

Annual Council 1983

The Death of a Boarding Academy

SPECTRUM

A Quarterly Journal of the Association of Adventist Forums

Volume 14, Number 3

NEW DIRECTIONS FOR ADVENTISM

Radical Discipleship
Covenant, Holy War, and Glory
Apocalypse as Liturgy

SPECTRUM

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The Association of Adventist Forums is a nonsubsidized, nonprofit organization for which gifts are deductible in the report of income for purposes of taxation. The publishing of SPECTRUM depends on subscriptions, gifts from individuals and the voluntary efforts of the contributors and the staff.

Editorial Correspondence: SPECTRUM is published

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quarterly by the Association of Adventist Forums. Direct all editorial correspondence to SPECTRUM, 7710 Carroll Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland 20912. Manuscripts should be typewritten, double spaced and in matters of style and documentation, conform to *A Manual of Style* (University of Chicago Press). Submit the original and two copies, along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Responses from readers may be shortened before publication.

Subscription Information: In order to receive SPECTRUM, send a membership fee (\$15 per 4 issues, except \$18 in Canada and in other foreign countries; \$2 less for students) to Association of Adventist Forums, Box 5330, Takoma Park, Maryland 20912. Phone: (301) 270-0423. Single copies may be purchased for \$4. Pay by check made out to the Association of Adventist Forums. For address changes, send old address label along with the new address.

Litho USA

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About This Issue

The special section of this issue suggests new dimensions of the Adventist vision. Timothy Smith, a distinguished professor of American religious history at Johns Hopkins University and an ordained Nazarene minister, recommends that Adventists intensify their pursuit of sanctification, a path on which they were launched by their Wesleyan forbears. Two editors of *Spectrum*, Charles Scriven and Roy Branson, suggest that Christian traditions emphasizing radical discipleship and the experience of the holy provide fresh understandings of Adventism. Charles Teel shows how Adventists can make the book of Revelation a part of their present experience of worship.

In other articles, Penelope Kellogg

Winkler, who teaches writing at Columbia Union College and whom we are pleased to welcome to our masthead as editorial associate, reports on this year's eventful Annual Council. Ted Vick, an Adventist professor in England who received his graduate degrees in theology from Vanderbilt and Oxford universities, comments on the three essays exploring the sanctuary which appeared in the last issue of *Spectrum*.

Finally, we welcome two new consulting editors who have already made significant contributions to *Spectrum* through their writing and editing. Bonnie Casey, who received her master's degree in English and has taught at Loma Linda University and Columbia Union College, now writes and edits in the Washington, D.C. area. George Colvin is completing a doctorate in government at the Claremont Graduate School in California.

—The Editors

Four Great Ideas In Adventism— An Evangelical's Testimony

by Timothy L. Smith

Sometimes I think youthful or scholarly Adventists, like youthful or scholarly members of other communions, may be too quick to yield to the temptation to dismiss one or another aspect of their denomination's teachings as vestiges of folk-dogmas inherited from simple-minded forebears. This is particularly true of doctrines that have become denominational distinctives, serving to separate an oncoming generation from other Christians. I listened recently to a group of young Mennonite graduate students in the congregation gathered around Boston by those who have moved there to study or teach at Harvard and MIT. Their impatience with the ancient Mennonite insistence upon radical Christian pacifism saddened me, for at this moment in history people outside their tradition are turning to the peace-churches to help save humanity, and perhaps all life on earth, from destruction in a firestorm of nuclear violence that is falsely called war.

I imagine it to be possible that Adventists have sometimes not seen as clearly as a

deeply interested outsider might what your most priceless gifts really are, or always known how to share them as generally as you wished. I am sure that we have rarely been wise enough to receive them thankfully.

The dynamic character of biblical revelation, evident across the centuries of its composition, and Christ's promise that the same Holy Spirit who inspired "all Scripture" would attend the believing and obeying church "to the ends of the earth" prompt us to listen closely to every historic Christian community that has taken the Bible seriously as the word of the Lord. The light shed upon its entire message by the particular doctrines that each one of the great evangelical traditions has found crucial is, I think, indispensable to a full illumination of its meanings. Wesleyans like me, therefore, need you to be the very best and most thoughtful Adventists you can be, utterly open to the Holy Spirit's guidance as you seek to understand the truth of Scripture.

You may not yet realize it, but you also need me this morning to be the very best Wesleyan that my Nazarene background calls me to be. Indeed, whenever I speak in the pulpits of other ministers, or in the more neutral pulpits of college and university chapels, I have found it best always to speak clearly as a Wesleyan; in that tradition lies the particular treasure I have to share. You

Timothy L. Smith is a professor of history and director of the program in American Religious History at the Johns Hopkins University. He is well-known as the author of *Revivalism and Social Reform*. Smith first gave this presentation at the national conference of the Association of Adventist Forums, September, 1982.

Adventists have something likewise to share with me and every other evangelical.

None of us intends to be sectarian. I sometimes think of my fellow Nazarenes as a Jewish friend did of the Jewish community in New York. "We Jews are not really sectarian," he said "we just find our own inner life so interesting." Indeed, the inner life of each evangelical community should also be interesting to other evangelicals. Though our distinguishing doctrines may not be the wheel on which all Christian truth must turn, they do mark the boundaries of our own fellowship, and they identify the special gift we have to offer to the others. Let me, then, speak this morning of four great ideas which I hear singing out of Adventist history, forming a chorus that the whole evangelical community might join.

The End of History is at Hand

I begin (to surprise you) with your conviction that the end of history is at hand. The hope for the long-deferred fulfillment of the promise of Christ's Second Coming first drew together the Seventh-day Adventist community in the early 1860's. Ellen White helped to shape and thereafter expounded the doctrine of the cleansing of the sanctuary to deal with, though not in her view to explain fully, what had been happening in the years since the great disappointment of 1844. Thereafter, she and her associates and successors used this doctrine to deal with what has happened both within and beyond history since the 1860's, though none of them foresaw many of the particular events that have taken place in human affairs. In the long perspective of what Bible scholars call "salvation history," and in light of the belief of many of them that the early church likewise expected the immediate return of Christ and reacted to its delay by rethinking their understanding of the prophecies of His return, the century and a quarter since the

gathering of your denomination seems a relatively short time.

I want to affirm the continuing relevance of this Adventist expectation of the end of time to any proper understanding of what Scripture has to say to us today. It seems odd to quote Jonathan Schell's book, *The Fate of the Earth*, in support of Ellen White and of you who remain persuaded of the truth about the end of history that she set forth. Schell foreswears any religious commitment and denies any faith in divine help to spare us from what the political leaders of our world and nation seem bent on making inevitable. Schell describes, in terms that sound new only to secular readers, events so horrible as to ignite, he barely hopes, a worldwide peoples' crusade to stave off the fiery suicide of our race, and the murder of all other living creatures. You have inherited a stark doctrine of divine judgment; in it one can hear the heartbeat of grace. In the "last days," as the growth of your own communion demonstrates to be true, the Lord has promised to pour out his Spirit upon all flesh. What may be proceeding behind the veil of eternity in the cleansing of the sanctuary certainly does not preclude the renewal of the vitality of Christian faith that is taking place on earth now, in these closing decades of what was supposed to be the post-Christian century.

The trans-national character of the doctrine that we are living in the end-time is also important to contemporary Christianity, as it has been, historically, to Adventists. It underlays the amazing interracial and international perspective on Christian evangelism which has been so much a part of Adventist perceptions since Mrs. White went to Australia and endorsed her son Edson's determination to preach to black people in northern Alabama. Your community presently is the most international of all religious ones, including the Buddhist and Islamic. Its loyalties cut across all allegiance

to nations, races, and places, all identification with classes, customs, and cultures. On no college or university campus in this country can one experience intercultural and inter-racial friendships better than at Andrews University. Moreover, the movement of black people converted to Adventism out of Alabama and Mississippi during the early years of this century, especially

The God of the sacred Scripture does not stand on the side of racial oppression, or legitimize routing villagers by the thousands out of ancestral homes.

during the two World Wars, laid foundations for an indigenous black Adventist movement that was a rebuke to the racism that still gripped American Protestantism decades after the end of the Civil War. Your church's history demonstrates, then, the coming end of the old world of ethnic, national, and religious discrimination, and the dawn of a new one in which neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female may claim precedence in world Christendom.

The foreign missions that you have carried on with such astonishing success are likewise the seedbed of internationalism, as they are in every other evangelical community, including the fundamentalist one for which the Reverend Jerry Falwell often presumes to speak. I feel very close to Haiti today, partly because one of my former students helped found a mission there in which the Nazarenes have been prompted for the first time to respond to immense poverty with a broad range of social ministries for persons to whom we are preaching the Gospel. Likewise, when the King of Swaziland passed away a few weeks ago, Nazarenes everywhere felt differently about it, I suppose, than other evangelical

Christians, because the largest Protestant community in Swaziland is Nazarene, and many of the king's family are members of our churches there. Through such overseas missions, done at the simple bidding of Christ that we preach the Gospel to every creature, an international view of things has been imprinted in the minds of young people in Bible-believing churches.

These young people belie the public illusion and rhetoric of some of their leaders that evangelicals are super-patriots with little sense of responsibility for the world.

Adventists have renounced with a special urgency the notion that the Christian religion is to be identified with American culture, with any country's nationalist policies, or with upper-class social ideals. The particular shape of your beliefs about the end of history has foreclosed for you the dispensationalist option of embracing in Christ's name the militarist national socialism that has recently engulfed the modern state of Israel. The God of the sacred Scriptures does not stand on the side of racial oppression or legitimize a foreign policy that routs villagers by the thousands out of their ancestral homes to make room for those who believe they are still God's favorites.

The language of extermination that cropped up during the recent attacks on Beirut by the Israeli army (as one colonel put it, "The PLO are like termites; if you leave one they'll all be back next year") echoed, in all our memories, the neurotic oratory of Adolf Hitler and Joseph Goebbels. Some wise man said, "Choose your enemies carefully, for you are apt to end up being much like them." Jewish psychoanalysts, carrying out their studies of the psychology of concentration camps, first demonstrated the tendency of the oppressed to take upon themselves the traits of their oppressors. It is not an anti-semitic statement at all, but a sober warning to friends and to members of my family who are Jews, to say that the greatest corruption of biblical idealism and of Jewish morality in the past

1500 years now threatens to prevail in modern Israel.

If we Americans are obliged to warn our Jewish allies of their danger, we should also press our own leaders to draw back from the parallel corruption of this nation's idealism and morality. The world we have known is in sober fact coming to an end, either by violence of fire or by the radical submission of humankind to the "righteousness that is by faith in Christ." You Adventists have never compromised for a moment this biblical conviction.

The Law of the Lord is Life

Second, I want to lift up the Adventist affirmation that the law of the Lord is life for humankind. No single biblical notion is more pervasive in Scripture than this, and because of your distinctive emphasis upon Sabbath law, it stands at the very heart of Adventist faith and life. Like most Protestant evangelicals, I was reared to think that your opposition to laws forbidding many activities on Sundays was helping to destroy the "Christian Sabbath." As time went on, however, it became evident that large numbers of evangelical Protestants were not going to be careful about keeping Sunday in the old way, and were on that account losing interest in such legislation.

It was refreshing last night to hear Mrs. Hartman explain that her family became Seventh-day Adventists under the guidance of a new landlord who refused to accept their rent check on Sabbath morning. From this flowed friendship and an opportunity for this man to bear witness to his faith. Her family soon chose the Adventist way, convinced in large measure by one Christian's loyalty to the Ten Commandments; her father was eventually ordained an elder in the church.

I think this Adventist "gift" is more important for its potential than for any success you have had recently in sharing it. No

greater compromise has undermined Protestant and Catholic Christianity during the last 80 years than the growth of antinomianism—the notion that the moral law of Moses is out of date and has been ever since Jesus preached the law of love. Under the new covenant, we hear on every hand, in phrases

Ellen White herself could not have improved upon the concept of the consummation of history in Sabbath rest that appears in the line reading, "When the church victorious, Shall be the church at rest."

wrenched out of their actual biblical sense, grace supplants law and forgiveness makes obedience unnecessary. The result is to obscure the biblical point: God's priceless gift of love, through faith, was intended precisely to enable us to fulfill the righteousness of the law.

The fulfillment, which Jesus proclaimed in his "Sermon on the Mount" as the essence of the Good News, was not a new doctrine at all, but the central promise of the old covenant. Only recently has the determination of Old Testament scholars to confront us with Torah on its own terms forced us to realize that the Bible does not contain two ethical systems, one for the Old and the other for the New Testament. What Jesus and St. Paul preached was the same ethical system that Moses set forth, under the inspiration of the same Holy Spirit. When Jesus answered the question, "What is the greatest commandment of all?" with the word, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart and mind and soul and strength," he was quoting Moses' commentary on the meaning of the Ten Commandments in Deuteronomy 8. (Moses' words have stood at the heart of every Jewish

service of worship until this day.) On Moses' terms, the law is life for Israel: it is holy, just, and good. St. Paul reiterated the point, in that section of Romans 7 that many 20th century evangelicals pass over in their eagerness to expound its last section, misconstruing it to teach that believers must expect to continue in their old and sinful ways. When Jesus went on to say, in response to his questioners, that the second "great" commandment was like the first, "You must love your neighbor as yourself," he was again quoting Moses from another key summary of the meaning of the law in Leviticus 19. St. Paul, going back to Moses but echoing also the words of Jesus, affirmed in Romans 13 that the last five of the Ten Commandments, having to do with our relationships to other human beings, can only be fulfilled in love.

Mrs. White's generation of Adventist leaders had fully absorbed this deep sense of the moral unity of the Old and New Testaments, having inherited it from their varied Methodist and Puritan backgrounds. You have not forgotten it. In the nuances of speech that I hear in your celebrative worship, such as the gathering last night, it is clear that keeping the Sabbath, as you view it, means far more than simply observing a series of restraints on behavior. I hear instead an immense affirmation of the continuity of law and love in the Old and New Testament scriptures, in the lives of faith you now endeavor to live and in your hopes for the future. In Adventist understanding, grounded, I think, on a profound grasp of Biblical teachings, God hallows ordinary time in the Sabbath, linking it to eternal time—called, in the Greek New Testament, *kairos*. In that eternal *kairos* we live now, by faith, and one day shall in it be gathered to the presence of the Lord. As we began our worship this morning, I sang the hymn "The Church Has One Foundation" like an Adventist, having sung it as a Nazarene all my life. Ellen White herself could not have improved upon the conception of the consummation of history in Sabbath rest

that appears in the line reading, "When the church victorious shall be the church at rest."

The Promise of Righteousness by Faith

Closely linked to all this is your historic understanding that the gospel consists in the promise of righteousness, by grace, through faith. I am aware that arguments over this question have recently been substantial among Adventist theologians. I think I know, however, though I am not sure I know as fully as I should, where Ellen White stood on this question. Her perceptions and sensibility, like those of other Adventists and Millerites, were shaped under Methodist influences. No theme was more crucial to Wesleyan religion, either in England under the leadership of the founder or in 19th century America. In my book, *Revivalism and Social Reform*, now reprinted in paperback by my own university, I stressed the Wesleyan roots and character of the moral perfectionism of the mid-nineteenth century. I am now persuaded that New School Presbyterians Charles G. Finney and Asa Mahan read Wesleyan writings more deeply during the years between 1832 and 1839 than I had originally thought. The new book of Finney's lectures, *Promise of the Spirit*, that I have edited reflects Finney's embrace in 1839 of an essentially Wesleyan view.

But my understanding of the biblical authenticity of the experience of righteousness through faith has been greatly enriched by recent reading in the history of Calvinist and Puritan thought. Indeed, from the earliest years of the Puritan movement in England and the earliest days of its transplanting in America, the only firm ground of one's assurance of being among the elect was the discovery of inward grace and power to live above ordinary sinfulness. Scholars have known this for many years. Nevertheless, I was scarcely prepared for

my discovery last year in the sermons of George Whitefield (which I began reading in order to see more clearly what John Wesley taught) an obsession with precisely this good news. The Holy Spirit who brings repentant sinners to new life in Christ, Whitefield preached often and nearly always, breaks the power as well as cancels the guilt of sin; He enables each believer to live a life of consistent victory over temptation. In 1737, a year before John Wesley experienced “salvation by faith,” as he called it, at a prayer meeting in Aldergate Street, London, Whitefield published in England his sermon *On the Nature and Necessity of Our Regeneration or New Birth in Christ Jesus*. It is a “fatal mistake,” Whitefield warned in that sermon, to “put asunder what God has inseparably joined together” and to “expect to be justified by Christ without also being sanctified, that is, having one’s nature ‘changed’ and made holy.” That sermon, republished in Boston with the blessing of leading clergymen, prompted the invitation that brought Whitefield to that Puritan city in September 1740 for the revival that has ever since been called a “Great Awakening.”

George Whitefield did not learn this doctrine from Jonathan Edwards at all. He was still a very young man and had been taught in Oxford’s “Holy Club” to make Scripture the source and test of all Christian doctrine. He had read, on the recommendation of Charles and John Wesley, the great devotional works of the Puritans of the previous century, as well as Scottish Henry Scougal’s *Life of God in the Soul of Man* and Anglican William Law’s *Plain and Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*. Like the Wesleys and all evangelicals of that century, he had also read Bishop Jeremy Taylor’s *Holy Living and Holy Dying*. But he tested all his reading by the Scriptures.

The doctrine of righteousness by faith was the moral heartbeat of 19th century evangelicalism. Few then would have considered for a moment reinterpreting the New Testament as a rejection rather than a

fulfillment of the law of the Old. You may look high and low in the religious literature of the evangelicals of that century—Lutherans, Calvinists, Wesleyans, Baptists, Disciples of Christ, or Adventists—and you will find nowhere the antinomian understanding of grace that has become such a pernicious infection in the 20th century evangelical revival. Precisely to the degree that the revival of our age is continuing and deepening, just so are leaders in all these traditions (illustrated notably by Richard Lovelace’s book, *The Dynamic of the Spirit*) rediscovering the centrality of the biblical promise of sanctification, of a transformation of moral life through the work of the Holy Spirit.

If she were alive, I believe Ellen White would be embarrassed if you Adventists were to resolve your current discussions of this question simply by attributing the

I imagine it to be possible that Adventists have sometimes not seen as clearly as a deeply interested outsider might what your most priceless gifts really are.

doctrine of righteousness through faith to her. (She would have instantly rejected the notion that a vision or a series of moving thoughts was revelation from God if in substance they contradicted what she thought were the plain teachings of Scripture. She would have called such a vision simply a bad dream, for she stood as firmly as any of her contemporaries upon the authority of the Bible.) Rather, you Adventists owe your longstanding commitment to moral restoration, as Wesleyans and other Christians do, to that same loving God who in the power and grace of his Spirit made the world, revealed himself to fallen humanity in Scripture, and in his blessed Son, our Savior, created the faith, through

love, that reopened our lives to the Spirit's transforming presence.

The promise of righteousness by faith is the central theme of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. If you share my dismay at the fragmentation of biblical studies that has taken place in the 20th century, and the resultant uncertainty as to how something called "biblical theology" might grow out of such a patchwork of varied writings, I urge you to consider the wholeness of Scripture. Today, we tend to think that concept was an affirmation of faith that the same Holy Spirit had been present from age to age, in every situation, inspiring alike prophets, lawgivers, and the writers of the four gospels and the New Testament epistles. Our earlier teachers, however, whether John Wesley, John Cotton, Alexander Campbell, or Ellen White, saw the wholeness of Scripture as an observable fact. Study it in this light for yourself. I urge you to see whether you do not find that, on common sense examination, from the first chapter of Genesis to the last chapter of Revelation, its central theme is God's call to righteousness and his promise to restore in us by grace the divine image and so enable us to fulfill that call. His love (in the biblical text the word means "loyalty"), his faithfulness (which is the very ground of all Revelation and the reason for His giving to us the law), are the fountain from which springs the grace that saves us from unrighteousness.

Such convictions have been one of your gifts to your fellow evangelicals. Now, in the 20th century, when they need that gift most grievously, I urge you to continue making it, discharging that only debt that Christians should really know, "the debt of mutual love."

The Presence of the Hallowing Spirit

One final contribution, to which I have been pointing throughout this talk, is the conviction that the Holy Spirit is present in

the church, empowering it for righteousness by constantly renewing the community's understanding of Scripture. Here, again, I point to a strong current of Christian doctrine whose source is far deeper and wider than the inspiration of Ellen White. It springs from the teachings of the apostles and the early church fathers, from the rediscovery of the unity of Spirit and Word in Puritan and Wesleyan thought, and from the common evangelical understanding of the inspiration and authority of Scripture. A good place to begin reading about this question is in Geoffrey Nuttall's book, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Practice*, notably his great chapter on "The Spirit and the Word." Nuttall shows how the 17th century Puritans and the Quakers who followed in their train laid out very carefully and clearly the link between the revelation of the Spirit in the Word, and the illumination of the Spirit which guides Christians as they search for the meaning of the Word. He stresses the firm bond that has existed in the minds of evangelical leaders between the authority of Scripture and the Spirit's leadership.

The 19th century understood that the Scriptures comprised, as virtually all the creeds in evangelical Christendom put it, "the only guide to Christian faith and practice." They assumed that the guiding Spirit was with believers as they studied the Bible. The authority of Scripture lay, then, not in each particular word but in the meanings of the sentences and paragraphs, in what they taught about salvation and holiness. The recent struggle over theories of biblical inspiration, conducted sometimes, I think, by persons who care more about the battle than about the Bible, seems almost to ignore this point.

Here stands the watershed that separates the Hebrew and Christian faiths from virtually all the other religions of the world. The Bible declares that our Heavenly Father wants his children to understand. To Ezekiel he said, "Son of Man, stand upon your feet and I will speak with you." Don't grovel in the dust before God; he is not an idol,

but your Father. He wants you to reason, to think with him. As Richard Baxter said in the 17th century, the way in which the Holy Spirit teaches us is by commending God's truth to our reasons so that we can understand how true and right it is that we should do what he tells us. I don't read letters from my mother to memorize the words; I read them to get the message. Just so, the messages of Scripture comprise God's inspired Word. I am dismayed when friends who say they stand for a "high view" of Scripture tease me with the charge that I believe in an errant Bible. What I do believe in is the unerring power of Scripture to make plain, through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, all the truth that is necessary for my salvation and moral rectitude. Salvation comes through the word of the Lord because the same Spirit who breathed into those words is at work in my mind and heart.

In many different ways and times He spoke to us—"in sundry places and in diverse manners," as the writer to the Hebrews put it—but always the essential theme is our lostness, our utter dependence on his grace, and his promise not only to forgive us of our sins but in the power of his Spirit bring us into a new life of deliverance from them.

Two complex developments took place in the last part of the 19th and the early part of the 20th century that distorted our memories of this great tradition of scriptural authority. One was the emergence of fundamentalism, with its sincere conviction that the literal and verbal inspiration of each word in the Bible is the ground of our faith in it. Alas, this allowed, though of course it did not require, the use of proof-texts. Not only was context disregarded, but the long tradition of understanding the meanings of biblical passages that runs from Moses to Paul. Moses illuminated Israel's understanding of God's covenant with Abraham while

serving as an agent in the forging of another and more particular covenant. Half a millennium later, Samuel, Micah, Amos, and Isaiah of Jerusalem taught the people of the two kingdoms the meaning of Torah. The later prophets—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Malachi—revitalized the teachings of the earlier ones by applying them to the crises that brought on Judah's downfall.

. . . always the essential theme is our lostness, our utter dependence on his grace, and his promise not only to forgive us of our sins, but in the power of his Spirit bring us into a new life of deliverance from them.

(Jeremiah escaped with his life from the charge of sedition because someone remembered that Micah had said the same things two hundred years before, prompting a repentance that saved the nation for divine judgment.) Likewise, in the New Testament, John the Baptist and Jesus gave new life and newly relevant meanings to the teachings of the prophets; Paul, Peter, and John, nearing the end of their own apostolic ministries, revitalized the meanings of all Scripture—the Torah, the prophets, and the Gospels—with an inspired new exposition of the way in which "the truth as it is in Jesus" confronted an increasingly Gentile church. Literalist fundamentalism dulls the historic Christian conviction that although in the Scriptures God has spoken in different places, times, and circumstances, the moral, spiritual, and saving truth remains consistent throughout.

The other and quite opposite event was the emergence of modernism, whose teachers made culture and the developing consciousness of their own historical situation the ultimate sources of religious and ethical authority. Most modernists, however, in the early part of this century as well

as now, continued to preach sermons from biblical texts. Many of them were quite deeply absorbed in understanding the original settings and meanings of those texts, yet they remained convinced that the interpretation and application of whatever truth there may be in Scripture must rest upon what history and modern culture have taught us. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit became, in this view, a general notion of the "inspiration" of the human intellect; modern ideas may not only supercede those of Scripture, but if necessary entirely displace them.

Both fundamentalists and modernists have wanted to force the great body of evangelical Christians, whose true inheritance was the doctrine of scriptural authority outlined above, to a choice between these stark alternatives. Modernists would love nothing more than for evangelicals to have no choice but to embrace the fundamentalist understanding of scriptural authority, for they believe that most bright young epople would soon find that dogma would not stand up, even against the testimony of Scripture itself. Meanwhile, fundamentalists seem still to take pleasure in pushing their evangelical brothers and sisters toward the modernist camp, on the grounds that not to believe in the literal and verbal inspiration of Scripture is to betray the old time religion.

Someone wrote recently in an article in *Spectrum* that Adventists have remained largely untouched by this controversy because, as the writer put it, "we have Ellen White." Yes, you do, but I am not quite sure that you understand just how and why that is important. Certainly she would scorn any who suggested that her prophetic words revised the teachings of Scripture at any point. She inherited the 19th century

understanding of where the authority of Scripture lay: not in the words but in the meanings of the passages that conveyed "present truth." If I have understood at least some aspects of the recent debates in Adventist circles, I think that, ironically, divergent parties are subjecting the inspiration and authority of Ellen White to the same stark alternatives that the battlers about biblical inspiration have insisted on. True to my historian's role of defending the dead from libel, I say that's unfair to the memory of Mrs. White. What she said, I think, viewed in the perspective of her own times, was that God had spoken with the gift of prophecy to illuminate the meaning of Scripture. The final authority of the Bible over all Christian faith and practice must be, she thought, the unquestioned conviction of any prophet who came from the Lord. Her encyclopedic comments on the meanings of Scripture (the index to them fills a substantial volume) displayed her reverence both for the Bible and for the sovereign Spirit who in all times and places must guide believers into truth.

Evangelical faith rests, in the broadest sense, on the whole biblical record of God's faithfulness to humankind. That faithfulness, dimly comprehended, becomes the garden of love in which his Spirit plants saving faith. This, I think, you Adventists ought now to reclaim from your tradition and shout from the housetops.

Indeed, in all four of the ways I have talked about this morning, I pray God will give you grace both to grasp these rich treasures and to give them away—to your evangelical brothers and sisters, and to those who dwell at the far corners of the earth.

Radical Discipleship And the Renewal Of Adventist Mission

by Charles Scriven

The theological crisis in Seventh-day Adventism today has made many churchmembers doubtful and even anguished about their religious identity. Some of them are leaving the community and others are unsure whether to remain in it. This turmoil calls for constructive response, and what follows is the outline of such a response.

Our church has, to this point, seriously misunderstood its Reformation roots. It is usual among us to suppose that our 16th-century predecessors were Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli. This is partly true, but at the same time massively misleading. The pivotal 16th century antecedents of Adventism are the Reformation radicals, most notably the Anabaptists, who differed substantially from these other reformers. After describing the main outlines of the Anabaptist vision, I will suggest how that vision of solidarity with Christ and radical discipleship illuminates the true meaning of our own church's special mission, and helps establish a viable Adventist identity for today.

Adventists and the Radical Reformation

Seventh-day Adventists have for a long time said it was their particular task to complete the Reformation. In *The Shaking of Adventism*, Geoffrey Paxton took notice of this, quoting exemplary passages from the writings of Ellen White, Carlyle Haynes, LeRoy Edwin Froom, and Hans LaRondelle.¹ He did not, however, betray any awareness that the religious upheaval of the 16th century involved more than the dispute between Roman Catholicism and the Reformation of Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli. His claim appears to be this: the criterion of Adventist success in completing the Reformation is precise faithfulness to Luther's doctrine of justification by faith—and not only to his doctrine but also to his emphasis upon it, his belief that it is the “cardinal” Christian doctrine, the one on which we should “concentrate our attention.”²

If, however, we recall the beginnings of Adventism, we find impressive reasons for doubting this idea. Ellen White came out of the Methodist tradition,³ reflecting it in much of her writing. The most important leader of Methodism was John Wesley,

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whose characteristic emphasis was not justification by faith but moral growth through the transforming presence of Christ. He believed in justification by faith and his conversion occurred, indeed, under the influence of Martin Luther's writings; still, he thought it possible to cut Christianity's ethical nerve by overemphasizing the doctrine, something for which he criticized his friends the Moravians in Germany.⁴

Besides Methodism, another pivotal influence upon the Adventist conception of the Gospel, mediated through the church's other most important founding teacher, William Miller, was the English and American Baptist tradition. In this tradition, too, we find not only points of agreement with Luther, but also emphases substantially different from his. Shaped in part by Calvinism and even Methodism, the Baptist tradition also reflects the influence of Anabaptism.⁵ This by itself would justify attending to Anabaptism as a way of enhancing our understanding of the Adventist heritage.

But in addition, historians have come to believe that both Methodism and Baptism belong to a distinctive type of Christianity, profoundly different not only from Roman Catholicism but also from the "magisterial state-church" religion of Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Anglicanism.⁶ This is the "believers' church," or "sectarian," or "radical Protestant" type of Christianity, and though it is anticipated by such medieval sects as the Waldenses and the Czech Unity of Brethren, many 20th century historians believe it was with the appearance of the Anabaptists in the 16th century that this type of Christianity actually began.⁷

Anabaptism, then, is the founding movement among the many movements that make up the radical Protestant tradition. More than Lutheranism or Calvinism, it is the radical Protestant tradition that acquaints us with the Methodist and Baptist pioneers of the Adventist way. This radical Protestantism is what we should especially attend to as we try to faithfully fulfill the promise of the Reformation.

If Geoffrey Paxton did not consider this, it is due partly to the fact that although our pioneers did identify Adventism with groups that are considered part of radical protestantism, they did not specifically mention one of its largest components. The index to Ellen White's writings contains no reference to Anabaptism. What helps to explain this, perhaps, is that in the age of our pioneers, Anabaptism received extremely unsympathetic treatment from historians, largely because of the immense influence of the Zwingli reformer Henry Bullinger, whose account of Anabaptism traced its origin back to the (widely despised) Zwickaw prophets and ultimately Satan himself.⁸ We now know that the first of these claims (at least!) is false.⁹ We are able to benefit from 20th century research into Anabaptism that has led to a thorough reassessment of its history and character as well as its relation to later religious movements. What our pioneers could not know and Geoffrey Paxton apparently overlooked is available for us to know; important because in these days we are groping, all of us, for a renewal of our identity as Adventists.

The Anabaptist Ethos

We may turn now to the story and ethos of those most important of the radical reformers, the Anabaptists. The story began in Switzerland, though beginnings more or less independent of this one occurred later, in southern Germany and in the Netherlands.¹⁰ A brief narrative of the first of these beginnings will provide us with a minimal sense, at least, of the type of conflict out of which the Anabaptist vision grew.

In 1519, Ulrich Zwingli came to the Zurich Cathedral and began preaching straight through the New Testament. Focusing on ethical questions, not as Luther did, on questions of personal salvation,¹¹ he sought to conform church practice with the

Scriptural pattern. But when the city council, which had to this point supported him, refused for political reasons to let him celebrate Communion in a new way—as demanded, he thought, by the Bible—Zwingli accepted its decision, believing that patient education would eventually change the council's mind.

In this he betrayed his acceptance of the medieval pattern of union between church and state. Some of his followers thought, however, that he had “cast down” the Word of God and “brought it into captivity.”¹² These dissidents began to meet for Bible study and to discuss their differences with Zwingli. They soon were reflecting on what a true church should be like, emphasizing the Lordship of Christ and the need for a return to apostolic ways. On January 21, 1525, despite a council decree passed that very day banning independent Bible study groups, a dozen or so of them gathered in a Zurich house. Before the evening was through, there was a baptism—of the adults who were there, not of infants. In that day and place, this signaled a radical denial of Zwingli's state-church conception and an affirmation that loyalty to Christ may mean opposition to the magistrates. Not only was this a break with their teacher, but also with the whole “magisterial Reformation,” as the movement of Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli has come to be known. All these Reformers held on to the medieval Catholic idea that church and government should be linked together. The Anabaptists, or “rebaptizers”—the name was at first a term of derision—said No.

From the day of its birth, Anabaptism was a missionary movement; soon the first Anabaptist fellowship grew up in a nearby town and from there spread further. Government authorities took umbrage at this and began persecuting Anabaptists. When imprisonment proved no deterrent to the movement, they resorted to capital punishment, killing many of early Anabaptism's finest leaders. To Anabaptists, however, the costliness of their mission was no surprise, but rather a

part of their distinctive outlook. We may turn now in some detail to the main features of this outlook, remembering that our precise aim here is to illuminate Adventism through the Anabaptist element of our heritage.

The phrase “solidarity with Christ” has been suggested as the key to the various strands of Anabaptist dissent from the mag-

True solidarity with Christ, true witness to Christ, meant obeying his command to resist no evil with the sword. Since it was characteristic of the state to rely upon the sword, the church had no business being its partner.

isterial Reformation.¹³ In fact, the phrase is an apt *summary* of Anabaptist conviction. We begin by considering the movement's conception of Christ. Here, as in other doctrines, Anabaptist writers did not display sheer uniformity of opinion; still, we may with minimal oversimplification sum up their position as follows: *Christ is the Jesus of the Bible story now exalted, now the Lord and Liberator of his people; he is embodied on earth in his church; he will soon complete his victory over evil through a final apocalyptic transformation of the world.*¹⁴ Consider now the idea of solidarity. The qualities it suggests—trust, loyalty, likemindedness, union, shared life—are precisely the marks, according to Anabaptism, of a proper relationship between Christians and the Christ.¹⁵ If we understand the term Christ as these dissenters did, the phrase “solidarity with Christ” really does epitomize their outlook; the main features of that outlook turn out, indeed, to be ramifications of this single, summarizing motif. Moreover, as readers familiar with Adventism will note, they also bear striking resemblance to the convictions Adventists grow up with. This is what we would expect, of

course, if Adventists are really inheritors of the Anabaptist way.

1) *Discipleship*. At the center of Anabaptist conviction was the idea of discipleship. This meant, on the one hand, radical identification with the story of Jesus—the story of his people, of his own career on earth, of the first years of the church that rose up in response to his resurrection. Thus, as is often noted in recent scholarship,¹⁶ the Anabaptists took Scripture to be the ultimate

In trying to establish a viable Adventist identity for today, nothing can matter more, surely, than acknowledging that no person but Christ, whether Moses or Luther or Ellen White, is the center of our life; our proper business is to be in solidarity with him.

authority for Christian existence. In this they were like the other Protestant reformers, but with the difference that they applied their biblicism in a more radical way. Luther doubted whether Scripture supports the practise of infant baptism, yet held on to it still. A leading Anabaptist, on the contrary, called for discarding “the old ordinances of Antichrist” and holding “to the Word of God alone” for guidance.¹⁷ On the issue of the Lord’s supper, Zwingli, as we have seen, subordinated the Bible to the decision of the city council; Anabaptists said no authority but Scripture could be the norm for Christian practise.¹⁸

For Anabaptists, the culmination of the Bible story was Jesus Christ, and it was he, within all of Scripture, whose authority was supreme.¹⁹ Thus one Anabaptist could say that the “content of the whole Scripture is briefly summarized in this: honour and fear God the almighty in Christ his Son.”²⁰

The other side of discipleship was the actual obedience of Christ, the actual fol-

lowing of his example.²¹ Anabaptists criticized Luther for playing down the necessity of moral reformation among Christ’s followers.²² True Christians, they said, are “regulated and ruled” by Christ, seeking “to fulfill his whole will and his commandments.”²³

2) *New Life*. With discipleship we may match another crucial feature of Anabaptist solidarity with Christ, and that is the experience of new life in Christ. Unlike Luther, who began with a crushing awareness of being a lost sinner, the Anabaptists seem not to have been particularly bothered with feelings of guilt²⁴; what galvanized them was the liberating experience of Christ now renewing their lives. In his work on earth, Jesus overcame the devil²⁵ and through the Spirit he now overcomes the devil in his followers as well, delivers them, and sets them free so that they may be of the same mind and character as he.²⁶ People who do not exhibit the fruits of Christ’s liberating power cannot be said to have genuine faith. The Spirit, said Hans Denck, “equips and arms the elect with the mind and thoughts of Christ.” Then he added: “For whoever believes that Christ has liberated him from sin can no longer be the slave of sin. But if we continue in the old life we do not truly believe. . . .”²⁷

Here, solidarity with Christ means more than commitment to obedience; it means receiving from Christ the power to obey. In Christ “who strengthens us” we are able to live the “way of righteousness,” wrote Bernhard Rothmann, but without him “we can do nothing.”²⁸ Some took the theme of new life in Christ to the point of claiming they were without sin²⁹; most made no such claim. What no Anabaptist could countenance, though, was the idea, attributed by them to the magisterial reformers, that impenitent, unchanged persons could be called Christians and remain members of the church.³⁰ No Christians are perfect as Christ was, said Hans Denck, but if they are true Christians they do “seek exactly the perfection which Christ never lost”—though the

seeking, paradoxically, is itself a gift from Christ.³¹

3) *Witness*. A main element in the new life of discipleship, according to Anabaptists, was witness. For these Reformation radicals (in contrast to their magisterial counterparts), the command of Jesus to go, teach, and baptize was addressed *to them*, and not to their leaders only but to every believer.³² They were all to shed their light; together, as the church of Christ, they were to be “a lantern of righteousness” so that human beings everywhere might “learn to see and know the way of life” and “all war and unrighteousness” might come to an end.³³

Witness was witness to *Christ*, witness by *obedient disciples*, and this meant acknowledgment that the church’s way of life might differ sharply from the way of life dominant in surrounding society. Schooled in the teachings of the Gospels, Anabaptists emphasized the contrast between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness, and urged that the values of the former put the true Christian profoundly at odds with the values of the latter.³⁴ Solidarity with Christ meant nonconformity, separation from the world.

In line with this, and as part of their understanding of witness, Anabaptists rejected the notion, typical in their day, of the church as the nation at prayer. The medieval idea that church and state are a socio-political unity remained alive in the thinking of Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin (and even some Anabaptists)³⁵; but Anabaptists in general anathematized it.³⁶ It presupposed that everyone was Christian, despite the scriptural doctrine of the two kingdoms; and it required the members of the church to compromise their allegiance to Christ.

A symbol of such compromise, and key illustration of it, was for Anabaptists the Christian use of the sword. The link between church and state had made church members into soldiers. But the way of Jesus was the way of peace, its weapons, as Menno Simons wrote, “not swords and spears, but

patience, silence, and hope, and the Word of God.”³⁷ True solidarity with Christ, true witness to Christ, meant obeying his command to resist no evil with the sword.³⁸ Since it was characteristic of the state to rely upon the sword, the church had no business being its partner.³⁹

It was dangerous making such a witness, and in the Anabaptist idea of solidarity with Christ this was recognized. Jesus suffered torture and death and so, Anabaptists believed, may his disciples. The enemies of God’s kingdom may be armed with fire and steel, but true disciples do not shrink back. As one Anabaptist martyr said, Christ’s sheep “hear his voice and follow him whithersoever he goes.”⁴⁰ They follow him, moreover, not only in going where he goes but also in forgiving as he forgives. They forgive even their persecutors, as Christ did. And this, said Menno Simons, is *how* they “conquer their fate, their opposition.”⁴¹

4) *Community*. Another main feature of Anabaptist solidarity with Christ was the shared life of the community which is now his body on earth. This community, the church, was to Anabaptists, as their adult baptism symbolized, a voluntary fellowship of those who had freely consented not only to follow Christ but also to share the joys and sorrows of faithful witness. The rite of the Lord’s Supper, as they understood it, likewise underscored this conviction. It was “a sign of the brotherly love to which we are obliged,” an “expression of fellowship.” No one could participate who was unwilling “to live and suffer for the sake of Christ and the brethren, of the head and the members.”⁴² To belong to the church was to be in solidarity with one another, to be concerned for one another.

One meaning of such solidarity was mutual aid. Members of the community were to be concerned about the needs of one another. They were to see themselves not as “lords” of their possessions but as “stewards and distributors.”⁴³ In addition to concern with the physical well-being of the community, however, they were to show con-

cern for its spiritual well-being. Solidarity with Christ's body meant not only mutual aid, but also mutual discipline and forgiveness. The brother or sister who sins openly, said the Anabaptists, must be reprov'd, or even, if resolutely unrepentant, excluded from the community. Discipline in whatever form, however, was to be redemptive. Whoever repented, no matter how serious his offense, was to be forgiven and received by the church "as a returning, beloved brother or sister."⁴⁴ The fundamental thing was to give mutual support to one another in Christian life and witness.

5) *Apocalyptic consciousness.* As we saw earlier, for Anabaptists solidarity with Christ meant identifying with his story. In this story we find a vivid sense of coming apocalyptic transformation. We find the themes of urgency, of judgment on the present age, of hope rooted in the trust of God. These same themes appear importantly in Anabaptist writings. One writer said that since the "day of the Lord is nearer to us than we expect" his followers should prepare themselves "in daily worship, piety, and the fear of God."⁴⁵ Menno Simons said the rulers and institutions of the present age would soon appear as "earth, dust, wind, and smoke."⁴⁶ Being in solidarity with Christ meant sharing his heightened sense of eschatology, and this, indeed, was another main element of the Anabaptist outlook.⁴⁷

Our sketch of Anabaptism has shown its emphasis on discipleship, new life, witness, community, and apocalyptic eschatology. We may note finally that in all of this, Anabaptists believed they were recalling the vision of the apostles. With the idea of church and society as one—an idea dominant, they believed, since the time of Constantine⁴⁸—Christianity had fallen from the apostolic standard. In saying that the true church lives out today the way and mission of the apostolic church, they were making, they said, "a new beginning upon the rule from which others had departed."⁴⁹

Radical Reformers and Adventist Identity

I have argued that in fact the radical reformers, particularly the Anabaptists, are the Reformation exemplars of our type of Christianity. An appreciation of this fact can help us reshape our vision and at the same time keep us faithful to our heritage. The idea is not, it must be emphasized, that 16th century Anabaptism is the final criterion of Adventism. I would say (in the spirit of Anabaptism itself) that this role is reserved exclusively for Jesus Christ. But it would be odd indeed to suppose that we are called to complete the Reformation while failing to acknowledge the authority of that strand of the Reformation that pioneered our way of life. We may recognize that Anabaptism supports the truth we know and brings out the truth we have forgotten or suppressed, while at the same time we recognize that Anabaptism, too, has seen through a glass darkly and must be subject to the higher authority of Christ.

Overall, my point is that remembering these pioneers can make us as Adventists unabashed in our devotion to Christ. In trying to establish a viable Adventist identity for today, nothing can matter more, surely, than acknowledging that no person but Christ, whether Moses or Luther or Ellen White, is the center of our life. Christ and Christ alone is the center; our proper business is to be in solidarity with him.

But this by itself may seem ordinary, hardly the basis for a special Christian movement with a special sense of destiny. Anabaptism helps, however, by setting before us a *distinctive and radical interpretation of devotion to Christ*. In this view, true devotion requires, first of all, discipleship: an acknowledgment that true Christian existence is determined by the Jesus story, a resolve to follow the pathway of the Christ. True devotion requires, too, that we acknowledge and proclaim the transformative

power of the indwelling Christ. The memory of Anabaptism can give us the courage to strike a different emphasis from Luther, to stress the reality of new life in Christ as strongly as we affirm the truth of justification by faith. Until the scriptural witness to Christ persuades us to think otherwise, we may regard our church's emphasis on sanctification as a thing not to be ashamed of, but to vigorously uphold.

Since the time of J. N. Andrews, we have seen ourselves as a missionary movement. In Anabaptism we find historical precedent for faithful lives serving as missionary witness—a witness to the world within the Christian churches as well as the world outside it. We find that we are not mere upstarts in thinking God uses a special people to call others, including other Christians, into transforming our entire lives into radical faithfulness to God. In doing so we belong to a tradition; we preserve a heritage. Knowledge of this fact can reinforce our commitment to this kind of witness.

More than supporting us in witness, however, Anabaptism summons us to a deeper understanding of it. We have always said Christ's witnesses are separate from the world; Anabaptists remind us that this is not a cosmetic matter (as when it is defined, say, in terms of wedding bands), but a matter of courageous dissent from the idolatries of nation and self, of violence and greed. The pioneers of our way call us to a recognition of the contrast between church and world. They challenge us to ponder whether we truly bear the message of the Three Angels if we do not reject violence for peace and selfishness for brotherhood, and if we do not so interpret peace and brotherhood as to show unmistakably the difference between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness.

There are two ways in which we can make this sort of witness; both reflect the Anabaptist heritage and both are present, if not fully

developed, in contemporary Adventism. Consider first non-violence: Christ's weapons, said Menno Simons, are not swords and spears but patience, hope, and the Word of God. For the most part, our own fathers and grandfathers refused to bear arms in the world wars. In light of this, is the time not here for non-violence to become a central motif of Adventist identity? Are we faithful to our own past if we avoid the simple question, Can disciples ever kill or prepare to kill? This is a complex matter and there is no easy answer. However, we are unfaithful to our heritage if we do not justify our conclusions by reference to Jesus Christ and acknowledge that the way to which he calls us is a narrow way. In an age of violence—an age, indeed, of potential nuclear holocaust—we veer toward irrelevance so long as we keep the issue of nonviolence in the background.

A second way to sharpen our witness is through the style of our lives together. True Christians live and even suffer for one another, the Anabaptists said; they build up a kind of family solidarity. Adventists today likewise have a strong sense of church as family, which suggests another motif for a viable Adventist identity, the motif of authentic Christian community. At the very forefront of our consciousness should be this task: exemplifying in our communal existence, patterns of social and economic life that are faithful to the way of Christ. In our relations as male and female, black and white, ordained and unordained, do we exhibit harmonious equality or do we erect dividing walls of hostility? Do our pay scales for the church-employed—in health, in education, in ministry—express mutual solidarity or display the world's concern with status and advantage? In our treatment of those who sin, do we reprove in love and forgive in love, or are we reproachful and conceited? Seen with an Anabaptist perspective, the ideals these questions evoke are not merely duties; they are the stuff of witness. They are at the center of Christian identity because true followers of Christ

transform surrounding culture not through words alone but through example; in their life together they are a “lantern of righteousness” showing the world the way to the Kingdom.

This takes us to another insight about Christian witness. Anabaptists rejected individualism. Christian faith was no private thing; it involved a common life. Furthermore, it touched on the entire fabric of human culture. In line with this, Anabaptists believed that true Christian witness, true Christian evangelism, confronts not only individuals but also nations and institutions. Witness must deal with public life and its goal must be the transformation of all society. The church is an exemplary community precisely in order to heal the nations, to be God’s agent in bringing injustice and war to an end. From this idea can we not better apprehend our own special calling? As inheritors of the Anabaptist way, are we not given the role of transformative minority in human culture? Is this not, perhaps, what it really is to be a remnant people, a people called out from Babylon to the way of the cross?

The radical Protestant element in our past teaches us this about Adventist identity: that through the witness and example of *radical discipleship* we are to transform human consciousness and thus transform society, and that in this special calling we are to address the other churches as well as the great mass of unbelievers. This advances the usual

conception of Adventist identity—the one implicit, say, in traditional evangelism—by linking it unmistakably with the task of social transformation. We remain faithful to the usual conception by acknowledging the truth of radical obedience and separation from the world.

Even if we were to entertain a sense of high calling such as this, we would still, no doubt, be tempted to sidle up to the world or to lose hope in the possibility of change. But that is where a final element of the Anabaptist heritage within radical Protestantism comes into play: the sense of coming apocalyptic transformation. We today are familiar with apocalyptic consciousness; it is central in Adventism as it was central in Adventism’s Reformation predecessors. The coming apocalypse keeps us always mindful of divine judgment on the present age, and always hopeful that, by whatever miracle, a new heaven and a new earth will truly come and our witness will truly matter.

In these ways then, re-appropriating our radical Protestant heritage helps us become what we feel called to become—a community truly faithful to God, a remnant making a new beginning upon a vision from which others have departed. To the degree that we feel a kinship at all with the Anabaptists, we will be willing at least to lift up the Christ as the final measure of our thought. To do less would flout more than our radical Protestant tradition for it is the New Testament itself which declares that among all the prophets, Christ alone is the very image of the father, the very Word of God to all mankind.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Geoffrey Paxton, *The Shaking of Adventism* (Wilmington: Zenith Publishers, 1977), pp. 18–23.

2. Quoted from Luther’s “Sermons on the Gospel of St. John,” *ibid.*, p. 36. On this point see all of chaps. 1 and 2. Paxton invokes several quotations from Ellen White which he takes to support the view that the Gospel as interpreted by Luther is “the criterion of the movement itself” p. 28. The quotations

by no means prove this, and in view of the emphasis Ellen White puts on the new birth, obedience, sanctification, church-state separation and the like, the claim seems all the more to be a dubious one.

3. To be precise, the American Methodist tradition. Russell Staples of Andrews University has reminded me that American Methodism differs

substantively from its British counterpart, but not, I believe, in ways that would affect the point I am making here.

4. See John Dillenberger and Claude Welch, *Protestant Christianity: Interpreted Through Its Development* (New York: Scribner's, 1954), pp. 129–134, and Donald Durnbaugh, *The Believers' Church: The History and Character of Radical Protestantism* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), pp. 132–137.

5. Durnbaugh, *The Believers' Church*, pp. 97–106.

6. *Ibid.*, chap. 1.

7. Among them Roland Bainton, George H. Williams, and Peter Taylor Forsyth. *Ibid.*, pp. 18–22.

8. On Bullinger's influence and "tendentious historiography," see George H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982), pp. 848–852.

9. Durnbaugh, *The Believers' Church*, p. 67.

10. Klaus Depperman, Werner O. Paukull and James M. Stayer, "From Monogenesis to Polygenesis: The Historical Discussion of Anabaptist Origins," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, XLIX (April, 1975), pp. 83–121.

11. Durnbaugh, *The Believers' Church*, p. 68.

12. Conrad Grebel's words, quoted in Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, p. 96.

13. J. Denny Weaver, "Discipleship Redefined: Four Sixteenth Century Anabaptists," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, XVI (October, 1980), 255–279.

14. Hans Denck is a prominent Anabaptist whose discussion of the relation of Jesus and the Christ differs from what this summary suggests, but the practical effect of his arguments keep him well within the mainstream of Anabaptism. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 263–271. As backing for the summary I have given, notice these representative quotations, all from Walter Klaassen, ed., *Anabaptism in Outline: Selected Primary Sources* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1981):

Hans Schlaffer, responding to heresy with respect to the doctrine of Christ: "Concerning this I choose to remain with the Scriptures. The Word which was with God from the beginning has become flesh" pp. 24, 25.

Balthasar Hubmaier, addressing the "Lord Jesus Christ": "I believe and confess that you suffered under the judge Pontius Pilate, that you were crucified, dead, and buried" p. 25.

Peter Riedeman: "... we likewise confess him [Jesus] to be Lord; as, indeed, he truly is, for all power is given him by the Father, not only in heaven but also on earth and in the abyss. For this reason also all unclean spirits fear and tremble before him, for he has overcome and bound them, and taken from them their power and delivered and set free the prey, namely us, whom they had held captive in death" p. 31.

Hans Schlaffer: "The body of Christ is the faithful community of Christ" p. 196.

Jacob Hutter: "Be comforted, you chosen of the Lord, for the time of our deliverance is at hand. . . . For he who is to come will soon come in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory, the king and comfort of Israel. He will rescue, save and liberate his own and will give them a glorious crown that will never fade" p. 325.

Menno Simons: "Yes, dear brethren, the desirable day of your release is at hand. . . . Then shall all those who pursue us be as ashes under the soles of our feet and they shall acknowledge too late that emperor, king, duke, prince, crown, scepter, majesty, power, sword, and mandate, were nothing but earth, dust, wind, and smoke" p. 343.

15. Consider these quotations, again from Klaassen, ed., *Anabaptism in Outline*:

Hans Denck: "Faith is the obedience to God and the confidence in his promise through Jesus Christ" p. 46.

Peter Riedeman: "This Spirit of Christ which is promised and given to all believers makes them free from the law or power of sin, and plants them into Christ, makes them of his mind, yea, of his character and nature, so that they become one plant and one organism together with him. . . . Thus we are one substance, matter, essence, yea, one bread and body with him—he the head, but we all members one of the other" pp. 66, 67.

Bernhard Rothmann: "The true Christian congregation is a gathering large or small that is founded on Christ" and that "holds only to his words and seeks to fulfill his whole will and his commandments" p. 106.

16. See, e.g., John H. Yoder, "The Prophetic Dissent of Anabaptists," and John C. Wenger, "The Biblicism of Anabaptists," in Guy F. Hershberger, ed., *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1957).

17. Conrad Grebel, as quoted in Wenger, "The Biblicism of Anabaptists," pp. 171, 172.

18. See Yoder, "The Prophetic Dissent of Anabaptists," pp. 95, 96.

19. The Old Testament, said Hans Pfistermeyer, "has been fulfilled and explained by Christ. What Christ has explained and helped us to understand, I will adhere to, since it is the will of the heavenly Father." Quoted in Klaassen, ed., *Anabaptism in Outline*, p. 149.

20. Bernhard Rothmann, quoted *ibid.*, p. 150.

21. The terms "most often used" in Anabaptist writings were *Nachfolge* (discipleship) and *Gehorsam* (obedience), says Robert Friedmann, in "The Doctrine of the Two Worlds," in Hershberger, ed., *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision*, p. 115.

22. Hans Denck and Peter Riedeman, for ex-

ample. See Weaver, "Discipleship Redefined," p. 226, and Robert Friedmann, *The Theology of Anabaptism* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1973), p. 89. For a useful comparison of the Lutheran and Anabaptist perspectives on justification, see Hans J. Hillerbrand, "Anabaptism and the Reformation: Another Look," *Church History*, XXIX (1960), 404-423.

23. Remarks of Balthasar Hubmaier and Bernhard Rothmann, quoted in Klaassen, ed., *Anabaptism in Outline*, pp. 102, 106.

24. Friedmann, *Theology of Anabaptism*, p. 78; Hillerbrand, "Anabaptism and the Reformation," p. 412.

25. Anabaptist writings reflect what Gustaf Aulen calls the "classic view" of the atonement. For his famous typology of atonement doctrines, see *Christus Victor* (London: S.P.C.K., 1953).

26. See, for example, Riedeman's remarks in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, pp. 29, 31, 67.

27. Quoted in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, p. 86. Cf. the famous epigram of Dietrich Bonhoeffer: ". . . only he who believes is obedient, and only he who is obedient believes," in *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Macmillan, 1963), p. 69.

28. Quoted in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, p. 35.

29. See Hillerbrand, "Anabaptism and the Reformation," p. 416.

30. See Walter Klaassen, *Anabaptism: Neither Catholic nor Protestant* (Waterloo, Ontario: Conrad Press, 1973), pp. 28-35.

31. The quote, from Denck's essay on God and evil, appears in Angel M. Mergal and George H. Williams, eds., *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1957), p. 99. Weaver, in "Discipleship Redefined," says the Anabaptist account of discipleship and Christian freedom is a rendering of the Pauline paradox of grace. Denck himself reflects this in the essay quoted here, as, for instance, when he speaks of the "Christ whom no one may truly know unless he follow after him with his life" and then adds: "And no one may follow him except as he already knows him." *Ibid.*, p. 108. Also in Weaver, p. 267, whose more elegant translation I have used.

32. See, e.g., J. Lawrence Burkholder, "The Anabaptist Vision of Discipleship," in Hershberger, ed., *The Recovery of the Anabaptist vision*, p. 138.

33. The first two quoted phrases are from Peter Riedeman; the third from Jacob Hutter; quoted in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, pp. 112, 275.

34. Robert Friedmann, "The Doctrine of the Two Worlds," in Hershberger, ed., *Recovery*, pp. 105-118. In the covering letter of the 1527 Schleitheim Confession, Michael Sattler, explaining the document to his fellow Anabaptists, said its points and articles make known that "we who have assembled in the Lord at Schleitheim . . . have

been united to stand fast in the Lord as obedient children of God, sons and daughters, who have been and shall be separated from the world in all that we do and leave undone . . ." Quoted in John Yoder, *The Legacy of Michael Sattler* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1973), p. 35.

35. As witness the Munster debacle. On this, see George H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, pp. 362-368.

36. Walter Klaassen, "The Anabaptist Critique of Constantinian Christendom," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, LV (July, 1981), pp. 218-230.

37. Quoted in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, p. 280.

38. See, e.g., articles four and six of the Schleitheim Confession, in Yoder, *The Legacy of Michael Sattler*, pp. 37, 38.

39. Most Anabaptists (though not all) said, indeed, that no Christian could even be a magistrate. Some, such as Hans Denck, could imagine Christian service in government but doubted, given the attitudes of the world they knew, whether anyone so employed could "keep Christ as a Lord and master." Quoted in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, p. 250.

40. Anneken of Rotterdam, quoted in Burkholder, "The Anabaptist Vision of Discipleship," p. 146.

41. Quoted in Franklin Littell, *The Origins of Sectarian Protestantism* (New York: Macmillan, 1964), p. 134.

42. The first remark, by Hubmaier, is in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, p. 194; the next two, by Grebel, are in Mergal and Williams, *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*, p. 76.

43. So said Hubmaier, as quoted in Durnbaugh, *The Believers' Church*, p. 269. Hutterite Anabaptists actually repudiated private property and practised a kind of Christian communism. On this whole matter, see J. Winfield Fretz, "Brotherhood and the Economic Ethics of the Anabaptists," in Hershberger, ed., *Recovery*, pp. 196-199.

44. See, e.g., quotations in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, pp. 219, 221. In support of church discipline Anabaptists appealed to such passages as Mt. 18: 15-18, I Cor. 5:9-10 and Col. 3:16.

45. Quoted in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, p. 324.

46. Quoted *ibid.*, p. 343.

47. A few Anabaptists, notably those involved at Munster, embraced an eschatology of revolutionary violence. Most did not. Anabaptist hymns, to take one measure of popular piety, nowhere reflect the idea. Friedmann, *The Theology of Anabaptism*, p. 107.

48. Littell, *The Origins of Sectarian Protestantism*, pp. 61, 62.

49. Words of an unnamed Anabaptist at the 1538 Bern Colloquy, quoted in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, p. 100.

Covenant, Holy War, and Glory: Motifs in Adventist Identity

by Roy Branson

Therefore are they before the throne of God;
and serve him day and night within his temple;
and he who sits upon the throne will shelter them with
his presence
They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more;
the sun shall not strike them nor any scorching heat,
For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their
shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living
water; and God will wipe away every tear from
their eyes.

—Revelation 7:15–17

The Revelation to John is the climax to a symphony, a weaving together of themes sounded throughout the Bible. In a single passage divinity is a sacrificed lamb who shepherds the faithful, a triumphant lord who wipes away tears, a presence who shelters. Revelation resounds to the meanings evoked by the central events of Scripture. For example, Israel's encounter with God at Sinai leads Exodus to find different meanings of its significance than does Deuteronomy. In the New Testament Christ comes to us through the theologies of not one, but four gospels. Adventists, who have assumed the special vocation of responding

to apocalyptic literature such as Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation, should particularly appreciate the diverse motifs that reverberate through scripture.

Adventists can be grateful for the myriad types, symbols and metaphors which appear in the Bible. Not only has Adventism persisted for well over 100 years, but it ministers to widely diverse cultures. We must remain open to new messages, fresh articulations of our mission and identity.

Symbols and metaphors form themselves into fundamental patterns of meaning that have been described as motifs.¹ Such motifs have the power to capture not only our reason, but our imagination. Symbols and metaphors set within new horizons can gain fresh power.

So far, Adventists have understood themselves in terms of two motifs central to Scripture and Christian thought: covenant and holy war. Both are necessary, but appreciation of a third—glory—provides an additional context within which Adventists' self-understanding can be enriched. All three motifs are necessary. Glory is stressed in this essay because until now it has received little attention within Adventism, and because the motif of glory allows Adventists to respond in distinctive yet fresh ways to a fundamental problem of 20th

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century culture: the sense that God is absent, disengaged from our lives and the tragedies of our times.²

Covenant

Gerhard Hasel has reminded Adventists through his recent Sabbath School lessons and accompanying book, *Covenant of Blood*, that many biblical scholars agree that “the central idea of the Bible, both in the Old Testament and in the New, is the covenant.” The dean of the SDA Theological Seminary identifies covenant with law. “A covenantal relationship between the redeeming God and His redeemed people can only function on the basis of established norms, obligations, or stipulations—in short—the law.”³

Although the covenant at Sinai was more than a contract of “Ten Words,” it did establish a standard of acceptable behavior for relating to God and to other human beings. When Israel violated the prohibitions of the covenant, its prophets demanded that the community confess its faithlessness. The sacrificial system was a way of reminding Israel that it must recognize its guilt; that restitution, payment, sacrifice, and atonement must be made if Israel were to be restored to a covenant relationship.

Both evangelical and traditional Adventists agree that the sanctuary is a heavenly assize. They only differ as to whether such a judicial proceeding is necessary.

The mainstream of Western Christianity accepted the motif of covenant or law. Paul’s discussion in Romans and Galatians of law, transgression, guilt, grace, justification, and righteousness provided the terms for debates among Augustinians and Pelagians, Lutherans and Arminians, Old-Side

Calvinists and American frontier revivalists. All agreed that the issue above all is humanity violating God’s law, and Christ’s death provides the one necessary way for human beings to be pardoned and restored to a right relationship with God. Certainly Luther, with his preoccupation with guilt and forgiveness, ensured that Protestant Christianity would think and live within a forensic paradigm. For Western Christianity the church’s mission was to extend Christ’s work of salvation. The church offered individuals the promise and assurance of freedom from guilt through administering the sacraments, preaching the word, and in some cases, teaching an entire way of life.

Both evangelical and traditional Adventists agree that the sanctuary is a heavenly assize, where individual guilt or innocence is being finally declared. Both sides clash over the identity of the Seventh-day Adventist church, but both groups have their divergent views in the language of covenant and law. They only differ as to whether such a judicial proceeding is necessary. Evangelical Adventists believe that at the cross Christ made the all-sufficient payment for sin for all who have faith in him. These Adventists object to the idea of further investigation in a heavenly courtroom because they think it transforms the Christian’s pardon into a suspended sentence, with assurance of forgiveness awaiting the close of probation. Traditional Adventists believe that the activity in the heavenly sanctuary is a necessary extension of the saving work of Christ. The risen Christ remains a justifier of the guilty from the penalties of the law. But both groups of Adventists view the sanctuary within a legal motif—what Gerhard Hasel repeatedly describes as the “judicial-redemptive-cleansing activity in the heavenly sanctuary.”⁴

Within the covenant motif the Sabbath becomes the symbol of the entire decalogue. Some evangelical Adventists think traditionalists observe the Sabbath in order to ensure salvation through obedience to the law. Since evangelicals consider Christ’s

death as the only payment necessary and sufficient to provide salvation, many have stopped observing the Sabbath, which they regard as the epitome of law. Even Adventists careful not to describe observance of the Sabbath as a means to salvation see its observance as a necessary expression of the forgiven person's gratitude for escaping condemnation for violation of the covenant.

Ellen White's writings are cited by both those who wish to stress the law as standard and those who see it as also outlining the way to attain perfection. Graham Maxwell and Herbert Douglass take almost as a credo a passage from *Christ's Object Lessons*: "Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own."⁵ On the other hand, Edward Heppenstall, for many years the chairman of the theology department at the SDA Theological Seminary and a proponent of righteousness by faith many years before Desmond Ford and Robert Brinsmead made a similar emphasis, cites passage after passage in Ellen White to support his assertion that "sinless perfection is God's ideal . . . this will be realized with the return of Christ, but not before."⁶ Brinsmead sadly concludes that "Mrs. White's great emphasis was sanctification," and that she was "unsurpassed as a disciplinary agent."⁷

Those concerned with law—either conforming to it or being freed from its condemnation—consider more than Ellen White's explicit comments on sin, grace, and perfection. They respond with pleasure or irritation to the casuist of the *Testimonies to the Church* and the compilations, full of admonitions as to how law-abiding members should order their lives in a variety of practical spheres. In a larger sense they are grateful or resentful of an Ellen White whose writings have acted as a standard for all Adventist belief and behavior.

Perhaps the clearest conflict regarding the identity of Adventism comes over the Second Coming. Even here, a covenantal, legal paradigm lies behind the protagonists. Maxwell, a professor of New Testament at Loma Linda University, in his latest book, says God is waiting to return until he has a people whose faith makes them "perfectly safe to save," because "the plan of salvation offers more than just forgiveness. Heaven is not to be peopled with pardoned criminals but transformed saints." He thinks "it is the mission of the Christian church to help produce such people."⁸

Herbert Douglass, the book editor of Pacific Press, provides the strongest claims for the moral condition of Adventism being the key to concluding salvation history. He insists that Christ's Second Coming is delayed until "for the first time in this world's history God will be able to point to his church and say without embarrassment: 'Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus,'" (Rev. 14:12, KJV).⁹ He is confident that "God does expect perfection of character in his peo-

Perhaps the clearest conflict regarding the identity of Adventism comes over the Second Coming.

ple—a demonstration that some generation of latter-day Christians will reveal before Jesus returns."¹⁰

Robert Brinsmead, the editor of *Verdict* magazine, regards the position articulated by Maxwell and Douglass as the position of the entire denomination, saying flatly that "Adventists have taught that the end of the world depends on their achieving perfect piety," and that the denomination is guilty of "ecclesiolatry."¹¹ His demand that assurance of salvation from the condemnation of the law rests on the completed, past act of Christ empties the future of much of its meaning and the church of any eschatological mission. "In Jesus Christ

the end of the world has already arrived. The end-time events, such as judgment, resurrection, the manifestation of God's wrath, the new creation and the destruction of sin and death, have already taken place in Christ."¹² A disturbing number of Adventists have accepted the idea that the Adventist church either finds its identity by guaranteeing a redemptive end to human history (through its members' perfect observance of the standards of the covenant), or that it has no identity. They have subsequently become convinced that Christ, not the Seventh-day Adventist Church, insures his Second Coming, and have concluded with Brinsmead (even though many keep their names on Adventist church rolls) that a "powerful confrontation of the gospel with Adventism is really 'the end of Adventism.'"¹³

The covenant motif has deservedly been a central way for the Bible to understand the relationship of God to man. It conveys the importance of persons-in-relation. It helps us to know that human actions are signifi-

Practically that means that Adventists must first spend considerable time convincing others that they are sinful so they can then be grateful for the grace that Christianity provides.

cant—ultimately so, and yet it also is realistic about the gap between standard and actual behavior. Evil is always a tangible reality within this motif, but so also is the divine response. One source of its power, particularly in the Lutheran Reformation version, is the fact that the one essential event necessary for salvation has already taken place.

This motif is undoubtedly necessary, but is not sufficient. Particularly Lutheran interpretations stressing covenant as law too easily limit the work of God to salvation of individuals. In certain forms, at least, the

covenant motif can drain the future of significance. Not only is it true that within the Adventist community disagreements concerning this motif are so profound that the motif has limited usefulness in bringing healing, but the motif also has limited potency in the present culture. The covenant and law can be significant to those who feel their greatest need is relief from a sense of personal guilt. But many in our culture, while acknowledging the existence of evil, do not feel personal guilt for its persistence. Practically, that means that Adventists must first spend considerable time convincing others that they are sinful so they can then be grateful for the grace that Christianity provides.

Holy War

An Annual Council of the General Conference a few years ago adopted a document called "Evangelism and Finishing God's Work." It was widely distributed and helped form the context for the denomination's emphasis on the church growth movement, the adoption of the faith-action-advance program in North America, and the launching by the world church of the One Thousand Days of Reaping. Very martial language is used in the statement:

Our mission and message are to be the decisive factors in God's eternal judgment of earth's millions before the final disposal of Satan and sin. . . . We are the one remaining challenge to antichrist, and in earth's last generation this church will be forced to stand against hell's legions, yet, in spite of all opposition, come through victoriously. When Jesus declared that all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth, He meant that no enemy could possibly stand in the way of God's conquering church.¹⁴

Rather than a group persistently reforming its behavior, or a community grateful for having their sins forgiven, the church is described as an army vanquishing powerful enemies, such as Satan and the "sinful order of things." This statement thrusts Adventists into the midst of the "Conflict of the Ages," "The Great Controversy Between God and Satan."

Some biblical students believe that the motif of holy war is as ancient as that of covenant. The holy war *par excellence* is the exodus from Egypt. In some Deuteronomic references to the exodus as a war, the covenant is not even mentioned. In these passages, God's authority is not expressed in His establishing a covenant, but in reaching out with "a strong hand and outstretched arm" to free Israel from bondage and oppression. (Deut. 7:16–26; cf. Deut. 9:1–6; 31:3–6, 7–8).¹⁵ Throughout the rest of the Old Testament, triumph in this ongoing holy war does not come from the power of the chosen people, but the authority of Yahweh over Israel's tribal enemies or the hosts of demonic powers described in the apocalyptic literature (Numbers 21:21–35; 31:1–12; Joshua 6:1–2; 8:1–29; 10).¹⁵

The New Testament understands Christ's activity not only within the motif of covenant and law, but also that of cosmic conflict. The cross is not only perceived as Christ meeting the demand of justice on our behalf, but in the Gospel of John the cross is a triumph (John 12:31–32). Paul says that at the cross Christ "disarmed the principalities and powers and made a public example of them triumphing over them in him" (Col. 2:15).

More than almost any other text in the New Testament, the early Christian Fathers quoted Hebrews 2:14, 15, depicting Christ as a mighty warrior vanquishing bondage, death, and the devil.

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subjected to lifelong bondage.

For Irenaeus and other Church Fathers, the greatest evil was not sin—violation of the covenant—but death. For them, the greatness of God in Christ was not primarily Christ's reassurance that because of his accepting the penalty for sin, humans can be freed from a sense of guilt; for the Eastern Church, the good news of the Gospel is that death has been defeated.¹⁶

Among Christians who regard Christ as *Christus Victor*, as the savior of life, the cross is a victory because it can be perceived through the triumph of the resurrection.¹⁷

Others, who think that the church should confront the still-rebellious powers and institutions, stress the Ellen White who acted and wrote on behalf of the urban poor, rural blacks and the exploited.

When the greatest gift of God is not a declaration of innocence, but life, Christ's incarnation and resurrection are at least as important as the cross. Indeed, the entire plan of salvation is not depicted so much as the passage from innocence to guilt to innocence restored, as the movement from life to death to life. Christians who understand themselves to be in a cosmic conflict are confronted with the question of what role the church plays in the struggle. Some Christians have been so conscious that "the rulers of this age are doomed to pass away" (I Cor. 2:6), that they have withdrawn from the theater of combat into havens of worship and piety.¹⁸ Like some of the early Mennonites and the Amish, they have concluded that they should rely on the Lord of Hosts to determine history, and retreated from public life. Other Christians have entered the world to extend Christ's decisive victory. They have actively engaged the thrones, principalities, and authorities that the New Testament period thought were both visible and invisible, natural and supernatural. They have enlisted in that enduring war which the Revelator says "arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon" (Rev. 13:7).

There were, of course, the crusades. Other smaller, radical movements during the Middle Ages, the Reformation and later, filled with the apocalyptic imagery of holy war, actively pursued the millenium. Some

even attempted to establish the kingdom of God by force; for example, the followers of Thomas Muntzer in 16th century Germany and the Ranters during the 17th century English Civil War.¹⁹

At first, Adventists did not participate in the affairs of society. There was no time. Even after 1844, they continued to think and act like Millerites, expecting the Lord to come so soon that even marriage was an act of faithlessness.²⁰ Then, like the early Christian Church, the Adventists had to decide how they would understand their mission in the days that stretched before them.²¹ The continued delay of the *parousia* has created tensions as to how to understand some of the distinctive affirmations of Adventism within an apocalyptic holy war motif.

Adventists have traditionally placed the Sabbath within an apocalyptic framework by expecting it to mark the imminence of the Second Coming. If civil freedom to observe the Sabbath is lost, time is very short. More recently, Adventist theologians like Neils-Erik Andreasen, Samuele Bacchiocchi and others have seen the Sabbath and its sister institutions of the Sabbatical year and Year of Jubilee, as symbols of not only religious freedom for Adventists, but civil and economic freedom and justice in society.²²

Either understanding of the Sabbath within the holy war motif directs attention away from personal morality to the sweep of God's actions in the world and history. But the more recent, expanded understanding enlarges the Sabbath, making it a symbol of God's activity in bringing freedom and justice to all humanity. As Neils-Erik Andreasen says, "The Sabbath, then, faithfully protects man from totalitarianism of all kinds, whatever the source."²³

Within the holy war motif, the sanctuary is not so much a law court as the place to which the Christ, the victorious Lord, ascended "when God raised him from the dead and made him sit at his right hand, in the

heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion" (Eph. 1:20–21). As Ellen White puts it, "The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ's work in behalf of men."²⁴ Indeed it is from

The great contribution of the holy war motif is to expand the sphere of God's activity: God saves the entire world and creation is included in redemption.

the sanctuary-temple-palace that the warfare against the legions of evil, human and superhuman, proceeds. From his place in heaven, the risen Christ is a triumphant Lord actively extending his rulership of creation, not pouring over the moral condition of each person. As throughout the conflict motif, the emphasis remains on God's action, not humanity's subjective condition.

Ellen White, within this motif, is not sought so much for her practical advice on daily living as for her perspectives on the Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan. Some seek her outlines of the future as reassurance that God's final consummation is certain and imminent. The fact that the Spirit of Prophecy is in our midst is assurance that Adventists are part of the victorious remnant in the conflict of the ages.

Others, who think that the church should do more than chart the progress of the cosmic battle, that the church should confront the still-rebellious powers and institutions, stress the Ellen White who acted and wrote on behalf of the urban poor, rural blacks and the exploited.²⁵

As for the mission of the church, Adventists have not been certain whether the publishing, educational, and medical institutions which they came to develop should be designed for retreat from this conflict between good and evil or training grounds to

prepare agents to penetrate and change organizations guilty of institutional evil.²⁶

In the "Evangelism and Finishing God's Work" document, the church is not described as preoccupied with its relationship to law but portrayed as aggressively involved in the Great Controversy: "Today's Adventist generation that will arise and finish God's work and put an end to the tragedy of our Lord's delay." But the involvement is quite specific—proclamation. "'Finishing the Work' means one thing: communicating God's message through the power and ministry of the Holy Spirit to all of earth's population so that God can proclaim his work finished. When this happens, Jesus will come."²⁷

A more expansive view of the role of the Adventist church in the Great Controversy has been increasingly articulated. Jack Provonsa, a professor of Christian ethics at Loma Linda University, thinks that the cosmic conflict demands that the Adventist church be a part of a prophetic minority that, like the prophets, is deeply disturbed by hypocrisy and injustice. "A prophetic movement, insofar as it is true to its divine

justice, in the alleviation of hunger and the conquest of disease."²⁹ Since the Adventist denomination is not better than its Lord, it should work, "if necessary, in revolutionary ways for the promotion of peace, justice, freedom and righteousness. Was not Christ's action scandalous because of his attacks on the structures of his society which were the instruments of oppression and dehumanization?"³⁰

The great contribution of the holy war motif is to expand the sphere of God's activity. He is active not only in rescuing individuals or even particular communities. God saves the entire world. Creation is included in redemption. Life itself is saved from that powerful enemy death. The triumph of Christ is so encompassing it even affects the institutional shape life takes in the world.

No matter how engrossed people are in urban, technological society, they sense the church is responding to a universal anxiety when the church offers an answer to death. Many who are puzzled by frenzies over guilt, fear death.

Furthermore, a motif like holy war, that conveys a basic optimism about the future, addresses a concern felt particularly acutely in our time—the threat to survival of the race from science and technology. If that optimism about ultimate human destiny were to motivate altruistic efforts to engage powers exploiting the weak, the church would appeal to some now cynical about religion.

Although this motif is necessary, it too is not sufficient. Any attempt to draw Adventist identity solely from the future, from a culmination of a holy war or great controversy, increasingly loses its plausibility and effectiveness.

Glory

If one asks a cross-section of Adventist friends what in either Adventist belief or practice means most to them, a large num-

Rather than a casuist or a seer predicting details of future battles in the Great Controversy, Ellen White could be Adventism's pillar of fire.

calling, may function as a catalyst for bringing about that final polarization which constitutes the climax of the Great Controversy."²⁸

In terms that are reminiscent of liberation theology, which itself draws on the imagery of conflict, Walter Douglas, a professor of church history and missions at the SDA Theological Seminary, challenged the Seventh-day Adventist Church in an address at the 1980 General Conference to become involved "in the struggle for freedom and

ber will say the experience of the Sabbath. Even those angry at administrative actions or disturbed by recent theological debates still warm to the Sabbath. During the last four or five years, several books on Adventist theology of the Sabbath have appeared. That material, together with a barely emerging literature of creative theology of the sanctuary,³¹ suggests that Adventists have overlooked a motif central to biblical faith. While not sufficient, it both highlights elements distinctive to Adventists and appeals to persons in modern culture typically beyond the reach of Adventism.

The Sabbath can be regarded as a provision in the covenant entered into at Sinai. It can also be a memorial of the redeeming action of God in the holy war of the Exodus.

The sanctuary, the Sabbath, and Ellen White's visions are means by which we can participate now in the reality to which they point—God's presence. They are not means to make men holy, but paths to the holy.

Or, as in many of the recent Adventist writings on the Sabbath, it can be a time to feel God's presence, to encounter his glory; "the glory of Yahweh" that settled on Mount Sinai (Exodus 24:16, 17). Fritz Guy, at the SDA Theological Seminary, describes the Sabbath as the "Presence of Ultimacy," the time when human beings encounter the transcendent and gain confidence that it is real; that it is totally reliable.³⁷

That was the experience of Moses when he descended from the mountain and God's presence. His face reflected God's glory or *kabod*, that he had glimpsed on the mountain (Exodus 34:29–30). "The glory of the Lord" was what "filled the tabernacle" (Exodus 40:34–35) at the foot of the mountain and accompanied Israel throughout its desert

wanderings. When the ark was brought into the temple of Solomon "the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord" (I Kings 8:11). As Israel recalled its history, it understood that God's Sinai presence had forever remained with the people of God.

The prophets called Israel back to the covenant, demanding moral seriousness or becoming agents of social reform, sometimes even calling for a holy war. But the prophets could also be "poets of a divine, electing presence," sharing with the people "visions alive with shattering memories of glimpses of infinity," as Samuel Terrien puts it.³³ Both Isaiah and Ezekiel were taken up into visions of temples that were also throne rooms, where Isaiah reports one seraphim "called to another and said 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the foundations of the threshold shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke'" (Isaiah 6: 3–4).

While the covenant motif interprets Christ as a sacrifice meeting the demands of the law, and the holy war motif sees a conquering Lord in the resurrected Christ, the motif of glory settles on the incarnation of Christ. In the early chapters of Luke, those who first hear that Emmanuel is coming—Elizabeth, Mary, Simeon, the Wise Men—are all bathed in the divine light that came also to the shepherds, "when the Glory of the Lord shone round about them." These early hymns of the Christian community preserved by Luke—*Nunc dimittis*, *Magnificat*, *Gloria in excelsis*—describe the coming of Christ as the approach of divine radiance.

The more theological gospel of John refers explicitly to Christ's incarnation as the appearance of God's sanctuary *kabod*. "And the Word became flesh, and he pitched his tent among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory of an only son from his father" (John 1:14). Christ is the embodiment of divine sanctuary presence.³⁴ Throughout the fourth gospel Christ is the glory of the

father, whose radiance encompasses his disciples. Through Christ they are drawn into God's glory, his presence.

Just as the mainstream of Western Christianity worked within the motif of covenant and law, and radical sectarians (whether withdrawing or aggressive) were drawn to the apocalyptic motif of holy war, Eastern Orthodox churches found their meaning in divine glory and worship. For them, what was important was not the crucified, but living Christ. Their liturgy and theology is shot through with reflections on the glory of the transfiguration.³⁵ Just as at the appearance of God to Moses at Sinai, the scene is suffused with light and glory. Just as it descended on Sinai, the tabernacle, and the temple, a cloud settles on the mountain of transfiguration. As the Sermon on the Mount provides, within the motif of covenant, a continuity between Old and New Testaments, and Christ's miracles and exorcisms of demons demonstrate that he is carrying on the holy war against rebellious powers, so also the transfiguration suffuses Christ with the glory of the sanctuary and the temple. "The *mysterium tremendum* of the temple was transferred into human flesh."³⁶

For Eastern Orthodox Christianity the transfiguration is a model for a spirituality that overflows with God's presence rather than achieves sinlessness through denial. In this tradition, Paul is important not so much for discussions of the old and new covenants or sin and grace, but because of his encounter with the blinding light of Christ on the road to Damascus. Proximity to God is not found in right relationship to law or revolutionary social action, but in the experience of the holy.

Within the motif of glory, holiness is not a category of morality, but of worship. The church finds its identity in providing members with occasions "when the Spirit of God descends on a man, and envelops Him in the fulness of His presence, the soul overflowing with unspeakable joy."³⁸

Not surprisingly, the Holy Spirit is central to an Eastern Orthodox Christianity that yearns for the entire being to radiate with God's glory. According to Macarius of Egypt, "The fire of grace kindled in the hearts of Christians by the Holy Spirit makes them shine like tapers before the Son of God."³⁷ In America, rather than within the elaborate *ordo* or order of Orthodox liturgy, experiences of being filled with the Spirit have typically taken place in Methodist or Baptist revival meetings. And it is out of this tradition that Adventists came.

Alden Thompson, of the Walla Walla College School of Theology, suggested in the *Adventist Review* that the most reliable Ellen White is the mature messenger of the later years.³⁹ However, the motif of glory would value her earliest visions, before she was a standard of behavior and thought for the church, when she was aflame with vision of heaven, exclaiming, "glory, glory, glory." The Holy City of her first vision includes a temple and the ark, all suffused with clouds of light. Surrounded by the "eternal weight of glory," she remembered that "God poured on us the Holy Ghost, and our faces began to light up and shine with the glory of God as Moses did when he came down from Mount Sinai."⁴⁰ It was for her visionary spirituality that Ellen White first received notice and on which her authority was founded. An Adventism that valued a present experience of glory would not be upset if Ellen White made errors in history or science or even biblical exegesis. Instead, Adventism would be grateful for her visions as vistas into the holy. Rather than a casuist or a seer predicting details of future battles in the Great Controversy, Ellen White would be Adventism's pillar of fire.

An Adventism of glory would find the heavenly sanctuary central to its self-understanding. The sanctuary would not be avoided by criminals dreading a courtroom. It would be regarded with awe because it is the heart of holiness. Rather than repelling,

its mystery would fascinate and attract. Because in Christ humanity has entered the holiest place, God continues to be a dynamic presence accessible to humanity, and the sanctuary a powerful lure to experience the glory of God.

The recurring movement of the book of Revelation is from the sanctuary to the world. When "the temple of God in heaven was opened; in his temple the ark of his covenant appeared; lightnings came—voices—thunderings—huge hail stones—earthquake" (Revelation 11:19). An Adventism of glory would embrace God's creation, expecting that any bush might burst into flame, any voice might be his voice. God's creatures would not be regarded as merely damned violators of the law, but reflectors of divine glory and therefore objects of wonder. Bearers of God's glory are to be respected, not used or abused. Since God's sanctuary presence streams throughout the creation, all of creation attracts us; all of creation has value. The arena of the church expands beyond the courtroom and the battlefield to enhance our appreciation of every glimmer of divine presence throughout human culture, and banish the darkness of pain, suffering, and injustice wherever we find it.

The experience of the sanctuary throughout Scriptures is a present experience of the holy. Within the motif of glory, Adventism would understand the book of Revelation as portraying present realms of glory penetrating the creation *now*. Rather than a scientific history of the future, the book of Revelation would be revered for its glimpses into God's present activity. Revelation would be a way into the heart of the holiness.

Of course, the physical location of the heavenly sanctuary remains transcendent to us. But we can experience now the glory of God—not in space, but in time. The Sabbath is our sanctuary in the present. As we pass the threshold of the Sabbath hours we enter into the experience of the holy. We are not morally purified of every evil tendency, but we are caught up into the sanctified presence

of God. Like the sanctuary, the seventh day is sacralized, and while God is not consubstantial with us, he is contemporary. Because of the Sabbath, God does not remain in the outer courtyards of our existence.

Within the motif of glory, Seventh-day Adventists, rather than putting themselves in a law court or in a war, would discover they had entered a church. If the motif of glory became prominent, worship would become more central to the life of Adventism. The beginning and ending of the Sabbath would be marked by moments of reverence for the God who enters our time. More effort would be expended on the shape of the Sabbath morning service, for many the most holy place of their existence. The entire service would be approached as reverently as Israel approached the sanctuary. Scripture, sermon and song would not be chosen simply to bring criminals to admit their guilt or provide warriors courage for the battle, but to draw all the faculties of worshipers into God's presence. As a people committed to the sanctuary and Sabbath making God's presence alive in our present experience, Adventists would feel a special responsibility to recover the apocalyptic hymns and rhapsodies for Christian worship.⁴²

If the motif of glory were emphasized, a premium would be placed on an education that aroused and cultivated the imagination. The arts and literature would be seen as not merely concessions to middle-class pretensions, but essential to enhance those capacities most likely to experience the glory of God.

Renewed and revitalized experiences of worship would attract the many unchurched who still have a hunger for experiencing the transcendent—people bored with the bureaucratic and merely technological. The Sabbath, the sanctuary, and the visions of Ellen White introduced as avenues to the experience of the holy might reach some now baffled by talk of imputed and imparted righteousness, or the book of Revelation

understood as a scientific prediction of the future.

The limitations of the motif of glory are clear. Religion can become reduced to the aesthetic, the emotive. It can lead to preciousness. Worship sometimes dissolves into rote litany or the smells and bells of ritualism. Ethical concern can be reduced to routines of preparation for the "peak experiences." The intractability of the human will to turn away from God and fellow human beings can be brushed over, and the necessity of divine power to counter institutionalized evil ignored. Glory can be rhapsodic escape.

But man cannot live by ethics alone. At some point, whether it is the personal morality of covenant or the social morality of holy war, one must ask the question, but why be moral? At that point, a horizon of ultimate meaning must be glimpsed, a sense that the empirical is not all, indeed a conviction that at the very core of our being there is a God who is beautiful, good and

true. Without a vision of glory, the covenants and wars of liberation finally wither into senselessness and oblivion.

Adventists can be grateful for the two biblical motifs of covenant and holy war that have ordered its thought and action. But we can also welcome another biblical motif that highlights three of Adventism's most distinctive affirmations. And we must find fresh meaning for our distinctive symbols, or they will vanish and with them the Adventist church. Glory is not sufficient, but it is necessary.

The sanctuary, the Sabbath, and Ellen White's visions are means by which we can participate now in the reality to which they point—God's presence. They are not means to make men holy, but paths to the holy; distinctive ways in which the whole being of persons—intellect, will, emotion—are inflamed with God's glory; when they cry out in joy that, yes, there is a God—they have been in his presence. Within the motif of glory the identity of the Seventh-day Adventist church is to be a present moment of incandescence.

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FORUM

AAF Newsletter
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Newsletter of the Association of Adventist Forums

December 1983

AAF Conference Features Sessions On Religious Experience, Worship

by Bonnie Dwyer

A special session on varieties of religious experience has been planned for the second National Conference of the Association of Adventist Forums. Steve Daily, chaplain on the La Sierra campus of Loma Linda University; Lorna Tobler, well-known Adventist laywoman; and Jonathan Butler, associate professor of history at Loma Linda University will discuss their own relationships to the Adventist church. A response will be given by social historian A. Gregory Schneider of the Pacific Union College faculty. He recently participated in a workshop at Yale University on the varieties of religious experience.

The second National Conference of the Association of Adventist Forums will be held in the Azure Hills Adventist Church, Grand Terrace, California, and the nearby University Church of Loma Linda March 15-18, 1984. A full program and registration materials are listed elsewhere in this issue of *Spectrum*.

"We planned this particular session on religious experience because we know that many people today are sorting through their personal religious experience, to bring it up-to-date with the way they live, work, and think," says conference coordinator Susan Jacobsen. "We wanted to provide a time when people could discuss this aspect of religious experience with others."

In a Friday session at the conference, the stages of development within a church organization will be discussed by Oxford Professor Bryan Wilson, one of the world's most notable sociologists of religion. Later that day, the AAF Task Force on Church Structure will report on the current work being done throughout North America on changing the structure of the church.

Sabbath morning Samuel L. Terrien, an associate editor of the *Interpreter's Bible and Dictionary of the Bible*, and one of this era's most distinguished contemporary theologians of the Old Testament, will talk on "The Day of the Lord and the Lord's Day." Charles Teel's "The Apocalypse as Liturgy," published in this issue of *Spectrum*, will be the heart of the Sabbath worship service at the conference. Later in the conference, Sergio Mendez Arceo, Bishop of Cuernavaca, who has the reputation of being one of Mexico's most progressive bishops, will describe the role of the Christian churches in social change in Central America. Walter Douglas, professor of church history and mission at the SDA Theological Seminary and member of a family involved in recent governments in Grenada, will respond to Bishop Arceo. John Kelley, an Adventist foreign service officer in the U.S. State Department, who manages the State Department's El Salvador Election Project, will explore whether and how the Adventist church might influence public policy in Central American nations.

In the final session of the conference, Charles J. Stokes, professor of economics at the University of Bridgeport, a former dean of Atlantic Union College and a three-time Fulbright professor of Economics, will give a presentation with the provocative title, "Mega-church, Mega-failure?" Groups will then focus on discussions of higher education, elementary and secondary education, health care, and publishing.

Bonnie Dwyer is a graduate student in journalism at California State University, Fullerton, CA.

89% of Readers Share Spectrum; 66% Refer to It Once a Week

by Dana Lauren West

The results from *Spectrum's* recent reader profile survey show that the respondents are satisfied with *Spectrum* as a whole. The rate of return was eight percent, slightly higher than the usual six percent response to a survey of this kind.

If the respondents are characteristic, *Spectrum's* typical reader is male (80%), between the ages of 34-41 (46%), has had graduate or post-graduate education, (35% and 45% respectively) is involved in medicine (24%), education (18%), or religion (14%), and earns over \$25,000 a year.

The results indicate an interest in attending AAF-sponsored conferences and workshops, but less interest in study tours. *Spectrum* readers also buy over 10 books and/or tapes and records each year.

The typical respondent is not active in his/her local AAF chapter (some do not have an organized chapter nearby), yet shares each issue of *Spectrum* with one to three people (89%), and reads or refers to each issue of *Spectrum* once a week (66%).

Although readers made suggestions for subjects they would like to see included in *Spectrum*, (some being religion and science, art and religion, literature, and the social sciences) the overwhelming number were pleased with the amount of space allotted to each section and with the selection of articles published. Respondents expressed satisfaction with the types of topics covered, but wished for more information regarding pertinent church issues and theological questions that are debated.

The present cluster format continues to be most popular, although some noted that on important subjects an entire issue devoted to one subject would be welcome. The content of *Spectrum* was considered to be readable and understandable (94%).

Many respondents took the opportunity to add written comments. A pastor of a 900-member church with 15 years in the ministry: "You people are doing a noble and necessary service to the church. You have avoided the pitfall of a sleazy journalism while giving pertinent information. Keep it up, be courageous, without your work the future would be bleak indeed. I have no doubt that your efforts have brought a deeper level of internal responsibility to church leadership. Fear is a powerful emotion. Perhaps courage can become a more frequent one! If not, this church is doomed!"

An older member: "*Spectrum* should never forget its root and its presuppositions. When W. A. Spicer and G. F. Wolfkill contributed to the re-

search group at PUC, they started with the understanding that the foundation doctrines were divinely inspired, but that further light on understanding these doctrines should be diligently researched. Positive research illuminates truth, but negative research presents pegs on which to hang one's doubts. But a multiplicity of doubts tends to undermine the whole structure of faith. One divinely revealed truth must prevail against a multiplicity of errors no matter how penetrating are the negative barbs. My perspective of *Spectrum's* place in Adventism is a clearing house for careful assessment of arguments and information that affect our understanding of the fundamental doctrines, and the church's application in its world mission."

An SDA volunteer teacher to Peking: "We leave shortly for Peking, where we will teach English for a year. If it is possible to put our subscription on hold until we ask for it to be continued, please do so. Thank you. We find *Spectrum* not only interesting but invaluable, and the layout is of a very good quality. We have one complaint, however: why is the layout aimed at the visually impaired? We can read it from six feet away without strain. Why not use a smaller type and squeeze in more articles?"

Another reader: "I feel that reading *Spectrum* is largely responsible for my still being an active SDA. It has been reassuring to realize that others—individuals that I respect—have similar questions and problems. It is helpful to understand their reactions and rationale for their beliefs. Keep up the good, informative, work and don't 'go soft.'"

A union conference president: "*Spectrum* is read from cover to cover. Great to have a magazine that digs in a bit. I am president of a union of the Seventh-day Adventist church."

Dana Lauren West is a graduate student at Maryland University, College Park, MD.

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Southern Region Hears Patterson, Wagner

by Grace Emori

Three chapters are active in the Southern region of the Association of Adventist Forums: Atlanta, Georgia, Orlando, Florida, and Southern College of Seventh-day Adventists in Tennessee. Two have recently held meetings. In Atlanta, on December 5, Gary Patterson, president of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, gave a report and entertained questions on the Annual Council of 1983. He himself had participated in the discussion of the possibility of creating a more independent North American Division. Previously, on October 14, Roy Branson, editor of *Spectrum*, made a presentation on "Covenant, Holy War, and Glory: Paradigms of Adventist Identity."

The chapter at Southern College has already held several meetings this school year. John Wagner, the new president of the college, soon after classes began, discussed the issue of town and gown relationships at the first of what are called "Bag and Brain" luncheons. They are informal get-togethers of faculty and students. Roy Branson gave his lecture on Adventist identity Sabbath afternoon, October 15, to about 350 people. The next month, November 12, Daniel Augsburg, professor of historical theology at the SDA theological seminary, lectured on a topic that honored the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's birth: "What Happens to a Movement After the Death of its Founder?" The discussion touched on implications for the Seventh-day Adventist movement.

Grace Emori is the AAF regional representative for the Southern Region.

AAF Chapters Triple in North Pacific Region

by John Brunt

Over the past three years the number of local AAF chapters in the North Pacific Region has tripled increasing from three to nine. There are now two chapters in Western Canada, four in Washington, and one each in Oregon, Idaho, and Montana.

One factor in this growth has been the consistent strength of the chapter at Walla Walla

College. Graduates have settled throughout the Pacific Northwest and have continued to feel the need for intellectual and inspirational stimulation and for the opportunity to discuss important religious issues. New forum chapters have met that need. Thus graduates have been involved in the formation of new chapters. Another factor is the positive attitude toward the church that has characterized chapters in the Northwest.

The Walla Walla Forum Chapter continues to be active. Mrs. Mary Dassenko, a social worker in Walla Walla, serves as the new president. Speakers have included Gordon Bietz, pastor of the Southern College Church, and Tom and Judy Dybdahl. The Walla Walla Chapter also sponsors a scholarship for needy students at Walla Walla College.

Another chapter that has already made plans for the new school year is the Portland Chapter. Its new president is Dr. William Taylor. He and his associates have planned a series of presentations affirming reasons for faith and continued commitments to the church. Topics include, "Why I am a Christian," "Why I am a Seventh-day Adventist," and "Festival of the Sabbath."

On October 23, the British Columbia chapter, with Michael Haluschak as president, heard presentations by Rabbi Solomon of Beth Israel Temple of Vancouver, and Marty Haapalo, chapter secretary, on "The Celebration of the Sabbath."

John Brunt is the dean of the school of theology at Walla Walla College and regional representative for the North Pacific Region.

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Atlantic Region

The **New York Chapter** has started its season of programs. On October 29, Dr. Gerald Sheppard, professor of Old Testament at Union Theological Seminary, spoke on "Daniel and Revelation: The Future of the World—Current Biblical Interpretation." Rabbi Jonathan Wolf, organizer of the Religious Jewish Committee for Progressive Political Action, spoke on November 12, and the founder of the New York Chapter, Dr. John Kelley, now with the State Department, spoke on November 26.

Columbia Region

The **Philadelphia Chapter** welcomed Judge Andrew A. McDonald on October 1. McDonald is a member of the President's Review Commission on Davenport.

The **Washington, D.C. Chapter** heard a panel discussion on "Review of the Autumn Council." Participants included Jan Daffern, associate pastor of Sligo Church, discussing women's issues; James Coffin, assistant editor of the *Adventist Review*,

giving his views on the overall significance of the 1983 Annual Council; Leslie H. Pitton, General Conference Director of North American Youth Ministries, exploring the prospect of a North American Division; and Warren Zork, associate pastor of Sligo Church and formerly a union official in East Africa, discussing the merger of two African divisions.

Southern Pacific Region

The **Los Angeles Chapter** hosted a presentation on the biblical principles of intimate love with Dave Larson of Loma Linda University's Department of Ethics.

Nuclear holocaust and Christian hope was discussed by Rob Lloyd and Ed Shakespeare, both pastors at Fullerton SDA Church at an **Orange County Chapter** meeting on October 22.

George Colvin addressed the issue of Adventism and re-organization for the **San Diego Chapter** on October 18, and Paul Landa of Loma Linda University discussed Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation on November 12.

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The Apocalypse As Liturgy

by Charles Teel

This service will be part of the Second National Conference of the Association of Adventist Forums, conducted Sabbath morning, March 17, 1984, in the Loma Linda University Church. To obtain folders containing printed texts of the entire service in a form appropriate for distribution to members participating in the worship service, write to Charles Teel, Division of Religion, Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, Calif. 92350.

Students in a class taught by Alan R. Collins, professor of art at Loma Linda University, created candlesticks representing the seven churches of Revelation to be used on the platform during the Sabbath morning worship service celebrating the Apocalypse as liturgy. The students were: Jim Nazario, Teresa Robinson, Brad Rowe, Debra Sherman, Reza Tabesh.—Editors

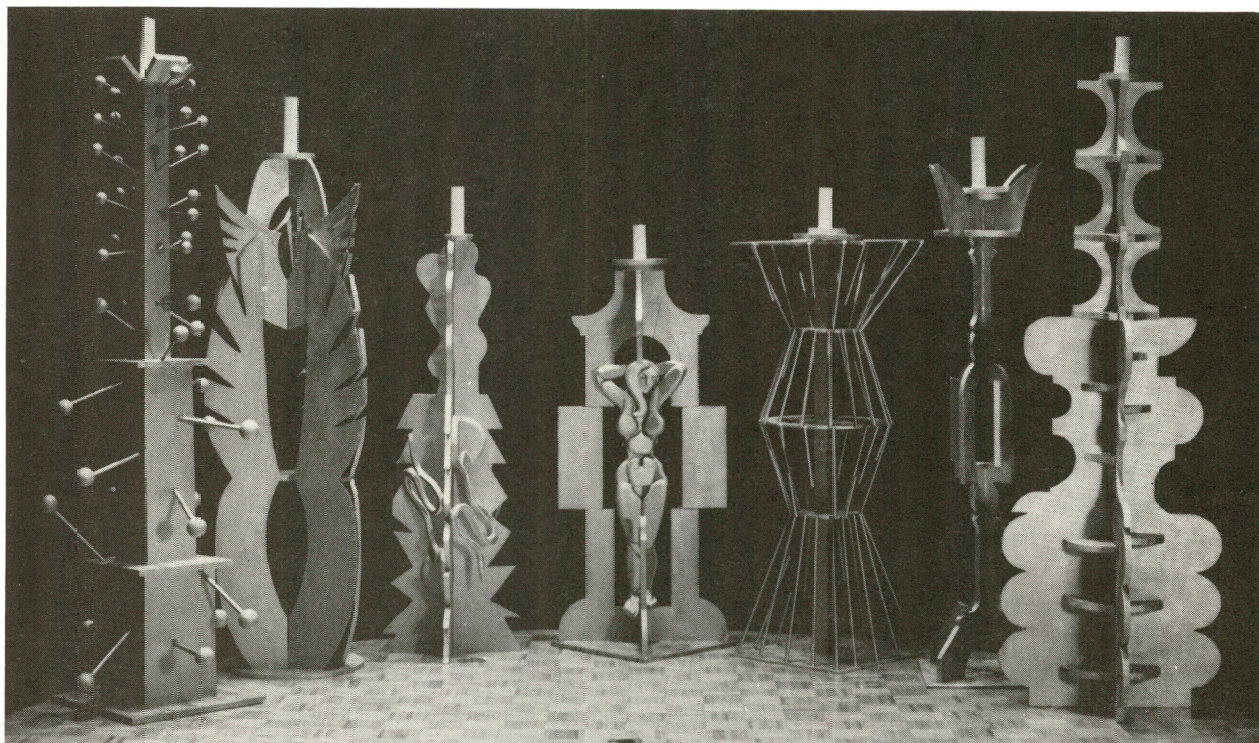
A worship service approaches the Apocalypse of John as a celestial liturgy. Believers in every age have viewed the Apocalypse not only as a work to be “analyzed” or “deciphered” but also as a psalm of praise to be “enacted” and “celebrated.” The liturgical format of the book builds on hymns and prayers that are punctuated by doxologies, alleluias, and amens. Worship aids include flaming candlesticks, golden bowls, and

burning censers. Participants in the service, in addition to John, are the Risen Lord and assorted heavenly creatures, with fully one hundred and forty-four thousand elect leading a vast multitude in antiphonal refrains.

John’s liturgy was written for the seven churches of Asia Minor that endured the alien atmosphere of pagan Rome. These fledgling Christian congregations are implored to honor the Lord of history who conquered the ostentatious wealth and persecuting power of secular culture. As brutal persecution by the Babylonian beast threatens the body, and subtle cultural and economic seduction by the imperial harlot threatens the soul, these remnant communities are exhorted to stand against false religious and political systems and indeed to “Come out of her.”

The apocalyptic language of the liturgy hurls hearers through space and time as they journey into heavenly and earthly and subterranean spheres while piecing together fragments of humankind’s cosmic story. Divine and demonic symbols of this great controversy flash larger than life on the screen of universal history. Beasts rampage and nations give obedience. Harlots seduce and populations succumb. Winds blow and the earth shakes. Bowls are poured out and history screams. Voes are flung against space and the universe is hushed. And through it all the vast multitude shouts, “Alleluia!”

Charles Teel Jr. is a professor of Christian Ethics at Loma Linda University. His doctoral dissertation at Boston University dealt with the American civil rights movement.



"Write down what you see on a scroll and send it to the seven churches."

The Babylonian beasts, imperial harlots, and demonic dragons are real. Very real. The forms of these false systems change, of course, but they stalk the faithful of every age. Yet the shout of "Alleluia!" is also real. It proclaims that ultimate reality lies rather with the New Jerusalem than with Babylon. The unlocked city, the temple-less religion, and the tree of life whose leaves heal the nations all call up a radically new reality—a reality in which persons and cities and churches and nations spring from values inspired by One who says, "Behold, I am making all things new."

In anticipation of this new reality—and in the face of false Babylonian powers which coerce, manipulate, and persecute—the slain Lamb calls believers to form remnant communities which heal, nurture, and build. This call has enabled the faithful remnant throughout history to cope and to hope. And it is this same call that our own worshipping community celebrates and enacts.

"Hear, you who have ears to hear, what the Spirit says to the churches!"

The Setting:

The congregation enters the sanctuary in silence. Each worshiper is provided with a worship folder containing apocalypse art as well as the text of the liturgy. The chancel centrum boasts seven golden candlesticks which range from five to seven feet in height. Each candlestick is sculpted to bear witness to the characteristics of a given church which John the Revelator addresses at the opening of his work. (With the reading of each of the seven messages to the seven churches, the respective candle is lit.)

The hour previous to worship has included stories of contemporary remnants who have faced beastly Babylonian powers: Dietrich Boenhoeffer, German pastor-theologian who inspired the "confessing church" to resist Hitler's Third Reich; Anne Frank, young Jewish girl whose diary on the Holocaust survives as an eloquent testament of hope; Maximillian Kolbe, Catholic priest imprisoned at Auschwitz who volunteered to die in the place of a fellow prisoner; and Vladimir Shelkov, a True and Free Adventist in Russia who was repeatedly imprisoned for his faith.

The congregation is thus prepared to celebrate the Apocalypse as a psalm of hope which speaks to every age; an affirmation that the baby, the woman, and the remnant triumph over the beast, the harlot, and Babylon.

The Churches

First Reader:

I, John, your brother,
who share with you in the suffering
and the endurance which is ours in Jesus—
I was on the island called Patmos
because I had preached God's word
and borne my testimony to Jesus.
It was on the Lord's day, and I was caught up
by the Spirit;
And behind me I heard a loud voice,
like the sound of a trumpet, which said to
me,

Audience:

'Write down what you see on a scroll and
send it to the seven churches:
To Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira,
Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.'

Second Reader:

And when I turned I saw seven standing
lamps of gold,
and among the lamps one like a son of Man.
He laid his right hand upon me and said,

Audience:

'Do not be afraid.
I am the first and the last, and I am the living
one;
For I was dead and now I am alive for
evermore.
Here is the secret of the seven lamps of gold:
The seven lamps are the seven churches.

First Reader:

'To the angel of the church at Ephesus write:
"I know all your ways, your toil and your
fortitude.
Fortitude you have;
You have borne up in my cause and never
flagged.
But I have this against you that you have lost
your early love.

Think from what a height you have fallen;
Repent, and do as you once did.

Children's Choir:

To those that are victorious I will give the
right to eat
From the tree of life that stands in the
Garden of God.

Audience:

Hear, you who have ears to hear, what the
Scripture says to the churches!"

Second Reader:

'To the angel of the church at Smyrna write:
"I know how hard pressed you are, and
poor—and yet you are rich!
Do not be afraid of the suffering to come.
The Devil will throw some of you into
prison, to put you to the test:
And for ten days you will suffer cruelly.

Children's Choir:

Only be faithful till death, and I will give
you the crown of life.
Those who are victorious cannot be harmed
by the second death.

Audience:

Hear, you who have ears to hear, what the
Spirit says to the churches!"

First Reader:

'To the angel of the church at Pergamum
write:
"I know where you live; it is the place
where Satan has his throne.
And yet you are holding fast to my cause.
You did not deny your faith in me
even at the time when Antipas, my faithful
witness,
was killed in your city, the home of Satan.
But I have a few matters to bring against
you:
You have in Pergamum some that eat food
sacrificed to idols and commit fornication.
So repent!

Children's Choir:

To those who are victorious I will give to eat
of the hidden manna.

Audience:

Hear, you who have ears to hear, what the Spirit says to the churches!"

Second Reader:

'To the angel of the church at Thyatira write:

"I know all your ways, your love and faithfulness,
your good service and your fortitude;
And of late you have done better than at first.

Yet I have this against you:

You tolerate that Jezebel, who claims to be a prophetess,
who by her teaching lures my servants into fornication

and into eating food sacrificed to idols.

And now I speak to you others in Thyatira, who do not accept this teaching.

On you I will impose no further burden. Only hold fast to what you have, until I come.

Children's Choir:

To those who are victorious and who persevere in doing my will to the end,
I will give authority over the nations.

Audience:

Hear, you who have ears to hear, what the Spirit says to the churches!"

First Reader:

'To the angel of the church at Sardis write:

"I know all your ways;

That though you have a name for being alive, you are dead.

Wake up, and put strength into what is left, which must otherwise die!

For I have not found any work of yours completed in the eyes of my God.

So remember the teaching you received; observe it, and repent.

Children's Choir:

Those who are victorious shall thus be robed all in white;

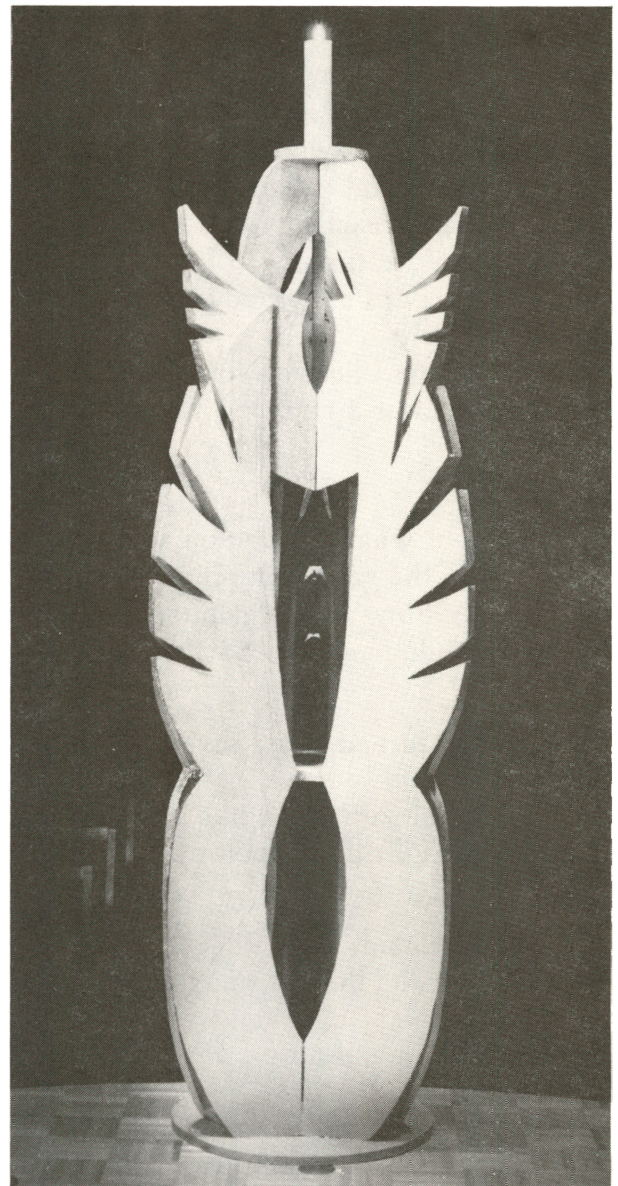
Their names I will never strike off the roll of the living.

Audience:

Hear, you who have ears to hear, what the Spirit says to the churches!"

Second Reader:

'To the angel of the church at Philadelphia write:



Smyrna: "Those who are victorious cannot be harmed by the second death."

"I know all your ways;

I have set before you an open door which no one can shut.

Your strength, I know, is small,

Yet you have observed my commands and have not disowned my name.

Because you have kept my command and
stood fast,
I will also keep you from the ordeal that is
to fall on the whole world.
I am coming soon;
Hold fast what you have, and let no one rob
you of your crown.

Children's Choir:

Those who are victorious I will write the
name of my God upon them,
and the name of the city of my God,
that new Jerusalem which is coming down
out of heaven from my God,
and my own new name.

Audience:

Hear, you who have ears to hear, what the
Spirit says to the churches!"

First Reader:

'To the angel of the church at Laodicea
write:
"I know all your ways; you are neither hot
nor cold!
How I wish you were either hot or cold!
But because you are lukewarm, neither hot
nor cold,
I will spit you out of my mouth.
You say, 'How rich I am! And how well I
have done!
I have everything I want in the world!'
In fact, though you do not know it,
you are the most pitiful wretch, poor, blind
and naked.

Children's Choir:

To those who are victorious I will grant a
place on my throne,
as I myself was victorious and sat down with
my father on his throne.

Audience:

Hear, you who have ears to hear, what the
Spirit says to the churches!"

Hymn: The Church Has One Foundation

*Note: During the singing of the hymn-anthem on
church, young people carry paper banners em-
blazoned with the names of patriots, prophets, and
friends within the congregation. These banners are
hung at various points in the sanctuary as slides*

*bathe the walls with full-face photos of the cong-
regation's diverse membership.*

The Portents

First Reader:

At once I was caught up by the Spirit.
There in heaven stood a throne,
and on the throne sat one whose appearance
was like
the gleam of jasper and cornelian.
In a circle about this throne were twenty-
four other thrones,
and on them sat twenty-four elders wearing
crowns of gold.
From the throne went out flashes of
lightning and peals of thunder.
Burning before the throne were seven
flaming torches,
and in front of it stretched what seemed a sea
of glass,
like a sheet of ice.
The twenty-four elders fall down
before the One who sits on the throne
and worship him who lives for ever and
ever;
And as they lay their crowns before the
throne they cry:

Audience:

'Thou art worthy, O Lord our God,
to receive glory and honour and power,
because thou didst create all things;
By thy will they were created, and have
their being!'

Second Reader:

After this I looked and saw a vast throng,
which no one could count,
from every nation, of all tribes, peoples, and
languages,
standing in front of the throne and before
the Lamb.
They were robed in white and had palms in
their hands,
and they shouted together:

Audience:

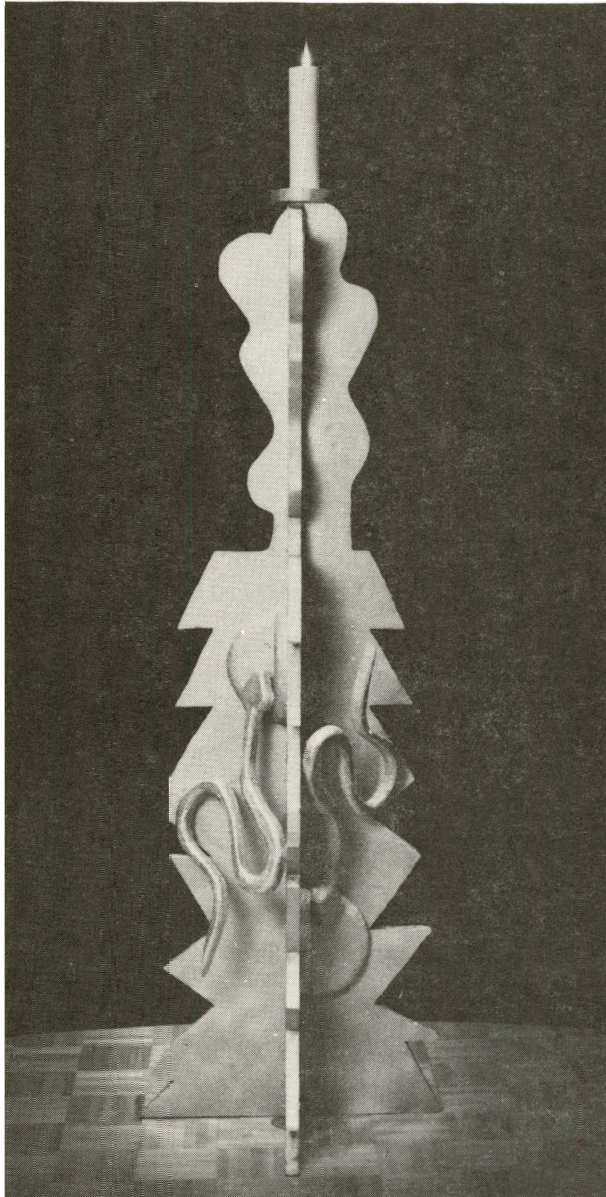
'Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom,
thanksgiving and honour, power and might,
be to our God for ever and ever! Amen!'

First Reader:

Then one of the elders turned to me and said,

Audience:

These that are robed in white
are those who have passed through the great
ordeal;



Pergamum: "You have . . . some that . . . commit fornication."

They have washed their robes and made
them white
in the blood of the Lamb.
That is why they stand before the throne
and minister to him day and night in his
temple;

And he who sits on the throne will dwell
with them.
They shall never again feel hunger or thirst,
the sun shall not beat on them nor any
scorching heat,
because the Lamb will be their shepherd
and will guide them to the springs of the
water of life;
And God will wipe all tears from their eyes.'

Second Reader:

Next appeared a great portent in heaven,
a woman robed with the sun, beneath her
feet the moon,
and on her head a crown of twelve stars.
She was pregnant, and in the anguish of her
labour
she cried out to be delivered.
Then a second portent appeared in heaven:
A great red dragon with seven heads and ten
horns;
And with his tail he swept down a third of
the stars in the sky and flung them to the
earth.
The dragon stood in front of the woman
who was about to give birth,
so that when her child was born he might
devour it.
She gave birth to a male child,
who is destined to rule all nations, with an
iron rod.
But her child was snatched up to God and his
throne;
And the woman herself fled into the wilds.

Audience:

At this the dragon grew furious with the
woman,
and went off to wage war on the rest of her
offspring,
that is, on those who keep God's
commandments
and maintain their testimony to Jesus.

First Reader:

Then out of the sea I saw a beast rising.
It had ten horns and seven heads.
Men worshiped the dragon because he had
conferred his authority
upon the beast and they worshiped the
beast also.

It was also allowed to wage war on God's people and to defeat them, and was granted authority over every tribe and people, language and nation. All on earth will worship it, except those whose names the Lamb that was slain keeps in the roll of the living, written there since the world was made. Then I saw another beast, which came up out of the earth; It had two horns like a lamb's but spoke like a dragon. It was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that it could cause all who would not worship the image to be put to death.

Audience:

Moreover, it caused everyone, great and small, rich and poor, slave and free, to be branded with a mark on his right hand or forehead, and no one was allowed to buy or sell unless he bore this beast's mark, either name or number.

Second Reader:

Then I saw an angel flying in mid-heaven, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those on earth, to every nation and tribe, language and people. He cried in a loud voice,

Audience:

'Fear God and pay homage; For the hour of his judgment has come! Worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the water-springs!'

First Reader:

Then another angel, a second, followed, and he cried,

Audience:

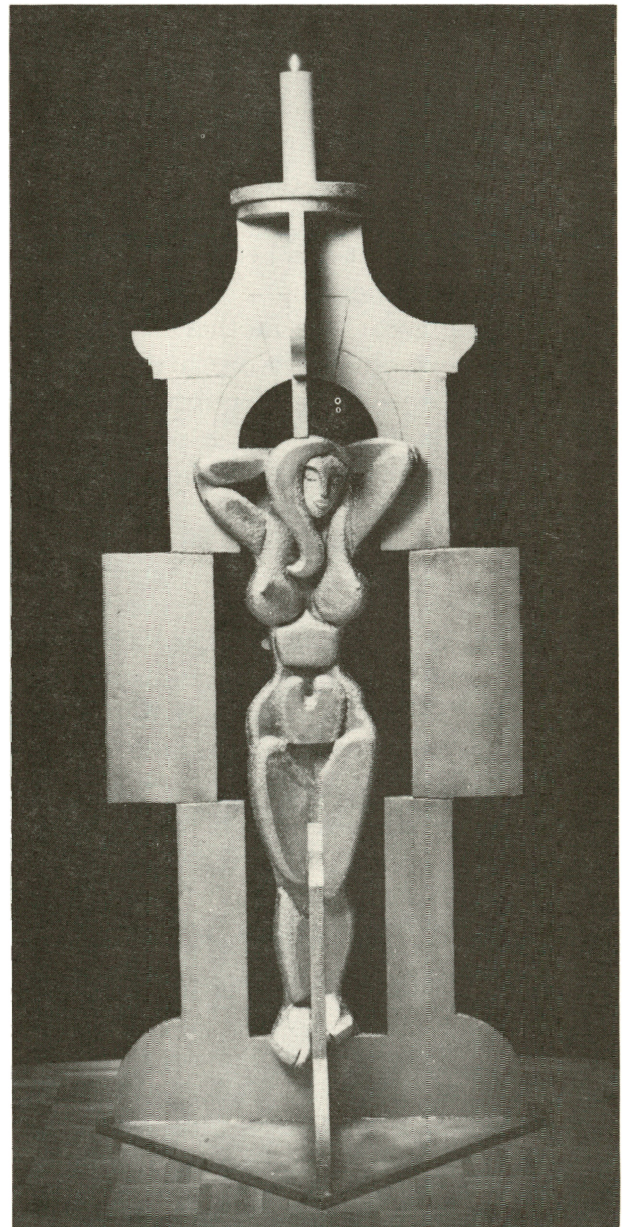
'Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all nations drink the fierce wine of her fornication.'

Second Reader:

Yet a third angel followed, crying out loud,

Audience:

'Whoever worships the beast and its image and receives its mark on his forehead or hand, he shall drink the wine of God's wrath, poured undiluted into the cup of his vengeance.'



Thyatira: "You tolerate that Jezebel."

And there will be no respite day or night for those who worship the beast and its image or receive the mark of its name.'

First Reader:

Here the fortitude of God's people has its place—

in keeping God's commands and remaining
loyal to Jesus.

Second Reader:

And then I saw a woman mounted on a
scarlet beast
which was covered with blasphemous names
and had seven heads and ten horns.
The woman was clothed in purple and
scarlet
and bedizened with gold and jewels and
pearls.

In her hand she held a gold cup,
full of obscenities and the foulness of her
fornication;

And written on her forehead was a name
with a secret meaning:

'Babylon the great, the mother of whores
and of every obscenity on earth.'

The woman, I saw, was drunk with the
blood of God's people
and with the blood of those who had borne
their testimony to Jesus.

The angel said to me,

Audience:

'The ten horns you saw are ten kings
who will confer their power and authority
upon the beast.

They will wage war upon the Lamb, but the
Lamb will defeat them,
for he is Lord of lords and King of kings,
and his victory will be shared by his
followers,
called chosen and faithful.'

*Note: Prior to the singing of the hymn-anthem,
slides are projected on the walls to depict modern
expressions of Babylonian powers and remnant
communities. Drawings of the manipulative beasts
and dragons created by the congregation's children,
are interspersed with drawings and magazine
pictures selected by the children which communicate
both hope and despair:*

swings	bombs
rollerskates	guns
dolls	swastica
baseball	KKK
home	Hiroshima
trees	death
flowers	hunger

church

family

friends

community

life

clouds

sun

rainbow

book burning

bombed churches

John F. Kennedy

Robert F. Kennedy

Martin Luther King, Jr.

their widows

their families

Ghandi

A bell is tolled

Hymn: For all the Saints

The Judgment

First Reader:

After this I saw another angel coming down
out of heaven;

He came with great authority and the earth
was lit up with his splendour.

Then in a mighty voice he proclaimed,

Audience:

'Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!

She has become a dwelling for demons, a
haunt for every unclean spirit,
for every foul and loathsome bird.

For all nations have drunk deep
of the fierce wine of her fornication.'

Second Reader:

The merchants of the earth also will weep
and mourn for her,

because no one any longer buys their
cargoes,

cargoes of gold and silver, jewels and pearls,
cloths of purple and scarlet, silks and fine
linens,

wine, oil, flour, wheat, chariots, slaves, and
the lives of men.

First Reader:

Then I saw the beast taken prisoner,
and so was the false prophet who had
worked miracles in its presence

and deluded those that had received the
mark of the beast

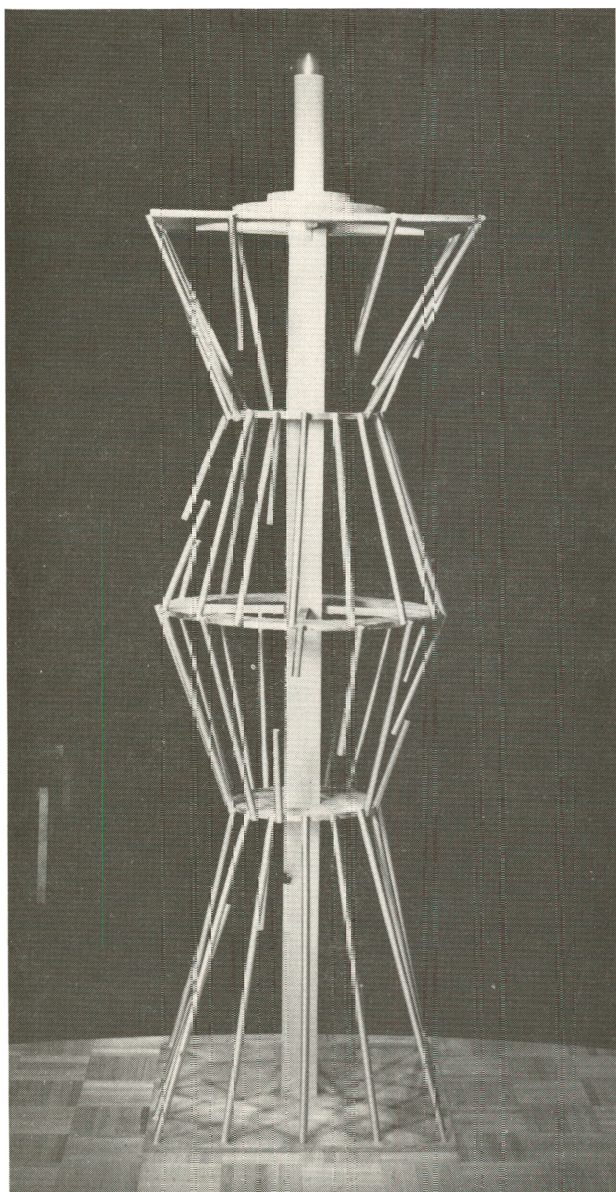
and worshiped its image.

The two of them were thrown alive into the
lake of fire

with its sulphurous flames.

Then I saw an angel coming down from
heaven with the key of the abyss
and a great chain in his hands.

He seized the dragon, that serpent of old,
the Devil or Satan,
and chained him up for a thousand years;
He threw him into the abyss, shutting and
sealing it over him,
so that he might seduce the nations no more.



Sardis: "I have not found any work of yours completed."

Second Reader:

Then I saw a great white throne, and the
One who sat upon it;
From his presence earth and heaven
vanished away,
and no place was left for them.

I could see the dead, great and small,
standing before the throne;
And the books were opened.
Then another book was opened, the roll of
the living.
From what was written in these books the
dead were judged
upon the record of their deeds.
The sea gave up its dead,
and Death and Hades gave up the dead in
their keeping;
They were judged, each man on the record
of his deeds.
Then Death and Hades were flung into the
lake of fire.
And into it were flung any whose names
were not to be found
in the roll of the living.

First Reader:

After this I heard what sounded like the roar
of a vast throng in heaven;
and they were shouting:

Audience:

'Alleluia! Victory and glory and power
belong to our God.
for true and just are his judgments!
He has condemned the earth with her
fornication,
and has avenged upon her the blood of his
servants.'

Second Reader:

Again I heard what sounded like a vast
crowd,
like the noise of rushing water and deep
roars of thunder, and they cried:

Audience:

'Alleluia! The Lord our God, sovereign over
all,
has entered on his reign!
Exalt and shout for joy and do him homage,
for the wedding of the Lamb has come!
His bride has made herself ready,
and for her dress she has been given fine
linen, clean and shining.'

Offertory

*Note: A brass ensemble plays an offertory of
sonorous cadence by way of expanding the theme of*

judgment. Visuals include various symbols of justice/judgment: sword, scales, muse, restrained serpent.

The Hope

First Reader:

Then one of the seven angels spoke unto me
and said,

Audience:

'Come, and I will show you the bride, the
wife of the Lamb.'

Second Reader:

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth,
for the first heaven and the first earth had
vanished,

and there was no longer any sea.

I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming
out of heaven from God,
made ready like a bride adorned for her
husband.

I heard a loud voice proclaiming from the
throne:

Audience:

'Now at last God has his dwelling among
men!

He will dwell among them and they shall be
his people,

and God himself will be with them.

He will wipe every tear from their eyes;

There shall be an end to death, and to
mourning and crying and pain;

For the old order has passed away!'

First Reader:

Then he who sat on the throne said,

Audience:

"Behold! I am making all things new!"

Second Reader:

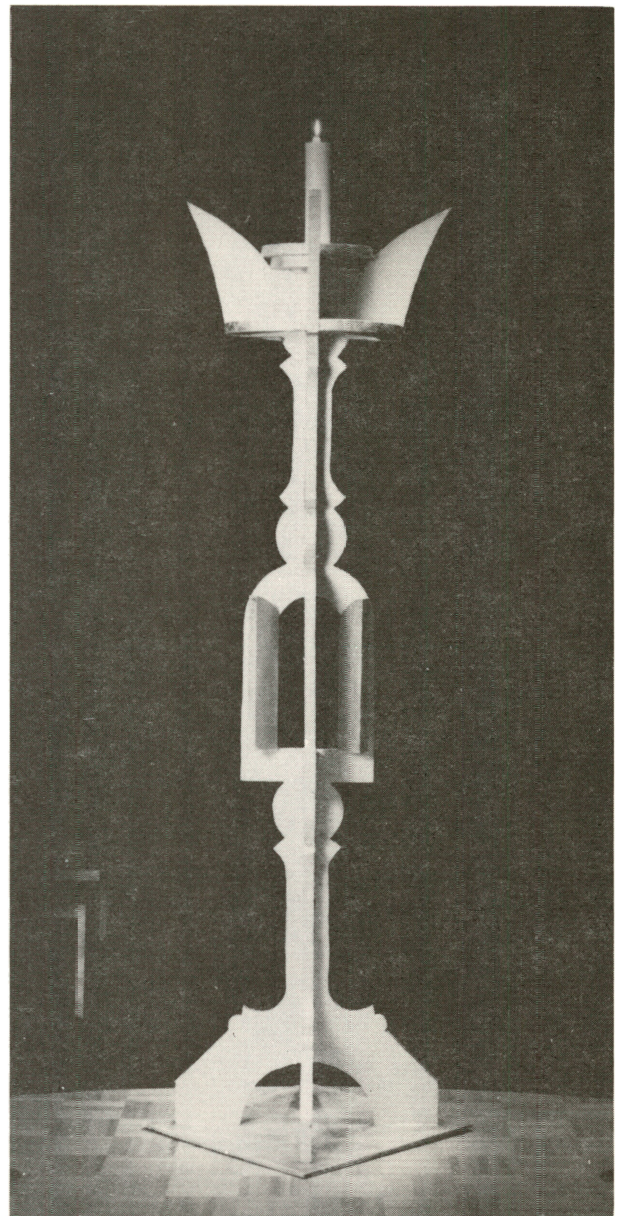
I saw no temple in the city,
for its temple was the sovereign Lord God
and the Lamb.

The gates of the city shall never be shut by
day—

and there will be no night.

Then he showed me the river of the water
of life.

On either side of the river stood a tree of
life,
which yields twelve crops of fruit,
one for each month of the year.
The leaves of the trees serve for the healing
of the nations,
and every accursed thing shall disappear.



Philacelphia: "I have set before you an open door."

Audience:

There shall be no more night,
nor will they need the light of lamp or sun,
for the Lord God will give them light;
and they shall reign for evermore.

First Reader:

Then I looked, and on Mount Zion stood the Lamb,
 and with him were a hundred and forty-four thousand
 who had his name and the name of his Father
 written on their foreheads.
 I heard a sound from heaven like the noise of
 rushing water;
 It was the sound of harpers playing on their
 harps.
 There before the throne they were singing a
 new song.
 That song no one could learn
 except the hundred and forty-four
 thousand,
 who alone from the whole world had been
 ransomed.
 They were singing the song of Moses and the
 song of the Lamb.

Hymn: Worthy, Worthy Is the Lamb!

Note: As the congregation stands to join the choir for the singing of the final hymn, the children's pictures of hope appear on the chancel walls once again, including dolls, family, congregation, community, sky, sun, rainbow.

Second Reader:

I, Jesus, have sent my angel to you
 with this testimony for the churches.
 Happy are those who wash their robes clean!

They will have the right to the tree of life
 and will enter by the gates of the city.

Readers:

'Come!' say the Spirit and the bride.

Audience:

'Come!' let each hearer reply.

Readers:

Come forward, you who are thirsty;

Audience:

Accept the water of life, a free gift to all
 who desire it.

Readers:

He who gives this testimony speaks, "Yes, I
 am coming soon."

Audience:

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

Readers:

The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all.

Audience:

Amen.

Note: Worshipers are invited to remain in the sanctuary following the organ postlude, and to view the seven candlesticks with sculptors Alan Collins and students.

*Benediction**Organ Postlude*

Money, Mergers, And Marriage—The 1983 Annual Council

by Penelope Kellogg Winkler

In any other year, a sharp decline in offerings and ingathering, such as the church is currently experiencing, might easily have been the most significant issue at the Annual Council. But in 1983, an issue of even greater concern than church finances consumed most of the time and passion of the delegates—power and authority in the Adventist church. Delegates to the 1983 Annual Council surprised themselves by voting down, in a straw ballot, a major proposal from the General Conference officers, and were surprised again later by the officers' implementing a major organizational change after it had been approved by only the narrowest of majorities.

Lance Butler, treasurer of the General Conference, reported that total tithe income is increasing, but at a dramatically slower rate. From 1979 to 1980 tithe went up 11.13 percent; from 1980 to 1981 it increased 6 percent; from 1981 to 1982 it rose by only 1.15 percent—an actual decline in buying power, given the rate of inflation. Even

without reference to inflation, both Sabbath School offerings and Ingathering collections have declined worldwide in absolute amounts: Sabbath School offerings dropped from \$35 million in 1981 to \$33 million in 1982; Ingathering has continued to slide from a high in 1980 of \$16.6 million to \$15.8 million in 1981 and to \$15.2 million in 1982.

The desire to save on both capital expenditures (\$1.5 million for a new division headquarters in Africa) and operating expenses (\$900,000 annually) consumed a significant part of the time the delegates spent in deciding whether or not to have two African divisions instead of three. On the other hand, it took the Annual Council only half an hour to approve spending up to \$6 million for a General Conference building that will cost a total of \$20 million.

While money was, as usual, a central issue of debate, most of the Annual Council was taken up with questions of church structure and authority. The question of how church policies should be devised and implemented, and by whom, ranged over a broad spectrum of issues, including the merger of two African unions, the proposed relocation of General Conference headquarters, the creation of a separate North American Division, the reorganization of SAWS, our policy toward women in the church, and the scope

Penelope Kellogg Winkler edits for *Spectrum* and teaches writing at Columbia Union College. This report was written with the assistance of other *Spectrum* writers and editors.

of freedom and accountability for denominational employees.

The African Merger

The first proposal presented to the Annual Council delegates was the controversial African division merger and reorganization. Although the proposal contained six separate items, three of the six occasioned the most debate:

1. That we proceed immediately to combine the Eastern Africa Division with the Trans-Africa Division.
2. That both the Southern Union and the South African Union continue as distinct organizations.
3. That the new division headquarters be at Harare, Zimbabwe.

Reorganizing the African Division structure has been a matter under discussion for several years. After the political upheavals which took place in Africa from the mid-sixties to the mid-seventies, emerging African nations demanded that they no longer be run by European-based divisions which reflected out-of-date colonial relationships. Eventually, sub-sahara Africa will be divided into a western, largely French-speaking Africa-Indian Ocean Division, and an eastern, largely English-speaking Eastern Africa Division.

The Eastern Africa Division, now merged with the Trans-Africa Division, consisted of the Adventist churches in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, which made up its three unions. The Trans-Africa Division had five unions, made up of the territories of Zambia, Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho, southwest Africa, Swaziland, and South Africa. South Africa itself contained two unions: the South Africa Union, composed of the white, "colored," and Asian workers; and the Southern Union, composed of the black workers.

Because of its apartheid policies, which legally segregate blacks from whites, travel

in and out of South Africa is limited. Many black African countries, including Kenya, prevent their own citizens from traveling to South Africa, and do not allow South Africans permission to cross their borders. Placing South Africa into a division with these black African countries was seen as nearly impossible.

Reasons for proposing the merger were given in an hour-long presentation by Neal Wilson, president of the General Conference. Wilson's most convincing arguments were the financial advantages of the plan. In addition to the roughly \$900,000 savings in operating costs each year, merging the divisions would allow the new division to occupy the Trans-Africa headquarters buildings in Harare, Zimbabwe (once called Salisbury, Rhodesia), saving \$1.5 million in capital investments.

Black and white delegates from both the Eastern Africa Division and the Trans-Africa Division (including South Africa) opposed the merger, but on different grounds. The Eastern Africa Division representatives objected to any merger which included South Africa in the new division, and the Trans-Africa speakers objected to the arrangements for excluding South Africa and for making its two unions detached unions, directly under General Conference administrative supervision.

Black leaders in Eastern Africa also protested establishing the headquarters of the new division at Harare, should the merger be approved. They preferred Nairobi, Kenya, the previous headquarters of the Eastern Africa Division. They argued that Nairobi has better communication and transportation facilities and reminded Neal Wilson that Eastern Africa personnel had only recently opened the headquarters in Nairobi, in 1980, with the encouragement of the General Conference. They further suggested that the Kenyan government, which has often given the church special treatment, might feel betrayed if the division headquarters were moved out of the country. However, had the headquarters of the

new division been established in Nairobi, South Africans would not have been able to serve in administrative positions within the new division. Since Zimbabwe allows South Africans to live within its borders, choosing Harare as division headquarters allows South Africans to be part of the division leadership.

Conceding the financial advantages of the merger, some speakers remarked that perhaps administrative expenses were not too great a price to pay to demonstrate the unity of the church in Africa. In one of his two eloquent speeches on the proposal, Duncan Eva, former General Conference vice president and a South African who spent over 30 years in the work in South Africa, cautioned the Annual Council that "more harm has been done in the name of obedience than was ever done in the name of disobedience."

Race was definitely a significant factor in the issue of the two African divisions. Pastor Swanepoel, president of the white South African Union, pointed out that administratively isolating South Africa may destroy the communication that currently exists between South Africa and her neighbors. Alf Birch, secretary of the Trans-Africa Division and a citizen of South Africa, begged to keep South Africa within the division in order to continue the church's work of breaking down apartheid. Other speakers referred to the fact that churches of both unions accept members of any race. President Wilson replied that the church has to work within existing political realities, that the church must address the situation in South Africa as it is, not as we hope it will be, and that we must consider the greater good of the church in Africa as a whole.

Despite Wilson's strongly instructing delegates not to vote according to emotion, they rejected the proposal in a straw vote 152 to 117: 60 percent to 40 percent. The chairman decided that the vote was too close to take the official ballot at that time.

Formal debate was then suspended until the following Sunday.

Some delegates thought that the defeat of the General Conference in the initial, non-

Despite Wilson's strongly instructing delegates not to vote according to emotion, they rejected the proposal in a straw vote 152-117.

binding vote was partially the result of North American delegates not wanting to encourage the General Conference officers to disregard the views of division leaders about policies in their own territories. However, Elder Wilson, on Sunday, October 9, apologized for his speech prior to the straw ballot which, he conceded, seemed to some delegates an unfair attempt to influence their votes.

Finally, on Sunday afternoon, the Annual Council delegates approved, by a narrow margin of only nine votes, 145 to 136, the proposal to combine the Eastern Africa Division with the Trans-Africa Division. Gary Ross, the General Conference representative in the United States Congress, asked if it was usual to proceed with such a major decision when the margin for approval was so small. The chairman of Sunday's session Lowell Bock, vice president of the General Conference, replied simply that the decision would stand.

Within a few hours the nominating committee began to select officers for the new division. Bekele Heye, president of the present Eastern Africa Division, became head of the new division. Kenneth Mittleider, the American president of the Trans-Africa Division who did not make any speeches opposing the reduction of his division to two unattached unions, became a General Conference vice-president with special responsibilities for overseeing the Southern and South African unions. The question now remains whether disrupting

the existing African unity will be justified by a stronger and more economical Seventh-day Adventist church in Africa.

General Conference Headquarters

Mid-way through the Annual Council, Lance Butler, treasurer of the General Conference, informed the delegates that plans to build new General Conference headquarters were being delayed. It was proving difficult to sell the present General Conference property for a price that would equal the cost of building a new headquarters. The only property appealing to prospective buyers was the ten-story, high-rise North Building. But even with the other buildings and property added, the General Conference would probably receive only \$14 million, which is not enough to construct the new building.

Butler said that a survey of space needs and a projection of continued increases in General Conference staff showed that the General Conference will need 250,000 square feet of space in the new building, an increase from the 187,000 square feet of its present quarters. The General Conference officers estimated they would need another \$3 to \$4 million beyond the projected \$14 million sales price for the present property. Merle Mills, a general field secretary of the General Conference, quickly moved that the Annual Council approve an expenditure for that amount.

Before a vote could be taken, Alex Bassinia, a building contractor from New Jersey who was invited as a lay delegate to the Annual Council, made a speech assuring the other delegates that an additional \$3 to \$4 million would not be enough. According to Bassinia, the new building would cost at least \$20 million, requiring an additional \$6 million beyond the sales price of the present property.

Walter Blehm, president of the Pacific Union, made a short speech saying he

wished that a vote on appropriating funds could be postponed until an actual bid on the present property was secured, and until documents outlining space needs and costs had been distributed to the delegates. After all, a decision on the issue of separate headquarters for the North American Division might reduce the size of the proposed General Conference headquarters. In light of the concern lay persons were showing about the finances of the church, Blehm also voiced the hope that the Annual Council could avoid "flying blind" on an expenditure of this size.

A few speeches were made in favor of the proposal and a voice vote called for. Although a sizeable volume of "no's" was heard, Charles Hirsch, chairman of the session, declared that the vote had been approved. No one called for a tabulated vote.

Just where the new General Conference building will be located is still not clear. It was announced that a committee is looking at many sites in Maryland and Virginia, causing some to wonder if perhaps the General Conference headquarters would eventually be built on the large property owned by the Review and Herald in Hagerstown, Maryland, approximately 65 miles from Washington, D.C.

North American Division

For the first time in years, the topic of creating a North American Division came to the floor of the Annual Council. However, no formal actions were taken. In fact, at the climactic moment of the discussion, the vice president for North America, Charles Bradford, would not entertain motions from either a union president or local conference president to establish a commission to at least study the possibility of creating a genuine North American Division (NAD). Other General Conference officers were surprised at Bradford's decision.

The tone of the discussion was set by Bradford's written statement, "How I View the North American Division."

It is not something separate and apart from the General Conference. Its mission is to facilitate and expedite. It is operational, functional. The General Conference works *through* the North American Division. . . . The NAD is not an entity of its own. It has no constituency base. It is the servant of the General Conference—to do the General Conference's bidding in the geographical territory known as North America. It is to make the plans and programs of the General Conference operational in North America (here is the functional idea again). It is solely at the pleasure of the General Conference.

Neal Wilson, president of the General Conference and the immediate past vice president for North America, declared that making the General Conference in North America as independent as other divisions would become a jurisdictional problem. The General Conference leadership itself resides within North America, but division leaders are also administrators of the General Conference and it is impossible to have two General Conference leaderships in one territory.

The union and local conference presidents who spoke were grateful that the North American Division had finally become an item on the Annual Council agenda, but they wished to move ahead. Earl Amundson, president of the Atlantic Union, wanted some group to study the possibility of locating the headquarters of the North American Division in a building other than the \$20 million complex discussed the previous evening. He suggested that it might even be built somewhere other than the Washington, D.C., area.

Walter Blehm, president of the Pacific Union, who had vigorously questioned appropriating the \$6 million for the new General Conference building before questions about a North American Division had been settled, urged that a committee be established right away to devise a new organizational structure for North America. But when A. C. McClure, president of the Southern Union, asked if Elder Bradford would entertain a motion that such a com-

mission be appointed, the chairman suggested instead that the matter be referred to a meeting of the union presidents. McClure acquiesced. When Gary Patterson, president of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, said that he was ready to move that a committee study the possibility of creating a North American Division with authority equal to that enjoyed by divisions in other parts of the world, Bradford again declined to accept a motion.

Speeches in favor of developing the North American Division did not include support

The entire set of recommendations concerning chaplaincy were placed on the Annual Council agenda and ultimately approved by the delegates, except the provision regarding ordination of women.

for eliminating the unions. In fact, speaker after speaker went out of his way to reaffirm the need for union conferences in North America. Ben Leach, president of the Southwestern Union, made the most colorful speech. He acknowledged that "unions should be lean, seen, and clean," but emphasized that they are the basic unit of the General Conference: "The Lord wants unions."

The union issue raised some debate, and the strident characterizations which some delegates used to describe those who wished to do away with unions led Warren Banfield, director of the General Conference department of Human Relations, to urge that the Annual Council not regard those who honestly want change as enemies.

ADRA International

The reorganization of the Seventh-day Adventist World Service (SAWS) under a new agency, Adventist Development and Relief

Agency (ADRA), concentrates power more directly in the hands of the General Conference. The director of SAWS will now report not to the board of SAWS, but to the executive director of ADRA, an associate treasurer of the General Conference. While internal personal conflicts may have contributed to the change, many administrators in the divisions did not appreciate the fact that SAWS representatives reported to SAWS officers in Washington as much as to the division or union administrators. The reorganization will also probably shift the emphasis of the denomination from the grassroots development projects favored by SAWS (see *Spectrum*, Vol. 12, No. 3).

The General Conference voted ADRA as an umbrella organization encompassing SAWS and also funding efforts to secure international financing for large Adventist institutions. For example, ADRA is negotiating \$21 million in interest-free loans for Adventist universities from the African Development Bank, a multi-national institution with 51 member countries including the United States. The bank has earmarked \$9 million for the establishment of the Adventist University of East Africa in Kenya, and an estimated \$12 million for the development of the Adventist University of Central Africa in Rwanda. These interest-free loans will be repaid over a 60-year period, the first ten years of which require no loan repayment.

Roberto Drachanberg, the new ADRA executive director, Lance Butler, General Conference treasurer, and Neal Wilson, General Conference president, responded to concerns expressed by delegates. They maintained that ADRA will be an organization controlling SAWS, not replacing it; the legal SAWS name need not be changed or dropped, allowing donors to continue their support. The General Conference Treasury was definitely not taking the agency over; much of the work of SAWS should be able to continue as before.

The chairman of the board of directors of ADRA is Kenneth Mittleider, a newly-

appointed vice-president of the General Conference. Each division will be assigned an ADRA director who will serve on the 21-member executive committee chaired by Lance Butler. Also on the board will be prominent lay-people from all over the world, as well as the top three executive officers from each world division, in addition to the General Conference president, secretary, and treasurer. Other members on the 55-member board are representatives from each of the major General Conference departments. There seems little doubt that ADRA will be a very tightly managed and controlled entity.

Women

Women in the Adventist church will be affected by decisions made at Annual Council. For one thing, the General Conference officers decided that a proposal recommending that the North American Division be allowed to ordain women should not reach the Annual Council for discussion. An *ad hoc* committee appointed by the General Conference Committee, Expanded Chaplaincy Study, had met July 19 and 20 and decided on several recommendations to reorganize the National Service Organization and other denominational activities into a separate office, Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries. The final recommendation of the *ad hoc* committee, which was subsequently approved by the union presidents in North America and sent by them to the General Conference Officers for placement on the Annual Council agenda, said: "Women offer a unique contribution ministering in chaplaincy services and are being actively sought by the military, prisons, health-care institutions, and others. Ordination is a requirement and a prerequisite for serving in these areas, therefore it was voted to recommend that in the NAD women be ordained." The

entire set of recommendations concerning chaplaincy were placed on the Annual Council agenda, and ultimately approved by the delegates, except the provision regarding ordination of women. The officers had prevented the delegates from even seeing it.

The Annual Council did approve the creation of an *ad hoc* advisory subcommittee of the General Conference Office of Human Relations to examine the role of women in the North American Adventist church. The Association of Adventist Women had proposed to the office of human relations that it establish a commission to further equal access to education and employment and the elimination of discrimination towards women in the Adventist church. The *ad hoc* advisory subcommittee was the response.

Members have been invited to Washington for an initial meeting in March, 1984. There are five denominational employees and four lay persons on the committee. Most are professionally trained women: Gaylah Cantrell, a certified public accountant, is associate treasurer of the Atlantic Union Conference; Jan Daffern, associate pastor of Sligo Church, is presently completing her Master of Divinity degree from the SDA Theological Seminary at Andrews University; Andree DuPuis, a homemaker, is a member of the Quebec Conference executive committee as well as a member of the Kingsway College Board; (She was previously a Bible worker and colporteur.); Delphine Gates is a member of the Education Board of the Mid-America Union in Denver, Colorado; Thesba Johnston, professor of psychology at Andrews University, has an Ed.D. in counseling psychology and has been teaching at Andrews University for the past six years. (She is also first elder of All Nations Church at Andrews University in Berrien Springs.); Lourdes Silva is chairperson of the office management of Loma Linda University, La Sierra Campus. Alice Smith, now retired, was formerly associate director of the General Conference health department. She presently lives in North Carolina and does consulting for the General

Conference and Orlando Hospital. Helen Turner, treasurer of the Southwest Region Conference since 1982, is the first black woman to become treasurer of a conference. She has an M.B.A. in management, administrative sciences, and accounting, and is presently working on her Ph.D. Dorothy Williams lives in Olney, Maryland, where she has had her own insurance agency for the past 26 years. She is head deaconess of the Takoma Park Church.

While Annual Council did not discuss the possibility of North America acting on its own to ordain women, it did hear Neal Wilson discuss the possibility that Adventist policy might change regarding Adventist converts in Africa and muslim societies who are already living in polygamy. Proposals from an already active committee, with members from all over the world, may come as early as the 1984 Annual Council. At present, a man with many wives must divorce all but one of them in order to be eligible for baptism, although wives may be baptized and remain in a polygamous marriage.

Wilson pointed out several problems in the present policy. The church now forces Adventists who are legally married to become divorced. These divorced wives are stigmatized, frequently left with no means of support, and thereby forced into prostitution. Children of divorced women are considered illegitimate and cannot inherit land, a vitally important right in an agrarian society.

The church's policy on plural marriages has changed from time to time (see *Spectrum*, Vol. 13, No. 1). In 1913, the first statement on the issue was that a man with more than one wife ought not to be baptized. However, in 1930, a policy was voted at Annual Council which permitted the baptism of men married to more than one woman, but forbade already baptized members from entering into such marriages. In 1941, the General Conference reverted to the strict policy that persists today.

Wilson emphasized very strongly that our

policy regarding plural marriages is just that, a policy. Polygamy is not a doctrinal issue, Wilson said, pointing out that the twenty-seven articles of faith voted at Dallas in 1980 are silent on the subject.

Freedom and Accountability

The General Conference officers recommended that a "Theological Statement on Freedom and Accountability," which proposed a policy that would "apply to all licensed and credentialed denominational employees in all categories," be adopted. But they failed in their attempt to have those disciplinary procedures adopted as guidelines. Led by academic administrators, the delegates sent the statement back for further study.

Although the Board of Higher Education established a committee of academic and school administrators to make recommendations, the actual statement was produced by a group of General Conference officers (see *Spectrum*, Vol. 14, No. 2). This statement recommended procedures for disciplining all church employees and removing their credentials, although the termination of an academic's employment would remain in the hands of the school's board of trustees (removing credentials and terminating employment are not technically the same, although the end results are identical).

A key paragraphy in the document provided the rationale for discipline:

It is understood that the disciplining of a church employee (or church institutional employee) who persists in propagating (or expressing) doctrinal views differing from those of the Church is viewed not as a violation of his freedom, but rather as a necessary protection of the Church's integrity and identity. There are corporate church rights as well as individual freedoms. The worker's freedom does not include the license to express views that may injure or destroy the very community that supports and provides for him (wording applying specifically to denominationally employed academics has been provided in parenthesis).

If the chief executive officer of a conference (or church institution) is convinced that an employee advocates "doctrinal

views divergent from accepted Adventist theology and is unwilling to refrain from their recital," then he refers the matter to the conference or institutional executive committee, which then appoints a committee to review the situation.

One aspect of the policy that academic administrators in North America objected to was the possibility that a teacher might lose credentials (and therefore his or her denominational employability) through a process that bypassed the college administration. When the statement was read to the delegates, Grady Smoot, president of Andrews University, said that the document on academic freedom had been wrongly titled; it really was a statement on withdrawing credentials. Richard Hammill, Smoot's predecessor as president of Andrews and a retired vice-president of the General Conference, agreed.

Although Charles Hirsch, the vice-president of the General Conference who advises the General Conference Department of Education, pointed out that approving guidelines is different from adopting policy. Robert Carter, president of the Lake Union Conference and vice-chairman of the board of Andrews University, said that he had noticed that guidelines often became policy. Carter preferred that it remain a study document.

Robert Reynolds, executive secretary of the Board of Higher Education, also urged that the statement not be adopted at this Annual Council, but rewritten and returned as two statements, one dealing with academics and one with ministers. Agreeing, the Annual Council voted to accept the statement on theological freedom and accountability as a study document and give further study to the document and to the possibility of presenting it in the form of two documents for consideration by the 1984 Annual Council. Suggestions for additions, deletions, or changes should be addressed to the vice-president, advisor to the Education Department, before March 1, 1984.

Must We Keep the Sanctuary Doctrine?

by Edward W. Vick

The Seventh-day Adventist church is consciously reassessing some of its essential doctrines. That process has been extended by the three articles reinterpreting the doctrine of the sanctuary, which appeared in the last issue of *Spectrum* (vol. 14, no. 1).

In the first essay, Richard Rice proposed that the insights of Pannenberg and process theology help to draw out the contemporary significance of the sanctuary doctrine (pp. 36–38). For Fritz Guy, doctrines such as the sanctuary, heaven, Jesus as high priest, are “symbolic” in that they have meanings which go beyond what may be gained from a literal interpretation. For him, the general theological assertion which arises out of the narrative symbolism of the sanctuary doctrine is that God is continuously with his people (p. 45). John Dybdahl, while more concerned than either Rice or Guy with preserving the traditional meaning of the doctrine, found emphases in the sanctuary different from the original meaning of the doctrine (p. 50).

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What I shall argue is that an old doctrine necessarily undergoes serious changes in meaning as time passes, and that indeed from the beginning of Adventism the sanctuary doctrine has been undergoing significant reinterpretation. I shall also argue that the doctrine of the sanctuary does not alone serve to make contemporary Seventh-day Adventism “unique,” that it is not the only doctrine which supports our faith and gives our message an eschatological urgency. In fact, it is not necessary to maintain the identity of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination.

An oft-repeated claim in Seventh-day Adventist circles is that “we have the truth.” A corollary to this claim is that truth, once established, does not change but stands firm and unalterable. When a group puts together the principle, “we have the truth,” with the implications of the slogan, “the Bible and the Bible only,” the scheme of beliefs is then anchored to the past. Once the firm foundation of truth has been established, the community can rest, knowing that the central body of truths is secure. This claim is based on several very interesting assumptions. One of these is that truth is static and quantitative. Some groups have some truth. Others have more truth. But in his grace, God has seen to it that all truth has been made available, specifically to “his people,” the Seventh-day Adventists.

One of the interesting effects of this attitude of thinking of truth as contained in sets of fixed doctrinal propositions is the historical exercise of finding who else in the history of the Christian church held such views, and then to claim a lineage with them. But you do not and cannot guarantee the importance of a doctrine for us today, nor do you establish the truth of that doctrine, by tracing its history, not even by connecting it to Scripture. Among other things, you have to ask, "What did it mean?" and "What does it mean?" In a changing social and historical situation, the doctrine, even if repeated unchanged, no longer has the same significance. Moreover, statements may continue to be true while they are no longer considered significant.

William Miller understood the words of Daniel 8:14, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed," in a way very different from the way the earliest Seventh-day Adventists understood them. (By "earliest Adventists" I mean those who survived the Great Disappointment of October 22, 1844, when the return of Jesus to cleanse the sanctuary of the earth did not take place.) The Seventh-day Adventists in the 1880s understood these words in still another way, very different from the way the earliest Adventists understood them. The same words have had at least three different meanings in the history of a given community.

For Miller, that the sanctuary would be cleansed in 1844 meant that the end was imminent. He thought and preached in terms of an end. The day after the Great Disappointment, Hiram Edson had a vision in a cornfield in which he saw that the sanctuary was not the earth, to be cleansed by fire, but was in heaven, to be cleansed in some other way. This was a revolutionary insight, involving a complete recasting of an earlier belief and teaching, not just a

revision of one simple point. Edson, and those who endorsed his new interpretation, thought in terms of a beginning, and hence an indefinite extension of time, of which the length could not be specified.

This new perspective, so dramatically meaningful in light of recent experience, led to a doctrine which directly contradicted previous teachings. They reformulated the doctrine of the sanctuary in the emotional

It is well borne out in church history that once a community is established it can and does assess, modify, or reject certain of its doctrinal foundations.

belief that came from seeing something constructive emerge from a bitter disillusionment. Today the sanctuary doctrine does not mean what it meant to the early Adventists. In fact, in one important respect, Seventh-day Adventists now make an appeal to the sanctuary that is precisely opposite to the meaning the sanctuary had for early Adventists. For them the sanctuary meant that they had more time to plan, to think, to work again for the saving of souls and the spreading of the gospel in the world. They could regroup and reassess, knowing that 1844 was the beginning and not the end. They were, like the early Christians, relieved to know that they had good reason to believe that "the end is not yet," (Matthew 24:6). Time would continue.

A century-and-a-half later, the sanctuary means the opposite for Seventh-day Adventists. As now taught, the sanctuary encourages a sense of urgency that the end is very near indeed. When the sanctuary is cleansed, the end is imminent. Since we cannot know when the end is, or when the time of opportunity will come to an end, we must be ready at any time. There is to be no reckoning now for time to be stretched out, as when the doctrine was first taught by the

early Adventists. Time is now practically at an end.

With this radically different meaning, the function of the doctrine has also changed. Edson and the early Adventists experienced a disappointment in their expectation of something supremely significant happening in 1844. But they maintained a common belief that something supremely significant had happened by working out together the significance of the “work” of Jesus in the sanctuary. The common emotional and personal involvement in the events they had shared and were sharing and their common interest in theological questions served to unite them. The development of the sanctuary doctrine was thus functionally necessary to produce a community. We cannot specify any such unique function which the reasserted, revised doctrine now has.

Here we must distinguish the function or effect of a doctrine from the truth of the doctrine. One criterion of a doctrine's importance is whether teaching it is necessary for the community to continue. A second criterion is whether the doctrine is true. It is obvious enough that error agreed upon may be functionally necessary for the continuance of a community, the Flat Earth Society being a case in point. But what was necessary to unite the community at the beginning may not be necessary at a later stage. Some teachings are more important at some times than at other times.

It is well borne out in church history that once a community is established it can and does assess, modify, or reject certain of its doctrinal foundations. The theologian's task, as I see it, is to anticipate changes in meaning, reinterpret traditional doctrines in light of new contexts, and articulate these new meanings to the church body. In this way, doctrines do not become dogma but remain data for questions and interpretations, occasions for theological insights. In this process of reinterpretation, retaining, as

far as possible, the original form and wording of long-established doctrines connects new insights to the tradition, lending them a certain authenticity they might not otherwise have.

One of the ways in which such assessment can take place is by asking about the status of the doctrine, whether it is to be taken literally or metaphorically. Obviously, if the propositions in a doctrine were once taken literally and later came to be understood symbolically, an important change of status has taken place. In the case of the sanctuary doctrine, some Adventist interpreters have taken it to be quasi-literal, others as allegorical or typological, others yet as mythological (even if they would not want to have these labels attached to their interpretations.) The meaning of this doctrine has been grasped by speaking of the relation of God to believers, the urgency of

The sanctuary doctrine does not have an essentially unique function for contemporary Seventh-day Adventism; it is not the only doctrine which builds our faith.

making decisions of faith, the appeal for moral living, and by variations on the theme of personal and corporate judgment. Sometimes, unfortunately, it has led to unsatisfactory statements about God the Father and God the Son. In other versions, it has quite literally been used to refer to goings-on in a space/time not accessible to us, but nevertheless significant for events in our world.

However it is interpreted and whatever its status, a doctrine which is assumed to be necessary for the unity of the church becomes fixed, removed from the realm of questioning. Such a formal doctrine is one we assert the truth of and confess belief in, even if it plays an insignificant part in the instruction of the community.

I propose that the continuing existence and unity of the Seventh-day Adventist community does *not* depend upon the continual reassertion of our original doctrine of the sanctuary. Seventh-day Adventism is much more complex now than it was in the formative days when agreement, at least in broad principle, about the sanctuary teaching was *the* unifying factor. The grounds for our unity are still doctrinal, but now are more complex.

Thus, the sanctuary doctrine does not have an essentially unique function for contemporary Seventh-day Adventism; it is not the only doctrine which builds our faith, gives a sense of urgency to our decisions, reminds us that God is provident, that history has a purpose, and that Jesus Christ is the focal point of God's revelation and of the church's life. It is not the one teaching which supports the Adventist church.

Nor is the traditional doctrine of the sanctuary necessary for the identity of the

Seventh-day Adventist church. Saturday as day of worship; belief in Jesus Christ and in the imminence of the Second Advent; emphasis on healthful living; these features taken together readily distinguish Adventists from any other religious group.

Seventh-day Adventists will, I believe, benefit from careful and serious consideration of the issues raised by our various attempts to reexamine and reinterpret traditional Adventist doctrines. We need to ask ourselves quite seriously whether we still value genuine conversation, whether we, like our Adventist forbears, can see discussion as a way forward, a means through which God may reveal himself. This, after all, is a community which came into being because it thought it experienced the guidance of God through discussion, debate, and continuing assessment. Who knows but that God is once again calling Seventh-day Adventists to change their doctrinal interpretations and take faith more seriously?

Provonsha's "Untheology" of the Atonement

Reviewed by Nancy Hoyt Lecourt

Jack Provonsha. *You Can Go Home Again*. 128 pp. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1982. \$6.95 (paper).

Mystery. That is the subject of Jack Provonsha's latest book. It's a thriller. Not a "whodunit," of course. Rather it asks, Why? Why did Jesus have to die? Here is mystery indeed, but mystery considerably illuminated by this moving, memorable book.

You Can Go Home Again essentially begins with a brief historical survey of the traditional answers to this most central of all questions. This is not an easy task in a book avowedly for non-theologians, yet the discussion is generally clear and helpful to the lay person. The main point made is that these theories are useful *as metaphors* but that when taken literally, as has been too often the case, they show a basic misunderstanding of the nature of sin and, hence, of atonement itself.

According to Provonsha, theories that consider Calvary a mechanism for reestablishing order, for allowing God to forgive, reduce sin to a "thing"—something that can be remedied by an act. But sin is not a thing; it is a broken relationship that must be healed. Further, these theories (again, when they are pushed beyond their metaphorical limits) pose an interesting problem. Most explain that Christ's substitutionary death satisfies justice and restores peace and order. But, as Anselm first posed the question: "What justice is there in giving up the most

just man of all to death on behalf of the sinner?" (p. 27). Finally, these theories often contrast Father and Son—a wrathful Father is mollified by his Son's suffering in our stead. Naturally such a dividing of the Trinity is, quite literally, anathema to the author.

Having described the strengths of these ideas as metaphors and delineated their weaknesses as full-blown theories, Provonsha is in a position to describe his own efforts to build toward an understanding of the atonement. The solution he offers revolves around another extended metaphor: the Genesis account of man's fall. The tree, the serpent, the fig leaves, the "better garments," the garden itself—all illustrate the human condition and God's loving, appropriate response. In a sort of cosmic "he loves me, he loves me not," the author removes obstacles from between God and the sinner—sin, guilt, doubt—like petals, until at last only the center remains. Here, at the emotional core of the book, we have his "untheology:" a vivid retelling of the tale of the prodigal, who can go home again when he finally understands with his whole heart, finally really believes, in his Father's love.

At last we have Provonsha's thesis: "Christ died because God loves—and that's the sum of it" (p. 113). The Son did not die to set right an injustice, to enable God to save man; he died because God's suffering love must be revealed, unforgettably made plain, to sin-hardened hearts so that they may believe. "The cross was the ultimate, forceful expression of the way things really are—it is the way things are!" (p. 91).

Though the early chapters, while necessary, are somewhat mechanical and seem at

times to wander into superfluous apologies, disclaimers, qualifiers, and asides of various sorts, these faults seem slight when one enters the powerful central chapters on sin, guilt, justification, and sanctification. Here the author truly finds his voice, and his conviction and enthusiasm carry the reader firmly down the path of his argument. The destination is certainly crucial, yet beside the way lie many unexpected pleasures. Provonsha illuminates troubling concepts such as original sin ("I, frankly, had nothing to do with Adam's sin, nor did you. . . ." p. 71) and perfection (including a discussion of Ellen White's statement that "when the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own"). Salvation by works is further unveiled as villain: it assumes an unfriendly universe, where "God requires our goodness in order to respond in kind . . ." (p. 102). An interesting use of church standards is described (p. 101), and we even learn the potential value of penance (p. 102).

This book is recommended reading, then, for those "thoughtful, reasonably well-educated" Christians for whom it is intended. Like any good mystery, it makes a pleasant, instructive way to pass the afternoon, rainy or otherwise.

Nancy Hoyt Lecourt taught most recently in the English department at Pacific Union College. She writes now from Geneva, Switzerland.

The Tie That Binds as Noose

Visions of Glory, by Barbara Grizzuti Harrison. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978. \$12.95.

by Carol L. Richardson

Take a sensitive, intelligent, religious nine-year old girl and introduce her to an American apocalyptic denomination, one

formed in the ferment of the social reforms of the 1840's, 50's and 60's; a religion whose earnest mission is to spread the gospel world-wide to hasten Christ's return; a religion that insists on a conservative, modest, family-centered life-style; introduce her to this religion and what do you get? A young woman, by age twenty-two, catatonic, unable to speak or walk down stairs, on the verge of breakdown, overcome by guilt and anxiety, estranged from her family, confused and friendless. What might seem to some like a sure-fire prescription for what ails a suffering humankind, in this case ended in disaster. What went wrong?

Visions of Glory, this passionate account of Barbara Grizzuti Harrison's thirteen years as a Jehovah's Witness, seethes with resentment at the psychic damage she suffered as a Witness, yet yearns to understand both the byzantine world of the Witnesses and her own attraction to this idiosyncratic sect. While the book contains a good deal of historical and contemporary accounts of the church's activities, Harrison's approach is frankly subjective, history and sociology merely providing the context in which she examines her own harrowing experiences.

For example, Harrison sketches a brief biography of the sect's charismatic founder, Charles Taze Russell, a man given to financial flimflamery; a man with an appetite for publicity, litigation, and women. After bitter scuffles in the courts with his wife Maria, Russell emerges as the church's chief articulator for the misogynist doctrine of Eve as the source of the world's evil. This is not mere history: its effect on the young Barbara is brutal:

But the offenses that made me most horribly guilty were those I had committed unconsciously; as an imperfect being descended from the wretched Eve, I was bound, so I had been taught, to offend Jehovah seventy-seven times a day without my even knowing what I was doing wrong. (p. 16)

Or again, Harrison's review of the Witness's historical objection to saluting the

flag as a form of idolatry contains more than the admission that this peculiar practice has, through its First Amendment challenges, benefitted all citizens by forcing a broad definition of freedom of worship. Harrison includes the personal cost as well with an excruciating look at how the resulting ostracism feels to a young schoolgirl:

Having to remain seated . . . during flag salute at school assembly was an act of defiance from which I inwardly recoiled. I wanted desperately to be liked—despite the fact that the Witnesses took pleasure in anything that could be construed as “persecution”, viewing any opposition as proof of their being God’s chosen. Not saluting the flag . . . did not endear me to my classmates. I wanted to please everybody—my teachers, my spiritual overseers, my mother (above all my mother); and of course, I could not.” (p. 20)

Step by step aspects of Jehovah’s Witness’s beliefs and history are explained: their narcissistic interpretations of final events, in which all world calamities somehow focus on themselves; their rabid anti-Catholicism; the often frightful persecution they have endured worldwide as a result of their intransigent definition of political neutrality. Marshalling so much information, down to demographic statistics, gives the book its tone of obsessiveness. But what we are witnessing is catharsis, a ritual cleansing, an exorcism.

Harrison is like the normal person who somehow got committed to the asylum, and she is confused and angry: confused at her own attraction to the vindictive, paranoid theology of the Witnesses, and angry over the guilt she was made to feel over her inability to adapt to the no-think behavioral conformism demanded by the group. She escaped, but she very nearly paid with her mental health.

Visions of Glory is an absorbing account, not without value to those of us whose own religion springs from similar roots. To be sure there are significant differences between Jehovah’s Witnesses and Seventh-day Adventists: Adventists have a wholly different conception of the deity, and take a more mainstream protestant approach generally. But what might to some seem outrageous beliefs of the Jehovah Witnesses often bear an uncanny resemblance to our own, only writ large. Where their misogyny is strident, ours takes a quieter, paternalistic turn; where their objection to worldly education is virulently anti-intellectual, our own lack of support for faculty with “unacceptable” methodology is only less explicit. Life in both communities might well be for some intolerable; the confines demanded of each sect might well suffocate an airier soul.

Visions is a plea for liberality, for “space.” The Christian church’s ostensible purpose is to provide a supportive community; its members aspiring to love each other as scripture commands. But a church can too easily become a provincial country club where admission demands not so much obedience as repression of human traits that, willy-nilly, will out, if not healthily, then pathologically. The church, according to Harrison, should be a place where sick souls become healthy, and not a place where the healthy are made ill.

Carol Richardson holds masters degrees in both English and Library Science. She is a reference librarian at the Loma Linda University Library.

The Mid-America Outlook on Davenport

by Bonnie Dwyer

To the Mid-America Union Committee, administrators should not be gauged by whether the conferences over which they presided invested in Davenport projects. The fact that an administrator has received a letter of reprimand for lack of fiduciary responsibility in connection with the Davenport affair is not the only consideration taken into account when a union committee elects its officers.

August 1, 1983, Ellsworth S. Reile resigned his position as president of the Mid-America Union and accepted an appointment with the Adventist Health Systems, Eastern and Middle America, thus ending the stalemate which had developed between the Union Committee and the General Conference over how he should be disciplined for his connections with the bankrupt Donald Davenport. The Union Committee wanted to lower his level of discipline so he could retain his presidency. The General Conference did not.

Later in August, Mid-America's Union Committee elected Joel O. Tompkins as its new president. He had previously served as president of the Kansas-Nebraska Conference and received a letter of discipline from General Conference President Neal C. Wilson for the loans the Kansas conference made to Dr. Davenport.

"Elder Tompkins' involvement with Davenport funds was not a major point one way or the other during his election," said Darrell Huenergardt, the union's attorney.

"The comment was made that he had no personal funds involved, and that he had delegated the responsibility of following up on conference loans to the treasurer. It was considered an appropriate way to handle the task. 'Do we want someone who knows how to delegate responsibility or not?' was a question we discussed."

North American Division President Charles Bradford chaired the committee meeting. He noted that the Kansas loans to Davenport had been thoroughly discussed with the constituency at the time the Kansas conference was merged with Nebraska. The constituency meeting had occurred a few months after Davenport filed for bankruptcy.

Members of the 1983 Mid-America Union committee meeting got the feeling from Bradford's comments that the statement about conference investments in Davenport's projects, made to the constituency meeting of the Kansas-Nebraska Conference in 1980, had served as adequate discipline for Elder Tompkins. For whatever reason, the General Conference has not conducted a discipline session in Kansas-Nebraska despite the fact that three people were on the discipline list at Level II, which by definition required a public session. Former Kansas Treasurer Dan Peckham and a retiree were also on the discipline list.

William R. Bothe, who attended all other discipline sessions as a representative of the General Conference and the President's Review Commission, refused to comment on the discipline in Kansas-Nebraska.

"I think in Mid-America we've put the thing in perspective," said Huenergardt. "The topic is not overly or underly discussed. It has been my hope that we would not become a one-issue church, so that

Davenport investments end up outweighing other considerations in evaluating administrators.”

Tompkins' election came after several ballots, in a process that lasted about seven hours. The committee started out with approximately 30 names. A couple of other people who had been disciplined for involvement with Davenport money were also considered. However, Tompkins led all the way, according to Union College president Dean Hubbard.

Tompkins estimates that the Kansas-Nebraska Conference will break even on its Davenport investments, which totaled \$1.2 million. He says \$600,000 has been returned through insurance.

It was in Kansas that Davenport funds were used to hire an evangelist one year. Davenport also contributed to the endowment of the conference academy. The letters between Davenport and Treasurer Dan Peckham were as much about evangelism plans as they were about investment monies. In May 1977, Peckham wrote, “There is one item I especially want to report to you regarding our evangelism. Because of a large meeting we had here in Topeka at the beginning of 1976, our total baptisms thus far this year are a little behind last year, but with the plans for the rest of the year, we feel quite certain that we will be very close to 400 baptisms for the year and this will be a big increase over last year—1976—which is the best year we have had.”

Davenport funded the evangelist's salary in 1976. He wrote back to Peckham that he was “thrilled with the prospects” of Kansas' evangelism and hoped “to have a small part in it.” In addition he told Peckham he wanted to provide some funds for needy academy students.

Peckham never invested personally with Davenport, and he went from the position of conference treasurer to assistant treasurer when Kansas and Nebraska merged.

Reile will be remembered, in Mid-America at least, for his role in the merger of the Northern and Central Unions into the

present Mid-America Union as well as the subsequent merger of several conferences. In the September *Mid-America Outlook*, Ellsworth Reile's shift from president of the Union to an officer in the Adventist Health System/Eastern and Mid-America was announced with a full-page story summarizing his accomplishments.

The article by *Outlook* editor Halle G. Crowson noted the conference mergers and the Union merger and the savings which have resulted from them. “There were ten conferences in the two unions prior to merger. Today there are six conferences in the Mid-America Union. The Mid-America Union office is operating with one less man in the office than were in the former Central Union office,” the article said. “These mergers have now resulted in a saving of more than one million dollars annually. These funds are now being channeled back into the conferences to help at the local level.”

In discussing his plans for Mid-America, Tompkins says he plans to carry out suggestions made in a report initiated by Reile and compiled by Dean Hubbard, president of Union College.

Bonnie Dwyer is a graduate student in journalism at California State University at Fullerton, and is news editor of *Spectrum*.

Closing Small Boarding Academies: The Pioneer Valley Case

by Terri Dopp Aamodt

The 1982–1983 school year had been a series of financial crises: 112 students instead of the budgeted-for 125; a monthly cash flow shortage of over \$18,000; over a million dollars of loans payable; utility bills that ran

\$25,000 per month in wintertime; a shortage of student jobs; \$100,000 of accounts receivable from unpaid tuition; and the 7,000 members of Southern New England Conference unable or unwilling to respond to repeated calls for emergency funds.

Faculty members had to wait two to four weeks to receive their paychecks.

At that point the conference, still trying to repay funds it had repeatedly borrowed to help Pioneer Valley Academy (\$139,000 in 1978–79, \$200,000 in 1981–1982), could not borrow any more money.

On May 8, 1983, the conference committee and the academy board voted to close the school because \$279,000 was needed to open school the next fall, and only 25 percent of a conference-wide goal to retire the debt had been raised. With the end of the school year, June 30, 1983, Pioneer Valley Academy in New Braintree, Massachusetts, disappeared in a surge of red ink. Other than those eliminated after conference mergers, Pioneer Valley is the first boarding academy in North America to close.

While new day academies, both junior and senior, continue to be established, boarding academies in North America are facing difficult times. It is true that the four largest boarding academies gained students in 1982—Monterey Bay Academy in the Pacific Union enrolled 514 students; Forest Lake in the Southern Union, 393; Kingsway in the Canadian Union, 340; and Shenandoah Valley in the Columbia Union, 327. But among the 42 boarding academies in North America, smaller schools, like Pioneer Valley Academy, are struggling.

Overall academy enrollment for the North American Division (NAD) dropped 1,418 students from 1981 to 1982. This drop was 710 students larger than the previous year's decline. What happened to Pioneer Valley Academy deserves to be carefully examined by church members in other

conferences which operate small Adventist boarding academies.

When Pioneer Valley Academy opened in September 1965, about 30 miles west of South Lancaster, Massachusetts, its future appeared considerably brighter. The gleaming new school attracted 250 students from the northeastern United States, and the curriculum offered a wide range of courses, including four years of French, and the services of three full-time music teachers.

The academy was built to replace boarding facilities at South Lancaster Academy, which had been operated by Atlantic Union College. In 1958, the college told the Southern New England Conference that accreditation required that they move South Lancaster Academy off the campus. On July 20, 1958, the conference constituency voted to build their own boarding academy. A few months later the 5200 conference members were asked to contribute \$200,000 a year for the next five years as part of a \$1,800,000 fund-raising program.

After prolonged debate, a crucial decision was made that affected the viability of the new school. The academy was located a considerable distance from the membership centers of the conference, Boston and South Lancaster. As a result, the already established Greater Boston and South Lancaster academies continued as senior day academies. A conference of under 7,000 members now had three senior academies.

By 1963, costs had risen above available funds, and the conference had to borrow money to complete the girls' dormitory. By 1965, the cost of the school had climbed to \$3 million.

For the first ten years of its operation, the academy survived from one year to the next with the help of heavy subsidies. Enrollment hovered between 220 and 250 students; the school was designed to accommodate 324. Just as the Southern New England Conference prepared to call a moratorium on nearly 20 years of fund-raising for the

academy, the school's problems began to multiply. Enrollment hit a high of 288 in 1977-1978. Many students with inadequate financial resources had been admitted, and 30 of them paid less than 25 percent of their bill. The following year's enrollment dipped to 207 students, or 40 below budget. This loss, coupled with a backlog of \$153,000 in unpaid tuition, forced the conference to borrow \$139,000. Similarly catastrophic enrollment drops occurred for several years.

By this time, several underlying problems became obvious. The Southern New England Conference had chosen Pioneer Valley Academy's location in part to attract students from the Northern New England Conference, which did not have a 12-grade school. When Northern New England transformed Pine Tree Memorial School to a full-fledged day academy, a critical source of students for Pioneer Valley disappeared. Since the academy had been designed to operate with one-third to one-half of its students coming from outside the local conference, the school had to go farther afield to attract students. The result was a group of parents who did not feel compelled to pay school bills, and a group of students who had little in common with each other and did not form a cohesive alumni group after they graduated. The location was too remote to attract industry; eventually the school's two main industries, Harris Pine Mills and Dakota Bake-n-Serve, pulled out. Pioneer Valley Academy was left with two large industrial buildings with large mortgages and high maintenance costs.

Enrollment in September 1981 fell to 142. By November, the school was down to a ten-day supply of food and heating oil. The power company and telephone company notified the school that their utilities would be shut off in ten days if their bills were not paid. The conference borrowed \$200,000 from the Atlantic Union to meet immediate needs and called a constituency meeting in February 1982 to determine what should happen to the academy. The constituency voted to operate the academy another year,

balancing the budget on an enrollment of 125. Only 112 students entered in the fall of 1982, which meant a loss of over \$100,000 to the school.

In the meantime, other crises ensued.

Pioneer Valley Academy was saddled with a heavier burden of interest on its loans. It had missed three consecutive monthly payments to Fitchburg Savings Bank, to which it owed over \$500,000 at 7½% interest on loans for industrial buildings and faculty homes. The bank recalled the loans and rewrote them at 15 percent interest as a penalty. The academy then had to pay nearly \$60,000 a year in interest on these and other loans. Grocery wholesalers refused to deliver c.o.d. to the academy. The only way the school could obtain food was to take cash or a certified check to the company and load the food on its own trucks. Faculty members had to wait two to four weeks to receive their paychecks.

On February 20, 1983, the Southern New England Conference constituency held another special session to deal with Pioneer Valley Academy. Conference officials maintained that with a special offering to retire the debt, and continued large yearly offerings, the academy could survive. The plan called for a special offering of .5 percent of conference members' yearly income (based on the previous year's tithe figures). The constituency voted to keep the academy open indefinitely.

On April 23 the conference collected a special offering with a goal of \$140,000. The offering netted only \$46,000 in cash and pledges, and the financial handwriting was on the wall. Within a few weeks the conference committee and Pioneer Valley Academy Board voted to close the school. On July 19, 1983, the constituency of the Southern New England Conference ratified the board's decision to end the struggle for Pioneer Valley Academy.

Responses

Support for Amnesty And Soviet Adventists

To the Editors: Your copy of *Spectrum* (Volume 13 Number 3) dealing with *Moral Challenges* was recently slipped into my hands by a good friend. I was relieved at last to discover that somewhere within the context of Adventist thinking honest answers to honest, relevant questions are being dealt with by some courageous, intelligent representation in our ranks.

I have recently spent three years in Germany during which time I was able to make several visits to the Eastern Communist block and discover head on the devastating effects of state rule over man's individual creative choices and religious or political convictions. During this time I became closely associated with both members of the "Grosse Gemeinde" and "Kleine Gemeinde" the equivalent of our larger Adventist representations and smaller reformed groups.

I felt devastated after reading your published letters from Amnesty International announcing their rejected appeal by the Adventist General Conference. Are we only in this world to preserve the freedoms of those who think like us? If Mr. Spalin had been labelled "Calathumpian" or some other more obscure title would his entitlement to freedom and justice be more justified in the vision of our "higher" representatives?

I would like Mr. Leonard Lothstein to know that as a member of the S.D.A. church at large I will be pleased to forward letters to Soviet officials on Mr. Spalin's behalf (along with other names appealed for) and will stand with Amnesty International in any way I can to support their cause against the growing mound of unnecessary political injustice accumulating around our contemporary world.

Daphni Clifton
Richmond, British Columbia
Canada

Taxes, Tithing and Local Church Expense

To the Editors: I am writing in regard to "Income Sharing: A Plan for Economic Justice in the Local Church," *Spectrum* (Vol. 13, No. 4).

"Equal access" to "equality" was provided by the seven-year release and 50-year jubilee. Both were Sabbath "rest" for the people to protect them from oppression. This was not income redistribution as such.

It is surely the right of any community to adopt re-

distribution if they choose, but I would disagree that their morality would be superior.

How do we relate these concepts to today? Earthly governments enact exorbitant taxes, far in excess of 10 percent, which God told Samuel was oppressive. Governments debauch the currency, thereby robbing the people by hidden taxation. The land is mortgaged, with no seven-year release. The theocracy was the most "gracious system" the world has known for sinful man, if practiced. Surely all nations would have wondered at her instead of taking her captive if its covenant had been followed.

As to the apostle Paul asking for income redistribution, where is that stated? There is evidence that churches gave freely to help in the support of the gospel in other areas. This, however, was not a command but a suggestion of the apostle (2 Cor 8:8). Peter told Annanias and Sapphira that what they had pledged was theirs. They performed an evil when they withheld what they had pledged freely.

To conclude that these biblical situations call for income redistribution today is to strain the text at best.

Patrick A. Travis, DDS
East Point, GA

To the Editors: For want of a better way of expressing myself regarding the plan of "sharing the wealth," may I call the corporate body of the S.D.A. church rich Uncle Midas? And let us call the local church his poor nephew William, with the individual members being the children of William. Now Uncle Midas indeed owns hospitals, universities, colleges, publishing houses, and has millions in assets. And poor William agrees that it is nice to have a rich uncle but it does not really help him much personally. For while they are asked to support Uncle Midas and add to his wealth and they do so faithfully, they are finding it harder and harder to pay the bills they owe, due to the poor economy and constantly increasing costs. When poor William advises Uncle Midas of his troubles, Uncle Midas answers: "It cannot be that bad, poor William. Are you giving faithfully? Are you all giving? Are you being careful with what you have left?"

But when poor William is asked to fit another offering into his budget and share the wealth, I fear he is going to say: "What wealth are you talking about? We have the roof in the sanctuary to fix, and the carpet in the school is full of holes. Our utility bills are going up again. We cannot afford to pay the tuition for some of the children who are too poor to pay their own way to church school. Don't mention offering at this time. Sorry."

The moral of the story is: if the problem is at the top with Uncle Midas, don't hassle poor William and his family.

Alice L. Davidson
Rockford, IL

On Rice, Guy, Dybdahl Revising Sanctuary Doctrine

To the Editors: I appreciated the three articles by Richard Rice, Fritz Guy, and Jon Dybdahl in the special section: The Sanctuary Revisited in Vol. 14, No. 1.

One point that I feel is often not clearly distinguished is the difference between the doctrine of the sanctuary which is the heritage of all Christians, and that teaching relating to the sanctuary which is unique to Seventh-day Adventism. Adventists often speak and write about "the sanctuary truth" in a way that would lead us to believe that the doctrine of the sanctuary is Adventists' unique and distinctive contribution to Christendom *in toto*. In point of fact, however, the doctrine of the heavenly sanctuary, with Christ's heavenly cleansing ministry as our High Priest, has been the heritage of all Christians at least since the book of Hebrews and the book of Revelation were written. Rice speaks of Adventism developing its "unique concept of the heavenly sanctuary over a period of 13 years following the Great Disappointment," and he goes on to say "this concept" teaches that "Christ's work in the heavenly sanctuary comprises two distinct activities which began at different times." It is not made clear that the doctrine of Christ's ministry as High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary since the ascension is not Adventism's unique contribution, but the common heritage of Christendom.

What is unique about Adventist teaching is the new twist added by which Christ's ministry is split into two distinct "phases" or activities in two separate apartments of the heavenly sanctuary, the second "phase" of which started in 1844, and consists of an "investigative judgment" and a "final atonement," the outcome of which depends upon the actions of human beings during their life on earth. This teaching is unique because no other Christians have interpreted the biblical data in this manner throughout the last 2,000 years. Although some have believed in a pre-advent judgment, they have not seen it the way Adventists have taught it. Some even feel that to question the traditional Adventist teaching is to question the "sanctuary doctrine" *in toto*. They fail to distinguish between that which is the common heritage of all Christians and that which Adventists have added.

Guy gives some helpful comments in the box on pages 40-41. While he does not explicitly identify "a particular idea," he describes three responses to the disparity between "what the community once believed and what it now actually and actively . . . believes," and he goes on to say that this "is directly applicable to the current discussion within Adventism regarding the doctrine of the sanctuary." He describes the first response as making the doctrine essential to the identity of the community, and defending it. The second response is to consider the doctrine as not only irrelevant but conceptually untrue because it lacks adequate support, and thus it should not have been believed in the first place, and the community was mistaken (if not deluded) to have ever believed it.

The third response, of which Guy says his essay is an example, is to suggest that the idea in question does have important experiential significance, even though this is not exactly the same meaning it had originally, and that therefore it should be maintained for the good of the community. My comment is that if, as James Russell Lowell wrote, "time makes ancient good uncouth," "then to side with truth is noble," regardless of what it may do to our denominational self-image.

I witnessed the debate between William Shea, Alex Ortega, and Desmond Ford and Smuts van Rooyen at the San Joaquin Valley Chapter of the Association of Adventist Forums (*Forum*, August 1983, pp. 2, 3). To some extent I saw all three of the responses Guy describes in evidence. Guy, Rice, and Dybdahl, even though they seem to be better spokesmen for revisionism than they are defenders of the original tradition, still speak from within the church while Ford and van Rooyen are increasingly seen as critics from without. However, fundamentally they are all pointing out that our original "unique contribution" contributes very little today.

Arlyn Baldwin
Mendocino, CA

Divisions Adapt Church Policies to Local Cultures

To the Editors: Roy Bran-son's "Principles for Renewal" in the August issue of *Spectrum*, Vol. 14, No. 1, might well have been entitled "The Relationship between Policies and Principles." It raises critical issues for the overseas church, which has naturally borrowed heavily from its parent stem.

Seventh-day Adventists pride themselves with the knowledge that the same policies apply everywhere to everyone. But policy must be contextually meaningful, and should reflect societal mores, cultural practices, and special conditions. Where policy is at basic odds with the sovereign laws of a country, the church should not expect special exemption or protection as a religious organization. Policy is not an end in itself, but is the servant of principle.

Policies are not useless, but the utility of policies must be evaluated finally by how well they further the church's mission. Perhaps as the church moves toward the close of the century, policies will become even more varied, adaptive, and flexible.

I expect that in the future the church will retain similar policies, but that each division will adopt policies to contextually fit its unique circumstances and peculiar needs. Variety in policy need not mean confusion, but could well become a cornerstone of creativity and aid in the accomplishment of the church's mission.

Sylvan Lashley
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