

Sound Over Sight in Sabbath Worship
Watching Your Step in Brewster, WA.

SPECTRUM

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BIG BANG OR DIVINE COMMAND?

Campfire Stories About Black Holes
Genesis — Do SDA Students Believe It?
What About Gentry's Halos?

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Taking the Pulse of an Adventist Campus

We didn't plan it that way, but in this issue one can feel the pulse of a campus. Four of the 10 pieces were written by faculty and students of Walla Walla College. Their voices are quite distinct. Dan Lamberton, in the English department, remembers a devout Adventist father reassuring his sons about their awakening sexuality. Glen Greenwalt, in the school of religion, is both sweet and salty about a heavily-promoted denominational book. Ronald Carter, the head of the biology department, by liberally including quotations in his book review, reveals why the author, a creation activist, appears to be self-absorbed. Ernest Bursey, another

religion teacher, and one of his students, Larry Brunt, disarmingly admit many shortcomings in the church, while making the case for Adventism's continuing relevance.

No one essay—or collection of writings—can adequately capture a school, let alone a system of colleges; but those wondering why Adventists go through all the bother with Christian education need look no farther than student David Reimer's account of one Walla Walla faculty meeting. Editors of campus newspapers are not easily moved. He was. You will be too.

—*The Editors*

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Responses

Growing Up Adventist: Watching Your Step in Brewster, WA

by Dan Lamberton

I am talking with friends in a Seattle restaurant. We meet together because we work at poetry and the University of Washington offers us a place to study and to write. We are drawn to one another partly because we are so unlike. One of us is Islamic and a restaurant owner; two write for high-tech firms; the friend next to me is a bright and eccentric barmaid; another is an older woman, recently divorced, who is starting her second year of graduate school at Columbia and is full of New York and freedom.

We ask ourselves what we have left from our childhood religions. We all insist that our spirituality is still important, although no one claims to be at ease with any creed. As we left childhood, God became even more mysterious, His mystery leaving an increasingly large question mark. The presence of God is inescapable. But where, we wonder, does spirituality come from? We don't answer the question well.

I say that my own spirituality remains partly because I was raised on a farm, and bad weather often reminded us of our frailty. When my friends insist that spirituality remains a persistent theme in my writing, I tell them my imagination was formed by a Seventh-day Adventist childhood.

At home, we weren't especially strict Adventists. Although we took our faith seriously, we differed from many in our church. We ate our cattle, sheep, and chickens. I remember the

slaughter and dressing of these animals. We children sometimes joked about other Adventists' strict dietary rules, about carob and the church's commercial attempts to simulate meat with soybean products.

But we weren't lax. Once, when I nearly burned our house down, my father didn't give me the spanking everyone thought I deserved. Instead, he took me into the bedroom where we shook hands on my promise never to smoke in my life. This was before the Surgeon General's report, and not smoking seemed peculiarly Adventist to me.

When we milked cows in the barn, we listened to rock and roll on a portable radio. But if we caught each other singing Elvis or Jerry Lee Lewis on Saturday, we'd just say "Sabbath," and the singer stopped. We played basketball and HORSE during the week, but on Sabbath changed the game to MOSES.

Ours was a large family of Adventists—I had five brothers and sisters and nearly 70 first cousins. I am quite certain I would now be a Mennonite or Lutheran, as my ancestors once were, if I had been born to one of those religions. I have never had much interest in changing churches or in persuading others to join mine. My grandparents, however, *became* Adventists.

Mother seldom spoke of her past. But what I do know of my mother's side intrigues me. Her family blended independence with conviction. Mother came from Saskatchewan; her uncle was T. E. Unruh, a conference president. One of her aunts began as a staunch Adventist, but later wrote a book denouncing Ellen White. My mother says her own parents gathered their neighbors together

Dan Lamberton, assistant professor of English at Walla Walla College, is working on a doctorate at the University of Washington. His brother Henry (just a year older), is an associate professor of religion at Loma Linda University.

for discussions of prophecy, urging them to accept Adventist doctrine. My grandma traveled about, raising money to build the churches in Nipawin and Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. But of her six children, only my mother remained an Adventist.

From my mother I heard stories of uncommon devotion. Her father died an Adventist, but the last time my mother saw him, he was leaning against a door in the Old Sailors' home in Victoria, B.C., gesturing toward her with his beer bottle. "Bernice," he said, "never give up the message."

My mother's oldest sister left Adventism on a Sabbath morning. Radio had come to northern Saskatchewan, and over the air my Aunt Edna heard a minister explain grace and salvation. She decided that her *Sabbath School Quarterly* missed the whole point of Romans; its avoidance of grace was too much.

My cousin remembers the Sabbath morning when they drove to church in a truck. Her mother honked the horn until the little congregation came outside, and then all six children stood up in the back of the truck and yelled, "We're going to the circus." Church officials came to convince my aunt of her doctrinal error, but she and her family did not count themselves Adventists again.

My favorite story of this family happens several years after their break from the church. Two of my cousins stole a new Studebaker from an Adventist church parking lot. They toured the small northern towns for several days, avoiding the dragnets and radio bulletins, leaving service-station attendants holding dripping gasoline hoses, registering as the Hardy Boys at the little inns, taking clothes and meals and driving away. They also avoided severe punishment from the provincial law because members of the same Adventist church where the boys' escapades began would not aid the province by pressing charges. Instead, the church members promised the authorities that they would look after the youngsters.

These same cousins who had taken the car visited us often. Once, when I was 12 or so, one of them threw me a swimming mask and told me to watch underwater while he and his wife submerged and kissed.

They knew irreverence and reverence. They believed in grace and they argued that our Adventist doctrine was a heavy anchor of law, thrown overboard before we reached the harbor of Christ's free salvation. I have never again seen such spiritual conviction and enthusiasm as they had. We challenged each other with Biblical debates; text ran up against text. I remember one cousin weeping because, she said, she loved us and feared we would go on rejecting the gospel.

But we grew up in my dad's hometown, and my father's parents and their religious outlook did the most to form our lives. I feel it still—practical, intense, and driven by the maverick devotion of

My father's parents and their religious outlook did the most to form our lives. I feel it still—practical, intense, and driven by the maverick devotion of people who take a thing very seriously although they don't study it much.

people who take a thing very seriously although they don't study it much. Grandfather had strong patriarchal ideas even before the family became Adventists. He kept his daughters on a short leash—they dressed strangely—and his sons were insecure. My father says that Adventism actually softened his father. Prior to his conversion he had fierce and unpredictable beliefs. Adventism gave the family a code and the relief of order.

My father's mother worked hard and held her own firm opinions. She flew around the house, baked bread daily, canned as many as 200 quarts of peaches in a day and commandeered her army of 14 children. She whacked any child who hinted at, wondered aloud about, or betrayed any knowledge of sex. My father got his hardest spanking when he was quite small, and his mother found him inspecting a hole in the fork of his pants. She also said "daresn't," as in "You daresn't keep that *True West* magazine. It's full of fiction; take it back to the drugstore." So I took it back.

My father often draws an analogy between his

church and his mother. Both embarrassed him; but for both he is grateful. He remembers his mother as pregnant, toothless, and quick to tears. She and my grandfather never made any money. My father felt self-conscious about his mother's well-scrubbed but obvious unsightliness. She didn't own a bra or get false teeth until she was in her fifties. Her most notable achievement was overseeing her home's exploding population. But she was generous and saw to it that her children ate well and that they advanced themselves.

My father's analogy emphasizes ambivalence. He knew the church separated him from the community. Still, although the church embarrassed him at times, he is sure that without it he would never have left his father's orchard and

He has a uniform and a correct stance. But he never ran for his school. My grandmother cried and cried when my father mentioned the coach's interest in him. Sabbath observance separated him from the rest of the students.

lumber work, and gone on to Walla Walla College and then the College of Medical Evangelists. It was an Adventist preacher who encouraged my grandparents to send their children on to school.

His parents had read their way into Adventism. In South Dakota, a Catholic woman had informed them that Saturday was the true Sabbath; although they searched, they found no biblical evidence on which to contradict her. They bought *Daniel and the Revelation* from a colporteur and decided the book was right. My grandparents moved to Washington State, in part, to make an easier transition to Sabbathkeeping. On a homestead above Spokane, they settled next to Adventist neighbors. Accepting their church required only minor adjustments. They quit eating pigs.

Because of the prospect of orchard work, and because they heard an Adventist family lived there, they moved to Brewster, Washington. Then, as now, the town thrived on apples and

athletics. A family with eight muscular boys did the town some disservice by keeping its sons off the school teams. I see pictures of my father lined up for track. He has a uniform and a correct stance. But he never ran for his school. My grandmother cried and cried when my father mentioned the coach's interest in him. Sabbath observance separated him from the rest of the students. Curiously enough, my father could box without parental interference. He stayed out of high school for a year and represented his lumber crew in the ring. But Sabbaths didn't pose the problem in the camps that they did in the high school.

When my father talks with us now about the church, he wonders if, because of our Adventism, we also felt separated from our community. He remembers with some sadness taking us past the public school and on through the orchards to the little Adventist school. He says that when we drove past the public school, we sometimes hid on the car floor.

My brother Henry remembers how he felt as an Adventist child in our community: "I grew up in my father's hometown, a place where he had suffered considerable hardship. Dad felt there was virtue in hardship, and we felt he went out of his way to find it for us. He made sure that we walked the two miles from our home to school. For my father, walking to school was part of a good education that enjoyed rank alongside the three 'R's.' And since we went to an Adventist school, we also got the fourth 'R' of religion.

"We could walk to school by two routes. One was on the Great Northern Railroad tracks that passed just below our house. The other route followed the road that went through town and on by the public school. Both of these routes were very dangerous.

"The railway was dangerous because hobos camped along it. Every fall, at pear and apple harvest time, these men we called 'bums' rode the freight cars into town. Most orchardists did not provide shelter for these workers, so they slept and cooked their meals on a concrete foundation slab next to the railroad along which we walked. At harvest's peak, the 'bum camp' overflowed into the sagebrush and lumber piles that lined the

Overture to My Mother's Northern Story

by Dan Lamberton

In Saskatchewan, it got so cold
in our small home, this when I was a girl,
that our breathing laced the walls with ice;
we'd wake to see the mist we breathed in dreams
still gleaming in the morning with our prayers.
Yes, it was cold, and Mother sewed so well
that weather and her dress shop let us leave
the prairie farm and move to Battleford.
But before that, before the school, before
the bus to my Aunt Rose's in the States,
before your father and his town, now ours,
I was a girl from the Saskatchewan prairie.

I often wish that you had seen my mother.
This picture shows her hair was dark; I thought
of a black plum. There she holds Naomi,
my sister who died up in Nanaimo.
Some stories are too strange to understand,
but, since you ask, can you say what this one
might tell you of my mother? She had nine sisters;
and their mother, nearly dead from surgery,
heard God say that her daughters, some now married,
were Christ's ten virgins who should all come home.
Who can argue if they came for visions
or for love? But for a while they came back home.
My dad spent most of those years in Missoula.
You know that I have a half-brother there?
When Dad came back the rest of us were born.

My father, plowing, turned over the prairie
that we thought unsurfaced since the silt
of Noah's flood. Yet here were dusty bags
of pemmican, broken arrow shafts
and once a skull we sent to Saskatoon.

This picture's of my brother Joe who died
at seventeen. I don't know where he got
that Indian bonnet, but when I think of him
I think of how we swam our ponds in summer.
That gray far-western river and his western
grave are darker dreams than I know how
to say. That boy by Joe is Rudy, who played
accordion while Ukrainian farmers sang.

Before the rest of us moved in to town,
my sisters left for the Adventist school.
They went with shoes my father altered with
his saw; he cut their three-inch heels to one.
An act that hard made all his acts ambiguous
and I began to make plans of my own.

("At least," I say to her, "they had new shoes
to cut." "Think of Dad's story," I say,
"his dad came home with a bargain wash-tub
full of women's button shoes he hoped to fit
as western boots on his young boys. Except
for school it might have worked. Remember how
Dad tells of herding cows, with his bare feet so cold
he warmed them in the cows' fresh dung? I see
him spring from pie to pie the way a boy
would ford a stream by jumping stone to stone.")

Your father's stories go well around our table.
Besides, each hill or old homestead pulls
memories from him that you can see
and hear. These quiet mountains stand beside
each other as chapters for his book. Out on the prairie
we had aspen groves. Without Saskatchewan
in your eyes my stories reflect on me
alone, although they may go far beyond
my sight; a tale's not all a story tells.
Like you I asked for things I could not hear.

My uncle might have told you more than this:
He sired a baby by a Mounty's wife,
and she could not keep the child. She sent my uncle
to a stubble field to burn a haystack
with the baby tucked inside. And I see
only smoke against the northern lights
and shame on fire below the winter moon.

I'm seventy, but if I could have more children
I'd lie down on this table as my mother
did on hers and bring this farm to life.
I'd have you all again. You know those aspens
you played in by the barn? Out on the prairie
were such groves that gave the land a voice.
Each farmer's section had its family
of round-leafed, white-barked groves. Each grove held secrets
in its undergrowth of Juneberries
and wild rose. And each had its own sound
to which it tuned the wind. One grove might ask "who"
and then, like owls, grow quiet if I came near.
At night, while coyotes barked, around the trees
danced shadows of the Indians and their children.
Those trees saw stories that I dream to hear,
but I won't know them till I know the wind.

railway.

“My uncles called these transient fruit pickers ‘winos’ because many of them spent their evenings at the local taverns. When my grandmother looked after us, she hinted at the appetites these ‘bums’ had for small children. So we were sure they would attack us if they got half a notion or if they weren’t treated with respect. Walking on the tracks so close to where they sat staring at us was an adventuresome thing to do. We quickened our steps and mostly kept our eyes straight ahead, glancing to the side only in order to get a running start if one of them raced out to grab us.

“We were little children, first through sixth graders, and we feared these men. But after weeks without incident, we did get the courage to wave and talk. A few times, after hearing in school about the necessity to witness for our faith, we

It seemed honorable to be struck by, or forced to drink from, a wine bottle while giving out *Listen* magazine.

handed some of them sack lunches with *Signs of the Times* or *Listen*, the temperance magazine, tucked inside.

“The second dangerous route to our school avoided the railroad tracks, and went down a long hill and turned a sharp right in front of the public school. In the fall, the giants from the high school football team would walk down part of this road on their way to practice.

“The public school was the same group of red brick buildings where our father had gone to school. But now it had a big gymnasium with glass backboards and a shiny hardwood floor. There were cute cheerleaders and Friday night dances. The students knew how to have a good time.

“On past the public school, our Adventist school was a little white building that doubled as our church. It sat near the Columbia River and our Uncle Ray’s rye fields. The school had been hauled to its existing site on a house-moving truck. As the school grew, it added wings of grey pumice-stone block or white plaster. The win-

dows were the texture of a sliding-glass shower door and, because of church, were stained yellow except for those that had broken and been replaced by clear glass. Our play field was dirt, and the little children would run about acting like wild horses while the older ones played work-up. Sometime we had battles using clumps of rye uprooted from my uncle’s field. The clodded dirt at the roots made for fine missiles and satisfying effects on impact.

“I was embarrassed to carry my lunch bucket and walk home on the road. I much preferred the danger of walking the rails past the hobo camp to the feeling of walking, isolated and conspicuous, among the crowd of laughing young people who emerged out of the public school at the end of the school day. It seemed honorable to be struck by, or forced to drink from, a wine bottle while giving out *Listen* magazine.

“I could think of nothing redeeming in the imagined ridicule of my public school peers. Walking by them reminded me that I was different. Not so much because I went to school in an older building, but because I was a member of a religious minority that kept apart from them. We were sectarian.

“Not everyone who grows up in a community where he is part of a religious minority feels the way I did as a child. In fact, many of my classmates seemed to feel superior to or just not interested in people outside our group. But I suffered from an attitude common enough among members of religious minorities for sociologists to have given it the name ‘Sectarian paranoia.’ ”

Work and the use of time was a moral issue both with the Adventist church and with my family. “Work for the night is coming,” said the hymn. “Work like you’re killing snakes,” said my dad. “Don’t dawdle or daydream.” Still, I wondered what Moses, Jesus, and Paul were doing in the desert and the wilderness. When Jesus prayed all night, what did he pray about? When David meditated on the law “day and night,” was he working on legal solutions? Mysteries. But I still grew up convinced that all thoughts should be linear and come in full sentences.

My church did not see itself arousing the imaginative life. Rather, it worked to master my imagination. In children's Sabbath school we stacked books according to their moral worth—comic books on the bottom, secular publishers next, followed by nature titles, church publications, Ellen White, up to the Holy Bible's place on the top. This exercise taught me several things. I saw books as power objects, I learned about hierarchy and publishers, and I still feel uncomfortable to find something on top of my Bible.

In the barbershop I could never read the Donald Duck or Chip 'n' Dale comics at leisure. Each time I sensed a body passing outside the shop window, I feared it was someone from our church who might think ill of me. I quickly slid the comic book under the smock the barber had tied around my neck. I'm sure he wondered what this jumpy kid was doing.

My brother Henry witnessed to someone who was standing in the drugstore, enjoying the Sunday color section. "You won't go to heaven if you read those," he said. Of course, we loved the comics ourselves. Guilt couldn't keep them, *Treasure Island*, *Robin Hood*, or the *Brothers Grimm* out of our hands.

In fact, it was our parents who handed some of those books over to us in the first place. That was one way I learned the difference between the standards of my home and the standards of my school. Our parents read Aesop and Jack London to us—books our church school library would not have stocked. Ironically, this led me to trust my school more. School outlined a pretty clear standard. My parents were less codified. Moreover, my parents were not in print, and therefore lacked the authority of the *Junior Guide* or of *On Becoming a Man*.

This dissonance between school and home, between textual authority and the imagination, between freedom and restraint, reverberated into my adolescence. For example, no one mentioned sex in our grade school. My parents talked to us about it some; once, to the boys around the kitchen table, my father talked about masturbation in a way that was intended to help us accept ourselves and be neither excessive nor full of guilt.

Our home and my father's office supplied us

with surgery and anatomy texts and with clinical advice books on sex. By the time I was out of junior high, I had peered into books by Albert Ellis, by the feminists Betty Friedan and Simone de Beauvoir, and into all kinds of manuals. But the book I really believed in was Harold Shryock's *On Becoming a Man*. It meshed with my grandma, with what I read in *Messages to Young People*, with what wasn't said in our school, and with what I could imagine of God watching me. All through my adolescence I met Adventist classmates who admitted the guilt and self-loathing they felt about their sexuality. I remember one classmate who was certain that oth-

My Adventist childhood was a luxuriant garden of irony. We were educated to avoid fictions and the dreamy life, but we had planted in us stories that made fictions thrive and the imagination flourish.

ers knew his eyeglasses were evidence of his "self-abuse." "I'd be blind," another friend assured him. But I imagine my classmate's guilt has hung on.

My Adventist childhood was a luxuriant garden of irony. We were educated to avoid fictions and the dreamy life, but we had planted in us stories that made fictions thrive and the imagination flourish. The church sowed me with prophecies, dreams, and predictions—with beasts, dragons, whores, and feet of clay. One day I would be wheat or chaff.

One of my clearest memories has me sitting on the floor at the back of the congregation while the minister tells of brave people who died rather horrible deaths for their faith. Naked men sang "We will not give up the cross" while they froze to death on the ice; women gave up their babies before giving in to blasphemy; martyrs sang as flames burned them. This could be my future if I remained faithful through that imminent "time of trouble." At night my parents tried to comfort me, but their language lacked the minister's power.

Our church was in our school building and

during one apocalyptic sermon, I managed to open a bookcase door and slip out a *National Geographic*. In the magazine I found pictures of a medieval battle—swords, spears, and headless bodies. They fit right into stories of the final conflict that I had been told over and over. I suppose it was at my instigation that my little sisters and I played martyrs with their dolls. What could be more noble play than to fight and not to yield? Like Luther, the chubby dolls rode to challenge the Catholics, were betrayed by cowering men, and finally, while tied to a Juneberry bush, they met the smoky fate of John Huss.

My Adventism defined my language, my friendships, my interests. Because of the Adventist church, I am now haunted by stories and symbols.

Those that have stayed with me the longest are from the Bible, the top book on my Sabbath school stack of acceptable reading. I often tell my students in introductory literature classes that if they have learned and heard the Bible, especially if they listened to the King James and memorized from it, they have an advantage. They have internalized not just a source of inspiration, but also of imagery, rhythm, and sound.

My Adventist education made me familiar with the Bible; I knew its language and used it. When I needed inspiration, I could quote from the Gospels, from Psalms, from Paul, and from the last chapter of Revelation. I got over my childhood fear of the dark by quoting texts about light, and remembering Christ's comforting "Let not your heart be troubled," from John 14:1. When I was concerned about my procrastination in school, I asked God to help me study to show myself approved, as Paul encouraged Timothy to do.

We also used texts joyfully and in word play. "Why stand ye there gazing?" my friend asked people who were staring at something. With Ellen White we took larger liberties. After a speech by a strict and pushy adult, we'd mumble "C on D and F," short for *Counsels on Diet and Foods*. Once I cut myself handling barbed wire. "Self-abuse," I groaned, and my brother and I cackled, and kept on laughing long after a joke should normally have faded away.

My friends around the table in Seattle say that my language and even my poetry still show the conflict between a strong moral code and the desire for a less censored life. I tell them I value that conflict.

Campus Thought: Walla Walla's *Collegian*, 1988-1989

Compiled by Harvey Brenneise

Year-in, year-out, the student-edited newspapers on North American college and university campuses include excellent news and feature stories. Indeed, Southern College's *Southern Accent* was rated First Class by the Associated College Press in 1988, receiving four of five possible marks of distinction. Also in 1988, Andrews University's *Student Movement* received four Columbia Scholastic Association Gold Circle awards, including a first for design. The *Student Movement* did not fare as well in the spring of 1989, when it did not publish three of its last four issues, ostensibly because of lack of funds, but following a firestorm of criticism of its April Fool's edition, which lampooned Adventist icons such as the second coming and Ellen White. The students at Walla Walla College also produce an outstanding, if less flamboyant, campus newspaper. Following are several features from the 1988-1989 *Collegian*.

— *The Editors*

Challenging Adventism

by Larry Brunt

The Seventh-day Adventist church is becoming de-homogenized. During the past 20 years, almost everything that we believe has been challenged to some degree or another. Walter Rea challenged the notion that Ellen G. White was inspired. Desmond Ford challenged the idea of the cleansing of the sanctuary. The church's stance on jewelry, movie-going, competition, and countless other issues has been challenged by a huge percentage of members. Problems continue to grow.

While it is nearly impossible to attribute these problems to a single or definite origin, there are certain

notable contributing factors. One of these is the structure of the church itself.

The SDA church can be broken into two distinct sections with two seemingly opposing purposes. The administrative branch—conferences, unions, divisions—calls for community. Administration attempts to hold the church together by encouraging commitment, by maintaining the status quo.

The second branch, the academic, thrives in an environment which, by its very role, challenges blind acceptance. "It's part and parcel of the educational process to raise questions," states Doug Clark,

professor of theology at Walla Walla College. "Part of the academic mind-set is to be curious and search for every possible alternative." The more highly educated people become, the more questions they will ask.

The juxtaposition of these two seemingly opposed purposes sometimes produces negative effects on the "tranquil" nature of the church. John Brunt, also a theology professor at Walla Walla College, points out that "You can't have a church that runs education systems without having critical thinking concerning that church's faith."

An additional factor contributing to Adventist disunity is an earlier movement in church history that encouraged "unthinking." Early church pioneers held vigorous debates and asked many questions of their theology. At the 1919 Bible Conference, we find the highest church administrators debating over the nature of Ellen White's inspiration. However, by the 1930s and 1940s, there was concern over too much questioning. The church encouraged an unthinking community—"a uniformity that couldn't hold up," notes Brunt. The result of being rudely awakened from a blind trust in the church by incidents like the Davenport fiasco and Rea debate has caused a serious rift of trust within the church.

Aggravating the situation is an attitude—a sensitivity—about theology that causes us to debate it more fervently. Religion is a part of us—a

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part of our being. Says Clark, "Religious faith is so close to us that debate about theology spins off more tension. Religion touches us more closely than arithmetic, for example."

The dangers these divisions have produced are diverse. Especially as people grow uncertain of their beliefs, there is a real fear that the more questions asked, the greater the chance for people to lose their faith and leave the church. There is a tendency for people to become

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judgmental when presented with different, opposing perspectives. People who see things differently are accused of being doubters, radicals, or heretics. As a result, prejudices occur. These simple assumptions have hurt the church in the past, and continue to hurt it today.

In addition to this concern over immediate fallout, there is the risk of cynicism and skepticism. People become convinced that nothing is known concerning theology or that what is said to be known is wrong.

The ultimate result of this is that the church loses a sense of community. The SDA family splits into separate groups.

This dehomogenization of the church also brings up the possibility of a future, right-wing reaction—"going backward with such rigidity that it is inconsistent with Seventh-day Adventism," Brunt explains. As was the case in the first half of the century, people could be encouraged to stop asking questions for strictly reactionary reasons.

The converse is also true. If nothing is done, it is theoretically possible for an increased secularism to sweep the church if it forgets distinct values. Entertainment could

become more important than spiritual interests. Self-interest could become more important than the well-being of others and the furthering of God's kingdom. In many ways, this would seem to be the trend of modern Adventism: strictly Laodicean.

As the church's doctrines, beliefs, and values are challenged, problems will continue to arise. But along with these troubles comes the possibility for great opportunities.

Questioning provides an opportunity for individuals to take active steps in reaffirming their beliefs. As questions are raised, people are encouraged to search for answers on their own. Pat answers and clichés are no longer enough. People are challenged to know what they believe and why. The result is more active, individual exploration of the Bible and of Christian literature.

This personal study opens the way for forums and the exchange of ideas. Thus learning can take the form of listening to others and weighing what they have to offer—expressing and defending the positions their individual experiences are leading them to.

"In the long run," states Clark, "there is a positive effect. When people are free to ask questions and free to confront problems, then ultimately their faith is stronger." As answers are sought after individually—rather than passed down within a community—they become much

more personal and real. The value of any intellectual movement is in the personal convictions it inspires.

Finally, the dehomogenization of the church presents several needs. We must actively work toward meeting them.

Clark suggests that we must work toward creating an environment in the church where people are "free to ask questions in faith, sincerity and honesty" without being "labeled as doubters and cynics." We must put an end to the notion that the person who asks questions is a troublemaker and heretic. Instead, there needs to be an acceptance of open, sincere questions that the curious, committed, and educated Christian—Adventist or otherwise—will ask.

"We need to be in touch with the world, yet hold on to our unique heritage," says Alden Thompson, provost and academic dean at Walla Walla College. "What I see as the dream for the church is a mainstream, sectarian body." The church should not be blind to the world, but aware and in tune with it. However, there should be a difference.

Is such a dream attainable?

Thompson states, "According to the demands of the New Testament, I see no other possibility."

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The Glow of Patriotism

by David Reimer

Living in Walla Walla tends to give one a sense of peace and security in relation to environmental problems. Dwelling in a desert removes us from some of the threat of the greenhouse effect. The general lack of forests and waterways eases concerns over acid rain, and the area has few animals in

danger of becoming extinct. Removed from the forefront of politics and environmental conflicts, we seem to have it made, right?

Wrong.

Consider an area to the west of us known as the Hanford Site. In the early 1940s, the government acquired 570 square miles from existing farms comprising the Hanford and White Bluffs communi-

ties. Located quite literally in the middle of nowhere, Hanford seemed the perfect location to work on the plutonium production required for the secret Manhattan Project. The plutonium used in the atom bomb dropped on Nagasaki was manufactured at Hanford. Since that time, the plant has operated at various levels of activity, peaking during the early sixties and dropping off steadily until 1983, when the Reagan administration reopened some of Hanford's operations as part of the large nuclear buildup effort.

Aside from providing thousands of jobs and a patriotic feeling prominent among area residents (Richland has an Atomic Bowling Center and a Proton Boulevard; one of the local high schools has also chosen the mushroom cloud as its school symbol), what has Hanford done for the community?

Documents released in 1986 reveal a history of public-safety abuses almost too frightening to believe. Hanford regularly emitted as much as 11,000 times the federally allotted amounts of radioactive and toxic wastes into the surrounding habitat—including the Columbia River—from 1943 to 1967. Not once was a public-health warning released.

Also present on the Hanford Site are hundreds of locations where

millions of gallons of toxic and radioactive wastes have either leaked from their tanks into the ground or been poured directly onto the earth. All this has taken place above the groundwater level, and tests conducted in nearby wells show levels of toxic materials from 25 to 400 times greater than federal water standards allow.

The Columbia River, which supplies water to much of Washington and Oregon, has been heavily contaminated at times, with radiation showing up as far away as Portland and the ocean bay into which the Columbia empties.

Most shocking of all is the discovery that in 1949 the government intentionally released 11,000 times the federal limit of radioactive material into the air above Hanford just to see what it would do. A Whitman College student here at the time spent her Christmas vacation feeling fatigued and began losing hair shortly afterwards. Her hair never returned, and the reason for its loss was not known until 1986, when the government released minimal documentation of the experiment, under extreme pressure from several groups. The government continued releasing radioactive materials monthly for several years as a part of the experiment. The public was never informed.

No plans have yet been made for cleaning up the toxic wastes at Hanford. Studies are currently under consideration to determine whether Hanford's neighbors suffer a higher rate of cancer or other diseases, but after 40 years it seems that much of the damage is irreparable.

Yes, the Walla Walla area appears to be lucky in many ways: removed from many ugly realities of the outside world, able to take an

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objective view of the environment and politics. Hanford has played on the peaceful attitudes and the quiet patriotism of the Columbia River Basin's inhabitants for more than 40 years. The final results of that betrayal of trust remain to be seen, but for the residents of the Columbia Basin—many of whom have lost several relatives to cancer—the pride of patriotism has soured.

David Reimer is a senior history major and French minor at Walla Walla College. He is the current *Collegian* editor, and was feature editor during the 1988-1989 school year.

Why Be an Adventist?

by Ernest Bursey

The biggest issue on Adventist campuses is not whether Adventist education is worth the cost of tuition. A bigger question lurking in the shadows for this generation is whether being an Adventist is worth it. Will the current generation of college students tith their professional incomes? Will they hand over a substantial portion of their cash to pay for their children's Adventist education? Will they get

up on Sabbath morning to take their children to Sabbath school? Or will they decide that the price of being a Seventh-day Adventist is too high for the benefits received?

Of course I can't speak for the next generation. I can only speak for myself as one who has been asking the big question for many years now. So I am going to speak for myself. Maybe I am speaking to myself, too.

Recently I listened to a group of alert college students wrestle with the question: Am I proud of my

church? They were not able to say "Yes" with any strong degree of enthusiasm. Part of the reason is that they do not seem to know of the people in their church who are doing something more than tending the machinery of a middle-aged institution or looking after their own careers. I suspect they suffer from a lack of honest exposure to Adventist history, warts and all.

Adventist history has recently fallen on hard times. As Adventists, we seem to have a built-in "past-basher" that exceeds even the ho-hum attitudes toward history that characterize Americans in general.

After all, didn't our "movement" begin with a moment of embarrassment—the world was still here intact on the morning of October 23, 1844. And our continued presence in this world is often held up as an accusing reminder of the failures of all Adventists since the beginning. Why should anyone be proud of a church that has proved to be such a disappointment to itself and God?

I am an Adventist because of what I have read. What has helped me to see things differently is a healthy dose of personal reading in Adventist history. I have read and reread Graybill's *Mission to Black America* and the candid biography of James White by Virgil Robinson. I know about Fernando Stahl, the missionary who preached Jesus' coming and insisted on social justice. The prodigious efforts of Ellen White continue to dumbfound me.

Maybe it is time for an Adventist Heritage Week where the shakers and movers from the Adventist past can emerge to confront us. A fresh

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look at their achievements along with their warts could help us right now in moving off dead center.

But not all the Adventist dreamers are dead. I'd like to meet Jim Rankin, the saint of Adventist Development and Relief Agency International, who has taught more than a quarter of a million Africans to feed themselves. Not surprisingly, more than 2,000 have decided to accept his Adventist commitments, too.

I am an Adventist because of the people who I have known and can

never forget. A number of years ago I served as youth pastor for several churches in Loma Linda, California, a center of Adventist affluence. At the time I was deeply impressed by the generosity of several elderly women in the Campus Hill Church. Their resources were limited to small pensions. Yet they managed to support our youth programs and a number of other worthwhile projects with a generosity that shocked me. They scrimped and sacrificed so they could give lavishly. I cannot forget how little they lived on and how much they gave.

In the same community a local Adventist doctor provided major funding for the summer recreation program our church ran for hundreds of children. His money came with no strings attached except one—absolute anonymity. No one must know who was underwriting the program. I kept my mouth shut, but I haven't forgotten what that man did with his money.

These people and others have shown me what it meant to be an Adventist. The Davenport fiasco or the current salary explosions in the Adventist health systems can't erase their mark on me. In keeping with the command of Jesus they usually didn't let their left hand know what their right hand was doing. They loved the Lord with all their heart and strength and still somehow had a lot left over for the rest of us. Because of them I don't think I could walk away from the Adventist church in disgust, no matter how much greed and narrow-mindedness I think I can see in those who claim to speak for Adventists. I have seen the real thing.

I am an Adventist Christian because of Jesus. For the last decade I have been assigned to teach the Gospels every quarter here at Walla Walla College. The result for me has been a firmer commitment to Jesus and to the Adventist brand of Christianity.

I am convinced that the central issues in the teachings of Jesus lie at

the heart of Adventism—a life of humility before God and absolute integrity before others, a life of rigorous spiritual discipline that dares to speak of the narrow way, a life of confidence in God's care while working hard to do as much good as possible.

The Jesus I know demands that his followers renounce the ways the world uses force and violence over others. He taught us that we must leave our enemies in the hands of God. No matter how right I think I am or how wrong your beliefs, I must not ignore your conscience! The Adventist appeal for freedom of conscience for even atheists and blasphemers resonates with that demand.

Instead of finishing this piece with a flourish of reasons why you or I should be an Adventist, I return to the matter of the high price tag for being different. Is the cost too high?

Will the North American Adventist church be able to remain different from the culture around it, different enough to justify the tremendous energy and funds to keep its own institutions alive and healthy? If it becomes too much like American culture, there will be no reason to ask for sacrificial giving from its members. Like butter in hot soup, the church will melt into its cultural milieu.

My generation of Adventists is worried. So we insist that the next generation embrace quite a few "standards" or differences. Unfortunately, too many of these differences simply involve abstinence and avoidance of evils, as though goodness were simply the absence of vices.

I have a hunch that there are a lot of thoughtful young people who in their souls would like to be challenged to stick with or even join a church that really was different from the rest of culture as long as they thought the differences or "standards" dealt with were important. For starters, what about Jesus' list—justice, mercy, and faithfulness

(Matthew 23:23)? Maybe he knew that these are the “standards” that stand out in our world because they are in such short supply. Maybe the Adventist church has asked too little of its members. Maybe the price tag for membership has been high enough to pinch but too low to make a real difference.

I have the advantage of having a father who told his children that when the church went in the wrong direction, God expected us to do something about it. We should never forget that we have just as much right to be in the church and to speak our mind as the elders or the conference president. It is our church, too.

He taught us to be part of the “loyal opposition” that wouldn’t go away and wouldn’t be silenced. He could never understand those who sat quietly in the pews or those who walked away.

I confess that much of the time I feel like part of the “loyal opposition.” But I intend to stay. If God has given you a hunger for righteousness and a desire to join others in making a difference in this world, I pray that you will stay, too.

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The speech was very stirring, very idealistic, very—if one must be cynically honest—unrealistic. These people were being offered a choice between accepting or turning down a greater pay raise, and no one can say No to a better standard of living.

And then came the vote. Oh, sure, there was some discussion—discussion that never once challenged Brunt’s remarks—but it was leading to an inevitable vote. When Bergman called for a vote, the faculty unanimously moved to accept pay adjustments—for better or for worse—as equals. No scale adjustments. No higher pay for full professors. No selfishness. The overwhelming spirit was one of service, of dedication, of sacrifice.

Quite honestly, my cynical mind was astonished. It’s not that I don’t respect my teachers; it’s only that I hadn’t realized before listening to some of their comments and witnessing the vote how deeply their convictions run. How serious they are when they talk about sacrificing for a Christian education. Even with the full knowledge—as Claude Barnett so kindly pointed out—that it is virtually impossible to leave here and not make more money, our teachers prefer to remain at WWC and vote down a pay raise.

Much has been said the past few weeks about Walla Walla College’s troubles. They are here. They are also very real and very in need of solving. But after visiting that faculty meeting, after witnessing that incredible brand of dedication, one cannot help having restored confidence in the future of our school.

Faculty Unity Inspires Confidence

by *David Reimer*

Attending Monday night’s faculty meeting was an impressive experience. I am a cynic, one who rarely places much confidence in people’s idealistic statements. After all, it is much easier to say one believes a certain way than to actually do something about it. But Monday’s meeting was enough to convince me that idealism is very much alive and well on the campus of Walla Walla College.

After President Bergman opened the floor for discussion, the air was somewhat tense. No one knew for certain where the evening’s conver-

sation would lead, and no one was sure quite how to begin. Dr. John Brunt, dean of the School of Religion at Walla Walla, made things clear for everyone involved.

In a speech that was simple yet quite eloquent, he pointed out that the reason for teaching here at Walla Walla is not to get rich or to receive recognition, but to function as a part of the body of Christ. Wage scales and pay increases aside, Brunt stressed that service is the main philosophy behind Christian education, no matter where other Adventist colleges may be headed. No matter where the “world’s” patterns are leading.

The Art of Expression

by Malcolm Bull and Keith Lockhart

“**T**he Art of Expression” appears this month as a chapter in a book, *Seeking Sanctuary: Seventh-day Adventists and the American Dream*. The book explores not only Adventist theology, but its structure and patterns of behavior. The authors draw on a wide range of Adventist publications and their own extensive interviews.

Both authors were raised in Seventh-day Adventist homes; one is a baptized member. Malcolm Bull, a junior research fellow at Wolfson College, Oxford, and a doctoral candidate in the history of art at the university of London, was president of the Oxford Union, the undergraduate debating society that has been led by men who many times became British cabinet ministers. Keith Lockhart attended Adventist schools, including Newbold College and Andrews University. He taught in the Adventist educational system and is now a reporter with the *Guardian*.

—The Editors

Among the early Adventists, the preferred mode of religious expression was shouting. In the 1840s they followed the practice of the “Shouting” Methodists, from whose ranks many of them were drawn, of uttering cries of spiritual exaltation. “Glory! Glory! Glory!” the phrase Ellen White repeated on falling into vision, was typical. Speaking in tongues was an unusual, but not unknown, manifestation of the same enthusiasm. In general, however, Adventists shouted out short, unconnected phrases of their own language, the vigor of enunciation making up for whatever was lacking in the sophistication of the utterance.¹

At a contemporary white Adventist service, there is unlikely to be any comparable display of emotion. In Black and Hispanic churches, there is more spontaneity. The words of the preacher may be affirmed with a chorus of “Amen,” and individual worshipers may feel free to call out “Praise the Lord” or “Hallelujah.” Despite this freedom, Adventist worship is generally restrained and carefully organized; and it bears no resemblance to the unstructured, ecstasy-inducing practices of modern charismatic or Pentecostal groups. It would be misleading to account for the change from an enthusiastic mode of expression to a more regulated approach solely in terms of the declining fervor and increasing respectability of the church’s membership. Religious emotions are susceptible to various forms of expression: they may burst forth seemingly uncontrolled; they may be channeled into evangelistic endeavor; they may be clothed in the languages of art and music; or they may be repressed in a mute, but telling, gesture of denial. The history of Adventist self-expression is not just the familiar tale of excitement melting into indifference; it is also a story of transformation and renewal in which the peculiarity of the Adventist experience is creatively reinterpreted and re-expressed by succeeding generations.

To appreciate the richness of the Adventist tradition, it is necessary to look beyond the instrumental aspect of Adventist practices to their symbolic significance. An action or creation of the Adventist community may have both a pragmatic and an expressive function. Adventists speak in order to communicate, dress in order to keep warm, build churches in order to hold services, and so on. But the way in which they speak, dress, or build is not solely a means to an end; it also

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reveals, perhaps unintentionally, the aspirations and tensions that are inherent in the Adventist experience. In all that they do, church members are liable to betray something of their Adventism. The fact that they have not, on the whole, been notable for artistic achievement does not mean that Adventist culture is devoid of interest. The very absence of artistic experimentation may itself be an important aesthetic statement.

The presence of a shared set of cultural idioms is most easily discovered in Adventist churches. Members may live far from one another in homes indistinguishable from those of their neighbors; but when they meet together for worship, they engage in a specifically Adventist activity in a space specially set aside for the purpose. Although it can be said that Adventism became an organized denomination in order to preserve its property, the more significant fact is that the Adventist movement was sufficiently stable to need its own buildings. Churches imply continuity of commitment. Their maintenance demands the presence of a loyal body of adherents; the merely curious, however numerous, are better accommodated in tents or hired halls. A church presupposes a community of believers.

Although in urban areas Adventists may often purchase the redundant churches of other denominations, most churches are purpose built.² They require few fixtures. A pulpit, a baptistry large enough to immerse adults, a communion table, and seating for the congregation are the only necessities. Of these, the pulpit is of primary importance. Communion is celebrated only four times a year, and baptisms may be infrequent, so the sermons preached from the pulpit are the natural focus of attention.

The sense most vital to an appreciation of a service is hearing. There is no incense to smell, usually no bread or wine to taste, and no icons or holy water to touch. The only other sense employed is that of sight, which serves chiefly to identify the sources of sound and aid the process of hearing. To this end, the pulpit is generally located in the center of a raised platform at the end of the building opposite the entrance. Its prominence emphasizes the authority

of the preacher, the centrality of the sermon, and the primacy of the word.

Potential visual distractions are kept to a minimum: ministers wear no special garb; there are usually no processions, no statues or pictures, no crosses, and no figurative stained glass. (Abstract designs in stained glass have, however, recently become a more common feature.) Congregational participation also employs the medium of sound. There are generally two or three hymns and perhaps a special music item in the main preaching service. At the earlier service, the Sabbath school, adults listen, and perhaps contribute, to a discussion of a specially prepared and standardized Bible study provided by the General Conference. For most Adventists, Saturday morning is occupied with two or more hours of listening, singing, and speaking.

This exclusive concentration on sound is balanced only at the quarterly celebration of the Lord's Supper at which, in addition to the communion (itself purely a memorial and not a sacra-

The practice is not inappropriate; it can be taken to signify the Adventist estrangement from society. Men and women leave their families to enter the unfamiliar environment of Adventism into which they are initiated by another act of washing—baptism.

ment), Adventists perform the "ordinance of humility" in which, in imitation of Christ, they divide into pairs of the same sex to wash one another's feet. This practice is a legacy of the time when Adventists defined themselves by their willingness to wash one another's feet and greet one another with a holy kiss. The kiss, with its suggestion of sexual license, has disappeared, but foot washing has survived. Its intimacy serves as a reminder of the strong sense of community that binds members together, but its infrequent performance is typical of the restraint that characterizes Adventist social interaction. The exceptional nature of the rite is emphasized by the actions it requires. The congregation often leaves the

church, the customary center of worship, to enter other rooms in which water, bowls, and towels have been made ready. Men and women, who customarily sit together in family groups, are separated. There may be conversation or prayer during foot washing, but it is irrelevant to the action, which is concerned not with sound but with touch. The hands, which are normally in contact with other hands, are brought down to touch another person's feet—the customary order of relationships between the parts of the body is thus disturbed. In all of these respects, the ordinance is peculiar, not only in terms of non-Adventist behavior but in an Adventist context as

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well. In consequence, some members feel awkward or embarrassed when performing the rite. However, the practice is not inappropriate; it can be taken to signify the Adventist estrangement from society. Men and women leave their families to enter the unfamiliar environment of Adventism into which they are initiated by another act of washing—baptism. The ordinance, anomalous in its Adventist setting, reenacts the process by which Adventist themselves have been separated from the world to enter a new sphere of activity. Through its peculiarity in Adventism, the rite symbolizes Adventist peculiarity in the world.³

In this, the ceremony of foot washing makes explicit what is implicit in other aspects of Adventist worship. The emphasis on sound is also particularly appropriate in Adventism, because it presupposes, as does foot washing, a social context. The spoken word becomes audible only where speaker and listener are in a shared space; it becomes intelligible only where there is shared

language. Where worship is constituted through an exchange of sounds, as it is in Adventism, a community of speakers and listeners is assumed. In contrast, those forms of Christianity in which visual or tactile expression is more important lend themselves more easily to individual spirituality. The painter of an icon need not be in direct contact with the person who venerates it. The rosary is a solitary exercise.

The Adventist concentration on sound belies the superficial impression that they adhere to the minimalist aesthetic of Puritanism. Unlike Quakers, Adventists are loathe to sit in silence, and music has always been a significant part of worship. Adventist churches may be architecturally uninspiring and lacking in visual interest, but the absence of decoration has more to do with a mistrust of sight than an abhorrence of superfluity. In sound, Adventists are prepared to tolerate a degree of variety and elaboration well beyond functional necessity. Churches that would never contemplate using expensive sculpture or glass are prepared to spend large sums on installing a good organ. Short items of classical instrumental music are regularly performed in church services. Adventist choirs and instrumental groups perform frequently in both religious and secular contexts. The best-known artists associated with Adventism—Prince, a songwriter who grew up in the church, the sometime church member and rock singer Little Richard, and the conductor of the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra Herbert Blomstedt—are musicians.⁴

Adventists are also encouraged to acquire rhetorical skills. In church services, members are expected to contribute to discussion of the Sabbath school lesson, announce hymns, make long extemporized prayers, and, in smaller churches, preach sermons. Obviously, all members do not engage in these functions, but many do, and children are taught to speak in public by reciting Bible texts. In Adventist schools, unusual emphasis is placed on the acquisition of skills in public speaking. Adventists, as individuals, are often unusually articulate, for speech, the organized production of sound, is their chosen, and often their exclusive, means of expression.

This concern with sound is significant, not only

because it presupposes a high degree of social interaction, but also because time rather than space is the dimension that makes it possible. Music and speech extend through time, not space.⁵ It is through the modification of tempo and frequency that variety, and thus significance, is given to sound. The Adventist preference for sound as a means of expression is indicative of particular sensitivity to the modalities of time, to beginnings and endings, speeds and rhythms. Such awareness is unsurprising. Adventist theology is primarily concerned with time—with the time of the end, the correct timing of the Sabbath, the prophetic interpretation of time.⁶ To be an Adventist is to have an acute awareness of location in time. It is important to know which day of the week it is; it is vital to think of history as temporal progression punctuated by dates of prophetic significance. In particular it is through their understanding of time that Adventists differ from the members of other Christian groups. Adventists have an unusual perception of history as a sequence of prophetically bounded time packages; they are almost alone in considering the seventh day of the weekly time cycle to be the Sabbath; and they are unique in thinking that only a Sabbathkeeping remnant will be able to move from time to eternity at the Second Coming. Adventist theology describes history in distinctive fashion, gives church members peculiar temporal obligations, and projects an extraordinary future for the church itself. Adventists use time as the dimension of expression, for it is also their primary dimension of experience.

As a corollary of this, Adventists tend to disregard the significance of all that is extended in space. As the world is soon to perish, all that it contains is an irrelevance; only that which will travel through time to eternity is important. This attitude is clearly revealed in a 1849 hymnal compiled by James White. Many of the hymns, some of Millerite origin, express this conviction:

Farewell! farewell! to all below,
My Jesus calls and I must go:
I'll launch my boat upon the sea,
This land is not the land for me.
This world is not my home;
This world is not my home;

This world is all a wilderness;
This world is not my home.⁷

The message that there is no salvation in space but only in time is perhaps most clearly expressed in a hymn reprinted from Joshua Himes's *Millennial Harp*:

Here o'er the earth as a stranger I roam,
Here is no rest—is no rest;
Here as a pilgrim I wander alone,
Yet I am blest—I am blest.
For I look forward to that glorious day
When sin and sorrow will vanish away,
My heart doth leap while I hear Jesus say,
"There, there is rest—there is rest."⁸

That which is visible and tangible is, of its very nature, unlikely to offer anything of spiritual benefit. Adventism's unenthusiastic response to the visual arts is . . . a reflection of the general tendency to devalue those things that are extended in space.

No amount of movement in space will bring relief from the trials of life; only the passage of time and "that glorious day" offer any hope.

This perception is particularly interesting when viewed in the light of American history. The United States was founded by immigrants who crossed the Atlantic to build a new life in a strange land. The new continent may have been a wilderness, but it was one in which Christians had a mission. In the revolutionary war against Britain, the republic was likened to "the woman in the wilderness" persecuted by the dragon.⁹ The pilgrimage hymns take on additional significance when understood in this context. The words, "I'll launch my boat upon the sea, / This land is not the land for me" were sung by the descendants of relatively recent immigrants. "This world is all a wilderness, / This world is not my home" is a sentiment expressed by people whose neighbors looked on the American wilderness as a sacred opportunity to realize the millennium.¹⁰ The last verse of the hymn contains a final insult for those who took egalitarianism to be the philosophy

avored by God over the antiquated, feudal institutions of Europe:

Praise be to God our hope's on high;
The angels sing and so do I:
Where seraphs bow and bend the knee,
O that's the land—the land for me.¹¹

Even without this added twist, which equated heaven with hierarchical social organization, such sentiments were unorthodox. Americans felt that they could overcome their difficulties by moving through space; Adventists asserted unequivocally that this was impossible and that only temporal transition opened the prospect of eternal bliss.

This indifference to the possibilities offered in space helps to explain the Adventist preference for unadorned churches and functional buildings. That which is visible and tangible is, of its very nature, unlikely to offer anything of spiritual benefit. Adventism's unenthusiastic response to the visual arts is thus, at least in part, a reflection of the general tendency to devalue those things that are extended in space. It is an attitude that also finds expression in Adventist taboos. Ostentatious clothing signifies an undue concern with the time-bound things of this world and, as such, is discouraged. Jewelry suffers similar condemnation, as does, at least among traditional Adventists, the use of makeup. The problem with such adornment is that it draws attention to the surfaces and orifices of the body, thus emphasizing that the body is defined in space. Similarly, Ellen White objected to the use of confining garments because they were designed to create a particular shape and thus redefine the body in spatial terms. Concern with female health was the primary motivation for this stand, but it can also be seen as an effort to avoid anything that draws attention to the body as an entity extended in space.¹² For an Adventist, spatial extension was the medium of damnation; salvation was to be found in the extension of bodies through time.

Some "worldly" practices are to be avoided because they locate the church and its members in the static dimension of space and are thus liable to prevent them from moving freely through time to eternity. Such taboos are concerned with the way in which Adventists define their bodies and build-

ings. Another set of taboos, regarding the intake rather than the production of cultural values, derives from a different imperative: the need to prevent church members from imbibing rival understandings of the structure and significance of time. Fiction is the most obvious example.¹³ Writing, like speech, depends for its effect on the ability of the reader to retain sensory impressions gained over a period of time and organize them into an intelligible sequence. Reading is unlike hearing in that it is concerned with what is visible rather than what is audible, but it shares a reliance on temporal sequence. This is true not only on the level of the sentence—where intelligibility depends on the order in which the words are read—but also on the larger scale of the book. In the novel, in which the narrative flows from a clearly defined beginning to a predetermined end and the plot develops in the shadow of its unknown but ineluctable resolution, the reader is induced into an experience of time in which impressions are manipulated to engender an awareness of duration different from that of everyday life. There is a sense of expectation supplementary to, and perhaps conflicting with, ordinary intimations of the future. In these respects, fiction performs the same function as apocalyptic, which is also concerned to reorient perceptions of time. Adventist eschatology, with its strong apocalyptic content, offers a unique apprehension of time: enjoyment of fiction involves at least a temporary betrayal of that understanding.

Ellen White clearly perceived that Adventism was incompatible with novel reading. In *The Ministry of Healing*, she compared fiction to alcohol, advising that

the only safety for the inebriate, and the only safeguard for the temperate man, is total abstinence. For the lover of fiction the same rule holds true. Total abstinence is his only safety.¹⁴

Her objection to novels, even those of reputed quality, was that they interfered with the mind's ability to make coherent sense of the world:

Even fiction which contains no suggestion of impurity, and which may be intended to teach excellent principles, is harmful. It encourages the habit of hasty and superficial reading merely for the story. Thus it tends to destroy

the power of connected . . . thought; it unfits the soul to contemplate the great problems of duty and destiny.¹⁵

Novels disrupted perceptions of time: “To the active minds of children and youth the scenes pictured in imaginary revelations of the future are realities.”¹⁶ Even fairy tales “impart false views of life and beget and foster a desire for the unreal.”¹⁷ The trouble with all narrative was that it offered a sequence of perceptions to the mind that might constitute an alternative way of viewing the world. Fictional works

contain statements and highly wrought pen pictures that excite the imagination and give rise to a train of thought which is full of danger, especially to the youth. The scenes described are lived over and over again in their thoughts. Such reading unfits the mind for usefulness and disqualifies it for spiritual exercise.¹⁸

Along with novels, Adventists were also taught to avoid other forms of entertainment that offered an apprehension of time incompatible with that of the church’s theology. The theater came in for particular condemnation, and the cinema has fallen under similar disapproval in the 20th century. Unlike fiction, which relies solely on the organization of the words in time, the cinema, the theater, and, most recently, television, involve the organization of images. As such they are manifestations of the concern with space that Adventists have long equated with worldliness. They thus embody a dual threat: not only the possibility of being seduced by a rival understanding of the world, but also the danger of being trapped in space, in the sphere of matter, in the realm of the flesh. Bodies defined by, and interacting in, space in an artificially constituted and nonapocalyptic time were free to incline toward that most spatially defined of evils—sex. Ellen White complained that in the theater “low songs, lewd gestures, expressions and attitudes deprave the imagination and debase the morals.”¹⁹ It was, she said, “the very hotbed of immorality;”²⁰ as for dancing, it was “a school of depravity”; opera opened “the door to sensual indulgence.”²¹

Adventists were well aware that their true home was in heaven and they were constantly being exhorted to emulate the devotion and obedience of the angels.²² The corollary of this orientation toward the divine realm was the desire

to be free of the limitations of this world. The angels were the representative inhabitants of heaven; the timebound character of earth was exemplified by the animals. Humans were pictured as standing somewhere between the angels and the animals and, in becoming like angels, people were expected to become as unlike animals as possible. According to Ellen White, it was the mingling of human and animal characteristics that had prompted God to destroy humanity in the Noachian flood:

But if there was one sin above another which called for the destruction of the race by the flood, it was the base crime of amalgamation of man and beast which defaced the image of God, and caused confusion everywhere.²³

It was peculiarly appropriate that meat eating and the “animalism” it caused would jeopardize the reproduction of the image of God in human beings for, at the end of time, all those who were not to be saved would have the “mark of the beast.”

In particular, animals were associated with unbridled greed and lust. Having neither reason nor intellect, animals needed to be trained by human beings.²⁴ But human beings shared animal instincts and, for this reason, needed to acquire self-control. Ellen White was adamant that “the animal part of our nature should never be left to govern the moral and intellectual,”²⁵ but should rather be kept in “rigid subjection.”²⁶ Parents were instructed not “to degrade their bodies by beastly indulgence of the animal passions”²⁷ and were advised to feed their children properly lest “everything noble is sacrificed to the appetite and animal passions predominate.”²⁸

Food was particularly dangerous, for through eating animals, people were in danger of becoming more like them. Ellen White warned one couple that “your family have partaken largely of flesh meats, and the animal propensities have been strengthened, while the intellectual have been weakened.”²⁹ She continued, “The use of the flesh of animals tends to cause a grossness of

body, and benumbs the fine sensibilities of the mind.”³⁰ By eating meat, people could lose those qualities of mind that distinguished them from the animal kingdom. In a sense, eating the flesh of animals was liable to effect the same confusion of the species that had existed before the flood. The amalgamation of human being and beast had “defaced the image of God.” According to Ellen White, Christ died so that “the defaced image of God will be restored in humanity, and a family of believing saints will finally inherit the heavenly home.”³¹ Meat eating endangered this restoration: “Grains and fruit . . . should be the food for the tables of all who claim to be preparing for translation to Heaven.”³²

Could it be that Adventists, through depicting their foes on paper and in papier-mâché, are expressing both their fear and their assurance of ultimate victory? To represent such malevolent forces is to limit their potency; it is an act of control.

It was peculiarly appropriate that meat eating and the “animalism” it caused would jeopardize the reproduction of the image of God in human beings for, at the end of time, all those who were not to be saved would have the “mark of the beast” as a result of worshipping the beast of Revelation 13. The convergence of these ideas is probably fortuitous, but it is also significant, for it constitutes a coherent set of symbols. Salvation involves the repudiation of animal passions, flesh foods, and the beast and his image. For people poised between heaven and earth, between the angels and the animals, such imagery is compelling. It reinforces the Adventist message that what is extended in space, what is purely material or animal, is to be left behind by the saints as they move into heavenly time to join the company of the angels.

In the light of this, it is especially interesting that pictures of the beasts in Daniel and Revelation are perhaps the images most characteristic of Adventist art. They were present from the begin-

nings of the church. When John Greenleaf Whittier attended a Millerite camp meeting, he commented on seeing “the wonders of the Apocalyptic vision—the beasts, the dragons, the scarlet woman . . . exhibited like the beasts of a traveling menagerie.” One particular image caught his eye, a dragon with “hideous heads and scaly caudal extremity.”³³ As evangelistic tools, pictures of the beasts proved effective. Later Adventist preachers even used three-dimensional models. Ellen White wrote warmly of one such evangelist:

Brother S. dwells especially upon the prophecies in the books of Daniel and Revelation. He has large representations of the beasts spoken of in these books. These beasts are made of papier-mâché, and by an ingenious invention, they may be brought at the proper time before the congregation. Thus he holds the attention of the people, while he preaches the truth to them.³⁴

Adventists devoted time and imagination to the depiction of the beasts, whose appearance could only be reconstructed from their strange descriptions in the Bible. Uriah Smith, the great expositor of prophecy, also used his artistic skill to make woodcuts in which he depicted the beasts of Daniel 8 and Revelation 13.³⁵ The absence of any one authorized representation left considerable scope for individual artists to portray the beasts in ways that reflected their own preoccupations. For example, in the representations of the two-horned beast, symbolizing the United States, it is possible to perceive a gradual mellowing in the attitude of the artists’ concept, from the snorting bison of 1907 to a cuddly lamb in 1947.³⁶

The beasts were illustrated with regularity and ingenuity. There were obviously good pragmatic reasons for this. The biblical descriptions of the beasts were difficult to visualize, and color representations served both a didactic and a dramatic purpose. But the significance of the representations surely ran deeper. Adventists were not generally given to using visual media for religious expression. It is odd that the most striking exception to the general rule should be the pictures of the beasts. These are the visual images most likely to be referred to during a traditional Adventist religious meeting. There are no crucifixes, no representations of the nativity, no statues or icons of saints to draw the eye. The chief association of

visual stimulus is the exposition of the prophecies in which the speaker may use charts, or cloths, or in recent years, slides or videos.

In assessing this practice, it must be remembered that the beasts are the adversaries of God and his remnant church. The beasts of Daniel 7 persecuted the Jews and the early Christians; the beasts of Revelation 13 are expected to persecute the Adventists. They represent dangerous and demonic powers. Could it be that Adventists, through depicting their foes on paper and in papier-mâché, are expressing both their fear and their assurance of ultimate victory? To represent such malevolent forces, to enclose them within a clearly defined space, is to limit their potency; it is an act of control. The significance of this is enhanced by the fact that the Adventists who created these images were also being exhorted to control their animal passions. The beasts, with their multiple heads and monstrous deformities, exhibited the full pathology of lust. As embodiments of animality, the beasts symbolized the defacement of God's image resulting from sensual indulgence. The representation of the beasts enclosed them within space—the dimension of damnation—and distanced their creators from both their eschatological adversaries in the world and their animal appetites within.³⁷

Obviously, not every act of representation has the effect of controlling and distancing its object. The peculiarity of the beasts is their appearance in the context of religious meetings in which visual imagery is largely taboo. In general, Adventists have not been encouraged to engage in the visual arts for the reason that the decoration of space is a wasteful activity. The major exception has been book illustration. Adventists, with their preference for language, have been exceptionally active in publishing and distributing books, periodicals, and tracts. As many of these are sold to the public by colporteurs, there is considerable pressure to make Adventist publications as attractive as possible. Ellen White sanctioned this practice but warned against any extravagance.³⁸ In consequence, Adventist publishers in the 20th century recruited their own illustrators, some of whose work is now familiar to church members throughout the world.

The most famous of these men was Harry Anderson.³⁹ The son of a Swedish immigrant, he became a commercial artist doing illustrations for popular magazines. He was converted to Adventism in 1943. His first color picture for the Review and Herald Publishing Association was painted in 1945. It was called "What Happened to Your Hand?" and it established a new genre in Adventist art. It depicted Christ clad in long white robes seated in a garden with an inquisitive girl in contemporary dress on his knee and a boy holding a toy airplane at his feet. It was the first of numerous pictures in which Christ is shown in modern settings. In "Christ at the Sickbed," Jesus is depicted in a modern room at the bedside of a young girl; in "Christ of the Highway," he directs lost travelers in an open-top sports car; in "A Modern Nicodemus," he reasons with a middle-aged man in a well-appointed room; in the "Couple in a Garden," he talks to two suburban-

Like time travelers, Adventists share space with their fellow Americans but do not themselves belong to it. They adapt to their surroundings, for they know that their stay is only temporary. They move unnoticed. Their peculiarity is unobtrusive, their dissent silent.

ites who have interrupted their garden chores to listen. It is a striking compositional technique, juxtaposing the eternal and temporal, the sublime and the commonplace. It was a procedure that could be reversed. In "May I Hold Him?" a group of modern children are present at the nativity in the stable in Bethlehem. In both, the figures appear united within the picture's space, but the viewer can perceive the incongruity by recognizing that the figures are not united in time—one or more of them belongs to a different time or is outside of time altogether.

Another Adventist artist, Greg Constantine, a professor at Andrews University, has also explored the idea of locating Christ in a contemporary setting. Although his technique is very dif-

ferent, owing more to expressionism and pop art than commercial realism, Constantine's vision is essentially the same. His Christ does not inhabit suburbia but New York City. The story of the Good Samaritan becomes a mugging in Central Park. Lazarus is raised at Calvary Cemetery in Queens.⁴⁰ For Constantine, picturing Christ in New York is the natural development of a series of books in which famous artists have been pictured visiting major American cities. *Van Gogh Visits New York*, *Leonardo Visits Los Angeles*, and *Picasso Visits Chicago* all follow a similar pattern.⁴¹ The artist is brought out of his own time and enters the modern world, where he both adapts to contemporary culture and attempts to pursue his own projects in an unfamiliar setting. Constantine's work lacks Anderson's sentimental piety; it is urbane, witty, and depends for its effect on a detailed knowledge of art and popular culture. But Constantine's pictures of time travelers fulfill precisely the same function: they prompt reflection on the character of the alien, and they constitute an invitation to look at the world through the eyes of a stranger.

In an indirect way, these paintings may be seen

to reflect the religious and social position of the artists. The time travelers of Adventist art are not distanced from their surroundings in an arbitrary fashion but in the exact manner that Adventists are separated from the rest of society. The spectator is not deceived by spatial continuities but can see that one of the protagonists owes allegiance to a different temporal framework. The viewer is placed in the position of the divine judge for whom invisible discrepancies of synchronization are manifestations of an eternal choice. But those within the picture are unable to perceive its temporal dislocation. Reassured by the apparent unity of the space they inhabit, they treat the time traveler as one of themselves. In turn, the alien seems well adapted to his new environment, at home in a world of which he is not a part. Space elides the boundaries of time.

Nothing could reflect the Adventist experience more closely. Like time travelers, Adventists share space with their fellow Americans but do not themselves belong to it. They adapt to their surroundings, for they know that their stay is only temporary. They move unnoticed. Their peculiarity is unobtrusive, their dissent silent.

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1. See Graybill, "Power of Prophecy," ch. 4.

2. For a discussion of Adventist church architecture, see Walter O. Comm, "A Study of the Spiritual Influence of the Arts on Christian Liturgy with Special Emphasis on the Impact of Architecture on Seventh-day Adventist Worship Practice" (unpublished D. Min. project, Andrews University, 1976).

3. On the use of symbolic reversal to enhance community self-awareness, see, for example, Clifford Geertz, "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cock-Fight," in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays by Clifford Geertz* (London: Hutchinson, 1975), 412-53.

4. On Little Richard see Charles White, *The Life and Times of Little Richard: The Quasar of Rock* (London: Pan Books Ltd., 1985). Curiously, White does not mention Seventh-day Adventism explicitly, but the rock singer's Adventist background is revealed by Little Richard's references to Ellen White (p. 93), his conversion through the denomination's "Voice of Prophecy" correspondence course (p. 98), his subsequent attendance at the black

Adventist college, Oakwood, in the late 1950s (pp. 98-101), and his admiration of the Adventist preachers H. M. S. Richards, George Vandeman, and E. E. Cleveland (p. 189). On Prince's Adventist upbringing see Barney Hoskins, *Prince: Imp of the Perverse* (London: Virgin, 1988), 17, and Dave Hill, *Prince: A Pop Life* (London: Faber and Faber, 1989), 67. Little Richard and Prince are discussed further in chapter 15. On Blomstedt see "Herbert Blomstedt: Peak Performance," *Review*, July 5, 1984, pp. 5-8.

5. On music's links with, and possible effects on, perceptions of time, see Robert Newell, "Music and the Temporal Dilemma," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 18:4 (1978): 356-67.

6. The discussion of time in Bull, "Eschatology and Manners," p. 153, needs some clarification. Adventists are unusual among millenarian groups in that the timing of the end has not, since the 1840s, been a dominant preoccupation. The Adventist concern with time focuses on the coexistence of sacred and secular time, rather than the ending of secular time.

7. Hymn no. 15. Reproduced with commentary in Lyell Vernon Heise, "The 1849 Hymnal: A Theological Study" (unpublished paper, Andrews University, 1974), 31. See also Ronald D. Graybill, "Singing and Society: The Hymns of the Saturday-Keeping Adventists, 1849-1863" (unpublished paper, Andrews University, n.d.).
8. Hymn no. 23, *ibid.*, 42.
9. See Hatch, *Sacred Cause of Liberty*, 61.
10. See Perry Miller, *Errand into the Wilderness* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956).
11. Hymn no. 15, in Heise, "1849 Hymnal," 31.
12. See Numbers, *Prophetess*, pp. 129-50.
13. See Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967) ch. 2.
14. EGW, MH 446.
15. *Ibid.*, 445-56.
16. *Ibid.*, 444-45.
17. *Ibid.*, 447.
18. *Ibid.*, 445.
19. EGW, 4T, 653.
20. *Ibid.*
21. EGW, AH, 516, 515.
22. EGW, 4T, 71-72, and 1T, 216. See also Bull, "Eschatology and Manners," 150-51.
23. EGW, 3SG, 64.
24. EGW, 3T, 132.
25. EGW, 2T, 364.
26. EGW, 4T, 244.
27. EGW, 2T, 391.
28. EGW, 4SG-a, 132.
29. EGW, 2T, 60-61.
30. *Ibid.*, 63.
31. EGW, DA, 625.
32. EGW, 2T, 352.
33. Whittier, *Writings* vol. 5, 425.
34. EGW, Ev. 204.
35. J. Paul Stauffer, "Uriah Smith: Wood Engraver," *Adventist Heritage* 3:1 (1976): 17-21.
36. Ronald Graybill, "America: The Magic Dragon," *Insight*, Nov. 30, 1971, pp. 6-12.
37. The *pittura infamante* fulfilled a similar function in Renaissance Florence. See Samuel Y. Edgerton, Jr., *Pictures and Punishment: Art and Criminal Prosecution During the Florentine Renaissance* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1985) 71 ff.
38. EGW, CW 169.
39. See Raymond H. Woolsey and Ruth Anderson, *Harry Anderson: The Man Behind the Paintings* (Washington, D.C.: RHPA, 1976), in which all the following paintings are reproduced.
40. See Constantine's paintings "Central Park Mugging" and "Lazarus and Friend in Calvary Cemetery."
41. Greg Constantine, *Vincent Van Gogh Visits New York* (New York: Knopf, 1982), and *Leonardo Visits Los Angeles* (New York: Knopf, 1985).

The Gospel According to *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*

by Glen Greenwalt

The recent publication of *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* [Ministerial Association, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . . : A Biblical Exposition of 27 Fundamental Doctrines* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1988)] is a major event in Adventism. Its appearance will have seismic implications, not only for how Adventists do theology in the future, but also how we will use our theology in formulating the boundaries of our community. In this essay, I offer more than a simple review of the book; I seek to show why the book represents, for better or worse, a milestone in Adventist thinking.

For more than a century now, Seventh-day Adventists have held fast the conviction that they are divinely commissioned to share God's final message to a dying world. Yet, in spite of this confidence, the recent publication of *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* represents the first official endeavor in which Adventist authors offer a systematic statement of their beliefs. The usual explanation for this paradox is traced to the inherent fear of creedal statements, a fear held by Adventists and many revivalist movements. Creeds, it is believed, petrify belief and obscure the simple teachings of Scripture. Not surprisingly, the authors of *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* are careful to assure the reader that they "have not written this book to serve as a creed."¹

However plausible, something seems amiss in

this explanation. Adventists have proved time and again to be every bit as jealous of their teaching's orthodoxy, and no more eager to modify their teachings in the face of new or alternative views, than were the creedal churches from which they emerged. Adventists have been as resistant to change as any creedal church.

A more satisfactory explanation for why Adventists have resisted formulating systematic statements of belief was suggested to me some time ago by one of my parishioners. Upon hearing one of my interpretations of Scripture, he declared: "I never interpret Scripture; I simply recite it." The logic behind this way of thinking is clear: since Scripture is divinely inspired, and since human thoughts are always contaminated by error, the best theology is the simple recitation of Scripture. By reciting Scripture, our theology is not our own, but God's. It is this logic, I believe, that has led Adventist publishers to formulate doctrinal books that are either lists of biblical texts "answering" key questions, or story books in which biblical texts are recited in the course of the narrative. In this way we preserve our sense of the divine immediacy of our beliefs. We are not, after all, constructing theology; we are simply directing attention to God's Word. What is obviously overlooked in this way of thinking is that, even without comment, the selection and ordering of a certain set of texts is already an interpretation!

Whether or not the authors intended it, the publication of *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* represents a monumental shift in Adventist thinking. In the future, no matter how much the church may wish to keep alive the idea of the divine im-

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mediacy of its teachings, the church's doctrines have now suffered the ignominy of being written down by fallible human beings. "The Truth" has been published between two cardboard covers, just like any other book. Personally, I admit a feeling of loss. Innocence is not easily sacrificed for knowledge. People will now know more concerning what we believe than was ever before possible; but the vision of Adventism is threatened.

In the past, Adventists were fundamentally right about one thing in their fear of creeds: the spirit or vision of a community can never be rendered identical to a set of teachings or doctrines. While God's truth is indeed "wonderful" and "beautiful," our statements of that truth are not above reproach, nor is our language always divinely crafted. This is sometimes forgotten in confessional fervor, as exhibited by a recent dismissal of critics of *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* as the "one or two in our midst who seem to criticize everything the church tries to do." Such remarks, however well-intended, serve as a threat to honest inquiry and diversity. They also perpetuate a fundamental misunderstanding of the process of theological inquiry—the myth that theology is to be equated with divine truth.

Criteria for Evaluating Theology

Criticism is always helpful if it is presented fairly and with a healthy awareness of the beam in one's own eye. I preface my specific criticisms of *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* with a set of criteria by which I believe any theology should be judged.

Theology, at its best, is a practical undertaking. It is an attempt, from within the church, to understand and explain the content of Christian faith in the face of challenge and perplexity. Its primary task is not to tell us what people believed to be the Christian message in the past, but, as early Adventists understood when they referred to "present truth," to provide us with an interpretation of Christian faith that is relevant to the present.

Theology is boring and mediocre at best when

it is viewed as the mere recitation and formal ordering of historical texts, however inspired. The Bible is poorly understood and interpreted whenever it is used as a code book with formulas for ordering relevant facts, rules, or moral directives. Scripture functions far more like a collection of case studies that portray an outline of various encounters and relationships—good and bad—that have taken place between God and human beings. The task of theology requires less the perfunctory work of a legal canonist than the analogical imagination of the poet or narrator. The work of theology is always the constructive task of imaginatively highlighting both the similarities and the differences between an original divine revelation and God's present actions and purposes.

Theology, at its worst, is demonic, as the vivid images in the apocalyptic books of Daniel and Revelation remind us. It is capable of being both idolatrous and oppressive. Not only does it assume for itself an authority due only to God, but, whether through intention or default, it uses its authority to hold in check or even suppress the aspirations for freedom and justice that are the God-given right of us all. This dark side of theology is always present, even in the best of theology. With the power of interpretation inevitably comes the power to oppress.

Pro: Nature of Christ and Humanity

Using these criteria, I would rank sections of *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* on a par with some of the best of theology. This is especially true of the sections on the nature of Christ and human perfection. As anyone knowledgeable about Adventist doctrine is aware, these two subjects are closely related in Adventist thinking and have been the source of much controversy within the church. Stated baldly, there are, on the one hand, church members who argue that Jesus' nature was in all points just like ours. If Jesus, as our example and prototype, lived a perfect life, so can we. On the other

hand, other Adventists have argued that Jesus came as a second Adam in perfect manhood, free of all desire or propensity to sin. Hence we are saved not by copying Jesus—although he is the ideal we strive to be like—but by God forgiving our past and rescuing us from our present predicament.

In the best tradition of theology, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* redefines the debate by drawing a more careful distinction: Christ's humanity was neither that of Adam before the fall nor, in every respect, the humanity of the fallen. It was not like Adam's, because Christ's humanity had the innocent infirmities of the fallen. It was not the fallen's, because Christ had no propensity or desire to sin. Christ's humanity was literally our humanity, but without sin.²

The question still remains, "Did Jesus face temptation in the same way we do? Are we on the same footing? Or did Jesus have some advantage?" *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* astutely

Like the girl or boy your parents wanted you to date, there are no glaring faults in the book, but neither is it very interesting. It is doubtful, however, if many people will ever read it, for it fails to speak to the concerns and interests of most people living today.

reveals that a number of different questions are being confused here. In the first place, Jesus did not need to experience all the temptations we have. "He was never tempted to watch demoralizing TV programs, or to break the speed limit in an automobile."³ What counts is that the issue underlying all temptation is the question of allegiance to the will of God. Here, Jesus was not only tempted as we are, but he was at a disadvantage because he had the power to act independently of God the Father, whereas we only suppose we can. Jesus' victory over sin was therefore real and not farcical.⁴

Are Christians expected, then, to live perfect lives? Here again *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*

brings clarity to the terms of a debate that has often been at cross purposes. Contenders on both sides of the debate appear to be pleased with the book's formulation of these issues.⁵ In the first place, victory in the Christian life is not an imposition demanded of Christians, but a gift offered to them. Perfection is the goal of all Christian living. But perfection is not a static quality of sinlessness. Rather it is a dynamic quality of fellowship.

Con: Inspiration, The Sanctuary, Role of Women

Unfortunately, most of *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* does not qualify as great theology. Most of it is very ordinary. Like the girl or boy your parents wanted you to date, there are no glaring faults in the book, but neither is it very interesting. *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* is a handy reference book for anyone who wants a list of texts offered in support of the major teachings of Seventh-day Adventists. It is doubtful, however, if many people will ever read it, for it fails to speak to the concerns and interests of most people living today.

Almost every chapter of *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* illustrates the authors' indifference to the need for a contextual study of doctrines. We are presented with a great amount of information about Scripture, God, the atonement, the church, and so forth; but little of the information is addressed to everyday questions people actually ask. Space limits me to only a couple of examples of this overarching problem with *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*.

In their treatment of the doctrine of revelation and inspiration,⁶ the authors are justifiably jealous of the importance of the Bible's authority in matters of teaching and practice. While denying belief in the verbal infallibility of Scripture, the authors argue that the Bible, rightfully understood, is the norm by which all other ideas must be tested.⁷ Unfortunately, they give few if any clues as to how Scripture actually is to be used to guide decision-making, or to resolve conflicts when disagreements arise. The chapter on reve-

lation and inspiration is uninteresting, not because it does not uphold the authority of Scripture, but because it fails to offer any practical evidence of how Scripture functions as the final authority for Christians.

My second example is the chapter entitled, "Christ's Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary."⁸ This is the most unfortunate chapter in the entire book. Not only do the authors write as if the consensus statement that emerged at Glacier View never existed, but they also use such insufferable jargon and impossible transitions that not even traditionalists can feel very comfortable with this chapter. I am convinced that neither non-Adventists nor the average Adventist will ever be able to follow the logic of the chapter. It is bad enough that the writers introduce the reader to the ancient world of blood sacrifices and to Adventist jargon with little or no attempt to cross-reference what they are saying with ordinary language. It is unforgivable that they should expect the reader to follow as they jump back and forth among the meaning of the sanctuary as found in ancient Israel, personal salvation, heavenly anti-type, and prophetic fulfillment. The fact that the object lesson obscures what it is meant to illuminate—God's offer of salvation in Christ—should have alerted the authors that something was wrong in their presentation. If the sanctuary is a parable of redemption—as the authors suggest—they would do well to read again the eloquent stories Jesus told.

My real complaint with this chapter, however, is that in the authors' legitimate attempt to outline what Adventists have believed about the sanctuary, they obscure the most important discovery early Adventists made in regard to the sanctuary doctrine: that God's work of salvation did not end 2,000 years ago on the cross—he continued to act in their day. If the sanctuary is to be a viable doctrine today, its meaning must transcend its importance to ancient Israel and to Adventists who lived in the 19th century. The sanctuary must again become "present truth."

Biblically, the sanctuary's relevance is easily shown.⁹ Throughout the Bible, it is a sign of God's covenant promise to dwell with his people, to protect and vindicate them against their adver-

saries. Judgment is good news to God's people because it is evidence that God has not abandoned them.

On the darker side, the symbol of a polluted sanctuary is used in Scripture as a sign of the disruptions that have occurred in the relationship between God and his people. Murder, idolatry, divorce, oppression of the poor, and the innumerable other sins the prophets chronicle inevitably force God to forsake his dwelling with his people; thus the Bible speaks of the abominations that make desolate God's sanctuary. The hope of restoration, coupled with the call to reformation, is surely a truth that is as relevant today as it was anytime in the past.

Thankfully, I find nothing demonic in the theology presented in *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*. In fact, this book should help confirm Adventists' long-proclaimed contention that they are orthodox Christians. Still, I am concerned that the authors at times flirt dangerously with the temptation of idolatry. For example, the authors defend the notion that God has a physical appear-

[In this book] there is a shocking absence of those persons—some of whom are presidents of unions and chairs of theological departments—who have spoken in defense of women's ordination. This can hardly be recognized as anything but an act of suppression.

ance like us, because some have seen his hands, feet, and backside.¹⁰ Furthermore, God apparently dwells in a real building since the heavenly sanctuary is his "primary" residence.¹¹ While I am willing to allow that, for some people, such language is the only way they can understand God, I am troubled when such literal language is presented as an article of faith. At this point the confusion between human language and the reality it illustrates is a real threat. Idolatry is not far away.

I am even more troubled by the threat of suppression that is always a part of interpretation. The most obvious example in *Seventh-day Ad-*

ventists Believe is the authors' stance on the question of the ordination of women. In an unusual twist of logic, the authors quote 1 Timothy and Ellen White to support the view that an ordained elder must be a man—the husband of one wife—while allowing that if the candidate is unmarried, he should demonstrate leadership in the home.¹² Apparently literalism extends no further than denying women the possibility of ordination.

What bothers me in this case is not that the authors have taken a stand on the question of the ordination of women, however much I and others may disagree with it, but that they have offered no hint that some Adventists are strong advocates of the opposite view. Worse still, when one looks at the impressive list of scholars and administrators responsible for *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*, there is a shocking absence of those persons—some of whom are presidents of unions and chairs of theological departments—who have spoken in defense of women's ordination. This can hardly

be seen as anything but an act of suppression.

In reading any book review, I am always interested in the bottom line: Should I buy the book? My answer is yes. *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* is a useful handbook of Seventh-day Adventist doctrines. Unfortunately, I doubt if it will ever function as more than a reference work, although as such it does a respectable job. On the whole, it possesses neither the prophetic challenge nor the vigor of inquiry exhibited by great theology.

I would not make *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* my only (or even my first) book on Seventh-day Adventist doctrine. That spot on my shelf belongs to *The Reign of God* by Richard Rice.¹³ Read together, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* and *The Reign of God* give a fairly good picture of what Adventists are all about. While Rice is weaker on the biblical support of Adventist doctrines, he pursues the question of the relevance of Adventist teachings, and his book is thus a nice complement and, at times, a healthy contrast to *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Ministerial Association, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . . : A Biblical Exposition of 27 Fundamental Doctrines* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1988), p. vii.

2. *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*, p. 47.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 48, 49.

5. For example of an appreciative note from the perfectionistic camp of Adventism, see Ralph Larson, "A Tale of Two Books: Will This Be the End of an Era?" *Our Firm Foundation* (Sept. 1988), pp. 8-11. For an example of appreciation from the non-perfectionistic camp, see Desmond Ford, "Responses," *Spectrum*, 19:2 (Nov. 1988), pp. 60, 61.

6. *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*, pp. 5-15.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 313-331.

9. See for example Jon Dybdahl's excellent article, "The Sanctuary as a Call to Moral Seriousness," *Spectrum*, 14:3 (Aug. 1983), pp. 47-51.

10. *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*, p. 85.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 314.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 147.

13. The absence of Rice, along with other Adventist systematic theologians such as Fritz Guy and Charles Scriven, from the editorial committee is deeply troubling. There can be little question but that this was deliberate—especially in the case of Rice, whose book, *The Reign of God*, is used as a textbook for Bible doctrines classes on Adventist college campuses. The most unfortunate aspect of this sad scenario is not the obvious slight to those in the church who have devoted their lives to studying theology, but the fact that the first official book of Adventist doctrines is much poorer for their absence.

By the Campfire: Red Giants, White Dwarfs, Black Holes – And God

by Delmer A. Johnson

High in the mountains of Montana, three backpackers squat around a fire late at night. Most of the group of Adventist hikers have gone to bed, but these linger, warming themselves around the flickering fire. Ginger is a physicist; Greg is a graduate theology student home on break; Ralph is the associate pastor of their church. The friends have been talking for some time.

Ralph: Look at those stars! I wonder if we might be able to see the star that heaven is near tonight. Imagine how exciting it would be if our whole congregation reached heaven and we could travel around to visit the other planets together!

Ginger: Do you suppose heaven is actually in our own galaxy? Virtually all the stars we can see with our naked eye are right here in the Milky Way. Scientific observation and analysis tell us that there are literally thousands of galaxies out there.

Ralph: Space is so vast! It will take an eternity just to explore all the different worlds. I'm glad we'll have plenty of time.

Ginger: I've been thinking about that lately. A few months ago I read an intriguing book by an English physicist named Paul Davies. It's called *God and the New Physics*. Davies looks from the perspective of modern physics at a number of

questions which have traditionally been answered by theology.¹

Greg: That arouses my curiosity. I've read a couple of books recently in which Christian theologians address those very issues.

The End of the Earth

Ginger: I wonder about the destiny of this Earth and the universe. As Adventists we've been taught that after the millennium, fire will fall from heaven, destroying the wicked, and cleansing the Earth and the universe from sin. After that we'll spend endless ages together with God, learning and growing, spiritually and mentally. But cosmologists today talk about the ultimate destruction of our world and of the eventual end of the entire universe.

Have you thought about the future of the sun and Earth's corresponding destiny? Stars don't last forever, you know. Eventually their nuclear furnaces transform all the available hydrogen to helium, and they change into red giants, like Arcturus in Bootes, and eventually collapse into relatively small black or white dwarfs.²

Ralph: Yes, but Ginger, don't you think that God would see to it that the sun would maintain a steady output?

Ginger: He could. We know the nuclear reaction that produces heat and light in the sun joins four hydrogen nuclei to produce a helium nucleus. Eventually the hydrogen will be used up. Of course, that's a long way off, about five billion

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years they say, but then as the sun struggles to keep producing energy, it will form a new core of helium, which will contract under its own weight and grow hotter and brighter. The remaining hydrogen will keep on burning, in ironically expanding and cooling outer layers. The sun may become so large that it swallows up the inner planets, including Earth.

While this process is going on, the results on Earth will be devastating. First, the polar ice caps will melt, causing widespread flooding. Vast portions of Earth will become a baked desert, and eventually the oceans will boil. By that time, life as we know it simply will not be able to exist. As the surface of the sun grows nearer, the earth itself will be vaporized.

As astrophysicists look out into the universe, they observe stars in various stages of this cycle. God doesn't seem to be intervening in their natural progression.

Ralph: But God could just create a new sun when this one starts to act up. Maybe we could even do without the sun; after all, the Bible says the New Jerusalem will not need the sun.³ I suppose that he could even move his capital city to another planet. But couldn't God make sure that the sun always has an abundant supply of hydrogen to burn? Sort of like stoking a furnace?

Ginger: Perhaps in the case of our planet. After all, we believe that someday it will be the capital of the universe. But as astrophysicists look out into the universe, they observe stars in various stages of this cycle.⁴ God doesn't seem to be intervening in their natural progression. Even if God were to move the New Jerusalem to another planet, someday he would have to move it again, because the same problem would arise as the new sun ran out of hydrogen.

Some suns end in a spectacular event called a supernova. They blow themselves to pieces as the core crashes in upon itself. The gravity is so terrific that even the atoms collapse and the star becomes a sea of pure neutrons or a black hole.⁵

But back to our sun. As its core temperature

increases, the nuclear burning of helium will form carbon.⁶ Eventually, every kind of fuel will have been exhausted, and the sun will consist of moderately heavy elements like iron. As the nuclear furnaces die and internal pressure drops, gravity will take control, and the sun will contract until it's about the size of our earth. This giant lump of molten iron will orbit the Milky Way for billions of years, fading and cooling as it slowly reaches the end of its career as a black dwarf star.⁷

The End of the Universe

If this scenario were true only in the case of our sun, I suppose we wouldn't have much to worry about. But the mathematical formulas also apply to other stars of the same mass as our sun.

Greg: In other words, stars throughout the universe will turn into hot, black iron one by one. I imagine it will be like watching a large city office building at night. One by one the lights go out until the building is finally dark.

Ginger: Rather depressing, isn't it? Some stars will dazzle us as supernovae. Smaller stars burn their nuclear fuel more slowly and may take several thousand times as long to go through the cycle. Heavier stars will be unable to resist the force of gravity as neutron stars, and will become black holes, in which the force of gravity is so great that not even light can escape.

On the other hand, even as we speak, new stars are forming from interstellar gas clouds.⁸ Eventually, though, all material for the formation of new stars will be exhausted. The Second Law of Thermodynamics predicts that the universe will run down toward equilibrium.⁹ So the stars will gradually disappear from the universe.

That is the predominate theory about the end of the universe. But we have plenty of time between now and then: 10^{100} years, according to one estimate.

Prior to the end of the universe, we encounter the ultimate fate of the galaxies. As the burnt-out stars mill around the galaxy, now and then they will collide with one another. If one should happen to collide with a black hole, the hole will

swallow it. Some astronomers believe that there is a gigantic black hole at the center of our galaxy. If that's true, then the orbits of the burnt-out stars will gradually decay as they are slowly drawn closer to the monster hole.

Eventually the temperature of the universe will fall to nearly absolute zero. Black holes are only a few billionths of a degree above absolute zero, but once the universe becomes colder than they are, they will begin to lose heat energy through a process known as quantum evaporation.¹⁰

The ultimate fate of black holes is speculative, but Davies says that it seems like they will reach their end in this way. As 10^{67} years go by, they will condense to microscopic dimensions. They will increase in temperature as they contract until finally they will shine like stars for a few billion years, and may actually create some matter from energy. Eventually they will probably explode amid a shower of gamma rays.

Ralph: That's our modern cosmologic destiny? Seems pretty bleak to me.

Greg: Indeed it is. It's hard to find any meaning or purpose in life if ultimately every achievement of humanity will be reduced to gamma rays zinging their way across a vast, dark abyss of ever-growing space-time.

Ginger: Of course, there are a couple of other theories about the ultimate destiny of the universe. Both of them rely on the possibility that the universe's total mass may be great enough that gravity will eventually slow and halt the expansion that we now observe in the universe.¹¹ Then it will begin to contract, ever so slowly at first, but gradually gaining momentum over billions of years. Galaxies will begin to converge on one another. By the time the universe has shrunk to one hundredth of its present size, its temperature will reach the boiling point of water, and earth, if it is still around, will be totally uninhabitable.

As the ultimate implosion nears, structure breaks down, atoms themselves are dispersed, and protons, electrons, and neutrons break apart. The entire universe shrivels into less than the space of an atom. All matter is squeezed out of existence at an infinite density. Absolutely nothing will be left. Events, time, and matter will cease to exist.¹²

Ralph: Again, that doesn't offer much hope. What significance would there be to life, anyway?

Ginger: Some scientists feel as you do. They can't accept the idea of the end of the universe. They argue that some unknown force will stop the final implosion microseconds before the end and reverse the process, causing the universe to emerge, phoenix-like, from the fireball into another cycle of expansion and contraction.¹³ This process, they believe, has been going on for all eternity, and will continue *ad infinitum*.

Ralph: An unknown force? Small comfort that gives. You've already pointed out that life as we know it could not survive.

Ginger: This theory of an oscillating universe has plenty of critics. On the theoretical level, each cycle could produce an increase in the ratio of photons to nuclear particles. Over an infinity of time, the universe would be reduced to photons, devoid of nuclear particles. Since matter still exists, we know the universe has not existed from

Science presents us with a picture of the end—an eschatology, if you will; and it is illuminating to compare it with Christian and biblical eschatology.

eternity. Even if the history of the universe involves a tremendous number of cycles, the Second Law of Thermodynamics will inevitably triumph as entropy [disorder] rises to its maximum state.¹⁴

Ralph: Those theories make eternal life impossible! We'll either be cooked in a fiery inferno, or frozen as the last small suns exhaust their final resources.

Ginger: Of course, these are only theories, but experiments demonstrate the accuracy of the predictions that such theories make.

Greg: Science certainly has a high credibility level in modern society. One risks losing the respect of thinking people by brushing off science. In this area in particular, science presents us with a picture of the end—an eschatology, if you will; and it is illuminating to compare it with Christian and biblical eschatology.

The Bible writers also portray some pretty spectacular and terrifying events at the end of time, but unlike science's predictions, theirs are filled with radiant hope.

Theological Perspectives on the End

A conference held in New York City in 1971 drew together leading thinkers from three contemporary theological currents concerned with the future. One group drew on the metaphysics of Alfred North Whitehead. These "process theologians" were largely from the United States, although some were British. Whitehead developed his metaphysics in response to the theory of relativity and quantum theory. Essentially, he saw the fundamental units of the world as events rather than substance. For him, process was fundamental both to the world and to God. John B. Cobb, Jr., David R. Griffin, and Lewis S. Ford are representatives of this group who have addressed questions about the future.¹⁷

Process theologians seriously anticipate the ultimate extinction of life on this planet. Meaning for the future is ultimately located in God. Process theology shifts the locus of our hope from the world and its future to the ongoing contribution of our world to the life of God.

One process theologian envisions "an endless series of expansions and contractions of the universe." Each new universe that emerges presents a novel organization in which God is able to actualize new possibilities, experiencing everything which may be experienced. Our hope is to be found in the present experience of God, to which we are contributing, and to live on because of our enrichment of that experience.

Ralph: It doesn't sound as if the process theologians believe in eternal life for humanity. For them, God will survive and be the better because of all our experience.

Ginger: That sounds as if God is using us. Does God cause all the pain and suffering we see in the world in order to enhance his experience?

Greg: Process theologians don't believe that God is responsible for the suffering in the world, because they don't believe he is all-powerful. They say that God is doing the best he can with the material he has to work with.¹⁸

Anyway, a second group of theologians addressed concerns about the future in the spirit of Teilhard de Chardin. Teilhard was a French Jesuit priest, best known during his lifetime as a professional geologist and paleontologist.

Teilhard believed that the process of evolution was incomplete and that, therefore, creation was continuing. The lines of evolution were converging, he wrote, toward the ultimate unity, a single hyperpersonal center, a focus of consciousness and personality which he called "Omega." Omega, which he seemed to identify with the risen Christ, is both the future goal of the universe and a present influence, drawing the universe toward itself.¹⁹ At the conference, Philip Hefner and D. D. Williams spoke about the future from the Teilhardian perspective.²⁰

Process theologians don't believe that God is responsible for the suffering in the world, because they don't believe he is all-powerful. They say that God is doing the best he can with the material he has to work with.

In the secular world, political movements call men and women forward toward the future, while in the religious world, churches focus on the call from above. Teilhard saw God as both ahead and above, drawing humanity into both community and transcendence. Hope for the future then, according to the Teilhardian, is based upon two things: the character of God and the reliability of his creation.

Finally, the group known as the "theologians of hope" attempted to address questions of the future from within a biblical framework. There were several German as well as American theologians within this group, among them men such as J. B. Metz, Jürgen Moltmann, Wolfhart Pannenberg, Carl Braaten, and Hans Schwarz.²¹

The theologians of hope see a future with limitless possibilities. The human race will find its fulfillment in the endless freedom that exists in God.

For God, however, the question of the future is a bit more complex. He is Lord over time as well as space, matter, and energy, and as such, all times are present to him. Yet it seems that there must be some sort of ranking of temporal events within God, if he is to interact with people living in historical time.

Hans Küng explicitly addresses the issue of the end of the universe in his book, *Eternal Life?* He observes that Isaiah depicted the end of the world as a terrifying vision:

The heavens will vanish like smoke,
The earth will wear out like a garment,
and its inhabitants die like vermin . . .

But Isaiah followed this vision with a promise:

But my salvation shall last for ever
and my justice shall have no end.²²

Küng says that the end of the world appeared to authors of Old and New Testaments as an act of God. Today we realize that it is also within the power of human beings. Technology provides the human race with power to exterminate itself.

After discussing two scientific scenarios for the end of the universe, heat death and implosion, Küng goes on,

If not only man's life, but—as is now scientifically probable—earth and the universe do not last forever, the question arises: What comes then? If human life and the history of humanity have an end, what is there at this end? The biblical message—the New Testament prepared by the Old also in this respect—says: at this end is not nothing, but God. God who is both the beginning and also the end.²³

Küng concludes that our future lies in the kingdom of God, brought about by God's action coupled with human initiative. The main content of the consummation is seeing God. Nevertheless, the biblical expectations also include an image of a satisfied nature and satisfied humanity.

Ginger: It's interesting to hear what those theologians think, Greg, but how would you, as an Adventist studying theology, respond to what these scientists are telling us about the end of the universe?

An Adventist Perspective on the End

Greg: I really don't think that we can get much help on this issue from any "historic" position. The first place to look in Ellen White's writings for a comment on this topic would be the final chapter of *The Great Controversy*. There, at the close of the millennium, following the last judgment, fire envelops the earth, cleansing it from every trace of sin's curse.²⁴

If the universe is going to end in such a way that life as we know it cannot survive, it becomes difficult to believe in eternal life.

The fire will bring an era to an end, but it will mark not only an ending, but also a beginning. Not only will the redeemed continue to learn, using their minds to probe mysteries and wonders, but they will also teach. Knowledge, love, reverence, and happiness will continually increase throughout the universe, as space will no longer be a barrier for interplanetary travel.

Nothing whatever is said of an end to the universe. Apparently Ellen White never wrote in any detail on the history of the universe following the destruction of Satan and the renewal of our earth.

Ginger: That would make sense. It has only been in the past few decades that we have compiled evidence that the galaxies are receding from one another, and that the universe is expanding.²⁵ In Ellen White's day, many people believed that God had placed the stars in their proper positions and that they would remain fixed throughout eternity. If God had not informed her differently, it would seem natural for her to share that view.

Ralph: Sure. What difference does it make as far as our salvation is concerned whether the stars are just sitting in their appointed places, or whether they are moving away from one another? Not much, I think. But the point is that if the universe is going to end in such a way that life as

we know it cannot survive, it becomes difficult to believe in eternal life.

Greg: In the centuries before Copernicus and Galileo, people had a considerably different conception of the universe. Eratosthenes, who lived in the third century B.C., is deemed to be the first person in history who realized the earth was spherical, not disk-like or rectangular. The notion of vast, empty regions of space is a relatively modern concept in Western thought.

People living in the ancient Near East believed that before the earth and sky were created there was nothing but water.²⁶ It was necessary to create an open space in this primeval water so the land and living things could exist. In order to do this, they believed something had been pushed up to make a vault. In Genesis, this is called the firmament.²⁷ “Hard as a mirror,” according to Job; “like a canopy,” said Isaiah.²⁸ We might compare it to a giant superdome or planetarium.

God placed the sun, moon and stars within this “superdome.”²⁹ Below the inverted bowl with its heavenly inhabitants lay the land. Above and below—surrounding all—was water.

How our conception of the universe has changed! During the Middle Ages, people believed the universe resembled an onion, with crystalline spheres for each planet and an outer sphere containing the stars. By the 19th century, the bounds of the static universe had grown. Telescopes had revealed stars at enormous distances from earth. In the 20th century, our conception bloomed into a dynamic, expanding universe.

In the expression “the heaven and the earth,” the Bible writers described their universe—the earth under their feet, the sea, and sky above—this great abode that they shared with other creatures. As they saw the birds, sun, moon, planets, and stars, all were part of what they called the heavens. It is vastly different from the swirling galaxies and myriad suns we envision when we think of the universe, but it was all the universe those writers of a bygone era knew.³⁰

Several texts talk about the heavens passing away, like the one in Psalm 102:25-27.³¹ These statements were as radical in their day as the pronouncements of modern cosmologists are in ours.

Of old You laid the foundation of
the earth,
And the heavens are the work of
Your hands.
They will perish, but You will endure;
Yes, they will all grow old
like a garment;
Like a cloak You will change them,
And they will be changed.
But You are the same,
And Your years will have no end.

Ginger: And don’t forget this one:

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”³²

Greg: Right. But still these people did not despair. Even if all around them was destroyed, they believed that God was above and beyond the universe that they knew, and that out of the ashes of absolute destruction, God would create a new home for his people.

Ralph: But we have always associated those texts with the time when God purifies our planet from sin.

Greg: Nevertheless, at the time they were written, the texts did speak of a total destruction of absolutely everything known to humanity. The only refuge was to be found in God. I think that that concept can serve as a source of hope for modern people, too.

Creation and Eschatology

Ginger: I have a question about the relation of the end of the world to the beginning of the world. Some people within the Adventist church think that life has existed on earth for more than six, ten, or even twelve thousand years. Some think it may have been here for as long as most geologists and paleontologists claim.

I remember reading that our understanding of the end is tied up with our understanding of the beginning.³³ Some Adventists are concerned that if we accept the idea that life has been around for a long time, we will have to change our understanding of the Second Advent.

Greg: The problem of eschatology and science challenges our beliefs about the events surround-

ing the Second Advent, as well as about eternal life in light of the impending demise of the material universe. Scientists may be wrong about what lies in the future; but let us assume, for the sake of discussion, that they are correct.

Ralph: It seems that if a person believes that the world was created in six consecutive days, it's easier to believe that God can bring it to an end in the twinkling of an eye. The notion of a relatively sudden beginning seems to fit well with a sudden end. There ought to be a certain symmetry between the beginning and the end.

Ginger: Why should we require symmetry between the beginning and the end? Consider our own life. We believe that we had a beginning when we were born. Yet we believe that if we accept Christ as our Saviour and remain faithful to him, our life will never end.

Greg: You have a point, Ginger. While symmetry between the beginning and end seems appealing, it is hardly necessary.

But I think Ralph raises a question we need to address. A number of theologians have seen a relationship between the beginning and the end, or between protology and eschatology. Arthur Ferch and Fritz Guy,³⁴ among Adventist theologians, have pointed to such a relationship; and Hermann Gunkel, Claus Westermann, A. R. Peacocke, and Hans Küng have called attention to it as well.

In modern times, Hermann Gunkel was the first theologian to explicitly link these two extremes of time,³⁵ following the Epistle of Barnabas which states, "Behold, I make the last things like the first."³⁶ But Gunkel spent most of his book delineating parallels between Genesis and Revelation and Babylonian mythology.

Claus Westermann detected a correlation between beginning and end in Genesis. In the story of the Flood, for instance, the Creator decides to destroy what he has made. Thus Westermann traces humanity's concern with beginning and end back to a very early time.

Peacocke condenses Westermann's book, noting similarities in the biblical picture of those extremities. In both, barriers between humans and God are absent, and human beings are free to confront God face-to-face in his divine majesty,

something not allowed in the rest of the Bible; in both, our race lives in paradise; and in both, humanity is free from the curse of death, sorrow, and suffering.³⁷

Westermann insists that the beginning and the end must be studied together.³⁸ The description of the beginning, found in Genesis 1-11, and the description of the end, found in the book of Revelation, delimit the boundaries of history and provide an origin and goal for historical time.³⁹

For Westermann, two characteristics in particular set primal and end time apart from historical time: the universal scope of their concern and their special relationship to "mythological" language. As for his first point, the Old Testament, before the story of Abraham, is clearly universal in its scope, then progressively narrows from a concern with humanity as a whole, to a focus on the descendants of Abraham and then Jacob. In

The Bible writers' point was that even though everything familiar should vanish, God would continue on and see his people through.

the New Testament, Westermann argues that the book of Revelation primarily presents the final history of God's universal people. As for his second point about the Bible's language concerning beginning and end times, he concedes that the first 11 chapters of Genesis are not obviously mythological, but says Revelation is clearly figurative.

Westermann observes additional parallels between primal and end times. In both, God judges human beings in person and personally meets out punishment, while in the rest of the Bible God punishes indirectly, through an intermediary. In both eras, universal peace, or salvation, embraces even the animal world.⁴⁰ The end time is described as creation made whole again.

Hans Küng also relates protology and eschatology, warning that we must beware lest we think that we can derive "exact advance reports of the end of the world" from the Bible.⁴¹ He cautions that we shouldn't attempt to harmonize biblical statements about the end with the different scien-

tific theories of the end.⁴² The Bible writers' point was that even though everything familiar should vanish, God would continue on and see his people through.

Old Testament Process

Adventists believe in a biblical approach to eschatology. What better place to start than in the Old Testament? How would you describe it, Ralph?

Ralph: Moses told the people of Israel that if they were careful to follow God's commandments, the Lord would make them the greatest nation on earth.⁴³ The Hebrews anticipated that their nation would develop and increase in influence gradually, like the unfolding of a rose, from bud to full bloom. As the people faithfully followed God they would be blessed, their fame would spread throughout the earth, and one nation after another would come and ask to be instructed in the law of the Lord.

And, to a point, that's how it worked. During the reigns of David and Solomon, Israel's territory expanded, their military might increased, and people did come from distant lands to learn about God.

Greg: In a way you might say that the Exodus was the template upon which Israel built its future expectations. Of course, we must acknowledge God's role in their prophetic visions; we might say that he was working to bring the Exodus experience to its culmination.

Ralph: It's too bad that the Hebrews didn't cooperate. Again and again in Kings and Chronicles we read how they turned from God to worship Baal and Ashteroth, until finally Israel was exiled by the Assyrian empire and Judah by the Babylonians. But God had promised that this would not be a permanent arrangement, and the many prophecies holding out the hope of a return from exile were fulfilled. Seventy years later, the Jews returned to their native home, just as Jeremiah had prophesied.

Ginger: If it were true that protology and eschatology must be symmetrical, then one would expect to find a process of progressive develop-

ment described in the opening pages of the Old Testament.

Greg: Exactly. But instead of that, in the Old Testament we find a dramatic, sudden beginning followed by an extended, gradualistic eschatology. The overall picture of eschatology in the Old Testament does not resemble the sweeping, unilateral action of God found in the story of Creation. It appears, rather, to depict an extension and completion of the Exodus.⁴⁴

New Testament Transformation

The book of Revelation receives a great amount of study in Adventism because of our emphasis on apocalyptic. Revelation recalls the Old Testament prophets in a new context: the context of Christ. The revelator focuses primarily on Jesus Christ as he singlehandedly brings about a transition from a world of sin to a sinless paradise.

The New Testament prophecies focus on the person of Jesus. Rather than things getting better and better as the church converts the world and Christians become renowned for their success, wisdom, and power, we see a picture of a church, now burning with zeal, now plunging into apostasy, and down toward the end, lukewarm. Rather than expecting the conversion of the world, we expect wickedness to increase until the day Jesus returns.

Jesus stands in the spotlight of the New Testament. Jesus, the one who defeated Satan and sin in a few short hours between the garden of Gethsemane and the empty tomb. Jesus, the conquering King, who descends from heaven to attack the kings of the whole earth who have gathered to do battle against him. Jesus, the one who rains fire from heaven upon Gog and Magog who have gathered together for war against the saints. Jesus, who intervenes decisively in the history of this world to eradicate sin in a way that reminds one of his dramatic and decisive act on the cross. With one fell stroke, Satan's forces are destroyed and the church is delivered.

Ginger: It doesn't seem as though the expectations of either the Old or New Testament were

based on the Creation story of Genesis. In the Old Testament, the Exodus was the central event, just as the cross was in the New.

Greg: That's true. The Old Testament prophecies are filled with new and different meaning because of the first advent of Christ. The book of Revelation is the revelation, not of the church or of the role of the Jews, but of Jesus Christ. He is the theme and refrain of the whole New Testament. Certainly there are allusions to Genesis, as well as the prophets, but the new understanding did not result from a renewed study of protology. God didn't change his plans to be more in harmony with events at the beginning of world history, but because of events surrounding the cross.

On the day of Pentecost, nearly 2,000 years ago, Peter said that the last days had arrived.⁴⁵ They arrived with the first advent of Christ. They will conclude with the Second Advent. As Christians, we are a people who live between the times: we look back to the first advent and forward to the Second Advent.⁴⁶

Once it becomes clear that the expectations of the Old Testament had their roots in the Exodus experience, and that they were an extension and culmination of God's leading in that event, then it is obvious that New Testament eschatology finds its basis in the cross. Our expectations, as Christians, are based on the New Testament and therefore find their roots, not in protology, but in Christology. Our teaching about the Second Advent must find its basis in the first.

As long as Jesus was with them, the disciples clung to expectations of national greatness drawn from the Old Testament. But at Jesus' ascension, a new vision was born: the Messiah had gone away, but he would return in the same way they had seen him go into heaven. From the moment of the ascension, the Second Advent was linked to the first.

So New Testament eschatology is based on the first advent, especially on the events of the passion week, when, in a dramatic way, God intervened in the history of our planet. In the brief span of time between Gethsemane and the resurrection, in one decisive act, Jesus broke the power of Satan.

Just so, when he returns, he will open a path

through the skies and through the grave for his sleeping saints. In one brief moment, he will change the immediate destiny of the righteous and, in one decisive act, deliver his people from the very presence of sin.

Eschatology is not based on protology, either in the Old Testament or in the New. Rather, the hope of the Second Advent is modeled on the first advent. The model for Adventist eschatology, then, should be the first advent: God's decisive intervention in this world.

Ralph: I never thought of it that way before, Greg. But how would you answer Dr. Westermann? He seems quite persuaded that beginning and end are inextricably intertwined.

Greg: Without doubt they are. We can see parallels between them in the cases of direct judgment and punishment and of universal peace. But while there is indeed a connection between beginning and end in the Bible, we must be careful. Questions about creation do not necessarily demand that we have questions about the Second Advent.

If God took a vast amount of time to create this world, then a sense of balance seems to suggest vast amounts of time at the end. If God worked through natural processes in the beginning, we should expect he will work in a natural way at the end.

My main point of disagreement concerns Old Testament eschatology. Westermann sees a fundamental progression between the eschatology of the two testaments. He points out a cycle that is frequently repeated: the people are in trouble, they cry for help, and God delivers them. This cycle recurs often in the Old Testament and, in the New, reaches its pinnacle in the deliverance accomplished by Christ on the cross.

I see differences between the testaments in the areas of actors and timing. The primary event in the Old Testament was the Exodus. There are two things we might note that are wrapped up in the word *exodus* itself. First, the focus is on people.

They were the ones who actually walked from Egypt to Canaan. They were the ones in transition from slavery to landowning. They would never have made it without God's mighty acts in their behalf, but it was they who made the journey.

Second, the Exodus was a gradual process. The Hebrews did not suddenly wake up to discover that they were not slaves in Egypt, but Palestinian farmers. The new nation still had to cross the wilderness and conquer other nations and tribes.

Certainly there is continuity with the New Testament. God's role is utterly indispensable in both testaments. But in the New Testament, the central event is the cross of Jesus Christ. There are two things we can note from that event. First, the focus is indisputably on Jesus. He is the one who works. His disciples have fled.

Second, the cross is an event to be proclaimed. Jesus, in a few short hours, secured eternal salvation for humanity. The role of the disciples was to preach the good news about what Jesus had done. In the case of the Second Advent, the role of God's people is rather passive. We can prepare for it, but when it comes, it will be entirely God's doing. We cannot change ourselves from mortal to immortal.

Ralph: But if God actually took a vast amount

of time to create this world, then a sense of balance seems to suggest vast amounts of time at the end. If God worked through natural processes in the beginning, we should expect he will work in a natural way at the end.

Greg: Again, this type of symmetry between Creation and eschatology was not present in the Old Testament. Genesis presents the story of Creation in what seems to be a relatively brief period of time, but expectations for the end depict an extended process. The basis for change in the apostle's outlook was not study of the book of Genesis. The work of Christ in the first advent is the model for the Second Advent. The foundation of Christian eschatology should be the cross. Our authority comes from the messengers who assured the anxious disciples that their friend Jesus would return someday in a way that resembled the final events of the first advent.

Time had passed quickly as they talked, and only a few embers still glowed in the fire. Greg suggested, and the others agreed, that sleep sounded pretty good. After saying Good night and expressing appreciation for the others' contributions, the trio headed for their respective tents.

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36. Barnabas 6:13. Dated about 135 A.D.

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Negotiating the Creation-Evolution Wars

By Fritz Guy

When it comes to putting Genesis and geology together, there are (as is often the case in the rest of life) many options but no free lunches. Every approach is expensive in one way or another. But thoughtful Christians who are in touch with the modern world usually choose among five principal approaches to the problem of relating the biblical revelation about Creation and the natural history of the world.

It is useful to think of each of these approaches in an ideal or “pure” form, recognizing that seldom does anyone’s thinking fit neatly into a single category. (The quoted materials are intended only to illustrate a particular approach, not to represent the overall perspective of any particular author.)

Biblical Positivism: Genesis Without Geology

The starting point for the approach of biblical positivism is a simple biblical literalism that views Genesis as providing an authoritative literal account of the process of Creation, accurately describing what occurred and how it happened. This way of reading Genesis is reflected in the bumper sticker that reads, “God says it; I believe it; that settles it.” Biblical literalism is sometimes accompanied by a suspicion of modern sciences (and “godless scientists”) or by a more general anti-intellectualism.

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The most interesting example of this approach is the “apparent age” theory, which argues that in the beginning God created a “mature” earth. Adam had the appearance of being an adult, and a scientific examination of his body immediately after his creation would have provided ample data to indicate that he was, in fact, a fully adult male. On the Sabbath of Creation week his apparent age was at least 20 years even though his real age was only one day. This argument states that what was true of Adam was also true of everything else: every created entity appeared to have the age of its particular maturity. Thus, trees had numerous annual rings; light was well on its way to planet Earth from distant stars; and rocks had sedimentary strata. Of course, in no case was there empirical evidence of a recent Creation; by the nature of things, there couldn’t have been. So this theory has an interesting logical status: on the one hand no scientific evidence of age or development can count against it; on the other hand no scientific evidence can support it, either. This is why it is called “biblical positivism”: it is an *a priori* theory of earth history, simply “posited” on the basis of a conviction about the nature of the Genesis narratives of Creation.

The problem with this approach is that it considers scientific evidence irrelevant, if not misleading, in regard to earth history. It is not “putting Genesis and geology together” so much as taking Genesis and ignoring geology. This is a high intellectual price to pay in a culture that is distinguished by scientific and technological achievement. The price is so high, in fact, that relatively few people, Christian or otherwise, seem willing to pay it. The consensus is this:

“Science is not infallible, but God is hardly deceptive.”¹ Trees may have been created with annual rings; but a tree created with “Abraham loves Sarah” carved in its bark would have been gratuitously deceptive. In exactly the same way, it seems, the creation of fossil sequences in rocks would have been deceptive. Evidence that suggests sedimentation or vulcanization is one thing; evidence that points to millions of years of changing forms of life on earth is another thing entirely.

Another problem is that this approach wants to exclude one area of science (namely, geology) from our understanding of reality without affecting other areas. But it is hard to see how this can be done. Since Adventism is firmly committed to scientific medicine (so that its medical institutions and personnel will be legally qualified to provide medical care), it is very difficult to say, “We’ll take seriously those sciences (like biochemistry and neurophysiology) that help us practice medicine, but we’ll ignore other sciences (like geology and paleontology) if they don’t support our beliefs.” It is logically possible (although culturally difficult) to dismiss science as a whole, but if one kind of science is theologically legitimate, the whole scientific enterprise is, in principle, legitimate. One cannot pick and choose among the sciences. A commitment to medical science means that an understanding of Creation and earth history must take advantage of the earth sciences; otherwise there is intellectual schizophrenia. If Adventists are going to be concerned about origins, it makes sense for an institution that specializes in infant heart transplants and nuclear medicine to also have a Geoscience Research Institute.

Creation Science: Genesis Controlling Geology

Creation science is a process of harmonizing an understanding of natural history with biblical revelation. The starting point is the conviction that both Genesis and geology are relevant to an understanding of earth history, because truth is fundamentally a unity.

Theoretically, this harmonization could work in either direction: one could assert the primacy of modern science, and understand Genesis in terms of geology (which is what “harmonization” in this area usually means); or one could assert the primacy of the Bible and understand geology in terms of Genesis. In both cases the logic is the same: the range of the possible interpretations of evidence in one kind of study is determined by prior conclusions on the basis of evidence in another kind of study.

The intention of Creation science is to support the biblical account with scientific evidence and argument. Negatively this involves formulating objections to evolutionary theory; positively it involves presenting evidence of a recent origin of the Earth, life, and humanity.

The intention of Creation science is thus to support the biblical account with scientific evidence and argument. Negatively this involves formulating objections to evolutionary theory; positively it involves presenting evidence of a recent origin of the Earth, life, and humanity. In the 20th century there has been

a remarkable resurgence of belief among many Christian scientists in the crucial geological role of the Flood and in the idea that the Earth is extremely young. A host of biologists, physicists, chemists, geographers, and engineers (extremely few geologists and astronomers) have recently been insisting on a return to a belief in Creation in six twenty-four-hour days only a few thousand years ago. . . .²

This approach has two principle starting points. One is the conviction that biblical statements about origins are relevant to an understanding of earth’s history. While it is true that “in dealing with Creation, the Bible puts its major emphasis upon why God did what he did,” it is significant that “the Bible is also concerned with what God did and even, to some extent, how he did it. And there is indeed a statement about origins

which, imprecise though it may be, nonetheless has implications for the proposals of natural science."³

The other starting point is an implicit (and sometimes explicit) belief in biblical inerrancy, along with a kind of moderate (that is, not absolute) literalism. While affirming a recent Creation in six 24-hour days, this approach is flexible in regard to such things as (1) the nature of the "firmament" (literally, a beaten-out metal plate in

"Creation science" is not science in the generally accepted sense of the term. For one thing, the idea of Creation presupposes a Creator, and hence is a self-evidently religious notion.

the shape of a dome); (2) the creation of the sun, moon, and stars on the fourth day, after there is already vegetation on earth; and (3) the order of events in Genesis 2, which tells of the creation of male humanity, then plants, animals, and finally female humanity. Very few people believe that what looks like sky is really a huge metal dome, or that there was no sun or stars before the fourth day, or that humanity existed (in one gender only) before there was plants and animals. Only with this kind of flexibility of interpretation can the conviction of biblical inerrancy be maintained.

There are three elements in the rationale for Creation science. In the first place, a common-sense reading of the Genesis narratives of Creation suggests that they are "straightforward prose."⁴ In the second place, subsequent biblical materials seem to regard the Genesis account as a literal, factual description of the process of Creation: the fourth commandment (Exodus 20:11; cf. 31:17), for example, along with references to Adam in the Gospels (Mark 10:6-8; Matthew 19:4, 5) and the Pauline letters (Romans 5:12-21; 2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:13, 14). And in the third place, throughout the history of Christian thought, the dominant understanding of Genesis has been a literal one—the most notable exception being Augustine, who believed that everything was actually created simultaneously but was

presented in Genesis as taking six days so that people could more easily understand it.⁵

The major difficulty of this approach is that "Creation science" is not science in the generally accepted sense of the term. For one thing, the idea of Creation presupposes a Creator, and hence is a self-evidently religious notion. This is why the Arkansas law requiring the teaching of Creation science in public schools was declared to be unconstitutional.⁶ Everyone interested in Creation sciences seems to be religiously motivated; not only are the authors of Creation science materials self-identified as Christian, but in every case the materials are produced by religious rather than scientific publishers. Recently, a new term has been suggested to avoid this difficulty: "origin science." This resolves the logical problem although, again, the proponents and their publishers are religiously motivated.⁷

Another difficulty is the fact that, as of now, the preponderance of scientific evidence points to a very old earth and a gradual development of life forms. Occasionally this is implicitly admitted: "Creationists and flood geologists recognize that if their theory is true, there must be some significant phenomena yet to be discovered."⁸

Biblical Reinterpretation: Genesis According to Geology

Many Christians who have looked at the geological evidence have "shown much support for [both] the antiquity of the Earth and the integrity of the Bible as God's revelation, and have been eager to relate the discoveries of science to Genesis."⁹ And they note some interesting similarities between Genesis and geology: the order and diversity of reality, the progression of different kinds of reality from comparatively simple to more complex, and human existence as part of a temporal process that began before it and points forward to an eschatological future.¹⁰

Those who take this approach have developed various ways of interpreting Genesis to take account of a long span of time. (1) The gap theory,

which is no longer prominent,¹¹ puts geological time into the first two verses of Genesis 1, which, it is claimed, describe the conditions that preceded the six 24-hour days of Creation. (2) The day-age theory, on the other hand, puts geological time into the six days themselves, regarding them as indefinitely long but successive epochs.¹² (3) The revelatory-day theory (or pictorial-day theory), which is not as well known, puts geological time into Creation week as a whole, without correlating days with epochs. This theory maintains that it was not Creation that happened in six 24-hour days, but the revelation of Creation. "Pictorial-revelatory days, not literal days nor age-days" are the "means of communicating to man the great fact that God is Creator, and that He is Creator of all."¹³

The problem with all of these interpretations is that they are not indicated, much less demanded, by the biblical text; they are simply *ad hoc* attempts to make Genesis agree with geology. And there are some glitches. The gap theory ignores the structure of Genesis 1, and the function of the first sentence as the thesis of the whole chapter. The day-age theory ignores the impact of the refrain, "There was evening and there was morning" (Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31, NIV). The revelatory-day theory ignores the need for some reference to a visionary experience.

Some who take the approach of biblical reinterpretation go to great lengths to claim they are not reinterpreting Genesis according to geology.

The data of nature can only make us take another hard look at the data of the Bible to see if we have interpreted them correctly the first time. The Bible must finally be interpreted in terms of its own facts even though information from other sources, for example, literature or archaeology, may help us to ask proper questions of the biblical text in our interpretive task. The question of the length of days of Genesis 1 must be decided by the text of Scripture and the analogy of Scripture. It cannot be decided by information from nature. . . . We cannot reject the twenty-four-hour hypothesis simply because it doesn't agree with science. The length of days is an exegetical question.¹⁴

But after listening to all this explanation, one still has the impression that these interpretations really are determined by geology.

Having allowed for great ages of geological

time, this approach also allows for various views of the creative process. Here the difference between "progressive Creation" and "theistic evolution" does not seem to be theologically significant (since the latter can easily include the former), although the two terms may be sociologically important. Those who identify themselves as "progressive Creationists" may be trying to avoid the pejorative label "theistic evolutionist," which seems to many Christians to be a self-contradiction, since for them the term "evolution" carries atheistic connotations.

Operationalism: Genesis Paralleled by Geology

The approach of scientific operationalism begins with the conviction that science does not provide information about reality as such, but simply gives directions for further research. Applied to the relation of Genesis and geology, this means that the biblical revelation provides a realistic account of what happened, while the data of natural history indicates how Creation appears.

This means that science provides "theoretical models" used for "facilitating the predictability of future events," but doesn't "depict the actual constitution of the eternally real world." Science

is unable to establish any final truth or a final system of explanation. . . . What is scientific cannot on the basis of the scientific method be shown to be objectively true, and may in fact be "untrue" or "wrong."¹⁵

In other words, the activity of God in the natural world is so far beyond human comprehension that it is presumptuous and arrogant to assume that it corresponds to our theories. In this view, "modern science can pose no significant problem for Creation, and Creation need pose no problem for science,"¹⁶ because science talks about appearances, the Bible about reality as such. (Students of philosophy may here recognize the ghost of Immanuel Kant, who distinguished between the "phenomenal" realm of appearances and the "noumenal" realm of "things in themselves.")¹⁷

This approach is a sophisticated cousin of biblical positivism: both maintain that biblical

revelation cannot be refuted or supported by scientific data. In this respect, these approaches are like the idea that the world and its contents, including each person's memory, were created 15 minutes ago. But this is to divorce science from any knowledge of reality. The idea that science

Genesis is saying that God is the source of everything. Everything is created by God and dependent on God. What God creates is real and good, so nothing is intrinsically evil. This is not "scientific"; it is far more important than science.

cannot tell us about God is plausible enough; the idea that science cannot tell us about the natural world either is rather hard to swallow, especially now. "Contemporary Western civilization is more dependent, both for its everyday philosophy and for its bread and butter, upon scientific concepts, than any past civilization has been."¹⁸

Dimensionalism: Genesis Intersecting Geology

Dimensionalism regards Genesis and geology, like the larger categories, science and religion, as talking about different aspects of one reality. This approach is a little like operationalism (Genesis paralleled by geology), but in this case, Genesis and geology are seen as "intersecting" because they are both talking about the same subject—namely, the reasons for the actual reality we encounter.

This approach distinguishes "the question of ultimate origins (Where did it all come from?) from the quite different question of proximate origins (How did A arise out of B, if it did?)."¹⁹ Accordingly, it is believed that biblical revelation is intended, not to give an account of the process of Creation, but to identify the source and explain the intention of Creation. In other words, Genesis answers the questions Who? and Why? while geology and its related sciences answer the ques-

tions When? and How?²⁰ These are seen as complementary sets of questions about radically different dimensions of reality. Back in the 17th century, Galileo recognized this distinction when he explained, "The purpose of the Holy Ghost [in Scripture] is to teach us how one goes to heaven, not how heaven goes."²¹

For dimensionalism, the idea of Creation is an article of faith, like the idea of a Creator. It is compatible with "all kinds of scientific vocabularies which can underline, concretize, and illustrate it; but what this faith speaks of remains independent of all these modes of expression."²² Genesis is seen as a profound religious/theological affirmation of Creation—Genesis 1 as a hymn in seven stanzas, and Genesis 2-3 as a symbolic narrative something like the parables of Jesus—which is taken "seriously but not literally."²³

So what Genesis is saying is that God is the source of everything. God is exclusively ultimate; everything else is created by God and dependent on God. What God creates is real and good, so nothing is intrinsically evil. This is not "scientific"; it is far more important than science.

To know the process by which things came to be would be only interesting; to know that it comes from a will which unites its power with a creative love is to be able to answer with confidence all our most crucial questions about the meaning and intelligibility of our existence.²⁴

Thus Genesis and geology answer differing kinds of questions that need to be kept separate. "Bringing appropriate questions to the Bible leads to a harvest of beautiful and powerful answers; inappropriate questions are the seeds of nonsense."²⁵

Internal evidence for the theological (non-scientific) character of Genesis is seen in (a) the grammatical and logical subject of most of the sentences, which is not the world or its contents, but God: "God said," "God saw," "God blessed"; (b) the two parallel series of three creative acts: forming the world by differentiation (light from darkness, water from air, land from sea), and filling the world by production (astronomical objects, fish and birds, animals and humanity); and (c) the difference in the order of Creation events in Genesis 1 and 2—a difference that is no

problem if the two narratives are not regarded as providing a chronological account .

According to the approach of dimensionalism, although Genesis and geology intersect (because they are both talking about the reasons for the reality we encounter), they cannot be in conflict:

The Creator is behind all physical processes, all reproductive capabilities, all principles of harmony in the universe. Then in principle there can be no conflict between faith and science. Conflict will arise only if God is assumed to be merely the God-of-the-gaps, whose activities are circumscribed to the miraculous while science studies the “normal” or “natural” events. If the Creator is Lord of all events, taking ultimate responsibility for everything, then the term “natural” will not mean self-explanatory, but that fixed and stable state of processes in the universe of which God is the Ruler and Maintainer.²⁶

This approach makes it comfortable to think about both the geological evidence and the biblical narratives at the same time: one can wonder about the age of the earth and not be anxious. It is not necessary to say, “If the geologists don’t come up with the right data, we’ll have to give up the Bible.” On the other hand, this approach involves a different way of reading the first part of Genesis (taking it “seriously but not literally”) and of

thinking about such things as the Sabbath, the figures of Adam and Eve, and the relation of death to sin. This is, for some, too high a price to pay.

No, there are no free lunches. Biblical positivism, for example, is clear, uncomplicated, and continuous with historic Christianity and Adventism; but it comes at the cost of isolating itself from modern science—which isn’t possible for a community that is committed to scientific medicine. Creation science takes science seriously in order to use it in the service of a belief based on a reading of Genesis; but it is not itself truly “scientific.” Biblical reinterpretation wants to make Genesis scientifically respectable by harmonizing it with contemporary geology. Operationalism maintains the integrity of both Genesis and geology, but at the cost of divorcing science from reality. Dimensionalism gives each source of knowledge about Creation its own role and function, but it requires a new understanding of the meaning of Genesis.

Among all the approaches and options, not everyone will make the same choice, because different people will differently assess the benefits and the costs of each approach. However, we must learn to respect one another’s choices.

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How Do Adventist Students Think About Creation and Evolution?

By Donna Evans

“There’s no proof of creation; I just believe it because the people I trust believe it.”

“Obviously, there’s no scientific basis for creation as there is for evolution. Belief in creation is an issue of faith, whereas evolution is one of science.”

“Both creation and evolution require faith. When you look at evolution, there’s not a lot of evidence; but there’s no direct evidence that God created the earth, either, except for the Bible.”

“I don’t think anybody can say right now that they know for sure that the Bible is correct, unless they’ve had some supernatural experience. But you know, I’ve chosen to believe the Bible.”

—Adventist College Students

These college students—part of a study interviewing 19 freshmen and 19 seniors at an Adventist college—all claimed fidelity to the views of Creation, evolution, and biblical inspiration traditionally upheld by the Adventist church. Their responses to questions designed to probe their thinking revealed

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that each had done some wrestling with the issues involved. All had quite honestly faced the fact that the “other side” had some supportable arguments. But what about the foundation of these students’ belief? On what did they base their confidence? It appears that their beliefs were built without reference to the weight of evidence, rationality, or even personal experience. Instead, a faith supported by feeling, apart from rationality, and governed, not by understanding, but by preconditioning, is prevalent. They seem to lack comprehension that, in a world where most choices are not clear-cut, the choice of what to put faith in must be based on a careful weighing of evidence.

When analyzing the comments of these students, unsettling questions come to mind: Why, having come so far in Adventist education, are they unable to get beyond acknowledgement of other potentially valid viewpoints? Why must they cling to their beliefs based on what can only be called truly “blind” faith? The answer may lie, at least partially, in the way Adventist young people are taught or encouraged to think.

Being an Adventist—and especially growing up as one—can be a very secure and comfortable experience. There is security in knowing which things are right and wrong; there is security, too, in understanding the meaning of the past and anticipating events in the future. There is great comfort in knowing the acceptance and favor of God and in being reasonably sure of what his will is for one’s life.

Many Adventists are able to hold onto this comfort and security indefinitely because they believe that knowledge (or truth) is absolute and can be absolutely known. Others, however, come to the place where they must deal with challenges to their cherished values and beliefs. Because of such confrontations, these individuals eventually realize that not only are they no longer sure of things they once knew for certain, but now they aren't sure if they can know *anything* for certain. This ambiguity causes a major shift in their world view.

Such a shift is traumatic. The realization that human beings, because of their limitations, can never know all things, nor perceive revealed things with complete accuracy, is a major one. Especially for Adventists, the birth of such an understanding is generally difficult and painful, because it entails a loss of much of one's basis for security and comfort.

Major changes in world view come not only to Adventists, but to most people at some time in their lives, as a natural result of confrontation with reality. Some changes may happen gradually as a child matures, encounters more people, and experiences more of life. Other changes occur—gradually or not—as a result of learning that takes place during formal education. And finally, changes in assumptions about knowledge come because of major life crises. But regardless of how these changes occur, they usually carry a great deal of impact.

There is a model that describes a natural and predictable sequence of changes in world views (stages of thinking and/or attitudes toward knowledge). It is known as the reflective judgment model. As in any stage model, it presupposes that the stages are progressive, sequential, and invariant. This means that when people change from one distinct type of thinking to another, the change follows a set pattern. It also means that people don't skip stages—that for one to arrive at stage four, for instance, one must first go through stages one, two, and three—and, having achieved a certain stage of thinking, they generally don't regress to an earlier stage.

The reflective judgment model describes a predictable progression of stages, moving from a

certain and absolute view of knowledge through a relativistic and uncertain view, and beyond to a mature and reasonable way of selecting the knowledge that is most likely to approximate reality.¹

The Absolute Level

Stage 1: There is an objective reality that exists just as the individual sees it. Reality, and knowledge about reality, are identical, and are known absolutely. Thus, since knowledge exists absolutely, one's own views and those of authorities are assumed to correspond to each other and to absolute knowledge.

Stage 2: There is an absolute, objective reality that is knowable and known by someone, but that knowledge may not be immediately available to the individual. It is, however, available to legitimate authorities. The choosing of beliefs depends on authority, as certain knowledge can be obtained from authority. Evidence does not play a role in decision-making.

Stage 3: There is an objective reality, but it cannot always be immediately known, even by legitimate authorities. Absolute knowledge exists in some areas, but in others it is uncertain, at least temporarily. Even authorities may not have certain knowledge yet. However, given enough time and sufficient study, absolute knowledge can be attained. In the meantime, in areas of uncertainty, subjects are unsure of how to choose their beliefs. Therefore, in these areas, they tend to make their decisions based on feeling, whim, or previous belief.

The Relativistic Level

Stage 4: There is an objective reality, but it can never be known with certainty. Neither authorities, time, money, nor a quantity of evidence can be relied on to lead to absolute knowledge. Therefore, knowledge is always uncertain. There are many possible answers to every question, but no way to decide which one

is correct or even which one is better. Subjects are aware of evidence, but not able to evaluate it or to see how it leads to decision-making. Therefore, they tend to make decisions based on whim and/or mechanically used, or incomplete, evidence.

Stage 5: An objective understanding of reality is not possible, since objective knowledge does not exist. Reality exists only subjectively, and what is known of reality reflects a strictly personal knowledge. Knowledge, therefore, is subjective, and knowledge claims are limited to subjective interpretations from particular perspectives. Subjects are able, however, to cite evidence supporting the various different perspectives and to understand how each group of data can lead to a given conclusion, but only within a given context.

The Probabilistic Level

Stage 6: An objective understanding of reality is not possible, since our knowledge of reality is subject to our own preconceptions and interpretations. However, some judgments about reality may be evaluated as more rational or based on stronger evidence than other judgments. Knowledge claims can be constructed through principles of inquiry that are generalizable across contexts.

Stage 7: There is an objective reality against which ideas and assumptions must ultimately be tested. Despite the fact that our knowledge of reality is subject to our own perceptions and interpretations, it is nevertheless possible, through the process of critical inquiry and evaluation, to determine that some judgments about that reality are more correct than others.

Eleven years of research have shown this model to be very consistent. Subjects tested at different intervals of their lives have progressed from lower stages to higher stages in the sequence described, often reaching a higher stage at which they have remained. Cross-sectional studies have shown older subjects with more education to score at higher levels than younger subjects with less education. The Reflective Judgment Interview, the instrument used in these studies, has proved to be both valid and reliable.

The later stages of this model provide a very reasonable framework of thinking for the Adventist who has matured beyond absolutism, but is not content to remain relativistic. While it is true that the security and comfort of absolutistic thinking are gone, it is not necessary to remain in a state of chaos and unfounded and unmeasurable choices. The model provides for thinking that is evaluative and yet still open to change and/or additional information. This allows for both strong commitment and openness to new thought. It allows the individual to choose the better option based on evidence, authority, and personal experience.

Reflective Judgment Research and Adventist Education

The journey through the reflective thinking stages is a slow one and may stop at any given stage, leaving the individual with that particular style of thinking indefinitely. It is especially important to notice, however, that for a person to move from the arbitrary, authority-reliant, black-white early stages to the probabilistic stages, it is necessary to go through a time of relativism.

Research has shown that relative judgment scores increase with formal education. But what is it about formal education that causes changes in reflective thinking?

It is conjectured that the move from absolutis-

College education seems to provide the stimulus for the major jump from eventual absolutism to clear relativism.

tic stages to the relativistic ones is caused by confrontation. The move from relativism to probabilism may be fostered by the building of verbal and critical thinking skills; by support for questioning as a legitimate stage; by the teaching of options for thinking other than skepticism, cynicism, and relativism; and by the role-modeling of making choices based on probabilistic attitudes.³

Research done thus far has shown high school

students scoring generally between stages two and three, college freshmen at stage three, college seniors at stage four, beginning graduate students between stages four and five, and advanced graduate students between stages five and seven. A look at these scores shows that college education seems to provide the stimulus for the major jump from stage three to stage four, a leap that goes from eventual absolutism to clear relativism. But college does not seem to lead students through the relativistic states to the clearly more desirable probabilistic stages where choice is based on evaluated evidence.

The Adventist who studies the reflective judg-

How is it possible that Adventist students graduate with definite relativistic thinking? How can an education that is supposed to preserve values create, or at least sustain, relativism?

ment model will sooner or later come to ask how Seventh-day Adventist college education affects its students. Do Adventist students go through the relativistic stages, too? Is this possible in a college whose purpose it is to pass on “proven” values and to impart “truth”? If not, do students remain in the absolutistic stages? Or, on the contrary, does Adventist education provide its students with the necessary factors by which to arrive at probabilistic decisions without lingering in relativism?

In order to seek answers to these questions, 19 freshmen and 19 seniors, full-time students at an Adventist college, were given the reflective judgment interview, which consists of four dilemmas presented to the student one by one. After each dilemma, the student is asked a series of questions. The dilemmas explore the student’s thinking about issues that are familiar to most people, and about which there are conflicting viewpoints and no definitive solution or answer. These interviews were taped and later transcribed word for word. They were then separated and coded so they could be rated blindly. The scores of these Adventist students were then compared to scores of freshmen and seniors attending non-church-

sponsored colleges and universities. The comparison students were subjects of various studies done on freshmen and seniors, the students from each study attending the same school. Their ACT scores and high school GPAs were comparable to those of the students in the Adventist study.

Before the study at the Adventist college was undertaken, three hypotheses were proposed:

1. That there would be a significant difference or gain between the freshmen and the seniors in this study. (This hypothesis was based on the score trends for all college freshmen and seniors studied so far.)

2. That the Adventist freshmen in this study would score similarly to freshmen in other studies, but that the seniors would score lower or spread across a wider range than the seniors in other studies. (This hypothesis was based on the assumption that a religious, somewhat conservative, and homogeneous education would not provide the necessary confrontation with previously held values in order to move most of the freshmen into relativistic stages.)

3. That the students’ thinking on the Creation/evolution dilemma would score at a lower stage than their thinking on the other three dilemmas. (This hypothesis was based on the assumption that it would be difficult to bring into question a church doctrine so ingrained as the Creation doctrine.)

The results were unexpected. The first hypothesis was confirmed. The mean score (stage) for the freshmen was 3.87, and the mean of the seniors was 4.18. This, as hypothesized, was a significant gain. The freshmen mean, however, rather than being about the same as that of freshmen in the comparison studies, was actually the highest of any study done so far. The senior mean was not lower than that of other seniors; rather it was average. The range of scores for these seniors was narrower than any in the comparison studies. Thus, the second hypothesis was disproved.

The third hypothesis was also disproved. Scores on the Creation/evolution dilemma were not significantly lower than the scores on the other three dilemmas. However, the scores on the news-reporting dilemma were significantly higher than scores of the other three dilemmas.⁴

The results of this study raise several major questions.

1. Why did the freshmen score so high?
2. Why were the seniors' scores average, given that the freshmen scored so high? The progress between freshmen and seniors in this study is less than the progress between freshmen and seniors in any of the comparison studies.
3. Why was there a significant difference in the scores for the news-reporting dilemma compared to the other three dilemmas?
4. How is it possible that Adventist students come into college with close to relativistic thinking and graduate with definite relativistic thinking? How can an education that is supposed to preserve values create, or at least sustain, relativism?

Careful analysis of the transcripts of the interviews provided some answers to these questions.

High Freshmen Scores

One basic difference between the Adventist freshmen and those in the other studies was that they had all attended private academies rather than public high schools. A possible explanation, then, for the high scoring of the Adventist freshmen is the repeated reference in the freshmen interviews to exposure to both the Creation point of view and the evolution point of view.

It is to the credit of the science teachers at these academies that they presented both points of view rather than just presenting the Creation viewpoint and dismissing the evolutionary one. Although evolution was not validated, it seems that at least some of the bases for evolutionary belief were presented. It seems certain that this issue was discussed more deeply than it would have been at a public high school where, in general, Creation is dismissed as invalid and unscientific. The students in this study, therefore, were at least permitted to see possibly valid conflict, something not allowed for in stage two. Because confrontation on this fundamental issue challenged an overly simplified world viewpoint, it is possible that that style of thinking would have carried over into

other content areas. Examples of freshmen's statements citing the high school confrontation follow:

Uh, my ideas changed in academy. Until I went to academy, you know, I always heard that God created everything one day at a time, and that it took seven days and that was it; seven literal days of creation. And um, that always leads to well, what about these rocks that are so old and stuff. Well, I believe that there could have been matter here when God came on the first day, because it says that on the first day the Spirit of God moved on the face of the water . . . I got that from a high school teacher who taught science class . . .

Well, I guess, ever since I've been in school and old enough to, to uh, understand what my textbooks were saying, whether it was fifth or ninth grade, you know, I mean, some of which you have say millions and millions of years, you know, evolution this and evolution that, and you have to, I mean it is something that you're not used to seeing, you're not, you don't believe in it because your parents have taught you this and you have learned this in Sabbath school, and so when you have this conflict in belief, I mean, you have to sit there and figure it out for yourself in your own mind and you have to say this doesn't really make sense.

These freshmen obviously confronted a dilemma before they ever got to college. They wrestled with concepts and moved past the totally absolutistic stages.

Another possible reason for high scores of freshmen is that perhaps in a smaller, private school there were more opportunities for them to participate in activities of leadership and responsibility. Both of these factors—confrontation of beliefs and leadership opportunity—seem to have advanced these students' ability to think for themselves.

Relatively Low Scoring of Seniors

Given that the Adventist freshmen scored so high, why is it that the seniors did not make more notable progress? The low average for seniors was due not only to mostly stage four scoring with a goodly number still scoring at stage three, but also to the fact that there were very few evidences of stage five. Why did these seniors have such difficulty getting past

stage four? The transcripts suggested several reasons. One of these seemed to be the difficulty of seeing affirmation of faith as something that could be arrived at, at least partially, through an underlying rational process. Over and over again, the seniors gave faith as a valid ground for their decisions, but saw faith as alien to reason and more based on feeling or whim—evidences of stage-four thinking. Here are a few examples:

[In speaking of Creation and evolution,] both sides take, take a lot of faith into consideration. Because, you look at evolution, there's not a lot of evidence for a lot of these things that happened way back. But Creation, you know, there's not direct evidence that God created the earth, except for the Bible, and so you kind of, kind of have to work backwards from faith in God and religious experience to believing that what God has set down is true, and from that you believe that Creation is true.

No, I don't think that anyone ever knows for sure, I mean, I don't think that anybody can say right now they know for sure that, you know, the Bible is uh, necessarily correct except that they've had some supernatural experience and/or they feel they're so close to the Lord that they know for sure, but uh, you know, I've chose to believe in the Bible. I understand that this is contradictory from what I've said before [in reference to knowing things].

The following excerpt from the actual interview evidences the same stages of thinking:

Interviewer: What do you think about these statements?

Student: That's a tough subject. Obviously there's no scientific basis for Creation as there is for evolution. I would, I think that the belief in Creation as opposed to evolution is one of mere faith, where evolution is one of science.

Interviewer: You don't see that as a cognitive issue at all, then? An issue of logic at all?

Student: No, to hold Creation as a belief is one of mere, merely of faith, not of support.

Interviewer: So you wouldn't base it on any specific support?

Student: (Shakes head.)

This type of response was prevalent. It seems that to these students, belief in religion-related issues can validly be based on faith; but that faith is based on feeling, on choice made aside from rationality, on what "seems right," or on preconditioning, as one senior put it. This was true of most of the dilemmas.

Differences in Scores Across Dilemmas

Students did not see faith issues only in the Creation-evolution dilemma, but also saw their religion permeating most aspects of life. Therefore, both the chemical additives (Are chemical additives in foods harmful or beneficial?) and the pyramids (Were such complex structures built by the Egyptians alone, or did they have help from supernatural sources, i.e., aliens from space?) dilemmas were also faith issues. Only the news-reporting dilemma (Is news reporting objective or subjective?) seemed to be free of faith-related factors.

Because of the tendency, then, to see faith as a non-cognitive action, all faith-related dilemmas scored lower than the dilemma that to the students was free of faith factors.

Relativistic Thinking in SDA College Students

Although the students in this study all adhere firmly to church beliefs (insofar as this study refers to them), their thinking about such issues is very relativistic. The question, then, is, How do Adventist students become relativistic as a result of Adventist college education? The answer seems to lie, at least partially, in the nature of that education.

Actually, any kind of formal higher education seems to provide a broadening of viewpoints and a certain amount of challenge to previously held beliefs just because of exposure to so much that is new. Also, it should be noticed that many of the freshmen were already into a relativistic style of thinking when they arrived at college. The more appropriate question, perhaps, is why an Adventist college education doesn't guide them more quickly toward probabilistic thinking.

Several answers suggest themselves. Perhaps Adventist students are not being given sufficient support for and acceptance of the legitimate question-asking that should occur as one comes out of absolutism. Question-asking, viewed as danger-

ous, is a somewhat frowned-upon activity at Adventist colleges. Without support and validation for a student's honest and legitimate question-asking process, there will be a delay in progress.

Secondly, faculty may fail to provide students with sufficient role models for probabilistic thinking by explaining clearly and carefully the procedure they go through in arriving at decisions or choices, given the uncertainty of human knowledge. Faculty members themselves must think at probabilistic levels in order to be of help to their students in advancing out of relativism.

Even more fundamentally, Adventism too often sees faith as totally feeling-oriented. Our forebears studied and searched for truth and adjusted to and accepted new knowledge as it came to

them, even when that required abandoning or altering cherished beliefs. Surely we should teach ourselves and our students to weigh all the evidence that can be produced, to search for the best information available, and to examine all experience and circumstance in order to make faith choices as intelligently as possible.

The reflective judgment model provides a description of changing patterns of attitudes toward knowledge. It advocates probabilistic thinking as the highest form of reflective thinking. Understanding this model and its sequence of stages should help toward making the relativistic period a normal, though hopefully temporary, situation. The probabilistic period is a goal toward which all honest thinkers (not mere reflectors of others' thoughts) must move.

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Once More Into the Fray: Creation Science Seeks Respectability

The Beginnings of Modern Creationism

Henry M. Morris. *A History of Modern Creationism*. (San Diego, CA: Master Book Publishers, 1984). 382 pages. \$12.95 (\$9.95 paper).

Reviewed by Ronald L. Carter

The *History of Modern Creationism*, written by Henry M. Morris, the founder and director of the Institute for Creation Research, is not a book describing modern creation theory, but instead is a history of organizations and people within the modern creationists movement. The author's goal is to trace the development of creationism from Francis Bacon and Isaac Newton, the "Great Creationists," to the present-day modern creationists. However, the account reads more like a Who's Who of modern creationism than a book on the history of ideas.

This book appealed to my religio-cultural curiosity by frequently referring to Seventh-day Adventists. Morris calls the self-taught Adventist geologist George McCready Price "One of the most important creationist writers of the first half of the 20th century" (p. 60), but he believes that the reason many have questioned Price's importance is due in part to the fact that Price belonged to a religion regarded by many as an eccentric cult. Morris cites and annotates numerous other Adventists who actively contributed to various creationist organizations.

One of the most striking features of this book is

its strong autobiographical style and content. The reader acquires an unambiguous understanding of Morris's views regarding such things as the age of the earth, and his attitude toward Christians who, in his view, compromise biblical literalism. Morris is motivated by a strident belief that the fundamentalist view of biblical inerrancy is the only true basis for creationism. Adopting a type of "dominoes" fatalism, he asserts that theistic evolution is the natural next step to the compromising "gap" and "progressive creation" theories that are widely accepted by Christian churches. For Morris, trying to combine evolution and creation is like "trying to equate God and Satan." Morris's career has been further motivated by his dream to start a liberal-arts college that is truly based on "the biblical concept" of creation, a goal he accomplished with the establishment of Christian Heritage College near San Diego, California.

Among the events central to the development of creationism, according to Morris, are the 1925 Scope's trial (with its ensuing embarrassment to fundamentalists); the 1959 centennial celebration of the publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (which rallied creationists to new heights of commitment); and the \$17 million Biological Sciences Curriculum Study established in 1959 to provide an increased appreciation for evolution theory throughout the American public school system. The publication of Henry Morris and John C. Whitcomb's *The Genesis Flood* not only changed his life by making him internationally known and extremely busy, but also changed the course of creationism as "the Lord used his book." Furthermore, Morris tells the reader that, in the 1970s, the Institute for Creation Research caused the evolutionists to

take notice when “creationism finally penetrated the consciousness and aroused public concerns.”

Throughout this 10-chapter book, Morris dispenses criticism, in nearly equal quantities, to both evolutionists and “liberal” Christians. He believes that evolution was first promoted by pagan priests, witch doctors, and pantheistic philosophers. In his view, evolution is merely a revival of “ancient paganism” and a theory that “appealed to the innate desire of man to escape from his responsibility to God, and it did so by persuading him that his escape was supported by science” (p. 33). “The fact is,” he continues, “that the waves of imperialism, revolutionism, and racism which took such deadly toll in the wake of Darwin can be traced directly to the spread of evolutionary philosophy in society” (p. 45).

With regard to liberal Christians, Morris says:

To me, however, the saddest aspect of this whole dismal history is not the fact that scientists and sociologists so quickly capitulated to evolution. The worst feature is the inexcusable behavior of the theologians (p. 37).

Morris laments the fact that mainline churches, led by liberal theologians, retreated quickly to the gap theory. Morris sees “pious apathy” giving rise to the problem of Christian compromise and believes that liberalism and its “higher criticism” derive from strained exegesis that seeks to accommodate evolution. Furthermore, according to Morris, modern scientific creation scientists have made it abundantly clear that the real facts support a literal biblical view of Creation. Morris is convinced that the first step to destroying creationism within the churches is the acceptance of long ages for earth history.

Morris devotes most of this book to a discussion of the origin and evolution of organized creation societies. He describes more than a dozen organizations, giving information about when, where, and how these groups were born. Frequently Morris makes personal comments about how he was involved in these societies or how he personally knew these leaders. Often, more detail is given about the numbers of people attending a meeting, where an organization meeting was held, or what Morris thought of an individual, than is given concerning modern crea-

tionism’s ideas and its struggles. At first reading, I was put off by Morris’ frequent “I” statements, which seemed self-serving. On re-reading, however, and especially as I began to recognize more fully the central nature of Morris’ involvement in the development of the modern creationist movement, I became more accepting of the first-person references.

Morris credits both Price and Harold Clark, an Adventist science teacher from Pacific Union College, with having had a significant influence on the development of his own creationist views. Morris also discusses the Adventist-dominated Creation-Deluge Society, its metamorphosis into the “Forum” under the leadership of Molleurus Couperus, and the Ernest Booth-inspired Society for the Study of Natural Science, which Morris says provided a conservative response to growing liberalism in the Adventist church.

But Morris is also diplomatic in his chastisement of both fundamentalists and Adventists. He describes Adventists as dominating early Creation groups and then cautiously implies that they limited their influence by being too cliquish and self-interested, and by building their theories on Ellen White’s writings. However, he assures Adventists that he is not rebuking *them*, but conservatives and fundamentalists of other denominations who have failed to participate more with Adventists.

Morris sadly notes that within southern California a “restive” group of Adventist liberals has emerged and, today, widespread liberalism is to be found in the Adventist church.

In his view, the Geoscience Research Institute, whose members, since its establishment in the late 1950s, conduct research, teach, and write full time, does not qualify as the first *creationist* institute because its stance on the age of the earth is too liberal for it to be considered a true Creation research institute. The first *creationist* institution is his own Institute for Creation Research.

Morris concludes his book by commenting on the future. He predicts that the Christian private-school movement will continue to grow and that many humanist organizations will arise in response to the new and great public awareness that

modern creationism has produced. He calls upon Christians to look at the evidence scientific creationism has produced (not presented in this book) and to resist the spirit of compromise that, if not stopped, will destroy the church.

I had hoped that this book would detail the history of ideas, issues, and data that have transformed theories and have produced "Modern Creationism." I found, instead, that Ronald L. Numbers' article in *Science* (Vol. 218, November 5, 1982) provides more succinct details and insights into the people and organizations of modern creationism than does Morris's book. Nevertheless, this book makes it very clear that Henry M. Morris played a fundamental role in shaping the very nature of modern creationism.

Ronald L. Carter is the chairman of the biology department at Walla Walla College.

Adventist Scientists & Robert Gentry's Pleochroic Halos

Robert V. Gentry, *Creation's Tiny Mystery*, 2nd ed. (Knoxville, TN: Earth Science Associates, 1988). 348 pages. \$10.75 (paper).

Reviewed by S. C. Rowland, R. E. Kingman, and M. V. Anderson

Robert V. Gentry presents in his book, *Creation's Tiny Mystery*, what he considers to be evidence to support his own Creation model (chapters 1-4), which he believes falsifies the standard evolutionary paradigm. He also recites his polemical disputes with the scientific community (chapters 5-15); and provides the original documents of these disputes (extensive appendices). This review will deal primarily with the physical basis for Gentry's arguments as outlined in chapters 1-4.

One cannot help but be inspired by Gentry's commitment to and passion for his research on the pleochroic halos. Unfortunately, his logic is seri-

ously flawed; several of the assumptions which are crucial to his conclusions are, in our opinion, unfounded. Furthermore, one of his major conclusions, the dating of the Creation event to about 10,000 years ago is a *non sequitur*; and finally, he fails to deal consistently with all the data.

Pleochroic Halos

Gentry's research over the past quarter century has centered on tiny discolored spherical shells a few tens of microns in diameter found in micas and coalified wood. These are associated with radiation damage in the material resulting from alpha particles (helium nuclei) emitted by a variety of heavy nuclei that result from the radioactive decay of ^{238}U . The patterns of concentric colored spheres are a signature of the nuclear species present because each emits alpha particles of characteristic energy. The distance an alpha particle will travel in a material is determined by its energy. The rate of production of damage sites giving rise to a halo is directly proportional to the amount of alpha-emitting material present, and is inversely proportional to the half-life of the emitter. The halos that result from the Polonium isotopes 218, 214, and 210 are of special interest to Gentry because of their short half-lives of 3 minutes, 164 microseconds, and 138 days. In contrast, the half-life of the progenitor of the decay chain, ^{238}U , is 4.5 billion years. Because electrons deposit much less energy in the material, electron emission does not produce observable halos.

The Mica Polonium Halos

Gentry argues that finding polonium halos without evidence of the precursor nuclei disproves the standard account of evolutionary geology. This argument depends on his inferred absence of mechanisms to implant polonium inclusions in time scales less than those of the three-minute half-life of ^{218}Po . It is easy to suggest mechanisms that at least partially meet this requirement. Such a mechanism was de-

scribed by Rowland at the 1986 Quadrennial Conference on Higher Education when Gentry was present. One nucleus in the series of reactions stemming from the ^{238}U decay is ^{226}Ra , which decays to ^{222}Rn , which exists in gaseous form. In an aquifer covered by an impermeable dome, radon gas would be expected to collect. The decay of the radon to ^{218}Po could produce polonium which, in an aqueous solution, readily precipitates. If these precipitates find their way into the mica before they decay (in a time span of a few minutes), this would produce Gentry's halos. Several mechanisms have been suggested to account for the intrusion of the polonium into the mica.

It should be observed that if, for the sake of argument, one grants that the halos could not have been produced by such mechanisms, the halo phenomena make no statement about the amount of time that has elapsed since their formation.

Coalified Wood Halos

Polonium and uranium halos are found in coalified wood, but the polonium halos that are found are those from the ^{210}Po isotope. This is as expected because of the shortness of the half-lives of the other polonium nuclei. The ^{214}Po alpha decays to form ^{210}Pb , which emits electrons to form the halo producing ^{210}Po . The 22-year half-life of the lead gives ample time for its intrusion into the wood prior to its coalification. Gentry reports finding such samples in regions spanning much of the past 200 million years of geologic age. His argument for the uniqueness of events that lead to the halo formation as an indication of their resulting from a single catastrophic event, the Flood, is not necessary or convincing.

Reflections

Gentry does not discuss the length of time required to form a uranium halo in either mica or wood. If, because of theological reasons, he claims that at the Creation, the Fall, and the Flood, the decay rate for uranium changed, shortening the time required to form uranium halos, then he has left the domain of science. Postulating increased decay rates for uranium while leaving the decay rates for polonium unchanged is scientifically an inconsistent treatment of the data and theologically capricious.

If reasonable mechanisms exist for these polonium halos to have been derived from daughter products of ^{238}U , Gentry's arguments have absolutely no scientific basis. Since halos of only three of the known 26 isotopes of polonium are found, and these are all daughter products of ^{238}U , his case for these halos being "an indelible record of creation" is weak. Why should the Creator have chosen to use only those isotopes of polonium that occur as daughter products of ^{238}U when he had so many others he could have used?

Motivated by his theological perspective, Gentry has offered a hypothesis for the origin of the polonium halos that is not inconsistent with the occurrence of the polonium halos. But, when he fails to deal consistently with the uranium halo data, he has ceased to do science and has certainly not proved Creation.

The book helps its readers understand the motivation of one who has felt compelled to challenge a standard scientific model and now feels under attack. Unfortunately, the scientific basis for Gentry's challenge appears tenuous at best.

S. C. Rowland is a professor of physics, Andrews University; R. E. Kingman is chairman of the physics department, Andrews University; M. V. Anderson is a professor emeritus of physics, Pacific Union College.

Loma Linda Opts for Single University With Two Campuses

by Ronald Graybill

In a three-day meeting at Palm Springs' Wyndham Hotel, the Loma Linda University board of trustees voted 33 to 3 to maintain a single university under a single name, but to give each campus greater autonomy. The meeting, held August 27-29, voted for a slimmed-down board of trustees that will meet twice a year to handle major policy issues. Two smaller executive committees will meet monthly, one for the Loma Linda campus, one for the Riverside campus. Two chancellors selected by the board will be the chief operating and academic officers on their respective campuses. The reorganization, which will take effect January 1, 1990, will allow the campuses to apply for separate accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

The board unanimously re-elected Norman Woods to the presidency of the university, but his job description will change as he takes on greater fund-raising responsibilities and becomes less involved in the day-to-day operations of the university. The university's chief financial officer will be the only other administrator positioned above the chancellor level.

The board's decision was something of a surprise since key members had earlier spoken of the prime importance of protecting the entities on the Loma Linda campus, where sentiment for separation was strongest. Norman Woods, in his report

to the Loma Linda campus faculty, explained the board's decision as an outgrowth of the Adventist emphasis on Christian unity and cooperation. Given those values, he said, board members "just couldn't get their minds around" the idea of separation. Other board members indicated their concern about the impact of separation on the Pacific Union, which already has difficulty carrying the debt burden of Pacific Union College.

Riverside campus provost Dale McCune, in comments made to his faculty the day after the board meeting, said he believed a meeting between Neal Wilson and the Riverside campus administrators prior to the board meeting played a role in the decision. The administrators pledged to help end the constant gossip, suspicion, and criticism that has plagued the university in recent years.

On its first day of deliberation, the board received a detailed report from a consulting team headed by Gordon Madgwick, executive secretary of the church's North American Division Board of Higher Education. The report listed the pros and cons of six different options ranging from the status quo to separation. Ironically, opinion surveys and interviews revealed that a majority of the faculty still favored consolidation as an "ideal," but most said it was politically impossible at this point. Several board members credited the near-unanimity of their vote to the Madgwick study, even though the study made no specific recommendation on which option should be chosen.

In his report to the Riverside faculty after the board meeting, Woods described the past three years as difficult ones for him and his family, especially because of criticism from the Riverside campus. He said that before the board meeting he had believed that separation was the only viable option left for the university, in part because past decisions involving the two campuses had usually split the board nearly in half. Nevertheless, Woods said he was optimistic about the future of the Riverside campus, both because of the potential endowment bonanza from property

Ronald Graybill, associate professor of church history and religion at Loma Linda University, was elected by the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences on the La Sierra campus as their moderator. He also served on the university-wide strategic planning committee reviewing all plans for consolidation.

holdings, and because of the strong mandate from the board in support of a single university.

The board asked Woods to set up search committees on the two campuses to make recommendations regarding chancellors. The committees are to report to a special board meeting called for October 4 to meet in Silver Spring, Maryland, during the General Conference Annual Council. The search committee on the Riverside campus was selected and set to work immediately. Chaired by Woods, it contains four other administrators, as well as four faculty representatives, from the various Riverside schools.

The process of selecting a chancellor on the Loma Linda campus will be slower, since the post must first be defined in relation not only to the president and the deans, but also to the medical center, the medical and dental faculty practice groups, and the vice-president for medical affairs. According to Woods, these relationships will be important in the future because financial realities demand that the health science schools be more closely tied to the medical center.

Riverside campus' reaction to the board's decision was predictably favorable. There had been widespread fear that total separation and the loss of the university's name would lead to serious loss of students and faculty. On the Loma Linda campus, reaction was more restrained. A departmental chairman spoke of a "sense of heaviness" as he contemplated the delicate task of working out the details of the board's action. Practical decisions must be made concerning the future of entities presently located on both campuses, such as the graduate school, school of religion, records office, and library. On the other hand, one Loma Linda campus administrator was "enthusiastic" about the future, believing that the board's mandate gave the university some long-needed direction.

The school of religion's potential fate is illustrative of the difficulties. The school has thus far been based equally on the two campuses, with the dean's main office on the Loma Linda campus. Faculty meetings are held alternately on the two campuses, and many professors teach on both campuses. If the campuses are to be separately

accredited, where will the school of religion find a home? One administrator suggested basing it on the Riverside campus and allowing the Loma Linda campuses to hire its professors on a contract basis as they were needed. The school of religion opposes that concept because it would consign religion to a "hired-hand" status on the Loma Linda campus and could lead to a decline in the role and viability of religious training there.

Whatever presence the school of religion has on the Loma Linda campus, comments from vari-

The driving force behind reorganization has been the decision by the accrediting body, WASC, to place the university on probation.

ous campus leaders indicate that they want it to be distinctly related to the health sciences. Areas of emphasis, they believe, could include chaplaincy, spiritual growth for health professionals, medical ethics, science and religion, and the Adventist heritage in health and healing.

The driving force behind the reorganization move has been the decision by the accrediting body, WASC, to place the university on probation. The new configuration is meant to address several of the WASC complaints. The smaller board of trustees for the entire university will be chosen so as to avoid conflicts of interest, meaning primarily that the members of boards of competing institutions will not sit on the university's board. There is also talk of decreasing the size and constitutional authority of the constituency, since WASC believed the constituency held powers that should reside in a more responsible and active board of trustees.

WASC also cited Loma Linda University for paying most of its professors on the Riverside campus at parity with their external peers, while others, primarily on the Riverside campus, were paid some of the lowest university salaries in the state. Separate accreditation will address that issue to some extent, but WASC also said in its report that such low salaries made it difficult for the Riverside campus to attract qualified professors.

Since low salaries are a problem shared by all

Adventist colleges, the General Conference called a meeting for September 11-12 to study pay scales at North American Adventist colleges and universities. One suggestion was to sever professorial from ministerial pay scales. Another was to peg Adventist college faculty salaries at the 40th percentile for private, church-related institutions. Yet another idea was to allow for area-specific cost-of-living adjustments. Loma Linda University would profit from the latter since the cost of housing is so much greater for its professors than for those in the Midwest or South.

The financial outlook of the university was

brightened in recent weeks by the maturity of two multimillion dollar trusts and by a sooner-than-expected flurry of bids to purchase a parcel of residential land the university holds in Banning, California. A substantial portion of the recently acquired trust funds has been used to swell the university's endowment. The potential infusion of funds from real-estate developments, the prospect of a president working nearly full time to build the university's endowment, and the willingness of the General Conference to restudy salary structures all inspired hope that the university's financial problems were on the mend as well.

Abortion: Hard Questions Remain

To the Editor: In reference to the issue you ran on abortion.

I read and hear all the ideals Christians have for these unborn babies and it brings up the following questions:

1. Who is going to pay the expenses of this mother while she carries this child? She may be ill and not able to work during the pregnancy.

2. Who is going to guide this mother and make sure that she trains this child properly? I'm sure they want this child a Christian.

3. Who is going to pay this mother to stay home with the child the first few weeks and bond with it?

4. Who is going to make sure this mother loves and cares deeply for this child she is being forced to carry for nine months?

5. Who is going to guarantee adoption of this child, if this mother refuses to accept it? Remember, the child may be a minority child or a handicapped child.

6. Who will guarantee to this woman that the man who got her pregnant will receive punishment equal to carrying, delivering, and raising a child he never wanted?

I read the volumes of material being put out by Christians condemning women getting abortions, and I still find no answers to the above questions. I have yet to hear even a faint mention of the men who get these women pregnant. I hear only condemnation of the women.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

Dolores J. Adams
Gentry, Arkansas

Gainer Offers Kudos and Corrections

To the Editor: Thank you for the outstanding job you did in editing my paper, "The Wisdom of Solomon" (Vol. 19, No. 4). To transform 44 closely reasoned pages into nine accessible pages was no small task. There is, however, one item in the article that I missed when proofreading that, in the interest of fairness and historical accuracy, needs to be clarified.

A sentence on page 42, the right-hand column, the middle of the first paragraph, states that, "After this exchange in early March, guidelines one and five were revised in the direction suggested by Wilson." The problem with that sentence is that Elder Wilson made no suggestion

regarding Guideline No. 5 in his March 2 letter to which Elder Beach was responding.

My original sentence would better serve our quest for truth. That sentence read as follows: "It was after this exchange between Elder N. C. Wilson and Elder W. R. Beach in early March (and sometime before June 21) that Guideline No. 5 was revised to read, 'When for some reason the requirement of functional human life demands the sacrifice of the less potential human value' abortion is permitted."

In fact, I now think we can be more precise. I believe the evidence best supports the final revision of Guideline No. 5 to have occurred sometime between June 14, 1971 (when Elders Wilson and Bradford and Dr. Waddell were chosen "to refine certain aspects of the report"), and June 21, 1971 (when the General Conference officers voted to accept the "Interruption of Pregnancy Guidelines").

George S. Gainer
Takoma Academy
Takoma Park, Maryland

The Merikay Case: Review Sparks Debate

To the Editor: I read with interest Jean Lowry's review of Richard Utt's *The Other Side of the Story* regarding the Merikay-Pacific Press case (Vol. 19, No. 5). Ms. Lowry ends with the sentence: "Somewhere there is truth, but the reader is left to divine it."

This is a time for healing rather than reopening old wounds. However, if the lack of knowledge about what actually took place is so great that the truth cannot be known, of what value was the struggle? As the aphorism goes, Those who fail to learn from history are destined to repeat it. I also have an untold "side" of the story quite relevant to *The Other Side*. Here are my recollections checked against relevant documents.

I was assistant editor under my good friend Richard Utt, who headed English book editing. He had attracted me to Pacific Press with his visions, among which was creating books especially for sale in secular and religious bookstores across the country. In 1971, when fellow assistant editor Barbara Hand Herrera, also a good friend, moved to San Diego, Richard asked me to compile a list of potential candidates to fill her position.

On my list of approximately 10 people, I put Merikay McLeod Silver. I had known her at Andrews University where I had been impressed with her writing skills. Richard selected her (his second choice) and asked me to phone her in Seattle to find out her interest. I remember I was looking

out my office windows at the beautiful spring flowers while listening to Merikay express her joy and excitement at being considered. Richard had instructed me to ask her about her education. I did, and she said she had two years of college, but was planning to finish. I reported back.

We discussed how to handle the matter of her education. We both believed in the necessity of her finishing. But we agreed that even without the college degree she should still be seriously considered, since her writing ability was so much greater than that of any of the remaining candidates, regardless of their level of education. She could attend a suitable nearby university, just as other full-time SDA editors (including Richard) had done and were still doing. And since they were allowed to attend on "company time," it seemed only right and fair that she should also.

Richard asked me to go ahead and phone Merikay to tell her the Press would pay her flight down for interviews. I recently checked my Press calendar book for that year and saw where I noted her visit—from June 1 to June 13, 1971. In the same entry I noted that her husband, Kim, flew down with her, paying his own way, to attend a filmmakers' convention at Camp Loma Mar in the nearby Santa Cruz mountains.

When the time came for her name to be considered by the executive committee, which would have to ratify the choice, I suggested to Richard that he explain her educational situation to the members. Richard told me he had decided to tell them as little as possible. He was known as a champion of higher education in management in the denomination generally and in the publishing work specifically. Naturally, he didn't want to be exposed as a champion of an "undereducated" editor. He said that since the executive committee traditionally gave the hiring manager the person he wanted, he expected no difficulty in getting Merikay's name passed.

However, even after Richard had hired her, after she had gotten an apartment, and after she was at work in her office, the committee tabled his motion. I remember the chagrin on his face as he told how, in executive committee, foreign-language editor Fernando Chaij had asked, "How much education has this young woman? *Very important!*"

With Richard's blessing, I sent a memo dated June 24, 1971, to key members of the executive committee explaining Merikay's educational situation. Meanwhile, Richard repaired his bridges and the committee ratified his action in hiring Merikay as a full-time editorial assistant. As Press treasurer Bill Muir testified in an affidavit filed in federal court, November 19, 1973, she "was hired to fill an editorial assistant position. . . . She was paid as a full-time employee though she was to be permitted to attend college."

Management, I learned long after the fact, had given her the title editorial assistant, rather than assistant editor, as Barbara's title had been. Barbara held a degree from journalism school. Merikay continued her education and earned a master's in social science from San Jose State University. The point here is that Title Seven of the Civil

Rights Act of 1964, on which this case was largely tried, was concerned with equal pay for equal work, not equal pay for equal titles.

On the job, Merikay's work was essentially the same as mine. We both occupied nearly identical, next-door offices. We both worked 8:00 to 5:00. We both shared (with Richard) the same secretary. We both reviewed and reported on piles of submitted manuscripts. We both sat and voted on the important Book Committee. We both edited narrative and inspirational manuscripts, although she did not edit the theological books. We both wrote advertising copy for paperback covers and hardback dust jackets. We both coordinated artwork, photography, layout, copyediting, copyfitting, proofreading, et cetera.

Only after a year and a half had passed was I dismayed to learn—by accident in the xerox room where Merikay discovered me photocopying my W-2 form—that her Press income was less than 60 percent of mine.

By early summer of 1973 negotiations between Merikay and management had broken down, and her attorney was in the process of "discovery." One morning, shortly before I was scheduled to testify (in deposition in the Press boardroom) before a court reporter and attorneys for both sides, General Manager Len Bohner met me on the garden walkway between my office and the boardroom. He said some attorneys were here asking questions and asked me not to say too much. And during the deposition, when I said my work was essentially *identical* with hers, I noticed Len sitting across the large, polished boardroom table with a shocked and saddened look on his face. He had both hands out in front of him in a "put on the brakes" gesture which I understood to mean—Max, stop spilling the gravy! He was a good friend and I felt badly, but by then I knew that management was discriminating against Merikay, and I answered the questions honestly, although I confess I did volunteer some strong statements from Ellen White about women not being paid fairly in the denomination.

In a couple of weeks Richard strode into my office straight from executive committee, his face gray. He'd tried to save me, he said, "but you've gone pretty far!" At that moment the visions he and I shared popped like party balloons. Worried, I wrote to my good friend R. R. Bietz, then Press board chairman, telling him what I'd said under oath and why. He visited me in my office after that. I remember him pounding his fist into his palm and saying, "When you testify *tell them the truth!*" And I remember my mother, Austa Phillips, then living in Santa Cruz, telling me R. R. had taken her aside at Central California camp meeting in Soquel that summer and told her not to worry because "Max is going to be all right."

I was a material witness to the fact that Merikay was hired and worked for more than a year and a half as a full-time editorial assistant at less than 60 percent of my "male" counterpart pay. *The Other Side's* thesis (half-time student employee paid more per hour than general manager) would make sense only if the men who attended school on

company time also received less than 60 percent of standard pay. But this wasn't the case. And in court no one even attempted to refute evidence (such as mine and Bill Muir's) that was contrary to *The Other Side's* thesis. Richard himself spent much time on the witness stand. Why, then, did he wait till 1988, long after the case was settled, to drop the bomb that, if on target, would surely have sunk Merikay's ship?

If, as *The Other Side* seems to want it, the Press was forced to give up, not because it was in the wrong, but because it was "just too expensive to fight this kind of thing," then why is it that the case went through to complete adjudication? Why, for more than a decade, did the court hear the evidence and then finally decide in favor of Merikay on every major point at issue? Will the wounds on both sides ever be healed unless everyone concerned can accept the fact that this case was decided fairly and solely on the basis of fact and law, including Constitutional First Amendment law? Justice can't see enemies—she's blind.

Max Phillips
Sunnyvale, California

Lorna Tobler Recalls . . .

To the Editor: In response to Jean Lowry's review of Richard Utt's pamphlet entitled, "Pacific Press Lawsuit: The Other Side," (Vol. 19, No. 5) I would like to comment on her conclusion, "Somewhere there is truth, but the reader is left to divine it."

I would refer Ms. Lowry, as well as other *Spectrum* readers, to the Heritage Rooms of the libraries at Loma Linda University and Andrews University. There the saga of that 10-year story is minutely chronicled in the court documents preserved in those rooms, including the affidavits and depositions of Richard Utt, as well as the reporter's transcript of his lengthy testimony in federal court. During those long years he told his "other side of the story" to the judge over and over. In the end, his voluminous testimony was passed over in silence by federal judges, at both the trial and appellate levels.

The chief problem with Richard Utt's testimony was that it was not supported by the evidence or argument submitted by Pacific Press to the court. In fact, in its very first answer to the court, Pacific Press admitted that it did in fact owe back wages to Merikay Silver based on what it would have paid a similarly-situated male employee. The Press also admitted that Merikay was a full-time employee, and the payroll records it submitted to the court substantiated that fact. All of these records are available at Loma Linda and Andrews Universities. Among them is a summary of the record in the Opinion handed down by Judge Renfrew (*EEOC v. PPPA*, 482 F. Suppl. [N.D.Cal. 1979]).

If Pacific Press's lawyers had followed Utt's arguments in defending its employment practices by asserting that

Merikay was a "problem employee," already being paid at a rate "higher than the general manager," they could not have dealt with the facts of the case as they applied to every other woman worker at the Press. Obviously they could not argue that all the women paid a third of the rent allowance paid to men were simply "problem" employees. So they chose not to argue the facts but, instead, developed a novel theory that religious institutions are "exempt from all civil law." The rest is history.

One question, curiously, was not raised either by Utt or by his reviewer, and that was: How much money in back wages was accepted by women employees? Utt made much of the fact that some \$50,000 in back wages was not collected, concluding that women employees felt they should not take it. What he omitted saying was that some \$700,000 was collected by about 140 women—including Richard Utt's wife—in withheld wages earned for a period of up to two years (the token restitution required by law), which was theirs to use to support their families, pay their rent—or donate—now as they chose.

The principle of the choice of disposing of one's own wages was eloquently expressed by Judge Manual Real in a similar case involving wage discrimination against women teachers in the Pacific Union: "Nothing in the [Equal Pay] Act would prevent those persons—if they so desire—from remitting all or any portion of their salary to the church. There is, then, no impingement on the exercise of religion" (*Secretary of Labor v. Pacific Union Conference*, U.S. District Court, Central District of California, No. CV 75-3032-R).

Today the principle of equal pay for equal work is no longer the emotional issue it was 20 years ago. It has become the accepted norm. By holding out against it so long, Pacific Press raised the emotional stakes too high. It is time now, finally, to let go of the obsolete and build upon what has been achieved thus far.

Lorna Tobler
Sunnyvale, California

Merikay Remembers . . .

To the Editor: Had the struggle for equal pay at Pacific Press merely been a clash of assertive personalities or a difference of opinions, it would hold little meaning for us now.

However, the Pacific Press lawsuits embody truths that Adventists (especially Adventist women and their families) dare not forget. The decade between 1973, when I first asked for equal pay, and 1983, when more than \$600,000 was paid in token back wages to women employees of the Press, was one of intense growth for all concerned. It forced Adventist corporate and church leaders to confront their sexism and discrimination in a painful and somewhat public way. The result—government and judicial enforcement of the values Adventism espoused but did not practice—has

improved the employment experience of countless women throughout the denomination. And their more equal treatment has benefited their families as well.

Richard Utt claims that I was hired as a part-time worker. But if I had been, could I, in court, have successfully asserted a right to equal pay? Had the Press really hired me as a part-time student worker, wouldn't they have introduced that as evidence in each of the three sex discrimination suits filed against them (Silver, EEOC, and U.S. Department of Labor), and wouldn't they have emerged from the legal struggle a winner? Instead, they were ordered to pay back wages that they had withheld from their women workers.

When it comes to the history Richard Utt is trying to rewrite, the court meted out justice in *Silver vs. Pacific Press*, *EEOC vs. Pacific Press*, and *U.S. Department of Labor vs. Pacific Press*. All three cases were based on the same set of facts. I was not an employment exception at PPPA. The Press lost these three cases precisely because I was treated like all other women workers there. The court saw me as a perfect example of how the Press treated all female employees. We were all paid on a different (much lower) scale than the men, without regard to the work we performed. We did not receive the same benefits. And we were not promoted at the same rate or to the same type of positions as the men were. The court ruled in these three cases that the Press wilfully and continually broke the law by discriminating against women employees.

These facts are available to anyone who wants to read through the court documents of the three cases. They are also presented in my book, *Betrayal*, which is fully documented with footnotes from the court records.

One difficulty women face with prejudice is that it never seems to go away. Prejudice may be overt, covert, blatant, or subtle. In this latest claim that the Press really treated women fairly, a familiar tactic is used. It's called "blaming the victim" by trying to show that it was her faults (her unpleasant personality, her incompetence, her inferior work, her inability to handle money, et cetera) that caused all the trouble.

The truth, however, must be continually illuminated, because inaccurate claims attack the history of women's sacrifice and suffering within the church. The sacrifice and suffering is a fact established in each of our lives. We need to remember it, repent over it, and promise our daughters that we will do all we can to make sure such behavior, such overt discrimination, will never happen again.

The God we love is a God of justice.

Merikay McLeod
San Jose, California

. . . And Richard Utt Responds to Lowry's Review

To the Editor: Ms. Lowry has called my booklet, *Pacific Press Lawsuit*, an "intense tale" with the "strongly defined characters [of] great fiction." I hope she means *tale* in its dictionary sense, "recital of happenings . . . literary composition in narrative form," rather than in its alternate meaning, "idle or malicious gossip." I am so flattered to have any of my writing called "great" that I am tempted to offer my thanks and quit while I'm ahead.

I was surprised at a number of statements Ms. Lowry attributed to me which I did not make. I did not say that the Press was a "family more than a business." The Pacific Press was manufacturing and shipping worldwide more than \$20 million of books and magazines. That is a business whether it is the Lord's business or someone else's. What I did say was that Christian camaraderie was evident among employees and management, and that hiring agreements were carried out with mutual trust rather than with written job descriptions or contracts.

Another puzzling statement in Ms. Lowry's review is, "He bolsters the idea that women were not treated illegally by citing the fact that some women returned the court-ordered settlement money to the Press." What I said was quite different: "The fact that a sum of that size [\$55,696.53] was turned down by Pacific Press women says something about their attitude toward the Press and the denomination" (p. 13). The legality of the Press' salary scale was not determined by either the women who kept money or those who gave it back, but by the opinion of a federal judge.

However, Ms. Lowry does give evidence that my message came through when she concedes, "Perhaps Silver was not blameless in all details." Hardly a ringing affirmation of what I wrote, but I did indeed suggest something like that conclusion.

I still hope that those of us who love our imperfect church will refrain from calling in the barristers even when we feel we have been wronged. (I also deplore church officialdom's conduct in the Hawaii affair.) Can we not scrap with each other as Christian brothers and sisters while marching to Zion, without summoning the Gentiles? We live in a litigious society, but we have a New Testament that points to a higher and better way.

Richard Utt
Loma Linda, California

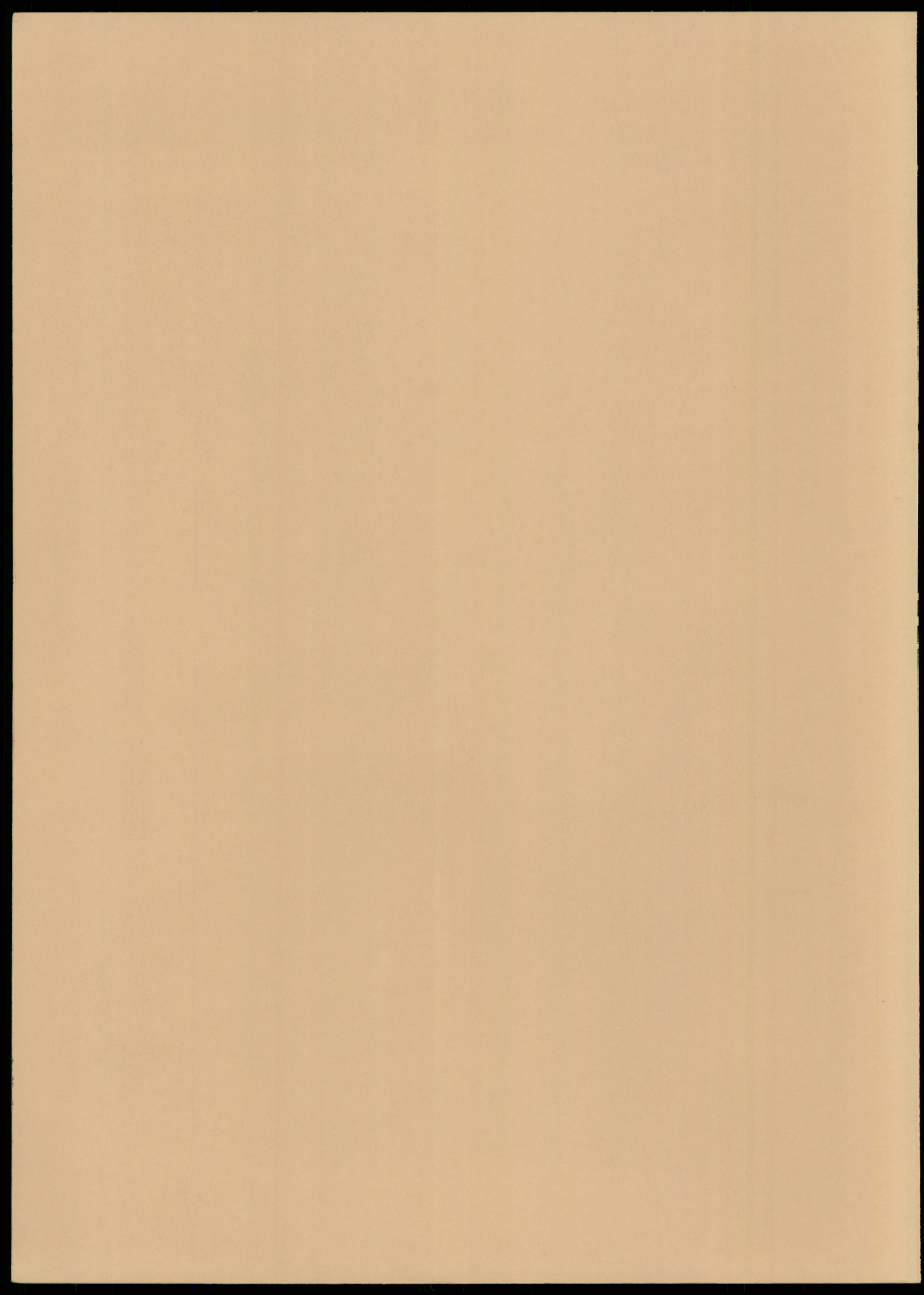
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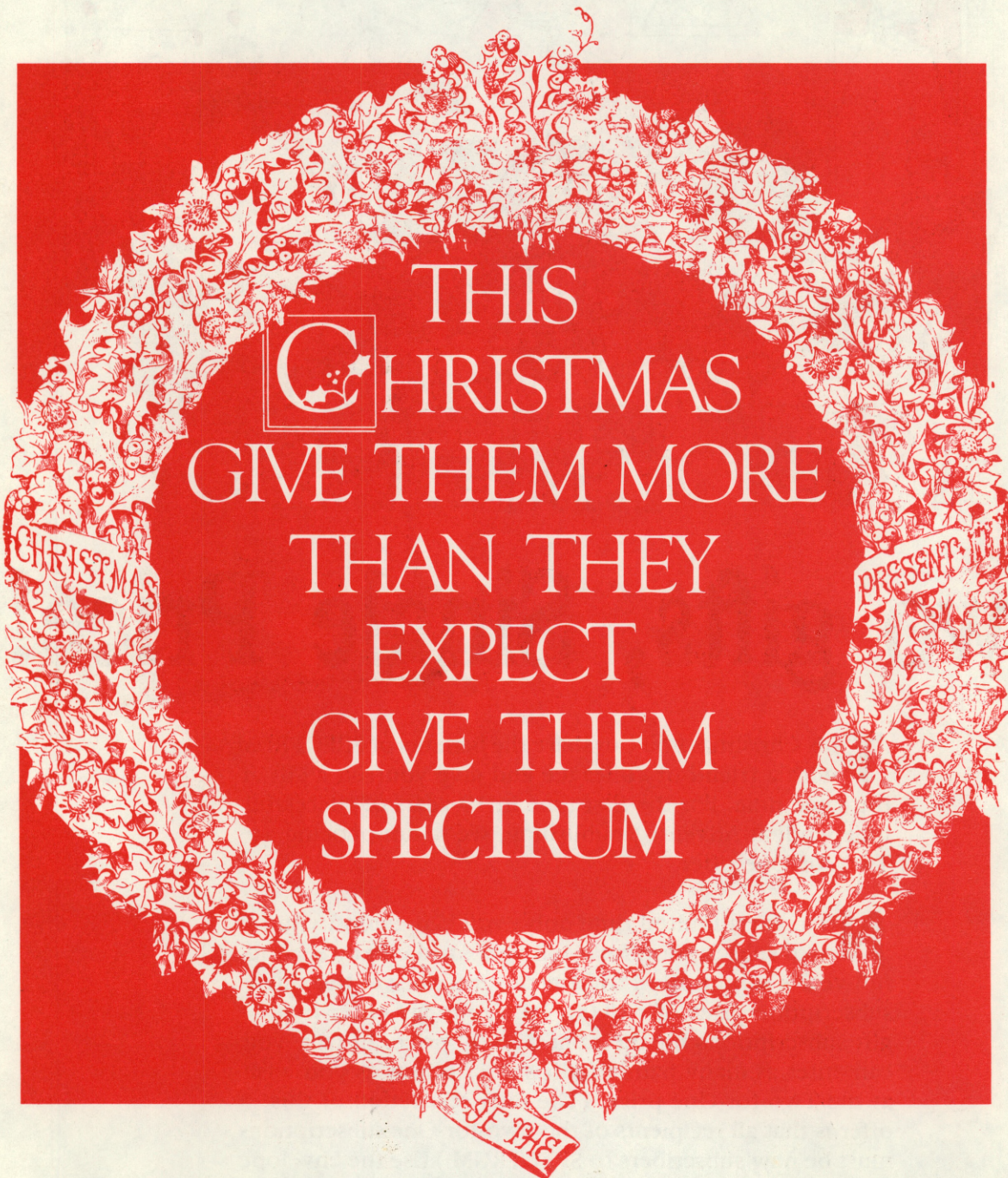
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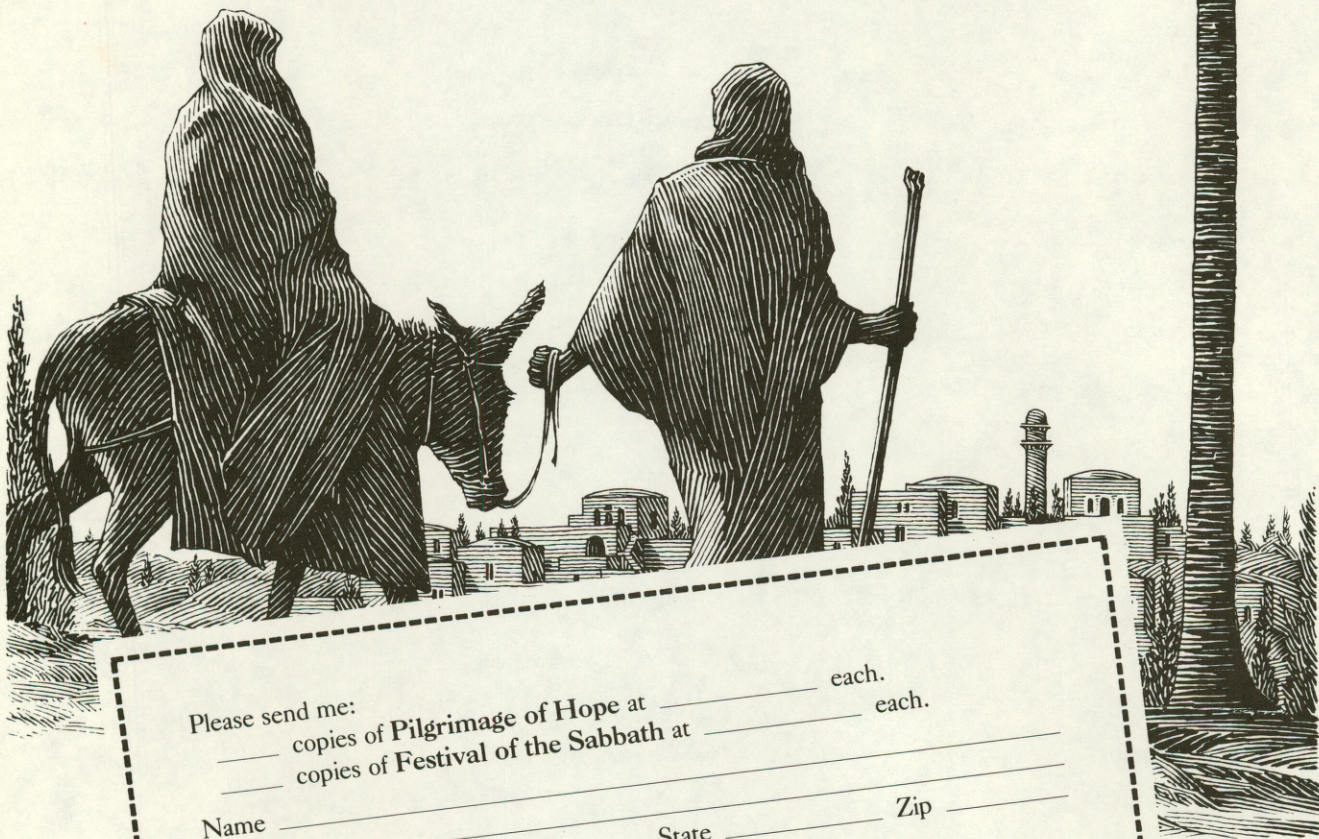
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