life in which there is true loneliness if such a friend is not available or has been lost by moving or by rejection. The parents' presence at this stage gives a feeling of security while the child ventures outside the family to experiment with interpersonal relations in his peer group. Either of the patterns of education mentioned can interfere seriously with this developmental task of the preadolescent. Mission parents are usually reluctant to allow free friendships with children of the alien culture, fearing cultural patterns they do not understand. Actually, in the absence of other preexisting emotional problems, children may perhaps adjust better if allowed more freedom to mix with their crosscultural peers.

Mission children most frequently leave home to attend boarding school at 12-14 years of age, although in many cases they are much younger.<sup>4</sup> A totally different crisis comes into the process. Having come through struggles with inferiority in his attempt to handle the tasks of school and work, the early adolescent is now undertaking the task of consolidating previous gains into what Erikson speaks of as an accruing sense of identity.<sup>5</sup> Failure at this stage results in what has been termed "identity defusion," characterized by inability to focus on a career, to develop a sense of purpose, or to

move toward the intimate relationships that result in marriage and other close adult ties. Here again the early adolescent child needs understanding adults to offer the support and security essential for the process. This help is seldom afforded as well in a boarding school, where surrogate parents are frequently overloaded with work and their own individual problems. Probably because of good resolution of earlier states, many children make a good adjustment in spite of the system, but a discouragingly large number do not.

Inevitably teenage mission children are separated from their parents most of the time in order to gain adequate education. The least one should expect of a boarding school dealing with early teenagers overseas would be that it provide: (*a*) the presence of well-adjusted and well-informed adults able to take a personal interest in the student without allowing their own problems to interfere; (*b*) attitudes and opportunities for the student to become acquainted with and appreciate the culture of the host country rather than to fear or ridicule it; (*c*) opportunity for the student to develop work competence appropriate to his age level; (*d*) opportunity for the student to talk through his fears and uncertainties in a supportive atmosphere; and (*e*) an environment in which the student may develop his own set of values. I am painfully aware of the difficulty of staffing boarding schools, but the critical nature of this aspect of mission life must be recognized and dealt with.

A recent study by Olson stresses the need for further investigation but presents some optimistic data concerning 208 children of missionaries in the Far East, Central America, and South America.<sup>6</sup> The study shows that students rated the overseas schools as lacking in equipment and having inadequate curriculum. But 97.6 percent of the responding students in the sample attended college, 78.8 percent were soon to graduate, and 35.7 percent had secured advanced degrees at the time of the study. The quality of staff members was not mentioned as a variable. Only 5.2 percent were openly critical or antagonistic to missions, and only 5.7 percent had left the Seventh-day Adventist church. No comparisons were made with the Seventh-day Adventist population in general, and no data were collected to assess the emotional adjustment of the respondents.

#### FURLOUGHS

I suspect that the traditional one-year furlough has been a destructive factor on the development of children in the 10-14 age range, when chum relationships are so important. At the furlough time — when parents are excited about the trip and caught up in visiting and in acquiring education — the child has been uprooted and taken into situations that are frequently

unfamiliar and frightening to him. If he has a friend, the friend has been left behind. Because of the temporary nature of the furlough, he will probably not form close ties — if he does, he must break them again and cope with the feelings of loss and resentment against the agents responsible for this loss, the parents. Since one way of coping with these feelings is to avoid future closeness, the withdrawal and loneliness that result may later be the pattern in adolescence and early adult life.

Increasingly I am of the opinion that the best adjustment pattern can develop if the family goes to the mission field early in the lives of the children, takes only short, frequent furloughs, establishes solid ties with mission life, and returns to the home country when the child is ready for college. This pattern is difficult to develop, of course, if there are a number of children of varying ages. But observation indicates that the child who has spent a large portion of his life in a foreign country has difficulty facing life in a school in America if his family remains overseas.

#### OTHER PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Children who do not go to a boarding school face other problems. Although a child may be fascinated with the alien culture, it does not give him the "looking glass" from which to receive valid appraisals of himself for the development of his self-concept.<sup>7</sup> Typically the overseas child will receive unrealistic feedback from the national children, either in the form of unrealistic deference because of his uniqueness or in a feeling of inadequacy because of lack of experience in the culture. Since in most cases he cannot consider himself one of the group, the reflections he receives are frequently inappropriate even if he forms relatively close relationships with his cross-cultural peers.

It is not uncommon for adolescents to experience some of their earliest romantic feelings in association with attention from opposite-sexed members of the alien culture. These may be highly stimulating experiences with long-lasting effects on the emotional life of the child, but later he may make unfavorable, although not necessarily realistic, comparisons with those of his own culture.

One girl in an American college experienced difficulty coping with feelings of hate and resentment toward her parents and the church, seeing these as responsible for her abandonment by a valued young man friend from whom she had to be separated because of moves from one mission station to another. The loss at the specific time appeared to bear some relationship to her later poor vocational adjustment, withdrawal, and subsequent suicide.

dal threats. One may wonder whether a better understanding on the part of her parents might have helped her bridge this traumatic experience, although such an assumption could be regarded as speculative.

#### SUMMARY

Admittedly, the variables involved in this consideration are difficult to identify and measure. However, I believe there is a large enough sampling of the population by which to attempt some intellectually honest assessment of the subject. If funds were available, graduate students in social or developmental psychology might be interested in conducting research that would both evaluate the hazards of growing up in foreign lands and ascertain the factors favorable to sociocultural enrichment among missionary children.

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Werkman promises to report in a forthcoming paper the methods found useful under these circumstances. I look forward to what he will say. Even more eagerly, however, I look forward to the development in our own church of an efficient method of assessing the potential of candidates for mission service and of making increased effort to give foreign service personnel the quality of back-up support they deserve to assist them in raising emotionally and spiritually well-adjusted families.

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In this comment on Werkman's article I shall concern myself with the problem of the effects of Seventh-day Adventist children being reared in a missionary family. One can hardly consider the plight of some of these children without making a few remarks about the parents and their reasons for accepting a missionary "call."

There is the mature couple responding to a deep religious conviction that they can serve God and the church most effectively in a foreign mission post. Unfortunately some answer the call for a variety of pathological reasons including, among others, "peer inferiority." These people feel inferior and "put down" when among their own peers, but they can feel competent and effective when working with persons they feel are their socioeconomic inferiors. Then there is the opportunist who needs a mission hitch to earn his missionary badge and collect a supply of mission stories in the hope of rising faster up the organizational ladder toward a position in the General Conference. And there are social misfits — the immature, the borderline psychotic, and others. But this is a comment on an article about the *children* of missionaries.

The child of an American Seventh-day Adventist missionary must often survive a combination of severe emotional impacts that frequently result in serious psychiatric problems. First, he suffers the shock of being separated from his own culture and having a foreign culture imposed on him. Second, he is exposed either to an artificial "compound culture" — an island of Westernism in a foreign sea — or to the native population, which imposes a different set of problems. Third, having made necessary adjustments to this new way of life in his early years, the child then faces a number of pos-

sibilities in his formal education. At different times he may find himself (a) taught at home by his mother with lessons from correspondence school, (b) in a special compound school for Westerners, (c) in a school for both Westerners and nationals, (d) sent away from home to attend a distant school in the same or another foreign country, to live with relatives or friends in the homeland, or to reside in a boarding academy or college. Fourth, there is a cultural shock to both parents and child when the family terminates its missionary role and returns home.

Erik Erikson identifies the various stages in personality development in his book, *Childhood and Society*. The growth of basic trust begins in the first year, followed in the preschool child by the development of autonomy and personal initiative. The first six years are the most crucial in the development of personality, character, and thus emotional health. In these years the strong foundations are laid that result in the formation of the well-adjusted, mature person — or conversely, the weak foundations of the unhappy, neurotic, antisocial, or psychopathic person.

The missionary child may very well face growing up in the crucial years in a family with a father absent for extended periods of time, a mother who turns the child over to the care of a native “nana” while she nurses her own misery because she is trapped in a compound with people she doesn’t get along with and with strange “natives” (and a stranger language) with whom she is less able to cope. In a situation like this, it is difficult for the child to develop trust, autonomy, and initiative. Because they are missionaries and are doing “the Lord’s work,” families attempt to conceal frustrations and anger; but under these pressures whole families disintegrate emotionally and must come home short of a full mission term. Following their return from mission service, many missionary parents have had to seek psychiatric help for themselves and (in some cases) for one or all of their children.

What can be done to protect these people from the cultural and emotional shock they may suffer? A few suggestions follow.

1. A thorough psychological study of Seventh-day Adventist missionaries and their children should be made to ascertain if there is indeed a difference in the mental health of missionary children and the children of Adventist parents who have never left the States.
2. Psychological testing and psychiatric evaluation of missionary applicants should screen out the emotionally unfit.
3. Only couples with no children, or with grown children, might be accepted for mission appointment.

4. A thorough program of education in the language and culture of the country of their appointment should be provided for mission families.

5. If parents with small preschool children are needed, only those able and willing to provide healthy parental guidance and supervision should be accepted.

6. Missionary parents should return to their country of origin when the oldest child reaches school age, and they should remain home until the youngest child finishes the twelfth grade.

Admittedly this is a controversial list of requirements and is not to be considered complete. Too many mission children have needed psychiatric treatment. We ought to define the problems and then bend our efforts to the preservation of the mental health of these mission families.

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I am writing these comments from the viewpoint of one who spent seven years (age four to eleven) as a child in the Congo, then seventeen more as an adult in East Africa, always in primitive areas. These thoughts are based on observation of the children of government officials, of other missionaries, and of our own in this situation.

In general, I would agree with Werkman's article. Especially for the newcomer, there is a dangerous ignorance of local customs which might involve the care of the child. If the parent could, and would, develop friendly communication with an intelligent national neighbor, this ignorance could be avoided.

The missionary's motivation for going overseas, it is to be hoped, is different from that of businessmen, those in military service, and those in foreign service. Most go with a deep concern for the spiritual and physical welfare of those whom they go to serve. Unfortunately, there are always the few who are there for adventure, a position of authority they might not achieve at home, or, very rarely, because they simply did not fit in anywhere else and were shunted out of sight.

A warm, loving family, with a mother who stays at home with the chil-



dren and a father who tries to spend some relaxed time with them, usually produces happy, well-adjusted youngsters, regardless of geography. When the mother is "busy doing good," flying from one worthy project to the next, the father is carrying the responsibilities of several people, and the children are in the care of a babysitter or "ayah," obviously, but for the grace of God, the home will have problems.

In mission life there is a tendency for the mother to fulfill her work capabilities — from the pressure of necessity because of lack of staff, or from the sheer joy of leaving the monotony of housework and child care in the hands of servants. The father is usually in a position of leadership and heavy responsibility as builder, teacher, maintenance expert, medicine man (whether or not he is prepared in that area), and peacemaker. Often his sweet temper has been used up before he gets home, and thus his infrequent encounters with the children are sometimes unpleasant. Naturally, this adds up to the child's feeling more at ease with his nursemaid, who never denies a wish or punishes him.

Because of the respect and fear of authority the servants and local children usually have, the foreign child is often treated like a small god, his every need anticipated and his wildest wishes fulfilled. It doesn't take long for him to become an obnoxious little tyrant who will have a good deal of trauma when he tries to fit into a competitive society.

In another area, the mission child's life can be badly damaged by the destruction of his confidence in church leaders. Especially in the mission situation, his whole world is centered around "the work" of the church. When parents (and their friends whom he respects) criticize and dissect the faults of the organization and its leaders from the top down, he loses his faith not only in those leaders but often in the church and in God as well. If he has already had his parents replaced by servants, his loss is very deep, and the ensuing insecurity causes all sorts of emotional problems.

On a more positive note, there are advantages for the child who is raised in a Christ-centered, loving home, with mother in charge and both parents honoring God and blessing the people for whom they are working by their kind, unselfish service. He gets a longer vision of the world — its needs, delights, problems, and challenges. He sees at a closer vantage point the effects of the gospel, and often he is inspired to go as a missionary himself.

In Africa, it was a rule-of-thumb that children should return to the home country, or at least to civilization, by age eleven. I'm inclined to agree, because the adjustment of even the best-raised children becomes more difficult with each year. If they come back to a relatively small, unsophisticated

school situation in a country setting, there are fewer problems. In a larger school they are plagued by their feelings of being "out of it." Their accent is amusing, their clothes are wrong, they are not familiar with the games, their values and outlook on life are totally different, and they miss the slower pace of most foreign lands. The social adjustment can be heartbreaking. By the teens, most of the circles of friends are pretty tightly formed. The new child goes through a period of feeling rejected, an object of charitable politeness, and then often withdraws until he can reshape himself to fit an acceptable pattern. This period seems to be the hardest on girls. If the child has been attending a school where there are others of his country and the school subjects are along the same lines as he will find when he goes "home," the adjustment is not quite so difficult.

Given a home where the parents love and respect God, each other, those in authority, and the people whom they are serving, a mission child has no reason for having *more* problems than his "home" counterpart. They will just be different problems. If the mother is at home, she can teach respect for individuals of all races, be aware of his playmates and their activities, have the child help with the work, and see that he has a balanced love for his home country without being obnoxious about the host land. As he grows older and notices for himself the imperfections of church and mission leaders, he can be taught to understand that as long as there are wheat and tares growing together there will be human inconsistencies and mistakes — that there is no point in being disillusioned and discouraged about situations that are always present in the affairs of humanity.

Having seen many children from foreign countries who seem to adjust to life as well as, or better than, their homeland counterparts, I think that the family and circumstances (which includes schooling) have a great deal to do with any problems that arise.

# Seventh-day Adventism's Legacy of Modern Revivalism

JONATHAN BUTLER

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[This discussion of revivalism is based on two presentations of the topic: one given at Walla Walla College, October 27-28, 1972, for the Missionary Volunteer weekend, and the other at Andrews University, February 7, 1973, for the Society of Andrews Scholars. EDITOR.]

One August night, and the leaves hangin' down  
and the grass on the ground smellin' sweet,  
[And] up a road [to] the outside of town  
and the sound of that good gospel beat,  
Sits a ragged tent where there ain't no trees,  
and that gospel group tellin' you and me:

It's Love, Brother Love's . . . traveling salvation show.  
Pack up the babies and grab the old ladies,  
Everyone goes, everyone knows Brother Love's show.

Room gets suddenly still. And when you'd almost bet  
you could hear yourself sweat, he walks in,  
Eyes black as coal; and when he lifts his face,  
every ear in the place is on end,  
Startin' soft and slow like a small earthquake,  
and when he lets go . . . half the valley shakes. . . .

Brother Love's traveling salvation show.

When I heard Neil Diamond sing those lyrics in Chicago a couple of years ago, an incredible thing happened: a so-called secular, date-night crowd broke into rhythmic handclapping, hallelujahs, and amens. For one electric moment, a hit song became a hymn, a troubador folk singer an evangelist, and a Saturday night crowd a revival meeting.

Revivals turn up in strange places. Peter preached in the city streets of Jerusalem and Wesley on the green hillsides of England; and Americans hear the Word in tents, in coliseums, and on streetcorners. In the late 1960s, Americans glued their religion to car bumpers ("Honk your horn if you love Jesus"), baptized their converts in swimming pools, put religion on Broadway or in the top-forty hits. Jesus Christ became, quite literally, "Superstar" for many. And "Amazing Grace," "Put Your Hand in the Hand [of Jesus]," and "My Sweet Lord" were at once hymns and pop songs.

This is no surprise. Revivals happen every generation or so in the United States, whether the Jesus people know it or not. Revivalism is as American as baseball.<sup>1</sup> Of course, the revival experience has not been confined to any one nation or period of history. However, revivalism took shape in a particular way in America and emerged here as an American institution. Camp meetings and high-powered traveling evangelists came out of an American frontier. Prayer meetings and big auditorium preaching first cropped up in American cities. The evangelistic "call" and converts coming down the long aisle first happened in America — where the call became almost a sacrament, like baptism or the Lord's Supper.

## I

*JONATHAN EDWARDS*, in the early 1700s, rang the bell of revivalism in the Connecticut Valley. He preached hell below and "heaven on earth," and those dour, crusty Yankees swooned in their church pews. Miracles happened, according to Edwards, and he was "surprised" by them. As a good Calvinist, Edwards relied solely on God to harvest any crop of souls in his valley. He believed that God predestined souls to be saved or lost, and there was nothing that a young preacher could do to change that predestination, no matter how much thunder rolled from his pulpit each Sabbath. What a preacher like Edwards could do was light a fire under his people — even "hellfire" if necessary — so those already "elected" would live up to their high calling. The "surprise" came when so many cold and lapsed church members warmed to the good preaching and counted themselves among the elect.

*GEORGE WHITEFIELD*, crossing over from England, transformed Edwards' local revivals into what has been called a "national conversion." Whitefield — who preached so eloquently he evoked rapture with the word *Macedonia*, who pleaded so engagingly that even thrifty Ben Franklin parted with his purse at a meeting — tramped up and down the American Colonies as the great itinerant, until evangelical revivals became the rule rather than the exception, commonplace rather than surprising. Whitefield depended less on an aloof Calvinist God to harvest souls at will and leaned more on his own efforts to reap man's salvation. The Calvinist God had been unilateral — doing everything on his own — while an Arminian God emerged in these American revivals as more cooperative, teaming up as a coworker with man in the matter of redemption. Not God's election of man, but man's will to be saved, became crucial for salvation in the American revivals. In some corners this was labeled the Arminian "heresy," but the idea multiplied like the sorcerer's brooms. John Wesley, back home in England, scolded his protégé Whitefield for the "false doctrine." Although Wesley's own "awakening" in England had carried him some distance from Calvinism, Wesley felt that Whitefield had gone too far in America.

By the early 1800s *CHARLES FINNEY* stared down with huge, hypnotic eyes on a new generation of Yankees, mostly under thirty, and promised them the millennium on earth. Arminianism was now "orthodoxy" rather than "heresy," and evangelical Americans believed they could build a kingdom of God on earth with their own hands.

Like Finney, American Protestants developed an evangelical "empire" in order to establish a kingdom of God in America and then spread it throughout the world with a kind of evangelical imperialism. This empire was made up of numerous "departments of state" (usually termed voluntary associations) — such as temperance, education, Sunday school, home missions, and foreign missions — to pursue the varied tasks of drying out drinkers, educating preschool children and schoolchildren, baptizing "barbarians" at home as well as overseas. These associations were defined by primarily functional rather than theological concerns. That is, evangelicals suspended matters of theological distinction and organized these functions to accomplish particular tasks, as the interdenominational character of the associations illustrates. Adventists grew up in the heartland of this Yankee empire and appropriated a form of these associations to pursue their own mission of "finishing the work" (perhaps best characterized on the departmental level) in functional terms.

Riding high on this wave of Christian activism, Charles Finney used mass revivalism to convert people and build up the evangelical empire. He dressed in lawyer's gray (instead of clerical black) and argued a shrewd case for Christianity, just as he had once presented cases as a lawyer. Unlike Jonathan Edwards, Finney believed that revivals are not miracles. Incredibly, he said that *revivals are manmade*. The Holy Spirit does not make a revival, but human technique, planning, eloquent speaking, individual counseling, and, finally, the human will to be saved — these make a revival. Finney took Whitefield's position and wrote it in big, bold letters — legible to the commonest man.

He introduced what was called "new measures" in his evangelism, though they seem anything but new to us today. They included praying "familiar prayers" in public (*you* instead of *thou*), bearing "testimonies," hearing women pray (and even preach) publicly, and, most notably, sitting on the "anxious bench." Finney made the unprecedented "call" for people who were unsure of their spiritual condition to come down the aisle and sit on the front bench, the "anxious bench" — and there Finney would appeal to them and argue his case before them as though they were a jury deciding their own fate. The results were so inspiring that Finney once looked for the millennium in three years!

Early Adventists populated New York and New England at this time, and they would have known Finney as we know Billy Graham. Adventists were like Finney in some ways and unlike him in other ways. They believed in revivals; and from Millerite days they pitched their tents or preached under the open New England sky.<sup>2</sup> They sang the popular hymns and warmed to good preaching, like other Yankees, and they used some of Finney's "new measures." Even today, Adventists bear "testimonies," pray "familiar prayers," and "answer the call." Adventist women pray and sometimes preach in public — for, after all, a woman has been prophet. Like Finney,

also, Adventists believe there is a human side to evangelism. Adventists do much human preparation for a campaign — budgets, brochures, personnel, auditorium rental, light and sound systems — and call it an evangelistic "effort."

Adventists were as unlike Finney in the 1840s, however, as they are unlike Billy Graham in the 1970s. At the Millerite revival meetings, early Adventists unrolled a prophetic chart on Daniel and Revelation — a new feature for a revival meeting! These early Adventist preachers became what were called "prophetic lecturers" — students of biblical eschatology — rather than the usual heart-thumping evangelists. They published their sermons as prophetic treatises, whereas most evangelists at this time preached homey, unpublishable sermons. Most importantly, early Adventists registered a protest against the self-assured optimism of evangelical Americans who looked for a millennium on earth. Adventists raised placards and shouted an apocalyptic "No" in the face of such religious and political self-importance, such manmade kingdoms. The end of things was in God's hands, and not Andrew Jackson's or Charles Finney's or even William Miller's hands. Adventists, too, could look on the Finney type of revival as a sometimes dubious means to God's end (as we shall learn later in the discussion).

Now, about the time Finney and early Adventists occupied the East, *PETER CARTWRIGHT*, another evangelist, went West with his "muscular Christianity" to tame the Kentucky frontier. And if Finney used the arm of man to make a revival, Cartwright used both fists. In fact, when a roughneck disrupted his meeting, he met him afterward for a fistfight. Cartwright preached like he fought, with fire and emotion. He preached "Southern," like Brother Love, and this kind of preaching can still be heard in the backwoods of Kentucky, as Neil Diamond sang about.

Cartwright pitched the first tents for the first camp meetings around 1800. People left their plows and their struggles to survive, and they traveled long miles over bad roads in covered wagons to attend these meetings. They came for the big meetings, the big-time evangelists, the music, the sociability, in order to "make things new" in their lives. In many ways, it was like the rock festivals — the Woodstocks — of the late 1960s. Thousands covered the hillsides — swaying and clapping and shouting to the music — to hear their spiritual heroes.

We could say George Harrison, for example, is a kind of revivalist — though in his case Hindu — and that people go to rock festivals for a kind of soul rejuvenation. Both rock festivals and revival meetings are marked by strong emotion, by the heart "strangely warmed" in some kind of personal experience. Both have attracted mostly young people, the under-thirty crowd. Both have received public criticism, not always unwarranted. In the first camp meeting revivals, some took advantage of the social upheaval that threw many men and women together. Rumor had it (no doubt exaggerated) that at these meetings "more souls were begot than saved." Very soon, however, camp meetings were tamed, and by the time Adventists took them over from the Methodists, they had become an innocuously well-ordered institution.

Despite the frontier trappings of revivalism — most obviously symbolized by the big canvas tent — revivals cannot be dismissed as a relic of the American frontier. If revivals were only a backwoods phenomenon, how do we explain Dwight L. Moody in Chicago, or Billy Graham in Washington, D. C.? As a matter of fact, the most

dramatic expression of the revival spirit in the 1850s occurred in Eastern seaboard cities, culminating in the "Year of Wonders" — 1858.<sup>3</sup>

We do not associate any prominent clergymen with the period of revivalism between 1840 and 1865. This omission is due in part to the neglect of historians, but largely to the fact that this was a period of layman's revival without clerical leadership. Businessmen and laborers met spontaneously on their lunch hours for prayer and testimonies. Here they found themselves in the "lostness" of the cities. Here, by mid-century, the democratization of Calvinism had led to a leveling of the clergy. Laymen took over the leadership of revivals and increased their influence in the churches. Somewhat naturally, ethics came to outweigh dogma, and the revivals spawned numerous social projects. The pre-Civil War period produced an admixture of revival measures and perfectionist impulses ignited by the millennial anticipation of a kingdom of God on earth. The millennium would come, it was felt, if laymen — that is, everyone — purified their hearts and pitched in with the work of their hands.

Infant Adventism, struggling toward adolescence in this period, needs to be seen against this midcentury backdrop. Adventists were children of their age — though, to mainstream evangelicals delinquent children.

Under *DWIGHT L. MOODY* in the post-Civil War period, revivals moved even further from Cartwright's frontier, settling into a respectable and rather businesslike mode.<sup>4</sup> Brother Love had been replaced by the Wall Street businessman. Men like the John D. Rockefellers and the Marshall Fields supported evangelism financially. Moody never took up offerings at his meetings (which might be inconceivable to us!). This liaison between big business and evangelism (something like Johnny Cash in an oil company commercial) is not so hard to understand in a "gilded age" that placed evangelicals at the management level and nonevangelicals (mostly Catholic immigrants) in the laboring force. So, despite his best attempts, Moody's revivals made inroads only in the evangelical community, with little success among the urban, hard-core nonevangelical population.

As a child of his time, Moody organized revivalism after the big business model: with advertising, a kind of door-to-door saleswork, a big "showroom" where people could come nightly to see the "product," and finally the decision cards that made "stockholders" out of the new converts. Even today, evangelicals often understand successful soul-winning in terms of "good management." Now, this analogy is unfair to Moody, so vibrantly personal about his evangelism. However, the machine Moody created could become a Frankenstein in other hands. And Brother Love's small-town "salvation show" of the early nineteenth century could become a big-city salvation "showroom" in late nineteenth-century evangelism.

*BILLY SUNDAY*, around the time of World War I, carried the excesses of evangelism even further.<sup>5</sup> He patterned his meetings after a vaudevillian model, standing on top of the pulpit, shouting hysterically at his audience, running across the stage, and sliding into "homeplate." He would even swear in the pulpit (more significantly, swear at people), telling Jews, Germans, and intellectuals to "go to hell." He preached more hell than heaven in his sermons, but thousands answered his "conversion" call, or, as he said, "hit the sawdust trail."

*BILLY GRAHAM*, another Billy in revivalism, is the "spiritual uncle" of many

Americans today (most notably of President Richard M. Nixon). He combines the organizational genius of Madison Avenue and the spiritual vision of Georgia fundamentalism. No doubt numerous Seventh-day Adventists feel that Graham has preached many of their best sermons!

American revivals — the long string of them — have shaped religion in America, even the religion of Seventh-day Adventists. From the very beginning, Adventists have been children of revivalism — singing revival hymns, preaching evangelistic sermons, experiencing revivals on the college campuses. In an official Fall Council of the General Conference, Adventists designated 1973 and 1974 as years of "total evangelism." It should not be out of place, then, to identify the legacy of modern revivalism in Seventh-day Adventism, and to evaluate it.

## II

Adventists have always viewed revivals as a mixed blessing and have hoped to separate the true from the false revivals. Ellen White took this position in *The Great Controversy* when she cast revivalism in an eschatological mold, anticipating a "revival of primitive godliness" and its "counterfeit" at the end of time. She refers also to "false" and "sensational" revivals in her own day, though they are not easily identified historically. The revivals generating in the late 1850s and overflowing into the holiness movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries best fit her negative description. However, a composite that includes some elements of the Moody revivals and of others is probably necessary to round out her idea of the false revival.<sup>6</sup>

This does not mean, however, that any one manifestation of revivalism can be judged by the historian looking back, or even by the believer looking forward to the "last days," as either "false" or "true," "good" or "bad." A social phenomenon as complex as a mass revival cannot be dealt with in glib, categorical terms. The same revival that can mean salvation for some may mean only a "salvation show" for others. It can mean genuine new birth for some, and for others a "stillborn" religious experience that never reaches Christian maturity. Because the same revival mingles both good and bad elements, I believe this is why Ellen White registered specific criticisms against contemporary revivals rather than dismissing them outright.

Let us evaluate Adventist indebtedness to modern revivalism, then, first in terms of liturgy and polity.

Take hymnody. Adventists sing revival hymns. The *Church Hymnal* is filled with the popular folk songs of nineteenth-century revivalism. People have walked down the aisles to "Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling." A hundred years ago they marched down the aisles to "Onward, Christian Soldiers." But before modern revivalism, hymn lyrics came from the Psalms, mostly, or other parts of Scripture. Almost no one thought of singing his own words for a religious hymn. With the revivals, instead of singing Psalms or Mary's Magnificat or Revelation poetry, people sang their *own* words. It's like saying that, instead of the Old Testament, they sang Joan Baez — a warmly personal religious form.

Adventists pray in their own words, too. In the long history of Christian public prayer, it is relatively new — even revolutionary — to pray in this way. Public prayers used to be largely liturgical, or read from a book of prayer. But the revivals changed



prayer for many. People came to trust their own experience enough to pray in their own words. In the early 1800s, revival meetings were criticized for these extemporaneous prayers and the familiar *you* instead of *thou*. Later, when Moody was accused of being "too familiar" with God in his prayers, he said, "I'm not one-tenth as familiar with him as I would like to be."<sup>7</sup> With revivalism, instead of using the prayer book in Latin or Elizabethan English, plumbers and housewives and children prayed *conversationally*.

Naturally, folk hymns and personal prayers tended to lower the aesthetic quotient to the level of common experience. Low liturgy sacrifices artistry for relevance and spontaneity that can surprise us, on occasion, with its own kind of brilliance. But spontaneity can also mean many dull prayers for every good one. High liturgy, while perhaps suffering from irrelevance, retains a more constant quality, at least for large numbers of worshipers. The frontiersmen, farmers, laborers, and businessmen who shaped revivalism were obviously more able to live with the drawbacks of low liturgy than worshipers of some other times.

As to polity, Adventists greet other church members and Christians as "brother" and "sister" so as to reflect something of a democratic spirit and so as to avoid calling them "Doctor" or "Professor" or "Lieutenant" (similar to the use of brother and sister in the black movement today). This democratic spirit unfolded in a democratic West by the influence of Methodist and Baptist revivalists who claimed to be "reviving" the early Christian sense of equality and communalism. Even women shared in this equality (early signs of women's liberation), from the Grimké sisters to Ellen White.

Nothing changed more radically in modern revivalism than the ministry. The seventeenth-century Protestant divine was what was called a "scholar of the word," an intellectual, who spent ten to twelve hours a day in his study poring over the Hebrew and Greek, the classics, and the commentaries. After framing a heavy treatise for the Sunday sermon, he entered the pulpit in his doctoral robe and read what amounted to a small paperback for his sermon — and it took hours! John Calvin preached like that. Moreover, these clerics stayed in one place. In Jonathan Edwards' time, a minister came straight to his parish from the seminary — green and in his twenties — and he spent the rest of his life there: baptizing the children, marrying the lovers, and finally burying them — several generations of them — one by one. There was no such thing as preaching a repeat sermon from the yellowed sermon notes; the seventy-year-old man in the front row had heard them all already.

Modern revivalism made dramatic changes in the minister. It shattered his ivory tower of scholasticism. It tore off his clerical robes and replaced them with the buckskins and business suits of the people. The new kind of minister could not be an egg-head spinning off irrelevant tomes of theology. He had to live with the people and speak their language. He couldn't read them a difficult paperback on Sabbath morning; he had to talk to them informally, conversationally. The new minister was not so much a scholar of the Word as a pastor, a curer of souls, and, with the revivals, a soul-winner. He didn't live in his study; he knocked on doors.

This new minister moved around instead of staying in one place. Revivalism made ministers itinerant — troubadors of the Word. In the early West, the space-scattered

people and the ministers had to saddle up and ride. The Methodists rode the hardest and the farthest. In bad weather, when blizzards howled and buried the world in snow, people had a saying: "There's nobody out but crows and Methodist ministers." Partly because of this legacy of the itinerant ministry, Adventist preachers move every five years or so. Adventists may wish that some of their ministers were more itinerant than others — but the blessing of itinerancy, as others of the revival heritage, is mixed!

Modern revivalism came into its own in nineteenth-century America as the Enlightenment yielded to Romanticism, Puritanism toppled into Pietism, and Rationalism dissolved into Experience. In America, the revival meeting provided a crucible for this change. The revival minister, then, was substantially changed. The John Calvins were "reborn" as the Dwight Moodys, and the oak-paneled study opened up to the street. Indeed, from the early nineteenth century, the role of the pietist minister has been primarily to carry out the enterprises of the numerous voluntary associations already mentioned — at the expense of shoe leather and tires — while matters of the mind rate only secondary consideration in an overtaking schedule. Perhaps an identity for the pietist minister should be carved out somewhere between a Calvin and a Moody, though this would not be easy.

It is not right to look down on the revival legacy in snobbish condescension. At one point in the Colonial period, about 90 percent of Americans did not attend church and some of the other 10 percent only barely attended. The revivals were a vigorous and creative response to this kind of darkness. Saddling up horses, preaching from tree stumps, pitching tents, singing folk hymns, bearing testimonies, praying and praying — as Finney said, in quintessential Arminian, praying "till your nose bleeds" — this was revivalism. It spread like a prairie fire, and many thousands were warmed by a deeply personal piety. To be converted at a revival meeting meant to encounter Jesus Christ as Lord in a vivid personal experience. And many did — if statistics are even half reliable. Since the first revivals in America, church attendance rose and never stopped rising for two hundred years.

The Seventh-day Adventist church has grown through evangelism. Without evangelism, Adventists could number only 30,000 members, like the Adventist Christian church huddled today on the rim of Chicago. Only in the context of these successes, then, can we properly understand the failures of revivalism. In fact, it is the pragmatism of revivals — the successes, the increases in membership — that has led to *theological distortions*.

### III

The major problem with modern revivalism — from Charles Finney to Billy Graham, from Kentucky camp meetings to the Jesus movement — is the *flabby theology*. The "soft heart" of revivalism lacks theological muscle. Theology as such does not seem to matter to people caught up in revivals. Experience matters, they say, not doctrine. Moody said, "It makes no difference how you get a man to God, provided you get him there." Sam P. Jones, the Southern evangelist, said, "[Theology] is a good thing to stuff with sawdust . . . and put in a museum as a relic of antiquity." It is for this reason that Henry Steele Commager wrote that "during the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, religion prospered while theology went slowly bankrupt."<sup>8</sup>

Ellen White discussed the theological bankruptcy of modern revivalism. Perceptively she noted that revivalists tend to eclipse law with grace, to destroy Old Testament with New Testament, to undermine Creation with Redemption, and, finally, to distort sanctification with justification.<sup>9</sup> Evangelicals, it would seem, did not lack a theology (notwithstanding Moody's offhand remark that he did not know he had one), but their theology was vulnerable to very basic criticisms.

Theological criticism crystallized in the debate over "Christian nurture" versus revivalistic "conversion." Here the Old Testament doctrine of Creation and its theocratic sense of communalism were engaged to counterbalance the "New Testament only" emphasis on redemption and individualism. Horace Bushnell, in his landmark study, *Christian Nurture*, argued that a good Christian upbringing, more than later evangelistic efforts, influences the spiritual development of a person. He wrote, "Let every Christian father and mother understand, when their child is three years old, that they have done more than half of all they will ever do for his character."<sup>10</sup> Bushnell even spoke of prenatal influences — physical, emotional, and spiritual.<sup>11</sup> And he believed that a child could grow up a Christian without ever being a non-Christian.<sup>12</sup>

Ellen White sided with a leading progressive theologian over against other evangelicals on this issue of "Christian nurture," as can be seen clearly in both *Child Guidance* and *The Adventist Home*. Some twenty-five years after Bushnell's initial remarks on the subject, Ellen White wrote, "The lessons that the child learns during the first seven years of life have more to do with forming his character than all it learns in future years."<sup>13</sup> And of course she, too, makes the point about prenatal influence. The Seventh-day Adventist understanding of education — its Sabbath schools and church schools and children's periodicals — was conceived and nourished, therefore, on the "Christian nurture" side of this nineteenth-century debate.

Another revivalism problem growing out of the evangelical doctrine of redemption is the heavy emphasis on statistics (that is, number of "conversions"). Theology is replaced by a kind of numerology. As one pastor commented to a magazine reporter about Billy Sunday, "The man has trampled all over me and my theology. He has kicked my teachings up and down that platform like a football. He has outraged every ideal I have had regarding my sacred profession. But what does that count against the results he has accomplished? My congregation will be increased by hundreds."

Reliance on statistics can get extremely mechanistic. One evangelist following Moody said that he had estimated the cost of a Moody campaign and had concluded that each convert cost \$7.43. He promised the local churches to produce "reborn souls" at \$4.92 each. Billy Sunday said he could produce converts at \$2.00 a soul.

Earlier evangelical use of statistics may have been more valid. In the Colonial period (with 90 percent of the population outside the churches) revival statistics were gratifying. But later, most "converts" were already church members or were small children of church members, and the rare conversions among nonchurch members seldom stuck a week after the revival ended. The big revival campaigns, like Moody's, were followed by a spiritual slump in the churches — the exhausting aftereffects of the campaign. Ellen White commented: "The light which flames up for a time soon dies out, leaving the darkness more dense than before."<sup>14</sup> Thus, statistics were often less impressive seen with a second look.

All these problems aside — Can a revivalist trample everything sacred, as Billy Sunday sometimes did, and obliterate much of truth, yet call his statistics a success? Can the revivalist turn a revival meeting into a spiritual burlesque of sound and lights — a salvation show — and then count his results successful?

It becomes clear that the history of revivalism mingles the good and the bad. Seventh-day Adventists can affirm much that is good in revivalistic hymns, prayers, prayer meetings, pastoring, and evangelism. Adventist worship and mission feed off these forms. At the same time, Adventists need to be wary of the inherent weaknesses in revivalistic forms of worship — and, above all, the weakening of theology. The true revival and its counterfeit may reside under the same big tent.

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- 2 The poet John Greenleaf Whittier, who attended a Millerite revival meeting, provides a lively description in *The Writings of John Greenleaf Whittier*, seven volumes (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company 1888-89), volume five, pp. 425ff.
- 3 Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers 1965).
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- 7 For anecdotes and quotations on the revivalists, see McLoughlin and Weisberger.
- 8 Henry Steele Commager, *The American Mind: An Interpretation of American Thought and Character since the 1880's* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1950), p. 165.
- 9 White, pp. 461-478.
- 10 Horace Bushnell, *Christian Nurture* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1966), p. 212. The first edition of Bushnell's book was published in 1861 from a series of essays that date back to 1838.

- 11 Bushnell, p. 194.
- 12 Bushnell, pp. 4ff.
- 13 White, *Child Guidance* (Nashville, Tennessee: Southern Publishing Association 1954), p. 193.
- 14 White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 463.

#### A NEW ADVENTIST PUBLICATION

*Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Index*. Edited by Grace Prentice Holm. Semiannual edition (January-June 1971). Loma Linda University 1972. pp. 137. Institutional, \$25.00 (annual) ; individual, \$9.50 (paper).

Loma Linda University has performed a useful service in having produced this periodical index (initiated as a pilot project in 1970 — the work of assistant librarians Keith H. Clouten and Marilyn C. Crane — made possible through the interest of George V. Summers, director of the libraries of the University). Now that current periodicals will be indexed regularly, it is hoped that funds will be made available in the future to complete an index of Seventh-day Adventist periodicals up to 1971. Among the journals included in the *Index* is SPECTRUM.

MOLLEURUS COUPERUS

ERROR. Reference made to a former editor of the *Signs of the Times* (provided by author Alonzo L. Baker as A. C. Tait) appeared on page 42 of the Autumn 1972 SPECTRUM as Arthur C. Tait. We regret this inadvertence. The *Signs* editor, of course, was Asa C. Tait. A.L.T.

## REVIEWS

### Social Science and Religion

ROBERT C. KISTLER

SECT IDEOLOGIES AND SOCIAL STATUS

By Gary Schwartz

University of Chicago Press 1970 260 pp \$9.00

100

It is questionable just how much of a contribution Gary Schwartz, an anthropologist by training, has made to American scholarship in *Sect Ideologies and Social Status*. A published version of his doctoral dissertation at the University of Chicago, this book represents an effort to study "the religious ideology of two sectarian groups in American society — the Pentecostals and the Seventh-day Adventists" (p. 1). Either religious body would have been a more than adequate source for doctoral research. That Schwartz put the two together — to show how "dissatisfaction with the social order in sacred guise" provides adherents with a total frame of reference and a world perspective that orders even the minor affairs of life — is a most formidable research task, to say the least!

The discussion of the sect in general as a phenomenon of social science is both interesting and stimulating. If sect affiliation, as is often asserted, is related to status deprivation — that is, if persons feel they lack the esteem due them and seek to rectify this lack by joining a sectarian group that promises future rewards — why do some persons with feelings of insignificance turn to a sectarian solution while others turn to psychiatric help? Schwartz concedes that knowledge has not progressed to a full understanding of this question. Both the psychological makeup of the person and the sociological perspectives of available alternatives in the community no doubt play a part in determining whether a secular or a sacred solution is sought. Perhaps other variables are involved. His analysis here is good.

The author's biases are not difficult to locate, even by only a cursory survey of the book. He uses the standard clichés of "social marginality," "status deprivation," and "resentment over the skewed distribution of social privileges" to justify his categorization of Pentecostals and Seventh-day Adventists as sectarian bodies. He has obviously read the literature. But then he uses other phrases and words that reveal something of his own perspectives. He writes about "bizarre" religious doctrines (p. 30), and about "exotic" customs and "esoteric" beliefs (pp. 240, 241) in describing the groups he has undertaken to study. Perhaps he had in mind the Adventist communion service or the Pentecostal speaking in tongues by some believers. These are subjective impres-

sions expressed in a rather negative fashion, however, and can hardly be considered the evaluations of the trained objectivity that doctoral research is expected to entail.

The lack of rigorous methodology would seem to me to be very much open to question. Participation-observation techniques used as one method of gathering information have their limitations. Schwartz is well aware of the problems posed by his regular attendance at religious services of the groups, but his resistance to encouragement, at the same time, to make some kind of commitment. When pressed, he referred to his Jewish background to explain his lack of interest in personal Christian salvation. One must question whether or not this explanation was sufficient to enable him to establish the rapport essential to elicit honest and forthright answers to the questions he asked after about six months of attending services. To be a participant-observer would be more successful in settings other than one where continued attendance presupposes some sort of interest. To what degree can one maintain closeness for greater insights while maintaining distance for greater objectivity?

Schwartz seems to have gathered his firsthand information about Seventh-day Adventists from one congregation only. His informants were only those whom he had come to know "reasonably well" (p. 241). Were they loyal Seventh-day Adventists? Were they new Seventh-day Adventists? Were they Seventh-day Adventists who tried to straddle the fence, so to speak? He does not identify who these members were or how many respondents he had. While one can secure information only from informants who will talk, the problem lies in translating such information, from a few church members toward whom one may feel the warmth of friendship, to generalizations about Seventh-day Adventists — and this Schwartz has done.

A second source of information was notes made on the sermons of the church pastor and notes on the teaching in Sabbath school classes he attended. Again, his methodology seems weak indeed.

To his credit, Schwartz did use bonafide Adventist publications as a third source of information. Quotations found in his discussion of Adventist teachings are from Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*; Arthur E. Lickey, *Highways to Truth*; Arthur S. Maxwell, *Courage for the Crisis*; George E. Vandeman, *Planet in Rebellion*; Charles L. Paddock, *Highways to Happiness*; *The Sabbath School Quarterly* (1963); and *The Youth's Instructor*. He confesses to not having read all of the literature; but his citations give the appearance of fair scholarship, although random checking reveals the wrong page documentation for some of the statements cited.

Seventh-day Adventist teachings are clearly perceived in some cases, murky in some, and just plain wrong in others. For instance, in discussing events at the end of the thousand years of Revelation 20, he writes about *both* the righteous dead and the wicked dead being resurrected. His overall picture of Adventists seems to be that of a legalistic group concerned with scrupulous observance of minute details of religion in life. Perhaps some Adventists portray a sense of legal obligation to that which is truth.

As to status concerns, Schwartz suggests that Seventh-day Adventist ideology is characterized by a dominant *fear* and a dominant *hope* (pp. 134, 135). The fear is primarily a fear of falling in the status system by not staying out of trouble. According to Schwartz, Adventists stress injunctions to stay out of trouble — to avoid drinking, adultery, and other patterns of what are perceived as a "lower" mode of life. The

hope is the converse, namely, that if one does good, works hard at his job, and is careful in expenditure and life, the prospects are bright for upward mobility and the achievement of the success image that he suggests underlies Adventist thinking. This interpretation of Adventist thinking may indeed be the motivational force behind the religiosity of some Adventists, but undoubtedly many have found a better motivational basis.

Not being fully familiar with Pentecostal belief and practice, I make no attempt here to evaluate Schwartz's treatment of that group.

As Glock and Stark suggest in *Religion and Society in Tension*, it may very well be that the conflict between science and religion peaked in the well-known Scopes trial in Dayton, Tennessee, as far as biology is concerned, but that the emerging conflict is in the social sciences. If that is the case, this work by Schwartz, with all of its methodological and theological weaknesses, might be a book with which Adventist scholars should become acquainted.

## LETTERS

My hearty appreciation to Herold Weiss (SPECTRUM Spring 1972) for the penetratingly true way in which he deals with Seventh-day Adventists as Protestants. All of our advanced Bible teachers should read this and ponder it well, especially his observations on Ellen White's stance on doctrines. Hermeneutically we must give the Bible the *first* place in any exegesis of Scripture.

WILLIAM G. WIRTH  
Pasadena, California

Ronald Graybill has added another chapter to the discussion of Ellen White's use of historical sources initiated in the pages of SPECTRUM two years ago by William S. Peterson.<sup>1</sup> The latest contribution is justified by the assertion that "some interesting evidence has come to light which can hardly be overlooked." The 1911 revision of *The Great Controversy* was undertaken, in part, to "identify historical sources in which material quoted in *The Great Controversy* could be found by those who wished to verify the quotations." According to Graybill, "an examination of the correspondence and other documents dealing with this revision has turned up significant data with a direct bearing on Ellen White's use of the historical sources appearing in chapter fifteen."

The "significant data" are marginal notations made by Clarence C. Crisler on certain "torn-out pages of chapter fifteen of the 1888 edition," indicating that Mrs. White "drew the quotations entirely from Uriah Smith's work." That is, Smith quoted



from Scott, Gleig, Thiers, and Alison — and Mrs. White "drew the historical quotations from Smith, not from the original works." Graybill claims this information is significant because "it changes our understanding of the way in which Ellen White selected the historical quotations she used," and "knowing the source from which Ellen White actually worked also helps explain the supposed suppression and distortion of evidence."

Peterson's central concern, by contrast, was the question: To what extent was Ellen White's description of the French Revolution "based primarily on visions" and to what extent was she indebted to historical sources? His conclusion is clear: "It simply will not suffice to say that God showed her the broad outline of events and she then filled in the gaps with her readings. In the case of the French Revolution, there was no 'broad outline' until she had read the historians."<sup>2</sup> In the ensuing dialogue, no one successfully refuted this view.

Although interesting, the latest contribution merely shows that Mrs. White read Uriah Smith on the French Revolution and then uncritically accepted both his sources and his use of them. To rephrase Graybill's summary of Peterson: Ellen White's source for her treatment of the French Revolution was not the visions she received, but Uriah Smith, who read bad historians whom he used badly.

I for one hope that the issue of the historical sources for chapter fifteen of *The Great Controversy* can be laid aside. It is clear that the chapter on the French Revolution, and probably much more, is based primarily on historical and other source materials. Concern about the quality of those materials is important — but secondary to the fact that they are the basis of Ellen White's writing on the subject.

It is time now to consider the implications of this finding for interpreting and applying her writings, and for understanding the nature of her inspiration.

1 William S. Peterson, A textual and historical study, *SPECTRUM*, (Autumn 1970), pp. 57-69.

2 Peterson, p. 66.

J. RUSSELL NELSON  
Vice President, University of Colorado

I am very grateful for Ronald Graybill's lucid contribution (*SPECTRUM*, Summer 1972) to our understanding of how Ellen G. White used historical materials in writing chapter fifteen of *The Great Controversy*. The principle which he enunciates — that the footnotes in her books frequently conceal her almost total dependence upon secondary sources — is undeniably sound. I have observed similar instances elsewhere in *The Great Controversy* that illustrate this tendency of Crisler and her other editors to cite a variety of impressive-sounding sources which are in fact quoted in, say, d'Aubigné or whatever historian she was closely paraphrasing at the moment. Graybill's analysis makes it clear that chapter fifteen does, after all, conform to her usual pattern of heavy reliance upon merely one or two secondary (and not very good) sources.

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## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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**RAYMOND F. COTTRELL** (The Eschaton: A Seventh-day Adventist Perspective) is book editor for the Review and Herald Publishing Association, author of numerous articles and of books (among them, *Faith and Reason* and *Beyond Tomorrow*), and major contributor to the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* and the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary*.

**PAUL S. MINEAR** (Response to The Eschaton), Winkley professor (emeritus) of biblical theology at Yale University, well known for his significant contributions to biblical scholarship, has been president of the Society of New Testament Studies and the American Theological Society, and director of the faith and order department of the World Council of Churches. He holds advanced degrees from Garrett Theological Seminary and Northwestern and Yale Universities.

**EUGENE H. MALY** (Comment on The Eschaton) is professor of Sacred Scriptures at Mount Saint Mary's of the West (Ohio) and author of scholarly studies (e.g., *The Epistles of Sts. James, Jude, and Peter*; *The World of David and Solomon*; *The Prophet of Salvation*). He has been president of the Catholic Biblical Association of America and chairman of the editorial board for *The Bible Today*. He earned the doctor of sacred theology and doctor of Sacred Scriptures degrees in Rome at Angelicum University and the Pontifical Bible Institute.

**JACK W. PROVONSHA** (Comment on the Cottrell-Minear-Maly discussion) is professor of philosophy of religion and Christian ethics at Loma Linda University. He has doctor of medicine (Loma Linda University) and doctor of philosophy (Claremont Graduate School) degrees.

**DEREK J. PRIME** (The Second Coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ) (see note one in his references and notes) is former president of the Federation of Independent Evangelical Churches. He holds the master of arts degree from Cambridge University.

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**SIDNEY L. WERKMAN** (The Hazards of Rearing Children in Foreign Countries). See prefatory note with his article beginning on page 69.

**MOHAMMED SHAFII** (Comment on Rearing Children). See prefatory note on page 76.

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