



# JOURNAL OF THE ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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## THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

### A Message from the ATS President

Gerhard F. Hasel

We give thanks to our Lord Jesus Christ for the completion and publication of this fourth issue of the **JOURNAL OF THE ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**. No less than 10,000 copies will be sent to members of **ATS** and subscribers as well as thousands of pastors, church administrators, teachers, church elders and others. We trust that you find a blessings in its pages, an enrichment for your faith, a positive voice of Biblical truth, and a deepening of your commitment to God's end-time church.

Some of you are wondering why you had to wait a little longer to receive this issue. Here are some major reasons. An **ATS** office was moved from Collegedale, Tennessee, to Berrien Springs, Michigan, where much of the technical work of **ATS** is now carried on. This took much time and effort. In addition, we needed to find a person with the skills required to execute the varied and complex jobs of our new office in Michigan. We are grateful that Mrs. April Younker is fulfilling this task with speed and skill. Unfortunately, both of our computers broke down, the one located in Tennessee and the one that was taken to Michigan. After long weeks, actually months, of repairs, the replacement of a hard drive, and other assorted problems, we needed to purchase a new computer which is now functioning for a few weeks. With the crashing of our hard drives, I mean not only the old one but subsequently the new one that replaced the old one and contained our back up files, we lost all of our files. Now we are restoring these files of names of both members and subscribers and many others. It appears that an Enemy was at work. We are grateful, however, that we are about

caught up, even though we are short by one computer at the moment in our Tennessee office.

I do not know whether the lines in the previous paragraph are an adequate explanation for the slight delay. We hope that you will bear with us. Keep in mind that all officers of **ATS**, its committees and boards, function in an unpaid fashion as volunteers. We are privileged to have a small part in assisting in whatever way we can. To God be the glory.

Two major meetings of **ATS** have taken place since you received the last issue of **JATS**. The third **International ATS Convention** was held on March 7-9, 1991, in Keene, Texas, at Southwestern Adventist College and the College Church, with the theme of "Salvation and End Time Prophecy." This convention was held in conjunction with the quinquennial Southwestern Union Ministerial Session. Elder Cyril Miller, president of the Southwestern Union Conference, and his Union Committee requested that this **International ATS Convention** function simultaneously as the Southwestern Union's ministerial convention. You should have been there with the more than 1,000 **ATS** members, pastors, and visitors present. The sweet spirit of fellowship, the deep unity in faith, the joy in the Advent message, and the enrichment from deep Biblical topics that were presented created a lasting impression that has become a part of our very existence in Christ and our commitment to the Advent movement. I have just returned from the annual **ATS** convention in Kansas City, Kansas, Nov 21-23, 1991, which was attended primarily by Bible teachers from the USA, Canada and Mexico. Most of the papers on the topic of "Revelation and Inspiration" will be published within the next few months in an additional issue of **JATS**. Thus we plan to publish three issues of **JATS** in 1992. This will help us to be as current as possible and to catch up on the fine materials we have for publication. There will be no extra cost for this extra issue of **JATS** for our members and subscribers. You will appreciate this.

We wish to announce that the fourth **INTERNATIONAL ATS CONVENTION** will be convened on April 16-18, 1992, at Loma Linda, California. The opening session will be on April 16, 7:30 pm, at the Chan Auditorium of Loma Linda Academy (Elementary Complex) with Dr. Mario Veloso, General Conference, as key

note speaker with the topic "Salvation and the Adventist Faith and Mission." All topics relate to "Salvation" and Scripture, law, the sanctuary, Calvary, blood, obedience, forgiveness, mission, atonement, creation, health, the believer's pilgrimage, the Advent hope, and Ellen White. Among the speakers will be such well-known persons as Drs. G. Reid, N. Gulley, M. Hardinge, C. M. Maxwell, A. Roth, G. F. Hasel, R. M. Davidson, H. LaRondelle, C. R. Holmes, R. Springett, A. Rodriguez, L. Van Dolson, A. Mazat, and J. Blanco. Elder Mark Finley, Speaker-elect of the **It Is Written** television program, who will have just returned from Moscow where he is scheduled to have an evangelistic crusade in the very Kremlin Auditorium in March, will present the vespers program on Friday evening. Elder Thomas Mostert, president of the Pacific Union Conference, will preach on Sabbath morning. We invite you to attend this exciting and uplifting 1992 **INTERNATIONAL ATS CONVENTION** in Loma Linda, California.

There is so much more to report. New publication plans for a symposium on creation and science. A new book is available on **SPEAKING IN TONGUES** (see the tear-out form at the end of this **JOURNAL**), a hot topic among Adventists, as the first volume in the "Adventist Theological Society Monograph" series. If you wish to become a member of **ATS** or become a subscriber to **JATS**, turn to the end of the **JOURNAL** and use the other tear-out sheet.

The amount of \$38,000 which was donated by **ATS** members for our seminary in Czechoslovakia will be used in December 1991, so it is reported, in buying a choice property for a permanent location for this newly opened seminary. There had been a stop to any real estate transactions in Czechoslovakia until the end of October 1991.

We can see how the Lord is blessing the humble endeavors of **ATS**. We are grateful for His guidance and consider it a genuine privilege to work together with our Church leaders in common interests, so the Lord can be glorified and His mission can be furthered.

Yours cordially in Christ,

Gerhard F. Hasel

## THE GOOD NEWS OF YOM KIPPUR

By Richard M. Davidson  
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary  
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How do you react when you read such solemn pronouncements of the coming judgment as: "The judgment was set, and the books were opened" (Dan. 7:10). "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come" (Rev. 14:6, 7). "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil"? (Eccl. 12:14). "Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment" (Ps. 1:5)?

Are these passages good news, or do they have an unsettling effect? I have not always considered the judgment as part of the assuring good news of the gospel.<sup>1</sup> While growing up in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, I used to shudder at the mention of the investigative judgment. The prospect of my name coming up in the heavenly court, with all my sins brought before God and the onlooking universe, made me think, "I'll never make it! I hope my name doesn't come up today."

Imagine my surprise when I first came across a number of prayers in the book of Psalms in which the Psalmist seemed to actually welcome, and even long for the judgment. The more general plea for judgment appeared shocking enough: "Arise, O God, judge the earth" (Ps. 82:8). Even more startling were the expressions of joyous exuberance at the coming judgment: "Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; . . . Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy before the Lord, for he comes, for he comes to judge

the earth" (Ps. 96:11-13, RSV). But simply beyond my comprehension were the passages where David longed for *his own case* to come up in judgment. Numerous times David prayed, "Judge me, O Lord!" (Ps. 7:8; 26:1; 35:24; 43:1). He seemed to be saying, in effect, Hurry up, Lord! Send the judgment. Let my name come up. I can't wait!

Is the judgment good news for you in the way it seems to have been for David? Perhaps a practical test of whether or not it is good news in your life is to ask yourself: Have I ever prayed David's prayer? This morning, did I pray, "Judge me, O Lord; please let my name come up in judgment?"

How could David pray such a prayer? With his record of heinous sins—adultery, murder, lying, to name a few. Did he not understand the sinfulness of sin, the seriousness of the judgment?

He understood. Note his prayer of deepest repentance after the affair with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband:

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight, so that thou art justified in thy sentence and blameless in thy judgment (Ps 51:3, 4, RSV).

David comprehended the heinousness of his sin and the reality of the judgment. But he also understood the message of righteousness by faith. He recognized that, sinful though he was, his sins could be covered and cleansed by the blood of the Substitute. He prayed: "Purge me with hyssop [the agent used to apply the blood of the sacrifice, Lev. 14:4-6; Num. 19:18; Ex. 12:22], and I shall be clean" (Ps. 51:7). In joy he could cry out, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (Ps. 32:1).

Scripture consistently upholds the seriousness of sin and the certainty of the judgment. But it also reveals that the Lamb of God, our Substitute, has been accepted in our place. As we receive Christ, we are covered with the robe of His righteousness. God says to the great Accuser, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan" (Zech. 3:2). We are acquitted, pardoned, and cleansed. We no longer are "anxious about what Christ and God think of us, but about what God thinks of Christ, our Substitute."<sup>2</sup>

### Assurance of Vindication

When we belong to Christ, the tables are turned in the judg-

ment. No longer do we stand there an accused defendant. Christ has paid the full price for our acquittal. Now we become the plaintiff, calling for vindication against the false charges of Satan. Now, with David, we can long for and welcome the judgment. We can pray, "Judge [vindicate, RSV] me, O Lord my God, according to thy righteousness" (Ps. 35:24).<sup>3</sup>

The outcome of this judgment is certain. It is "in favor of the saints of the Most High" (Dan. 7:22, NIV). Not only is Christ our Substitute, having paid the penalty for our sins with His blood. But He also is our Advocate, our Lawyer who never has lost a case that has been committed to Him. Eloquently and persuasively He pleads our case in the heavenly assize.<sup>4</sup> Those illustrations that picture the repentant sinner standing by himself in the midst of the heavenly tribunal miss the point. "He [our Advocate] ever lives to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25). For those in Christ, the heavenly courtroom is a friendly place.

Our heavenly Lawyer stands beside them with his arm around them, as it were; He "does not excuse their sins, but shows their penitence and faith, and, claiming for them forgiveness, He lifts His wounded hands before the Father and the holy angels, saying, I know them by name. I have graven them upon the palms of My hands."<sup>5</sup>

Not only is Christ our Substitute and Advocate, He is the star witness in our behalf! As the Faithful and True Witness (Rev 3:14), He brings evidence that vindicates us before the heavenly jury, and silences the false accusations of the adversary.

To top it all off, as if that is not enough good news, consider that in this heavenly court Christ also is our Judge.<sup>6</sup> This Judge has never made a mistake, and He is on our side. He is not a stern, harsh magistrate seeking to damn all He can, but a loving, gracious God seeking to save all He can. With tender pleading He urges us to accept the provisions of the court in order to exonerate us:

Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of

Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of any one, says the Lord God; so turn, and live" (Eze. 18:30-32).

The multiple function of a single individual in the judgment may seem strange to our modern Western legal system, but it is entirely in keeping with the Biblical concept of administering justice.<sup>7</sup> At the city gates the same elder(s) could convene the judicial proceedings, argue as advocate, give testimony, and render the verdict. At the Israelite sanctuary the priest not only did all of this (see Deut. 17:8-13) but also bore the penalty of the sins (see Lev. 10:17).

With Christ as our Substitute and Surety, our Advocate and Mediator, our Witness, Friend, and Judge, what better news can we ask?

This incredibly good news about assurance of vindication in the judgment will become more and more precious to us as the fires of persecution are kindled, as false witnesses accuse God's people of causing all the calamities in the land, and as the highest earthly tribunals render guilty verdicts against us. In the face of such a bleak outlook, we can have hope and confidence that in the investigative judgment the truth will come out. Like Job, who in a setting of investigative judgment<sup>8</sup> was faced with false accusers, we can proclaim confidently: "For I know that my Vindicator [RSV margin] lives, and at last he will stand upon the earth; and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then from my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see on my side" (Job 19:25-27, RSV).<sup>9</sup>

Ellen White poignantly depicts our final vindication in the investigative judgment:

John in holy vision beholds the faithful souls that come up out of great tribulation, surrounding the throne of God, clad in white robes, and crowned with immortal glory. What though they have been counted the offscouring of the earth? In the investigative judgment their lives and characters are brought in review before God, and that solemn tribunal reverses the decision of their enemies. Their faithfulness to God and to His Word stands revealed, and Heaven's high honors are awarded them as conquerors in the strife with sin and Satan.<sup>10</sup>

Thus the investigative judgment reveals to the universe the saints' standing before God. It does not put the salvation of God's

people in jeopardy. While it is a fearful thing to those who have neglected and rejected the provisions made for their salvation, for those in Christ the investigative judgment is a reason for singing. Since 1844, God's saints can proclaim, "Finally it's here!" For 6,000 years (since the death of Abel) the blood of the martyrs has been crying out, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before thou wilt judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell upon the earth?" (Rev. 6:9, 10). At last the time has come. Yom Kippur is here. The final judgment has begun—the process of investigation, followed by the millennial review and the final execution of the sentence. At last, Satan is to be silenced. The truth will be seen that vindicates God's people. Truly the first angel's message—"The hour of his judgment has come"—is part of the "eternal gospel [good news]" (Rev 14:6, 7, RSV).

Vindication in the judgment and assurance in the judgment *is* good news—almost too good to be true. I hardly dared to believe it, even as a theology major in college, as a seminary student, and as a young pastor. Inspired statements, such as the following, kept ringing in my ears: "Those who accept the Saviour, however sincere their conversion, should never be taught to say or to feel that they are saved."<sup>11</sup> What I did not understand was that in such statements Ellen White was refuting the erroneous belief of "once saved, always saved." I thought she meant that one could never have present assurance of salvation. How tragic that I did not see in the very same paragraph God's assurance that we can "give ourselves to Christ and know that He accepts us." For more than two years I preached sermons about Christ, but they were devoid of assurance. Finally, through a chain of marvelous providential leadings, the beauty and simplicity of the gospel began to dawn on me.

The sublime promises jumped out at me from Scripture: "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes *has* eternal life" (John 6:47, RSV). "I write this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may *know* that you *have* eternal life" (1 John 5:13, RSV; see vs. 11, 12). I found the same glorious revelation in the words of Ellen White:

If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted

righteous. Christ's character stands in place of your character, and you are *accepted* before God just as if you had not sinned.<sup>12</sup>

The marvelous news that I am "accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1:6), that Christ is my righteousness, brought to my soul a joy and peace like that described by those who heard the gospel message in the wake of the 1888 General Conference session. Ellen White captured my feelings as she depicted the experience of many at the Ottawa, Kansas, camp meeting in 1889:

Light flashed from the oracles of God in relation to the law and the gospel, in relation to the fact that Christ is our righteousness, which seemed to souls who were hungry for the truth, as light too precious to be received.<sup>13</sup>

I felt like the young pastor at that Kansas camp meeting who "saw that it was his privilege to be justified by faith; he had peace with God, and with tears confessed what relief and blessing had come to his soul."<sup>14</sup>

Since that experiential introduction to gospel assurance when I was a young pastor, the beauty of righteousness by faith has grown ever more precious. I must confess that sometimes it still seems almost too good to be true. I catch myself unconsciously falling back into old habit patterns of trying to be good enough to deserve salvation, and have to discover anew the joyous truth of "laying the glory of man in the dust"<sup>15</sup> and trust wholly in Christ's righteousness.

How precious, then, is the doctrine of Christian assurance! On Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, this assurance is no less sure than at other times. In ancient Israel on the Day of Atonement, the daily (*tamid*) sacrifice continued to burn on the bronze altar (Num. 28:2-7; 29:7-11), and the incense continued to waft over the inner veil and cover the holy ark (Ex. 30:7-10). Since 1844 we still are accepted by God solely on the basis of the atoning blood and intercessory merits of Christ.

### The Cleansing of the Sanctuary

Of course, the Day of Atonement, while maintaining the continual (*tamid*) ministry, also adds an additional service—the cleansing of the sanctuary—that involves the removal or blotting out of

sins. Some have become nervous about the Adventist teaching on the final blotting out of sins. They quote such passages as Isaiah 43:25: "I, I am He who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins" (RSV) and argue that the blotting out of sins comes when one first confesses his sins and receives forgiveness. But this concern arises from a failure to understand the eschatological context of Isaiah 43 and a failure to grasp the nature of the eschatological fulfillment of the Old Testament promises.

New Testament eschatology has both an inaugurated and a consummated aspect. The great gospel themes have both an "already" and a "not yet" dimension in the Christian era.<sup>16</sup> Thus we now are justified by faith (Rom. 3:28), yet await the final justification (James 2:22, 23). We now are redeemed (Gal. 3:13; 1 Pet. 1:18), yet await final redemption (Eph. 4:30). We now are adopted (Rom. 8:14-17), yet await the final adoption (Rom. 8:23). Now we are saved (2 Tim. 1:9), yet await final salvation (Matt. 24:13).

Similarly, in the earthly sanctuary the sins of the penitent were atoned for through the daily service, yet there was a final atonement<sup>17</sup> at the end of the year to deal in a final way with all their sins (see Lev. 16:16) through the cleansing of the sanctuary. Likewise, sins are blotted out when they are confessed and forgiven (as in Ps. 51:1, 9), yet the final blotting out or removal of the record of these sins takes place in connection with the investigative judgment. (See Rev. 3:5; Ex. 32:33; Heb. 10:14-18; Dan. 12:3; Matt. 10:32, 33).

Seventh-day Adventists have not misapplied Acts 3:19 in connection with the blotting out of sins, although they may not have always recognized its breadth of meaning. The context of this passage contains both the "already" and the "not yet"—the time of Peter's first-century appeal to the Jews (vss. 17, 18) and also the second advent (vs. 20). The "times of refreshing" thus encompass both the early rain at Pentecost (and after) and the Latter Rain preceding the second advent.

The blotting out of sins likewise refers to the immediate forgiveness of sin and at the same time alludes to the apocalyptic blotting out of sin in connection with the latter rain.

The sanctuary doctrine of the final atonement, or blotting out

of sins as emphasized by Seventh-day Adventists, is but the consistent climax to the Biblical teaching of Christian perseverance: "He that endures to the end shall be saved" (Matt. 10:22). In no way is assurance jeopardized. After all, the final blotting out of sins is still "by virtue of the sin offering."<sup>18</sup> The blotting out of sins is good news. The record of sin is removed from the sanctuary forever. The defilement is gone, the camp is clean—for eternity.

While the blotting out of sins is by virtue of Christ's blood alone, it is true that prior to the blotting out of sins there is an examination of the heavenly records. According to historic Adventist understanding, the cleansing of the sanctuary involves an investigative judgment, in effect, a judgment by works.

#### We Can Hold to Both Assurance and Investigative Judgment

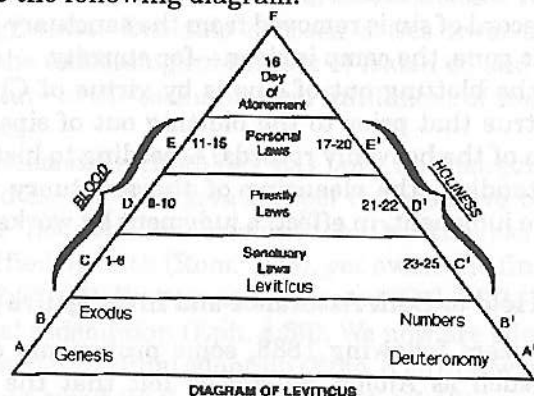
In the years following 1888, some proponents of Christian assurance (such as Albion Ballenger) felt that the doctrine of assurance of salvation could not be reconciled with the Adventist teaching concerning the pre-Advent investigative judgment of the saints. They consequently chose to retain the former and reject the latter.<sup>19</sup> This view once again has been championed by some Adventists in recent years. But the Biblical evidence forthcoming (especially since 1980) from the Daniel and Revelation Committee and other sources is persuasive: it is not a matter of choosing either Christian assurance or the investigative judgment. Both are solid Biblical doctrines.<sup>20</sup> What is more, the judgment involves an examination of the saints' works, as Adventists have consistently maintained.<sup>21</sup>

The Christian church long has wrestled with how we can have assurance of salvation totally by grace, and yet be judged by our works. But I have become convinced that Seventh-day Adventists, with their unique message of the antitypical Day of Atonement now in heavenly session, can preach these two doctrines with greater harmony, clarity, and power than any preceding generation. The Day of Atonement contains the key to holding in balance the relationship between grace and works, assurance and judgment.

This balance is illustrated by the literary placement of the most crucial Day of Atonement passage, Leviticus 16. Recent studies have shown that the entire Pentateuch (five books of Moses) is

arranged in a chiasmic, or “mountain” structure, in which the two “sides” of the Pentateuchal “mountain” match each other and the apex of the “mountain” contains the central focusing point of the whole.<sup>22</sup>

Observe the following diagram:



Note that the central chapter of the book of Leviticus, and of the entire Pentateuch, is Leviticus 16, which focuses upon the Day of Atonement. Here in the Torah, the foundational revelation for all of Scripture that follows, Yom Kippur is the focal point, the apex.

This should not really surprise us if we think about the importance of this day in the Israelite calendar. Yom Kippur was the holiest day of the year, during which the holiest person in Israel (the high priest) went into the holiest place on earth (the Most Holy Place) to perform the holiest work of all (the cleansing of the sanctuary, the work of final atonement).

If Leviticus 16, the Day of Atonement, forms the apex of the entire Torah given to ancient Israel, certainly we as spiritual Israel need not be ashamed to proclaim the antitypical Day of Atonement as the crucial and unique present truth for the end of time. Think of it—the holiest period of salvation history, during which the holiest Person of all intelligences, goes into the holiest Place in the universe, to do the holiest work of all time—and we have the privilege of preaching this message to the world!

But the placement of the Day of Atonement in the heart of the Pentateuch has more to say to us than underscoring its importance. Notice from the diagram that the book of Leviticus is divided into

two halves, each with a different emphasis. In chapters 1-15 the underlying theme is blood. Almost everywhere we find blood, sacrifice, and substitutionary atonement. But in the latter half of the book, chapters 17 and onward, blood is almost never mentioned. Instead, the overriding theme becomes holiness. Right in the middle stands chapter 16, the Day of Atonement.

I am convinced that we can only fully appreciate the *significance* of the Day of Atonement when we see it in its setting in Leviticus. Building up to the Day of Atonement, we see blood, substitutionary sacrifice—in New Testament terms, justification. Assurance on the Day of Atonement is based solely upon the blood of the substitute. Yet from Leviticus 16 onward, the rest of the book presents a call to holiness, to sanctification. The Day of Atonement thus ties together blood and holiness, justification and sanctification.

The very structural setting of Leviticus underscores the balanced gospel message: we are saved by blood, by grace, alone; but we are judged by our works of holiness, the natural fruit of atoning grace. The efficacy of the blood becomes manifest to all by its holy fruit.<sup>23</sup>

Assurance and judgment—in the Day of Atonement these two concepts meet and take on ultimate meaning. This balance between root and fruit, justification and judgment, is found not only in the structural placement of Leviticus 16, but also in the *theological content* of this chapter and its companion, Leviticus 23. Here we have not only the priestly ritual to be followed on the Day of Atonement, but also the specific responsibilities of the congregation on that day.

### So What?

Most of the recent scholarly discussion of these chapters has focused upon demonstrating the theoretical Biblical basis for the investigative judgment. But both Leviticus 16 and 23 also contain information concerning the experiential relevance of the pre-Advent judgment. Here we have instruction for the congregation of ancient Israel as they approached the Day of Atonement. Here in the type we have answers to the practical questions: so what if the historic Adventist message concerning the antitypical Day of



Atonement is true? What difference does it make in our personal lives? How does the doctrine of the investigative judgment impinge upon our lifestyle, upon our posture as a church since 1844?

There is no better place to find the answer to these practical "so what?" questions than in Leviticus 16 and 23, where the role of the congregation is so clearly spelled out. These chapters outline five duties of the people of Israel during the Day of Atonement, each of which is instructive for spiritual Israel in the antitypical Yom Kippur.

The five activities are as follows: (1) gather at the sanctuary for a holy convocation (Lev. 23:27); (2) identify with the ritual of the priest as he presents an offering by fire (Lev. 23:27); (3) refrain from work (Lev. 16:29; 23:28, 30, 31); (4) engage in affliction of soul (Lev. 16:29, 31; 23:27, 29, 32); and (5) undergo a work of cleansing (Lev. 16:30). Let us explore each of these in turn, with a view toward its application at the present time in the antitypical Day of Atonement. In particular we will note how each maintains a balance of faith and works.

The first responsibility is come to the sanctuary. As ancient Israel gathered at the sanctuary on Yom Kippur for a holy convocation, antitypical Israel has the privilege of coming by faith to the heavenly sanctuary. Here is the call to turn away from ourselves to Jesus, to focus upon Him and His work in our behalf. Now is the time for riveting our minds upon the present truth of the sanctuary and its meaning for our lives.

God's people are now to have their eyes fixed on the heavenly sanctuary, where the final ministration of our great High Priest in the work of the judgment is going forward, where He is interceding for His people.<sup>24</sup>

The subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be clearly understood by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. Otherwise, it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith essential at this time, or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill.<sup>25</sup>

Since "The correct understanding of the ministration in the heavenly sanctuary is the foundation of our faith,"<sup>26</sup> it behooves us to make it the focus of our study.

In particular, as a second activity, we are to identify with the

priest's offering by fire. We are to focus upon our Substitute, who "so immortalized Calvary that though He liveth unto God, He dies continually to sin."<sup>27</sup> As we have already seen, only in Christ's substitutionary sacrifice is found the basis of our assurance and joy in the judgment. As we will see shortly, only here is the secret of successfully accomplishing the other responsibilities devolving upon us on the Day of Atonement. Only by focusing upon Christ our sacrifice will we be able to offer ourselves a living sacrifice to God as we are challenged to do in Romans 12:1.

Thirdly, we are to observe a "sabbath of solemn rest." Obviously this does not mean that since 1844 Christians are to do no physical labor. Hebrews 4 is helpful at this point in explaining the attitude of "sabbath rest" that should pervade the Christian's life. Here again we have the emphasis upon justification by faith, laying the glory of man in the dust,<sup>28</sup> experiencing the rest of grace,<sup>29</sup> ceasing from our own works.

The special kind of Sabbath reform appropriate for the time of the Day of Atonement is set forth in Isaiah 58. As I have shown elsewhere<sup>30</sup> this chapter is set in the context of the Day of Atonement. The antitypical Day of Atonement will involve a "repairing of the breach" in the divine law by the restoration of the Sabbath truth.<sup>31</sup> Isaiah 58 describes in detail Day-of-Atonement style Sabbath keeping (vs. 13). The implication of this chapter (especially vs. 14) is that the weekly Sabbath experience of exquisite delight in the holy fellowship with the Lord will spill over into all of life.<sup>32</sup>

The fourth activity of the congregation on Yom Kippur is afflicting of soul. The Hebrew word for "afflict" (*anah*) literally means "to abase, lower, humble," and thus we here have another affirmation of justification by faith. In the time of the judgment we are to "lay the glory of man in the dust"<sup>33</sup> by ceasing to trust our own works and looking unto our perfect Substitute.

The "affliction of soul" is a posture of humble submission before God, both in attitude and action. It involves fasting and prayer, deep searching of heart, sorrow for sin, and sincere repentance.<sup>34</sup>

It is a time of solemnity, realizing the seriousness, the heinousness, of sin. There is a recognition that one *cherished* sin can neutralize the entire power of the gospel, and can make it possible

for Satan to take control of the mind and life.<sup>35</sup> This is the reason for Ellen White's strong appeals and warnings in her descriptions of the investigative judgment.

At the same time, "The character is revealed, not by occasional good deeds or occasional misdeeds, but by the tendency of the habitual words and acts."<sup>36</sup> This balancing perspective is illustrated dramatically in Ellen White's 1879 vision of the investigative judgment recorded in *Life Sketches*, pp. 241-244. In this vision, people were classified under different headings that best represented the trend of their lives. For example, "One class were registered as cumberers of the ground;" and on the positive side Ellen White wrote, "Upon one page of the ledger, under the head of 'Fidelity,' was the name of my husband."<sup>37</sup> Even though in James White "Self has at times been mingled with the work,"<sup>38</sup> yet the trend of his life was one of fidelity.

The solemn work of humble repentance does not mitigate against the joy of Christian assurance. In Psalm 51, David shows how the believer's life is a spiral of ever-deepening repentance and ever-increasing joy. The closer we come to Jesus and gaze upon His loveliness, the more we see our own sinfulness by contrast. This drives us back in deeper repentance to Jesus for pardon and cleansing, which once received, leads to greater joy.<sup>39</sup> Isaiah 58, which gives an inspired interpretation of the true fast during the time of the Day of Atonement,<sup>40</sup> shows how the liberating, redemptive activities lead to an experience of joy, light, healing, satisfaction, and even holy celebration.<sup>41</sup>

This fourth posture of soul affliction during the antitypical Day of Atonement is perhaps more instructive than has been generally recognized with regard to particular lifestyle issues currently being discussed in the church. Just as the first three duties of the congregation involve experiential issues—the sanctuary focus, justification by faith, and Sabbath reform—so the call to afflict our souls seems to point to specific areas of Christian behavior.

For ancient Israel "the affliction of soul" was regarded as a call to fasting [Ps. 35:13; Isa. 58:3, 5] and in the antitype we may see a parallel in the message of health reform. God calls his end-time remnant to a life of true temperance, abstaining from everything

hurtful and using judiciously that which is healthful.<sup>42</sup> Besides all the other good Biblical and scientific reasons for abstaining from alcohol, is there an additional one in the sanctuary message? After the death of Aaron's inebriated sons, who brazenly ventured into the sanctuary, God instructed that no one entering the sanctuary was to partake of strong drink. It is particularly noteworthy that this whole incident is then explicitly connected with the revelation concerning the Day of Atonement (Lev. 10:1-2; 16:1). Should we who by faith join Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, particularly in the time of the Day of Atonement, adopt the appropriate posture of sobriety, signaling our identification with the work that is going on there?

The Day of Atonement posture also may provide further substantiation for the historic Adventist position regarding adornment, and in particular, the wearing of jewelry. Our church rightly has explored underlying principles of modesty, economy, and humility. But perhaps there is an even deeper theological issue at stake. First we must correct the mistaken notion too common among many that jewelry per se is somehow "filthy," defiling, cheap, or bad. The Bible is plain: jewelry is beautiful. God made it. And He loves it! Before sin arose in the universe Lucifer was decked with jewels; "every precious stone was . . . [his] covering;" it was beautiful, splendid, and prepared by God (Eze. 28:13). In the Old Testament God likens His salvation to the ornaments of a bride (Isa. 49:18; 61:10). At the end of the millennium the holy city will descend, "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. 21:2).

A primary principle then is that jewelry is beautiful and approved by God. But to this must be added another principle. From the Old Testament record it appears that in a time of corporate investigative and/or executive judgment God regularly asks His people to remove their ornaments as an outward symbol of the special judgment setting.

The clearest example of this is recorded in Exodus 33:5, 6. After Israel's idolatry at Mt. Sinai, God commanded:

So now put off your ornaments from you, that I may know what to do with you [this last phrase indicates the investigative judgment setting]. Therefore the people of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments from Mt. Horeb onward.<sup>43</sup>

Jewish interpreters have recognized that the principle set forth in this passage applies to the Day of Atonement. Observant Jews still wear no ornaments of gold on Yom Kippur, the Jewish Day of Judgment par excellence.

Other Old Testament passages seem to reinforce this principle. In the time of the Divided Monarchy, as the Northern Kingdom faced imminent judgment by captivity, in a setting of divine covenant lawsuit or investigative judgment, God indicated that he would take away the finery of the daughters of Zion, including in particular their jewelry. (See Isa. 3:13, 14, 16-23).<sup>44</sup> The same pronouncement is given in the investigative judgment upon the Southern Kingdom two centuries later (Eze. 16).<sup>45</sup>

At the same time, these latter passages introduce a final principle. Jewelry in ancient Israel, when mentioned favorably, is almost always connected with bridal ornaments.<sup>46</sup> For example, in the allegory of Ezekiel 16 God marries Israel, and then adorns her with the bridal jewels (vss. 8-14).

Putting these principles together, is it possible that since 1844 Seventh-day Adventists have the privilege of refraining from wearing jewelry as a special outward sign of the unique present truth that they are Laodicea, "people of the Judgment;" that they live in the time of the investigative judgment? Is it possible that Adventists adopt this posture also because, although the church is spiritually espoused to Christ (Eph. 5; 2 Cor. 11:2), the wedding is not yet consummated (Rev. 19:7, 8)? For those who understand the deeper issues, taking on the bridal ornaments before the wedding is the posture of Babylon the harlot (Rev. 17:4, 5) not the true church (Rev. 12:1). It is not that wearing jewelry is wrong—but we have the privilege of waiting to do so until the wedding feast, when Jesus Himself will adorn His bride with jewels.<sup>47</sup> This discussion calls for further investigation, but it illustrates how the posture of "afflicting our souls" on the Day of Atonement may inform the practical lifestyle issues in our church.

The fifth and final responsibility devolving upon the congregation of Israel during the Day of Atonement was a work of cleansing. As the heavenly sanctuary is being cleansed there is a corresponding work of cleansing to be accomplished in the soul

temple of each individual worshiper.<sup>48</sup> Malachi 3:1-3 describes this special work, as does Ezekiel 36:25-28.

The Day of Atonement brings a call to holiness. But we must immediately add that even the life of holiness is rooted in justification by faith in the atoning blood of Christ.<sup>49</sup> Only as we trust wholly in the merits of our Substitute and Surety can we truly obey God in spirit as well as in letter.

Before internalizing the good news of justification by faith, I had tried to "depend upon watchfulness against temptation, and performance of certain duties for acceptance with Him," and discovered that indeed there are no victories in this kind of faith." Then came the glorious revelation:

There is need of constant watchfulness, and of earnest, loving devotion; but these will come *naturally* when the soul is kept by the power of God through faith. . . . God will accept every one that comes to Him trusting wholly in the merits of a crucified Saviour. Love springs up in the heart. . . . Duty becomes a delight, and sacrifice a pleasure.<sup>50</sup>

It also is crucial to note that the call to cleansing of the soul temple does not rob us of our assurance nor detract from the basis of our salvation. The Christian life is a matter of continual growth, and if in the growing process I make mistakes, this does not destroy my assurance. In the same way that a child taking his first steps is not disowned by his father when he trips and tumbles, our heavenly Father does not cast us off when we slip and fall. (See Ps. 37:24.)

I've often had to bow down and weep at Jesus' feet because of my shortcomings and mistakes, yet on divine authority I am not to be discouraged. Even if I am overcome by the enemy, I am not cast off, not forsaken, not rejected by God.<sup>51</sup> Christ's perfect holiness atones for my shortcomings; when I do my best, He becomes my righteousness.<sup>52</sup> The Father beholds not my faulty character, but sees me as clothed in Christ's perfection.<sup>53</sup>

As John the beloved put it: "I am writing this to you so that you may not sin; but if any one does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1, RSV). What reassurance of assurance God has given!

I am thankful that this assurance is not dependent upon my feelings. I cannot look within myself for evidence of my acceptance

with God, for I will find there nothing but that which will discourage. My only hope lies in looking to Jesus, my righteousness, my consolation, and my rejoicing.<sup>54</sup>

As a final, and probably the most important point regarding the cleansing work of the investigative judgment, we must note *who* does the cleansing. "On this day shall atonement be made for you, to cleanse you" (Lev. 16:30).

For He [the messenger of the covenant] is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, till they present right offerings to the Lord (Mal. 3:2, 3)

I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances (Eze. 36:25-27).

The good news of Yom Kippur is that God Himself will take responsibility for the cleansing work.

What a marvelous work He promises to accomplish! At every stage of our growth in grace we are perfect in Christ,<sup>55</sup> but at the consummation of history, in the investigative judgment, God promises to bring the complete fulfillment of the new covenant blessings. He promises to pour out the latter rain to make the harvest "fully ripe" (Rev. 14:15). As we continue to focus upon Christ our righteousness, the assured result is inevitable: by beholding we will become changed—"transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory" (2 Cor 3:18, NIV).<sup>56</sup>

We will become fully settled into the truth as it is in Jesus so that we would rather die than disobey our loving Lord. Sealed as the spiritual 144,000, we will have the name (or character) of the Lamb and the Father written on our foreheads (Rev. 7:4; 14:1). Then the investigative judgment can close for the living<sup>57</sup> and Christ can come to put the finishing touch of immortality and glorification upon His faithful saints (1 Cor. 15:35-58). What glorious good news!

### The Vindication of God

This good news of cleansing on Yom Kippur has implications far beyond our personal experience. The plan of redemption focuses not only (or even primarily) upon our personal salvation. The Bible presents a theocentric view of salvation history. For example, Ezekiel, in the larger context of the earthly type of the investigative judgment,<sup>58</sup> underscores the "big issue"—the cosmic dimension. In Ezekiel 36:22, 23; 39:27, 28, God reveals to Judah the ultimate result of their judgment: "through you I will vindicate my holiness before their eyes [the eyes of the onlooking nations]." It is for their sakes, to vindicate the character of God before the onlooking intelligences, that God acts. The investigative judgment is not conducted to reveal to God who are His and who are not. He who is omniscient knows who are His (John 10:4, 14, 27; Isa. 46:9, 10; Heb. 4:13; 2 Tim. 2:19). It is for the sake of the onlooking universe who serve as the jury in the cosmic review. God, who through history has consistently set forth the evidence in open court before closing probation upon any individuals or nations,<sup>59</sup> does not depart from this procedure in the final review.<sup>60</sup> At the end of the Great Controversy, the entire universe will have opportunity to witness "one great and final reaffirmation of all that He [Christ] has accomplished through the plan of salvation."<sup>61</sup> and they will be able to attest to the justice and truthfulness of God's dealings with mankind. Satan's charges against God will be proven false.

The mind-boggling aspect about this cosmic trial is that we have a part in vindicating the character of God. In Ezekiel 36:23 (RSV) God says that "through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes." In succeeding verses, He describes the work of cleansing that He will perform for His people.

In the type, Israel's sins and the resulting captivity caused surrounding nations to charge that God could not keep His promises to His people. In gathering them from captivity and cleansing them He vindicated his holy character from such false accusations. (See Eze. 26:17-32). In the antitype also, against Satan's false claim that God cannot fulfill His new covenant promises, God gathers an entire generation to Himself at the consummation of history who demonstrate the ultimate effectiveness of the gospel. The new covenant promise, "I will put my spirit within you, and cause you

to walk in my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances"—will find complete fulfillment among God's remnant people. No glory will accrue to the people. "It is not for your sake that I will act, says the Lord God; let that be known to you" (Eze. 36:32, RSV). To God alone be the glory!

Not only do the *saints* serve to vindicate God's character. Ezekiel uses the same language to describe the final judgment upon the *wicked*, and in particular their leader:

In the latter days I will bring you [Gog, symbol of Satan leading his wicked hordes] against my land, that the nations may know me, when *through you, O Gog, I vindicate my holiness before their eyes*. . . . With pestilence and bloodshed I will enter into judgment with him [Gog]; and I will rain upon him and his hordes and the many peoples that are with him, torrential rains and hailstones, fire and brimstone. So I will show my greatness and my holiness and make myself known in the eyes of many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord (Eze. 38:16, 22, 23, RSV).

The final judgment reveals not only the ultimate effectiveness of the gospel but also the full ripening of iniquity. In Revelation 16, the seven last plagues serve the purpose of revealing that God's final judgments find no answering chord of repentance in the hearts of the wicked—they only curse God all the more (Rev. 16:9, 11). God is shown to be just and yes, merciful, in bringing the Great Controversy to an end. Before it is over, even the rebels, although still unrepentant, will admit that God is just. (See Rom. 14:11; Isa. 45:20-23; Phil. 2:10, 11).

At the grand climax to the Great Controversy, there will be a time of great rejoicing. The great good news will be the vindication of God in the judgment. The redeemed will sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb:

Great and wonderful are thy deeds,

O Lord God the Almighty!

Just and true are thy ways,

O King of the ages! (Rev. 15:3, RSV).

The angel of the water will say, "Just are thou in these thy judgments, thou who are and wast, O Holy One" (Rev. 16:5, RSV).

The altar will cry, "Yea, Lord God the Almighty, true and just are thy judgments!" (Rev. 16:7).

After this is heard "the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, 'Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power to our God, for his judgments are true and just'" (Rev. 19:1, 2, NRSV).

The message of Yom Kippur—of the final judgment, including the investigative trial, millennial review, and execution of the sentence—is good news vindicating our great God.

### Conclusion

In this article, we have explored three major reasons why Yom Kippur is Good News. It is good news because: (1) it restores the gospel to its rightful place, bringing to the believer assurance and vindication in the judgment; (2) it accomplishes the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary and its earthly counterpart, the soul temples of the saints; and (3) it vindicates the character of God.

This three-fold glad tidings is summarized in Daniel 8:14 in a single word: "unto two thousand and three hundred evening-mornings, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed [*nitsdaq*]." The three extended meanings of *nitsdaq* are "restore, cleanse, and vindicate."<sup>62</sup> Notice how they match the three problems mentioned in the previous verse (vs. 13). The gospel of justification by faith—the daily ministration of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary which was eclipsed by the little horn—is to be *restored*. The transgression of the saints, which causes horror in the heavenly sanctuary, is to be *cleansed*. And the character of God, which is defamed by the downtrodding of the saints and sanctuary, is to be *vindicated*. Praise God for the restoring, cleansing, vindicating good news of Yom Kippur!

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The written portrayal of my personal experience and some other parts of this article are revised from my previous article, "Assurance in the Judgment," *Adventist Review*, Jan. 7, 1988, pp. 18-20.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Bk. 2, pp. 32, 33.

<sup>3</sup> See also the following passages properly translated by the RSV as they relate to the *vindication* of God's people: Deut. 32:36; 1 Kgs. 8:32; 2 Chr. 6:23; Job 6:29; 13:18; 19:25 (margin); Ps. 7:8; 17:2; 24:5; 26:1; 35:27; 37:6; 43:1; 54:1; 103:6; 135:14; Isa. 50:8; 54:17; 62:1, 2; 63:1; Jer. 51:10; Joel 2:23.

<sup>4</sup> Note that the word "plead" here and in Ellen White's descriptions of the investigative judgment, is a legal term and does not refer to "begging" the Father for mercy, as some have construed it. The Father does not need to be begged—He has placed Christ there to be our Representative. He is on our side.

<sup>5</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 484.

<sup>6</sup> See John 5:22, 27, 30; Ellen G. White comments, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 989; idem, *Desire of Ages*, p. 210; idem, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 185. It is true that, according to Daniel 7, the Ancient of Days presides in the investigative judgment (*The Great Controversy*, p. 479), but it appears that when the investigative judgment is over, Christ then assumes the role of Supreme Judge in order to pronounce the sentence and execute the judgment. See the analysis of the pertinent Ellen White quotations in Robert W. Olson, compiler, "The Investigative Judgment in the Writings of Ellen G. White," Ellen G. White Estate pamphlet, Feb. 25, 1980.

<sup>7</sup> See Hans J. Boecker, *Law and the Administration of Justice in the Old Testament and Ancient Near East* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Press, 1980), pp. 34, 35; cf. Gerald Wheeler, "The Judge is on Our Side," *Insight*, Nov. 2, 1982, pp. 8-10.

<sup>8</sup> For recent analyses of the book of Job as a *rib* or covenant lawsuit, see especially B. Gemser, "The *Rib* or Controversy Pattern in Hebrew Mentality," in *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East*, eds. Martin Moth and D. Winton Thomas, *Vetus Testament Supplements* (1955), 3:122-125; Heinz Richter, *Studien zu Hiob* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1959); Sylvia Scholnick, "Lawsuit Drama in the Book of Job" (Ph.D. diss., Brandeis University, 1976); and Claus Westermann, *The Structure of the Book of Job* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981).

<sup>9</sup> See the analysis of this passage by Gordon Christo in his forthcoming doctoral dissertation on "The Eschatological Judgment in Job 19:23-29" for Andrews University. According to my literary analysis of the book of Job, this passage stands at the chiasmic apex of the book.

<sup>10</sup> *Our High Calling*, p. 361.

<sup>11</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 155.

<sup>12</sup> *Steps to Christ*, p. 62.

<sup>13</sup> *Selected Messages*, p. 356.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 456.

<sup>16</sup> See my discussion in *Typology in Scripture: A Study of Hermeneutical Typos Structures*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, vol. 2 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1981), pp. 391-397. Note that there are actually three phases of NT eschatology: inaugurated, appropriated, and consummated. The "already" can be seen to encompass the first and second phases—what Christ has done in His earthly ministry (inaugurated) and the gospel realities flowing from His work that are now available to us through the Spirit (appropriated).

<sup>17</sup> Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur is literally in Hebrew *Yom Hakippurim*, Day of Atonements—complete or final atonement.

<sup>18</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 358.

<sup>19</sup> See the analysis and critique of Ballenger's view in Roy Adams, *The Sanctuary Doctrine: Three Approaches in the Seventh-day Adventist Church*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, vol. 1 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1981), pp. 91-164.

<sup>20</sup> See especially Ivan Blazen, "Justification and Judgment," in the *Seventy Weeks, Leviticus, and the Nature of Prophecy*, ed. Frank Holbrook, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series, vol. 3 (Washington, DC: Biblical Research Institute, (1986), pp. 339-388.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 353-368, examines the major passages supporting this position (2 Cor. 5:9, 10; Rom. 14:10, 12; Rom. 2:16; 1 Cor. 3:13; 4:5; Col. 3:5, 6; 1 Thess. 4:6; Gal. 5:21; 1 Cor. 6:9; Eph. 5:5, 6; Gal. 6:7, 8; Rom. 8:5-13; Heb. 2:1-3; 10:26-31). It also reviews various attempts to resolve the tension between justification and judgment and shows the Biblical mandate to retain the tension and understand it in terms of the "dynamic, salvation-historical" perspective of the "already" and the "not yet" which we have discussed above.

<sup>22</sup> See Yehuda Radday, "Chiasm in Tora," *Linguistica Biblica* 19 (1972): 21-23; idem, "Chiasmus in Hebrew Biblical Narrative," in *Chiasmus in Antiquity*, ed. John Welch (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg Verlag, 1981), pp. 84-86; and William Shea, "Literary Form and Theological Function in Leviticus," in *Seventy Weeks*, pp. 131-168.

<sup>23</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 312 (discussing the investigative judgment): "Righteousness is right doing, and it is by their deeds that all will be judged. Our characters are revealed by what we do. The works show whether the faith is genuine." Blazen, *Seventy Weeks*, pp. 379-380, summarizes succinctly: "The investigative judgment, rightly understood, is in harmony with justification by faith and judgment according to works. It encompasses within itself the ingredients of these two fundamental teachings. . . . Plainly, the investigative judgment does not deal merely with the sins of mankind but with the forgiveness of Christ. Consequently, when the whole package is put together, and justification by faith and future judgment according to works are seen as the content of the investigative judgment, it can be stated that there are two questions this judgment answers. First, has the sinner sought and received Christ's forgiveness of his sins? Second, has this forgiveness brought forth good fruit in his life? . . . Only when the answer to such questions is a fundamental Yes can the final revelation of God's forgiveness and mercy be extended to believers."

<sup>24</sup> White, *Life Sketches*, p. 278.

<sup>25</sup> *Spirit of Prophecy*, p. 313.

<sup>26</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 221.

<sup>27</sup> *Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 343.

<sup>28</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 456.

<sup>29</sup> Ellen G. White Comments. *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 928.

<sup>30</sup> Richard M. Davidson, *A Love Song for the Sabbath* (Washington, DC, Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Assoc., 1988), pp. 91, 107.

<sup>31</sup> The LXX translation of Isaiah 58:12 and the consonantal Hebrew text supports the connection of verse 12 with the Sabbath instruction in the following verse. See the discussion in the unpublished paper by Ron du Preez, "Isaiah 58:13, 14: Its Unity with the Rest of the Chapter, Its Meaning and Implications for Sabbath Observance," 1988, TMs [photocopy], pp. 17-23, Adventist Heritage Center, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI; and White, *Great Controversy*, Chapters 25, 26, pp. 433-460. Note further that the First Angel's Message (Rev 14:6, 7) also connects the judgment with the Sabbath—see Davidson, *Love Song*, pp. 77, 78.

32 See the discussion and substantiation of this point in Davidson, *Love Song*, pp. 118-121.

33 *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 456.

34 See especially Psalm 35:13; *Great Controversy*, pp. 420, 490.

35 *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 452; idem, *Steps to Christ*, p. 34; idem, *Great Controversy*, p. 489.

36 *Steps to Christ*, pp. 57, 58.

37 *Life Sketches*, p. 242.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 243.

39 Note how David's prayer for forgiveness and cleansing (in vss. 9, 10) leads to joy of salvation (vs. 12) and to deeper contrition (vs. 17). See *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 561; idem, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 160; idem, *Steps to Christ*, p. 65 for descriptions of this spiral.

40 See note No. 30 above.

41 See Isa. 58:6-14. Those who take the position that during the antitypical Day of Atonement there is "no time to celebrate" have not grasped the balanced perspective of Scripture and the writings of Ellen White. Isaiah 58:13, 14 shows the mood of "exquisite delight" that accompanies Day of Atonement Sabbath keeping. We celebrate in fellowship with God our Creator, Redeemer, Sanctified, and Glorifier. [See Davidson, *Love Song*, passim.] Jesus' parable concerning the investigative judgment (Matt. 22) shows the *wedding* context of the Day of Atonement. Those invited to the feast who have accepted the King's gift of the wedding garment may begin celebrating even as the King inspects the guests. Ellen White clearly points out the seriousness of the investigative judgment and just as clearly calls us to times of celebration. For example, "well would it be for the people of God at the present time [during the investigative judgment!] to have a Feast of Tabernacles—a joyous commemoration of the blessings of God to them" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 540, 541) Although we live in the antitypical Day of Atonement, we may also *proleptically* (in anticipation) celebrate the joys of the Feast of Tabernacles.

42 *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 562; *Temperance*, p. 138.

43 Note that the NIV incorrectly reads "at Mt. Horeb" whereas the *mem* prefix clearly indicates "from Mt. Horeb [onward]", as rendered by the RSV. It appears that much of this jewelry was devoted to the building of the sanctuary (Ex. 35:22). Throughout most of Israel's wilderness sojourn the people were in a period of judgment: there was no circumcision nor keeping of the Passover for 38 years after Kadesh until they entered the Promised Land under Joshua (Josh. 5:2-12; cf. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 485, 486).

44 Note the explicit reference to the covenant *rit* in Isa. 3:13, 14.

45 The entire chapter follows the classic structure of the covenant lawsuit or investigative judgment: preamble (vs. 1); historical prologue (vss. 3-14); indictments (vss. 15-34); judicial sentence of covenant curses (vss. 35-52); witnesses (vs. 37). The trial is explicitly mentioned in verse 38.

46 For example, Isa. 49:8; 61:10; Jer. 2:32; Eze. 16:8-14.

47 Rev. 21:2; see Rev. 2:10; 4:4, 10; 1 Pet. 5:4; James 1:12; Zech. 9:16; Dan. 12:3; *Early Writings*, p. 288.

48 Lev. 16:30; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 214.

49 See Lev. 16:30, where it states that "on this day [Yom Kippur] shall atonement be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins you shall be clean

before the Lord." Note that the focus of even the people's "cleansing" is upon the atonement made by the blood of the Substitute.

50 *Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, pp. 353, 354.

51 *Steps to Christ*, p. 64.

52 *Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 368.

53 *The Desire of Ages*, p. 357.

54 *Steps to Christ*, pp. 64, 65; cf. Ps. 51; Isa. 6.

55 *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 65.

56 See *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 160; idem, *Steps to Christ*, p. 65.

57 See Doug Bennett, "The Good News About the Judgment of the Living," *Adventist Review*, June 16, 1983, pp. 14, 15, for evidence that probation does not close upon the living until *after* the latter rain and the sealing; see *Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 66; idem, *Early Writings*, pp. 85, 86.

58 See Richard M. Davidson, "In Confirmation of the Sanctuary Message," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 2/1 (Spring 1991): 97-100.

59 See Davidson, "In Confirmation of the Sanctuary Message," pp. 96-100, for discussion of this consistent procedure of God throughout history.

60 In a sense the investigative judgment may also be viewed as an accountant's *final audit* at the end of the year. The records are faithfully kept throughout the year, and the auditor verifies the completeness and accuracy of the accounts. The audit is a public vindication of the one being audited, that he has conducted his affairs with integrity, in accordance with accepted business practices. At the end of history, God opens the books, as it were, for a public audit of His business practices. The auditors testify to His *impeccable integrity*.

61 William Shea, "Theological Importance of the Preadvent Judgment," in *Seventy Weeks*, p. 327. Richard Rice, "The Relevance of the Investigative Judgment," *Spectrum*, 14/1 (1983): 32-38, rightly emphasizes the larger issue in the Great Controversy of demonstrating the character of God and rightly shows how this must take place at the end of history to reveal the *ultimate effect* of God's saving work in the light of the whole of history that precedes. Unfortunately, Rice goes contrary to the Biblical evidence by further insisting that the investigative judgment is also necessary to inform God, because He is not all-knowing with regard to the future.

62 Davidson, "In Confirmation of the Sanctuary Message," pp. 105, 106.

## THE TIME OF THE END AND THE LAST DAYS

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One feature of Daniel's apocalyptic prophecy calls for special attention—the predetermined "time of the end" (Dan. 8:17, 19; 11:35, 40). Daniel's book emphatically has been closed and sealed "until the time of the end" (12:4, 9). What is meant by "the end?" Obviously this phrase determines the meaning of the phrase "time of the end." From the internal evidence of Daniel's chapters, "the end" is characterized by the divine judgment on the "king of the north" (11:40, 45), and the final deliverance of the saints, which includes the resurrection of the dead (12:1, 2) and that of Daniel himself "at the end of the days" (12:13). This apocalyptic portrait of "the end" is of decisive importance for determining the meaning of "the time of the end."

Daniel's "time of the end" does not take its point of reference from the *first* advent of Christ but rather from the *second* advent, as the establishment of God's kingdom and the resurrection of the dead. This point of orientation qualifies Daniel's "time of the end" as a specific end-time that takes place a relatively short time before the end.

The phrase, "the time of the end," is found only in the Old Testament, exclusively in Daniel 8-12, and is said to *start* "at the appointed time" (11:35). Its start is connected with the termination of the three and one-half symbolic times of rule by the antichrist in Daniel 7 (vs. 25; see also 12:7). It also is related to the time of

fulfillment of the longest prophetic time period of the book that is contained in a vision that is sealed until the time of the end—the 2300 symbolic "days."

He said to me, "It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated" . . . As he came near the place where I was standing, I was terrified and fell prostrate. "Son of man," he said to me, "understand that *the vision concerns the time of the end.*"

. . . He said: "I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because *the vision concerns the appointed time of the end*" (Dan. 8:14, 17, 19, NIV, italics supplied).

Both in Daniel 8:26 and 12:4 the heavenly command is given to "seal up" the vision or to close up the words of the prophecy. Both the vision of Daniel 8 and the angelic interpretation found in Daniel 10-12 are said to pertain to the "distant future" (8:26, NIV) or to "the time of the end" which climaxes in the resurrection of the dead (12:2, 4). This strongly suggests that the vision of Daniel 8 runs parallel to the structural outline of Dan. 11-12. This is an important conclusion. The 2300 prophetic "days" of Daniel 8:14 must reach into the Messianic or eschatological age, and extend to the final phase of redemption history, the apocalyptic "time of the end."

### Greater Understanding of Daniel Foretold

When the "time of the end" shall arrive in history, "many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase" (12:4, NASB). The original text speaks of "*the*" knowledge, that is, the insight of the wise in Daniel's vision concerning the sanctuary truth and its restoration in the worship of God's people (12:3, 9, 10, NASB). Taken in the context of the angel's command to seal the words of the scroll (12:4), this going "back and forth" strongly suggests a scanning of the eyes to and fro, here and there, in the book of Daniel (cf. 2 Chron. 16:9; Zech. 4:10, NIV). It conveys the sense of "thoroughly to search into it" (C. F. Keil). The result will be that "those who have insight among the people will give understanding to the many" (Dan. 11:33, NASB). True worship of God will be restored among all the nations of the world.

In God's providence, at the proper time in the divine plan, the symbolic prophecies of the book of Daniel will be increasingly



understood while the predicted events are taking place. This is in accordance with the principle expressed by Jesus: "I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe" (John 14:29, NIV).

During that "time of the end," many will be aroused to search intensely for the meaning of Daniel's end-time prophecies: "Many will go here and there to increase knowledge" (12:4, NIV, second part). This phrase has often been divorced from its context and applied to the technical advances of modern science. In his editorial "The Time of the End" in *Signs of the Times*, July 22, 1880, James White pointed to Daniel 12:10 to prove that the understanding of Daniel's book was meant and that "the increase of knowledge does not refer to the progress in scientific discoveries." Daniel explicitly stated: "Many will be purified, made spotless and refined, but the wicked will continue to be wicked. None of these wicked will understand, but those who are wise will understand" (12:10, NIV). The focus of the wise will be on the book of Daniel that previously had been sealed to human understanding.

LeRoy E. Froom's comment on Daniel 12:4 is therefore valid:

It obviously is a forecast of a great revival in prophetic exposition that came under the simultaneous awakening in the nineteenth century, in both the Old World and the New.—*The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 4, p. 1209.

This prophetic awakening arose most dramatically in America through the work of the Baptist preacher William Miller of Low Hampton, New York, between 1831 and 1844. His specific burden was the message that Christ's return was imminent, being expected between 1843 and 1844. He based his conclusion mostly on the time prophecy of Daniel 8, which assures that in "the time of the end" the defiled "sanctuary" would be restored to its rightful use (8:14) through the priestly work of atonement and reconciliation with God. Unfortunately, he identified this predicted restoration of the sanctuary, and its true worship of God, completely with the final judgement at the second advent of Christ. However, Daniel's promise of a great restoration of true worship on earth was intended for "the time of the end."

### The Latter (Last) Days in the Classical Prophets

The question may be raised, How is Daniel's apocalyptic "time of the end" related to the phrase "the latter [or last] days," mentioned 14 times by the classical prophets? Are both periods the same and thus co-existent?

In Old Testament times the prophetic term "in the latter days" (*be'acharith hayyamim*) had not yet developed into a fixed technical meaning. It is properly translated in the English Bible versions (especially the *Revised Standard Version*, the *New International Version*, the *New American Standard Version*, and the *Jerusalem Bible*) by "in the following days" or "in the future" or "in days to come" (Gen. 49:1; Num. 24:14; Deut. 4:30; 31:29; Isa. 2:2; Hos. 3:5; Mic. 4:1; Jer. 23:20; 30:24; 48:47; 49:39; Eze. 38:16; Dan. 2:28; 10:14). Some versions are inconsistent, however, when they translate the Hebrew phrase sometimes by "in days to come" or "in the future," and other times by "in the last [or latter] days." The Hebrew root *'achar* means "afterward" and not "last" or "end." (The Hebrew word for "end" is *qets*, Amos 8:2; Eze. 7:2; Dan. 8:19; 11:27, RSV, NKJV.)

Several passages which use the phrase do not refer to the Christian age but simply to either the immediate future (Gen. 49:1; Num. 24:14; see also 2 Sam. 8:2) or to the coming Assyrian-Babylonian exile (Deut. 4:30; 31:29; Jer. 23:20; 30:24). However, other passages reveal a definite concentration on the Messianic hope or age to come (Isa. 2:2; Mic. 4:1; Hos. 3:5; Eze. 38:16; Dan. 2:28; 10:14). The context must decide in each case what specific era is intended. Also in Daniel, the phrase does not yet function as a fixed technical term for the Christian era. Daniel 2 takes into view the whole sweep of history from Daniel's own time until the Kingdom of glory. The *New International Version* translates Daniel 2:28, 44, 45; 10:14, simply with "in days to come," "in the future" (2 times).

It needs to be acknowledged that Daniel concentrates on the end-time and on the outcome of future history. This apocalyptic meaning (Dan. 2:44; 12:1, 2) is the intensified application of the "days to come." Daniel does not intend to predict the future in general, but the coming of the indestructible kingdom of God. For a detailed analysis of the Old Testament passages we refer to the article by John T. Willis in the bibliography.

### New Testament Usage

The New Testament gives the expression, "the last days," a definitive Christological character. It becomes a technical term for the Messianic or Christian age. The "last days" have begun with the first advent of Christ and His Messianic rule (Acts. 2:17; Heb. 1:2; Jas. 5:3; 2 Pet. 3:3). They continue with increased tribulation for the church until the second advent of Christ (2 Tim. 3:1; 1 Tim. 4:1). This apostolic view required a modification of the Jewish eschatological structure.

The era of the old covenant had come to an irrevocable end with the appearance of Christ. The cross of Christ signified the end or "the completion [*sunteleia*] of the ages" (Heb. 9:26, my translation). The apostolic church began its existence only *after* "the end [*ta tele*] of the ages have come" (referring to the old covenant times, 1 Cor. 10:11, NKJV, NASB).

Our conclusion, therefore, has to be that the New Testament expression, "the last days," must be defined by its orientation to the *first* coming of Christ. The "last days" begin their time of fulfillment with the incarnation of God's Son, "when the fullness of time had come [*to pleroma tou chronou*]" (Gal. 4:4, NKJV).

The phrase, "at the last day," is reserved to designate the apocalyptic events of the resurrection of the saints at the coming of Christ (John 6:39, 40, 44, 54; 11:24) and the final judgment of unbelievers (John 12:48). In this sense, Peter uses the expression for our future salvation "in the last time" [*en kairoi eschatoi*] (1 Pet. 1:5).

The phrase "this is for a (or the) last hour [*eschate hora*, without the definite article], which occurs only in 1 John 2:18, seems to be used by John to indicate the ultimate seriousness of the apostasy from the gospel truth within the apostolic church between A.D. 90 and 100. John interpreted this apostasy as a fundamental heresy in which he recognized the false teaching of "many anti-christs" (1 John 2:18; 4:3). This crisis placed every church member in Asia Minor already in the eschatological "hour" of decision. Jude likewise reminds the church of the apostolic prediction that "in the last time [*ep' eschatou tou chronou*] there shall arise scoffers from within" (Jude 18).

### Conclusion

Daniel's apocalyptic phrase, "the time of the end," signifies a specific time period, predetermined solely by a sovereign decree of God. The "time of the end" constitutes the final phase of the Christian era, or of "the last days," and is determined only by Daniel's time prophecies. Although both expressions ("time of the end" and "the last days") finally overlap, they are not fully coextensive. Each has a different point of beginning. The prophetic "last days" have begun since the first advent of Christ. Daniel's apocalyptic "time of the end" begins only after his long-range time prophecies have expired. The arrival of "the time of the end" will greatly intensify the hope of the church in the last days. It will bring about an international revival of prophetic studies, particularly of Daniel and Revelation. (See Dan. 12:4.)

This revival movement, foreseen by the prophet Daniel, will be consolidated as the final reformation of the church. Its end-time emergence is pictured graphically in the symbolic experience of John in Revelation 10. With a solemn oath, borrowed from Daniel 12:7, a mighty angel declares that "there should be time [*chronos*] no longer" (Rev. 10:6). Although commonly translated as meaning that there will be no more "delay," a comparison with the original oath of the angel in Daniel 12:7 reveals that neither the end of world history nor the end of probationary time is in view, but the end of Daniel's prophetic time periods.

The angel who instructed John appeared in the splendor of the heavenly Messiah, "Robed in a cloud, with a rainbow above his head; his face was like the sun, and his legs were like fiery pillars" (Rev. 10:1, NIV). Standing on both the sea and the land, He announces with divine power and authority the beginning of the end-time events. He *unseals* the little book of Daniel, an act suggested by His holding a little *open* scroll in His hand. (See Rev. 10:2.)

The new understanding coming from Daniel's end-time prophecies must be proclaimed to all peoples living on the islands and the continents of the earth. (See Rev. 10:11.) The essence of this final preparation message is set forth in the threefold message of Revelation 14:6-12. The world-wide presence of the "Elijah" movement will be the greatest sign of all that the End is imminent: "See, I will

send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes" (Mal. 4:5, NIV).

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## DANIEL'S PRE-ADVENT JUDGMENT IN ITS BIBLICAL CONTEXT

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Only a few non-Seventh-day Adventist scholars believe in a pre-advent judgment. It is almost universally overlooked in Daniel studies.<sup>1</sup> By contrast, Seventh-day Adventists find in Daniel 7-8, together with Revelation 14:6, 7, Biblical evidence for a pre-advent judgment. We call this judgment "pre-advent," denoting its time; and "investigative," denoting its method.

This presentation, employing the hermeneutical principle of *sola scriptura*, attempts to follow the Bible's self-interpretation of the pre-advent judgment in Daniel. After defining the way the term "pre-advent judgment" is used, we will document evidence for it in Daniel, evaluate the alternative view held by most historical critical scholars, and consider Daniel's presentation in the light of Leviticus 16, Zechariah 3, Hebrews, and Revelation 13-19. The good news of the pre-advent judgment is seen in the Biblical salvation-history context, with Calvary before it, Christ's intercession during it, and Armageddon following it.

### The Pre-advent Judgment in Daniel

**1. Who are judged?** The usual definition for the "pre-advent judgment" focuses on the investigation of God's people of all ages. I concur with this. But many of God's end-time saints, who live during this end-time judgment, look on the pre-advent judgment as

anything but good news, even though the first angel's message places the judgment in the context of the "eternal gospel" (Rev. 14:7, NIV used throughout, unless otherwise indicated). They apparently consider the judgment apart from its relation to the little horn in Daniel and apart from its roots in the cross, its relation to Christ's intercession, and its outworking in Armageddon.

The everlasting gospel is the truth about Calvary. If "the sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster" and if "in order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light that streams from the cross of Calvary,"<sup>2</sup> then Calvary must give us insight into the pre-advent judgment. No subsequent judgment calls in question the judgment of Calvary, neither is it different from, nor does it add to, but only reveals and applies what was completed there.

In other words, judgment day primarily and initially was equated with Calvary.<sup>3</sup> Jesus said of the cross, "Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out" (John 12:31). Calvary judgment means ultimate deliverance for God's people and destruction of their enemy. This is worked out in salvation-history through pre-advent, millennial and post-millennial judgments. Calvary's double verdict of "deliverance-destruction" needs to guide our definition of the pre-advent judgment verdict.

According to Biblical typology, the pre-advent judgment, concluding human history (see next section), is typified by the annual Day of Atonement (Lev. 16). That annual judgment was only for Israel, and never included other nations (Lev. 16:16). One would expect a correspondence of this in the antitype (Dan. 7). Although Daniel 7 does not name who is being judged in the pre-advent judgment, it designates those who will receive the judgment verdict (Dan. 7:22, 26). It is logical to assume that they are included in the judgment investigation. The two groups receiving this verdict are: 1. God's people attacked by the little horn (Dan. 7:20-22, 25-27); and 2. the little horn, as a professedly Christian system (Dan. 7:22, 26).

But is it legitimate to include the little horn? Ellen White says "the only cases considered are those of the professed people of

God,"<sup>4</sup> and further defines these as "all who have believed on Jesus,"<sup>5</sup> yet also significantly includes "all those who have ever taken upon themselves the name of Christ."<sup>6</sup> If two groups come to view here, that is, genuine believers and those taking on Christ's name, then the little horn corresponds to both. For the little horn has members within it who love God and the saints whereas the system hates God and the saints. It would seem reasonable that the judgment includes: 1. "All persons (of whatever communion) who have professed a relationship with God," as Bill Shea suggests;<sup>7</sup> and 2. the little horn, as a counterfeit system, because it masquerades as Christian—taking "the name of Christ." It should be remembered that because Israel also was composed of the genuine and the nominal, there is a correspondence between the type and the antitype. It should also be remembered that Christ mentions a pre-advent inspection in Matthew 22:1-14, of what Ellen White refers to as "a mixed company," for "not all who profess to be Christians are true disciples."<sup>8</sup> Remember that the original attack against Christ and His position in heaven was made by Lucifer while he still pretended to be a loyal angel. He works through this same guise in the attack of the little horn as a professedly Christian system.

It also is instructive that the immediate background to Daniel (2 Kings 21-25, 2 Chron. 33-36),<sup>9</sup> as well as the contemporary prophets, Jeremiah and Ezekiel,<sup>10</sup> document that Judah was judged by God for desecration of His sanctuary, and setting up of other gods in His place—the precise thrust of the little horn against Christ and His New Testament sanctuary service. It should also be kept in mind, that in contrast with the secular nations mentioned in Daniel (all which also lose their dominion, Dan. 7:12), the saints and the little horn both claim to be Christian, and either receive or lose their dominion subsequent to the judgment.<sup>11</sup>

As Baldwin puts it, "The heavenly court decrees that **his dominion shall be taken away**, and that he whose rule has been destructive will in turn see his dominion totally destroyed."<sup>12</sup> The Seventh-day Adventist Commentary states, "The judgment will pass sentence of extinction upon the papacy. This power will continue its war against the saints to the very last. Then its dominion over them will be forever removed, and it will be consumed."<sup>13</sup> Internal contextual evidence suggests that the saints and the little

horn equally share in the pre-advent judgment verdict, which includes three inter-related acts: 1. dominion is given to the Son of Man (Dan. 7:14, cf vss. 13, 14); 2. dominion is taken from the little horn (Dan. 7:26); and 3. dominion is given to the saints of the Most High (Dan. 7:18, 25). These three acts represent judgment in favor of the saints (vs. 26) and judgment against their little horn enemy (vss. 21, 22). It should be noted that the loss of the little horn's dominion is eschatological (Dan. 7:21, 22, 25-27), unlike the loss of dominion by the beast powers (Dan. 7:12). Christ comes in the second advent "for judgment" (Mal. 3:5), which Ellen White says is "His coming for the execution of the judgment,"<sup>14</sup> i.e., the implementation of the pre-advent verdict, that destroys the little horn/beast in Armageddon, as we will note later.

Scriptural evidence for including the little horn in the judgment is found in Hebrews, which describes backsliding Christians (*katapatesas*, Heb. 10:29, cf 29-31) in similar terms as Daniel describes the little horn (*mirmas*, MT, *sunpatethesetai*, LXX Dan. 8:13, cf vs. 10)—both "trample" on Christ, both have an anti-Christ thrust.<sup>15</sup> It is of interest that, in speaking of these backsliding Christians, to whom Hebrews was written, Calvin likened them to the Papacy. He said, "Our business with the Papists is similar in the present day; for they confess with us that Christ is the Son of God, the Redeemer who had been promised to the world: but when we come to the reality, we find they rob him of more than one-half of his power."<sup>16</sup> It is precisely this same kind of backsliding, with its rebellion against God (Jer. 6:28; Eze. 2:3; Dan. 7:12) and desecration of His Old Testament temple (2 Kings 21, 23; Jer. 23:11; Eze. 5:11; 8:1-18), that brought judgment on Judah in the time of Daniel as noted in footnotes 9 and 10.

Further scriptural evidence for including the little horn in the pre-advent judgment is found in Second Thessalonians 2:2-4, where Paul speaks of a coming apostasy (*apostasia*), that opposes God, sitting in the temple of God (*naon tou Theo*), as if God. Here is described a religious power usurping Christ's place, in his New Testament temple. The roots of this passage are in Ezekiel 28:2, Isaiah 11:4, and Daniel 11:36. The last text speaks of the little horn. Hans LaRondelle rightly concludes that "Paul did not think of the

antichrist as an atheistic power but as a staunchly religious one, who will claim to speak instead of and on behalf of Christ."<sup>17</sup>

Still more evidence is found in Revelation, with its reference to the true and false Christian churches—the two woman of chapters 12 and 17 respectively. Also in Revelation, the three angel's messages refer to the "beast" (little horn) in the context of the pre-advent judgment (Rev. 14:6-11). Biblical evidence suggests that the little horn is a counterfeit "Christian" system, and as such is included in the pre-advent judgment.

Daniel 7 contains the first mention of the little horn in Scripture, and each of the three times the little horn is mentioned, Daniel immediately mentions the judgment (vss. 7, 8 followed by vss. 9, 10; vss. 11, 12 followed by vss. 13, 14; vss. 20, 21 followed by vs. 22). In the light of what we have said thus far, it seems that the repeated mention of the little horn within the context of the pre-advent judgment is significant.

The little horn is the beast of Revelation 13:1-10. It is united with the dragon and false prophet (Rev. 16:12-16), which together constitute the enemy of God's end-time remnant. They gather the entire world against the saints (Rev. 16:14; 13:3, cf 12:17). Thus the little horn of Daniel 7 is a type of this end-time global alliance against God's saints, according to the hermeneutical principle of escalation, a principle well demonstrated by Richard M. Davidson.<sup>18</sup> Put with this fact of escalation the equally important fact that the Day of Atonement not only typifies the pre-advent judgment, but also the millennial and post-millennial judgments.<sup>19</sup> Thus we see that the judgment of Daniel 7 corresponds to only part of the Day of Atonement type in Leviticus 16. The Day of Atonement includes judgment against the scapegoat (Lev. 16:20-22) enemy of God's people that corresponds with judgment against the little horn enemy of God's people in Daniel 7.<sup>20</sup>

The pre-advent judgment has a double verdict (1) deliverance for God's saints, and (2) destruction for their enemy, which is an unfolding of the double verdict of Calvary. Internal contextual evidence in Daniel, beyond chapter 7, seems also to support this double verdict. Thus, "deliverance" (*sheyrib*, 3:17, 28; 6:20; *matsil*, 3:29; 6:16; *malat*, 12:1) of Daniel and his three friends, from lions' den and fiery furnace, gives insight into the eschatological deliver-

ance of those who have their names written in the "book" (12:1), which is the book used in the pre-advent judgment (7:10). Escalation from local deliverances to a universal deliverance is involved.<sup>21</sup> The historical deliverances for God's people also include destruction of their enemies in both the fiery furnace (Dan. 3:22) and lions' den (Dan. 6:24).<sup>22</sup> Likewise, the eschatological deliverance of the saints has its counterpart in the destruction of their enemy (little horn; Dan. 7:26-27).<sup>23</sup>

Corroborating this conclusion is the fact that Babylon as a literal enemy nation of God's people in Daniel is a type of spiritual Babylon, the enemy of God's people in the end-time in Revelation. Here the escalation is from one nation (Dan. 1:1, 2) to all the world (Rev. 13:3; 17:1-19:21). Babylon is a type of the enemy of God's people, spoken of as the little horn in Daniel 7 and as the woman or beast in Revelation 13-19. Daniel 7 and Revelation 13-19 clearly speak of the same power that attacks God's people. Daniel says, "As I watched, this horn was waging war against the saints and defeating them" (Dan. 7:21). Revelation records, "Mystery Babylon the great the mother of prostitutes and of the abominations of the earth. I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints" (Rev. 17:5, 6).

Ancient Babylon is not investigated in the pre-advent judgment because it never claimed allegiance to God. But antitypical Babylon apparently enters the pre-advent judgment precisely because it claims to be Christian. I doubt there is much need to investigate the little horn as a system,<sup>24</sup> for its actions are blatant against God and His saints (Dan. 7:21, 25, 26; 8:9-11, 25, 26; 11:28-32; 12:11), but it seems clear that both the little horn and the saints receive the pre-advent judgment verdict, which is not true of any other nation presented in Daniel.

**2. Time of the pre-advent judgment.** Is there internal contextual evidence that the judgment of Daniel 7 is pre-advent? The answer is yes. There is a triple sequence of time in Daniel 7:21-22: (1) The little horn wages war against the saints in phase one. (2) "Until," a temporal adverb, introduces the second phase in the time sequence. This is the phase of judgment at the end of which a verdict is pronounced in favor of the saints. (3) "At that time," another time expression, introduces the third phase. This indicates

that the time of judgment ends when another "time comes" and that time is the time of the "saints taking possession of the kingdom" at the second advent. This triple time sequence is repeated in Daniel 7:25-27. Clearly this repeated triple sequence places the investigative phase of the judgment prior to the second advent.

This pre-advent time-focus is corroborated by the larger context of Daniel. For Daniel traces the rise and fall of human kingdoms until God sets up His kingdom. God's on-going judgment lies behind these changes. For God "sets up kings and deposes them" (Dan. 2:21). Note the parallel sequence in Daniel 2, 7, and 8, as follows:

Dan. 2:37-44. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, 10 kingdoms, God's kingdom.

Dan. 7:4-14, 22, 27. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, little horn, God's kingdom.

Dan. 8:2-9, 20-26. Medo-Persia, Greece, little horn (Rome, Pagan/Papal).

Daniel names three of the kingdoms as Babylon (2:24, 38), Medo-Persia (8:20), and Greece (8:21). The data on Medo-Persia and Greece, from chapter 8, informs us of the two nations to follow the Babylonian kingdom of chapter 2. History corroborates this sequence<sup>25</sup> and records that Rome followed Greece. According to Daniel 7:7, 8, the little horn follows the fourth kingdom (Rome). The crucial fact is, the little horn not only follows Rome, but is followed by God's kingdom according to Daniel 7:14, 22, 26, 27. So Daniel 7 reveals that a judgment is convened and concludes by (1) taking away the dominion of the little horn (vss. 23-26) and in (2) establishing the dominion of God's eternal kingdom (vss. 27, 28). The removal of the one gives way to the establishing of the other. This judgment must therefore be pre-advent in its investigation and execution.<sup>26</sup>

The placement of the little horn in this sequence of nations clearly puts it beyond the time (2nd cent. B.C.) of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (believed to be the little horn by many scholars), as he is not alive today in this end-time when the dominion of the little horn is about to be taken away by the arrival of God's eschatological kingdom.

**3. Other reasons for rejecting Antiochus IV Epiphanes.** Scholars have noted the close relation between Daniel 2 and Daniel

7,<sup>27</sup> but have overlooked the same eschatological conclusion given in both (Dan. 2:31-35, 44, 45; 7:13, 14, 17, 18, 21, 22, 27).<sup>28</sup> It is precisely this eschatological time-frame that disqualifies Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Maurice Casey's assertion that the destruction of Antiochus inaugurates the eternal kingdom of the Jews lacks empirical evidence.<sup>29</sup> Jerome answered this question in refuting Porphyry. He said, if the Jew, Judas Maccabeus defeats Antiochus, how does Judas come with the clouds of heaven like a Son of man to the Ancient of Days in heaven (see Dan. 7:9, 13), how was royal power bestowed upon him, and how is his kingdom eternal (see Dan. 7:14)?<sup>30</sup> Obviously the scene in Daniel 7 is far larger than Judas and Antiochus. By contrast, G.K. Beale rightly refers to the judgment "book" of Daniel 7 and 12 as appearing "in contexts of eschatological persecution."<sup>31</sup>

Nevertheless, Antiochus is believed, almost universally, to be the "abomination of desolation" of the sanctuary mentioned in Daniel 8:11-13; 9:27; 11:31; and 12:11. But Christ referred to this "abomination of desolation" as still future in His day. He said, "So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand" (Matt. 24:15). We must allow scripture to interpret scripture, particularly when Christ gives specific guidance and urges that understanding be sought in this matter. There could be no clearer refutation of a second century B.C. interpretation, nor a better mandate to seek for another solution. (cf 2 Thess 2:1-12.)

The pagan Neoplatonist philosopher Porphyry (3rd cent. A.D.) is the earliest known source for supporting the Antiochus interpretation.<sup>32</sup> According to Jerome, "Porphyry wrote his twelfth book against the prophecy of Daniel."<sup>33</sup> Whereas Christ accepted Daniel's prophecy of a coming desolation (Matt. 24:15), Porphyry, rejecting Daniel's ability to predict the future, jettisoned a sixth century date for Daniel's composition; opting instead for a second century date so that the prophecies were merely events recorded after the fact. Porphyry's views were rejected by Jerome (Dan. 7), Eusebius of Caesarea, Apollinarius of Laodicea and Methodius.<sup>34</sup> But historical-critical scholars have followed Porphyry in these matters. The basic difference between Christ and these critics is their worldview. Christ believed in a God who is in control of human

history; who, because He knows the end from the beginning, can predict future events; and who evidently inspired Daniel to present authentic predictions. In fact this is a fundamental theme in the book. Recent scholarship provides evidence for a sixth century date for Daniel, and therefore for its authentic predictions.<sup>35</sup>

There are four schools of interpretation for Daniel.<sup>36</sup> Some preterists (6th century date for Daniel) and all historico-critical (2nd century date for Daniel) scholars believe the little horn was Antiochus. The other two views reject Antiochus, believing the papal (historicist) or some future antichrist (futurist) to be the little horn.

**4. Daniel compatible only with historicist view.** There is only one little horn in Daniel, not two. Samuel Nunez documents nine different interpretations for the little horn in Daniel 8, from 1700-1850.<sup>37</sup> Calvin believed the little horn in Daniel 7 was Julius Caesar, and the other Caesars,<sup>38</sup> and Antiochus in Daniel 8; and also that the little horn of Daniel 8 only reaches up to the first advent of Christ.<sup>39</sup> By contrast, the little horn is shown in Daniel to have a history that reaches back to Roman times and forward into the eschatological future. Paul corroborates this view, speaking of an anti-God power already at work in the first century that is to be revealed before Christ's return (2 Thess. 2:1-12). This is different from preterism, historico-criticism, and futurism.

**5. The 2,300 literal years.** The little horn is named in Daniel several times (7:8, 21; 8:9). Its attack upon the daily (*tamid*) ministry of the sanctuary (Dan. 8:11) is linked to 2,300 "evenings and mornings" (Dan. 8:14). First Maccabees<sup>40</sup> and Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*<sup>41</sup> describe the desecration of the Jerusalem temple by Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Historical-critical scholarship interprets the 2,300 "evening-morning" period as the time when sacrifices to God ceased due to the desecration of the temple/altar by Antiochus. The sacrifices ceased for either 2,300 literal days or 2,300 literal sacrifices—the latter would compute to 1,150 days to account for the morning and evening sacrifices.<sup>42</sup> But the period calls for over six years (2,300 days), if it were literal. This is double the time of the cessation of sacrifices caused by Antiochus. For on the 15th of the ninth month (Chislew) of the 145th year, Antiochus "set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar" (1 Maccabees 1:54) and

on the 25th day of the ninth month of the 148th year, Jews "offered sacrifice according to the law upon the new altar of burnt offerings, which they had made" (1 Maccabees 4:52). The time period is only ten days over three years.

The problem obviously is worse for the shorter 1,150 days. Beyond that, the 1,150-days choice is not possible on linguistic grounds, because the words *ereb boqer* are identical in their sequence with those in Genesis 1 for the days of creation (Gen. 1:3, 6, 13, 19, 23, 31). As the creation days were classified as *ereb boqer* it is logical to equate the 2,300 days similarly. Because of this, Sigfried Schwantes believes Daniel borrowed the phrase from Genesis 1.<sup>43</sup> In spite of the glaring differences between the 2,300 years of Daniel 8:14 and the attempts to fit them to the strictures of Antiochus, writers gloss over these gaps with creative imagination, such as "These 2300 days cover *about* the period of time during which Antiochus Epiphanes did his wicked deeds,"<sup>44</sup> or the time from the temple's desecration by Antiochus till deliverance by Judas Maccabees "was *exactly* two thousand three hundred days."<sup>45</sup> Looking beyond such creativity, if Daniel was written after the events, as critical scholarship claims, then why is the computation of the 2,300 days so far off?

Only the historicist interpretation subscribes to the 2,300 years in Daniel 8:14. It is based on "a day for a year" principle, which is found within scripture,<sup>46</sup> and best describes the Messianic context of Daniel 9:24-27, and the historical time-frame of the little horn as coming between pagan Rome and God's eschatological kingdom. Is there internal contextual evidence for this "day for a year" principle? Yes there is. In Daniel 8:13 the angel asks "until when," (*ad-mathay*), not "how long" (NIV), "will be the vision, **which includes** the continual service and the transgression causing horror, to make both sanctuary and host a trampling?"<sup>47</sup> What is the term used for vision here? Is it the entire vision, or only its latter part? The answer to this question determines the length of the 2,300 "evenings and mornings," and therefore its length in the answer of verse 14, "Until 2,300 evenings and mornings, then the sanctuary shall be cleansed."

Internal contextual evidence demonstrates that the vision includes the entire period, and not just a final segment.<sup>48</sup> Here is

the internal evidence. (1) The term for vision is "*hazon* and not *mar'eh*, which refers to a sub-element of the vision (to be considered later). (2) What is included in the *hazon*, according to what Daniel was shown? In Daniel 8:1, 2 the term is used three times, and includes all that follows. Thus the *hazon* vision begins with the ram (Medo-Persia, vss. 3, 4), continues through the goat (Greece, vss. 5-8) and into the latter part of the little horn power (vss. 8-12), because the angel says, "Son of man, understand that the vision (*hazon*) pertains to the time of the end" (vs. 17). Thus the *hazon* reaches from the beginning of the vision to the time of the end. It covers the entire period from the time of the Medo-Persian empire to the "time of the end." This includes the entire history of Greece, and the entire period of the little horn in its pagan and ecclesiastical phases to the "end of time" (vs. 17). Thus it only can be 2,300 years. Therefore, the sequence of question and answer demands that "evenings and mornings" be equated with literal years for no other equivalent will reach from Medo-Persia until the "time of the end" when the sanctuary will be cleansed.

Luther identified the little horn as the papacy. H.C. Leupold said, "We also hold that in stating that the pope is the Antichrist the Lutheran Confessions were correct much as some men have derided and belittled that view. Such belittling grows out of forgetting how thoroughly the reformers understood the papacy."<sup>49</sup> But Calvin did not. He said of the little horn in Dan 7:8, "Some twist this to mean the Pope, and others the Turk; but neither opinion seems to me probable; they are both wrong." Calvin believed the prophecy only reached up to the first advent.<sup>50</sup> He computed the 2,300 days as literal days.<sup>51</sup>

It should be kept in mind that classical prophecy speaks in literal terms and times, whereas apocalyptic prophecies communicate through symbols and symbolic time. Hence the image and beasts, symbolizing kingdoms in Daniel 2, 7, 8 are found in a context where time is given symbolically as "time, times and half a time" (Dan. 7:25; cf Rev. 12:14 and vs. 6), "2,300 evenings and mornings" (Dan. 8:14) and "seventy weeks" (Dan. 9:24). These are identical to or associated with the 2,300-year prophecy. It would take us beyond the confines of this topic to study the 2,300 years, reaching from 457 B.C. to A.D. 1844. Scholars have done extensive work docu-



menting this historicist view,<sup>52</sup> and documenting 1844 as the beginning of the pre-advent judgment in heaven's sanctuary.

Thus, rather than forcing onto the Biblical text a preconceived interpretation from the second century B.C., it is incumbent upon the Biblical scholar to allow the Bible to interpret itself. This *sola scriptura* hermeneutic opens up the Biblical meaning of these numbers. We have noted the internal contextual evidence for 2,300 years. We need to examine the term "evenings and mornings" (*ereb boqer*, Dan. 8:14) linguistically now. Is this a term used of sacrifices, as supporters of the Antiochus interpretation claim? Is this temple language? Only in part. It is used relative to tending the lamps (*me ereb 'ad boqer*, Ex. 27:20, 21), but never of the daily sacrifices. These are always spoken of as "morning and evening."<sup>53</sup> For example "morning and evening burnt offerings" (*laboqer wela 'areb*, 1 Chron. 16:40). So the division of the 2,300 "evenings and mornings" into 1,150 literal sacrifices is not supported by the term, which stands only for a full day, and never for the sacrifice sequence.

**6. Contribution of the last half of Daniel.** This term "evenings and mornings" (Dan. 8:14) is referred to as the "evening and morning vision" in Daniel 8:26. In both the Aramaic and Hebrew, to this point in Daniel, the word for vision is the same in twelve occurrences (in Heb. *chazon*; Dan. 2:19; 4:5; 7:1, 2, 7, 13, 15; 8:1, 2, 13, 15, 17). There is also the word *mar 'eh* (Dan. 8:16, 26a, 27). The word *mar 'eh*, "vision," is used six times in Daniel 9 and 10 (Dan. 9:23, 10:1, 7; 10:8, 16). The reason for this usage seems deliberate, for every subsequent mention of *mar 'eh* links the explication given with the "evening and morning *mar 'eh*" of Daniel 8:26. Thus, the word *mar 'eh* links these chapters to the little horn, and therefore to the pre-advent judgment context.

In Daniel 8, the little horn's attack upon the *tamid* is mentioned (vs. 11). We will look at the meaning of this term and its relation to the little horn and the sanctuary later, suffice it to note now that like the term *mar 'eh*, this word *tamid* is found in several chapters of the second half of Daniel (Dan. 8:11, 13; 11:31; 12:11), and provides further evidence that these chapters speak about the little horn and therefore provide insight into the pre-advent context. Thus, much of the final half of Daniel has to do with the little

horn and contributes to our understanding of the pre-advent judgment.

**7. An overview of Daniel 7-9.** H. H. Rowley rightly maintained that Daniel 7 has connections with both halves of Daniel.<sup>54</sup> It should be interpreted in the light of the historical and prophetic insights. Andre Lacocque notes that Daniel 7 is "intimately linked" with the rest of the book.<sup>55</sup> J. J. Collins sees Daniel 7 to 12 as complementing and clarifying each other.<sup>56</sup> Although defending an Antiochus interpretation, which we deny, these scholars are right in estimating the importance of Daniel 7, and its relation to subsequent chapters. W. H. Shea has demonstrated convincingly that chapters 7 to 9 are arranged in an "effect-cause" sequence, the inverted order to that which we follow in the west.<sup>57</sup> The eastern mind goes to the result first, and then into the factors that lead up to that result. In a sense, one may say that some insights in chapters 10 to 12 further corroborate this sequence.

We will follow this "effect-cause" sequence, beginning with Daniel 9 and working back to chapter 7. The "seventy weeks" (*shabu'im shib'im*, Dan. 9:24-27) are "cut off" (*nechtak*) from the 2,300 years of Daniel 8:14. This 70 times 7, or 490 years, is the first part of the 2,300 years. It speaks of making atonement for sins (Dan. 9:24) and the Messiah being cut off (*yikkarith*, Dan. 9:26), which brings us down to Calvary.<sup>58</sup>

The fact of Calvary already brings us down past the time of Antiochus IV Epiphanes, and substantiates the principle of a literal year for a symbolic day. As Gerhard Hasel notes, "Daniel 9:24-27 is one of the most controversial in the entire OT."<sup>59</sup> Hasel's article conclusively proves the validity of the Historicist's Christological interpretation, employing the "year-for-a-day" principle.

Chapter 8 traces the little horn, coming out from one of the four winds of the heavens (Dan. 8:8),<sup>60</sup> after Greece (Dan. 8:5-8, 21, 22). This little horn spans the pagan-papal Roman powers, and expands horizontally (vss. 9, 10) and vertically against the host, causing them to be trampled (vs. 10). He magnifies himself against the prince (*sar*) affecting His continual (*tamid*) ministry. Three times reference is made to the *tamid* (vss. 11, 12, 13) in the context of the place of His sanctuary being cast down (vs. 11) and truth being cast to the ground (vs. 12). The *tamid* has the supplied word

“sacrifice” in several versions.<sup>61</sup> But the *tamid* is broader than sacrifice. It is the entire sanctuary service or ministry. Then the question is raised, “until when” is the vision which includes the attack on the continual sanctuary service in heaven by this little horn (Dan. 8:13)? The answer comes, “until” two thousand, three hundred evenings and mornings, then the sanctuary will be vindicated/cleansed (*nisdaq* vss. 13, 14).<sup>62</sup> The angel interpreter is clear that the time focus is the duration of the entire vision and not just the little horn’s part in it.

The solution to the problem of chapters 8 and 9 is given in chapter 7 (following the effect-cause sequence). As Heaton pointed out, Daniel 7 is the apex of Daniel.<sup>63</sup> Daniel 7 is a literary unit, as convincingly shown by Arthur Ferch.<sup>64</sup> This vision was given to Daniel two years before that of chapter 8 (Dan. 7:1, 8:1), and it forms the content for which chapters 8 and 9 are the explication. In other words, the attack of the little horn on the heavenly sanctuary ministry, and hence its attack upon Christ, is the reason for the judgment it receives in chapter 7. Although the little horn comes out of the ten horns of pagan Rome (and hence does not cover the pagan Roman period as it does in Daniel 8—Dan. 7:7, 8, 8:8, 9, 21), the focus of Daniel 7 is upon what the little horn does in its papal period.

We already have learned that the end-time is the focus of Daniel 7. Daniel is shown in vision what the little horn is doing, and at the same time, what God will do to the little horn. The two scenes, earthly and heavenly, are concurrently played out before the prophet. He is directed to view events in both spheres—the sphere of the little horn and the sphere of the judgment. His gaze is horizontal and vertical in continuing sequence throughout the vision. All these events do not take place on earth as some conclude.<sup>65</sup> Baldwin rightly says Daniel “is seeing heaven.”<sup>66</sup>

The scene on earth traces the history of the little horn (particularly vss. 1-8, 23-28), whereas the scene in heaven (besides the brief setting up of the judgment, vss. 9, 10) focuses on the results of the judgment (vss. 13, 14, 18, 22, 27). To this degree Daniel 7 continues to enlarge on the reasons for the judgment given in chapter 8. Three times reference is made to the great things the little horn speaks (vss. 8, 11, 20) which are summed up as words

against the Most High. This anti-God power opposes the saints of the Most High (vs. 25). Together, Daniel 7 and 8 describe the little horn as opposing God, the Prince, His sanctuary, and continual (*tamid*) ministry, speaking great words against God and persecuting His followers. But Daniel 7 shows that in spite of the great words of the little horn, God will have the last word—judgment.

Thus the sanctuary vindication includes a judgment that says “no” to the great words of the little horn. These great words have to do with casting truth to the ground (Dan. 8:12). The truth about Christ in His sanctuary ministry has been cast to the ground by the little horn’s deflecting people’s gaze to its counterfeit priesthood on earth (Dan. 8:11, 12). The little horn’s attempt to change times and laws, its persecution of the saints (Dan. 7:25), and attack against the Prince of princes (Dan. 8:25, all present it as an anti-Christian religious power.

We see, then, that the execution of the pre-advent judgment of Daniel 7 includes God’s response to the little horn’s attack against the Son of Man<sup>67</sup> and His remnant. So the watching prophet sees the little horn overcoming the saints until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was given in favor of the saints (vs. 22) and “judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his rulership, to cut off and destroy until the end” (Dan. 7:26). As Baldwin notes, “The heavenly court decrees that **his dominion shall be taken away**, and he whose rule has been destructive will in turn see his dominion totally destroyed.”<sup>68</sup> Keil-Delitzsch suggest that the consequences of the judgment are given in verses 26, 27.<sup>69</sup>

Daniel 12 gives further insight into the judgment’s result. It focuses on the time when Michael (or Christ) will stand up (vs. 1). This is the opposite of being seated as found in Daniel 7:9. Standing suggests the end of the pre-advent judgment, just as being seated suggests its beginning. For, when Michael stands up, although there will be a final great time of trouble for the saints—suggesting that the little horn power is still to have its final fling against them (cf Rev. 13:3, 11-18)—Michael will deliver His remnant who have their names written in the book (vs. 1). This book relates to the books looked at in the judgment. (See Dan. 7:10.) If our reasoning is correct, Daniel 12:1 is a promise given to the saints that, in spite of an end-time final trouble, the pre-advent judgment will result in

deliverance for them and destruction for their enemies. This judgment verdict presupposes a pre-advent judgment, for it is executed in the final moments of history and in connection with the coming of Christ's eschatological kingdom (cf Rev. 16:12-16; 18:10-24; 19:1, 2, 11-21).

Daniel traces the rise and fall of four major kingdoms that come to an end within history (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome) and also the little horn power that comes to an end at the eschatological end-time. Just as the stone of Daniel 2 crushes the image, symbolizing the end of all political kingdoms with the arrival of God's kingdom (see Dan. 2:34,35,44,45), so the pre-advent judgment issues in a verdict that takes away the counterfeit dominion of the little horn by establishing Christ's dominion, and that of His saints, forever. (See Dan. 7:21-27.)

#### Day of Atonement as Type of the Pre-advent Judgment

The annual atonement for the sanctuary and "for all the sins of the Israelites" (Lev. 16:33, 34) came towards the end of the Jewish year. After it was over the sanctuary and people were clean. It was followed by the Feast of Tabernacles that celebrated the completed cleansing, among other things.<sup>70</sup> Daniel was familiar with this important annual pre-"advent-of-the-new-year" judgment. It is within this context that we should contemplate the words "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (Dan. 8:14, KJV).

The end of the 2,300 days did not bring the execution of the judgment, but the beginning of the process that would produce that verdict. It was time to "fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of waters" (Rev. 14:7). The day of atonement was the time to gather around the sanctuary and focus on the high priest as representative of the people ministering in the most holy place before God. It was a time of personal investigation.

On October 22, 1844, the antitypical day of atonement began. This pre-advent judgment is time to focus on the second phase of Christ's ministry in heaven's sanctuary. Such a focus is opposite to

that of the little horn that deflects from Christ's sanctuary ministry by calling attention to its own priestly service.

#### Pre-advent Judgment in Hebrews

Is the pre-advent judgment found in Hebrews? William G. Johnsson believes "In Hebrews the law/court model is not present and should not be imported nor superimposed." He suggests that "the court model, valuable as it is, is but one of the ways by which the human dilemma and Christ's work to solve it are set forth in the Scriptures."<sup>71</sup> It is true that the multiple atonement theories are evidence that Christ's work is greater than any one type.<sup>72</sup> However, Johnsson does see in Hebrews a judgment theme, "but it (Hebrews) does not pull together the concept of 9:23—the necessity of purifying the heavenly things—with this theme."<sup>73</sup> Johnsson sees three unambiguous references to the Day of Atonement in Hebrews 9:6-7, 24, 25 and 10:1-4.<sup>74</sup> It would seem, however, that he separates the cleansing of 9:23 from the Day of Atonement in 9:24, 25. He also believes "Hebrews does not take up the **time** of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary and the judgment (Heb. 9:23)."<sup>75</sup>

In contrast to Johnsson, Richard M. Davidson believes that Hebrews 9 "does provide hints of it [time] by his reference to the cleansing of the sanctuary (9:23), followed by reference to a future judgment (vs. 27) and the second coming of Christ (vs. 28)." He further suggests that "five additional passages refer to a future judgment (2:2-4; 4:1-3; 6:7-12; 10:28-39; 12:26-29). These passages suggest an investigative (4:12; 6:10; 10:28-30) as well as executive judgment involving the professed people of God. These hints regarding timing are consistent with the OT type."<sup>76</sup> George E. Rice divides Hebrews into five units, comprised of three identical elements, the third being judgment in each (2:2-4; 4:1-13; 6:7-8; 10:32-39; 12:25-29).<sup>77</sup>

Johnsson's and Davidson's views demonstrate two ways of looking at the antitypical day of atonement in Hebrews. Johnsson believes the function of the day of atonement references in Hebrews is to demonstrate that even at the high point of the cultic sacrifices the old cultus was inadequate. "All that the old system failed to do because of its inherent insufficiencies, all that the repeated days of

atonement could not accomplish, has now been done by Calvary."<sup>78</sup> Hence "the leitmotif of the sacrificial argument of Hebrews (8:1-10:18) is the **better blood** rather than the Day of Atonement."<sup>79</sup> Johnsson concludes, "9:1-5 (altar of incense in Most Holy Place) should already have put us off the track of trying to reason from type to antitype in this section"<sup>80</sup> Efficacy of the sacrifice, and not typology, seems to be the key for Johnsson.

By contrast, Davidson demonstrates that "typology in Hebrews is comprised of the same basic conceptual structures found in the typology of the rest of Scripture."<sup>81</sup> This includes both the horizontal and vertical correspondences. As far as Hebrews 9:1-5 is concerned, the altar of incense seems to be placed in the Most Holy Place, not because of any shoddy understanding of the Old Testament sanctuary by the author, but because *echousa* (having) seems to indicate that it "properly belonged to" the Most Holy Place in function.<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, all modifications of Old Testament types in Hebrews are not further evidence of a turning away from typology, for each instant is rooted in Old Testament control passages that legitimize the modifications.<sup>83</sup>

What do we make of these two different views relative to the day of atonement in Hebrews? It seems to me that Hebrews, although a carefully crafted sermon, does not systematically unfold the judgment in time, and does not take pains to distinguish between a pre-advent and final judgment. Nevertheless, judgment is within the purview of the writer. So the term judgment is mentioned in process—9:27; 10:27; 13:4; result (eternal judgment)—6:2; and judgment fire is mentioned in 6:8 and 12:29). Judgment synonyms are found in no "escape" (*ekpheuzometha*, 2:3) and "giving account (*hos logon*, 13:17). Finally, God is mentioned as "God the judge of all" (*kritei theo panton*, 12:23).

What is the significance of this data on the judgment? That Hebrews is addressed to backsliding Christians is clear throughout the letter.<sup>84</sup> The writer's concern is to demonstrate that they are giving up that which is much better—Christ (1:4); "better hope" (7:19); "better covenant" (7:22); "better promises" (8:6); "better" sacrifice (9:23) with better blood (9:12). The key word "better" (*kreitton*) appears thirteen times.<sup>85</sup> Although judgment can be considered a passing reference, it is what they get (present), and will

get (future) in exchange for what they have given up. Both sides of the equation seem to be in the writer's mind.

Moreover, Hebrews speaks of *tupon* (8:6) which necessarily points to *antitupa* (9:24): that is to say, the earthly sanctuary prefigures the heavenly. Hence, returning to the question of Hebrews 9 (mentioned above), one would expect the cleansing of 9:23 to be linked with the Day of atonement of 9:24, 25. Internal contextual evidence supports this typological correspondence. In Hebrews 9:22-27, the heavenly sanctuary is to be cleansed (*katharizesthai*, vs. 23), which is a direct reference to Daniel 8:14 (*katharizesthai*, LXX, *nizdaq*, MT). Christ entered the *antitupa* (vs. 24, cf *tupon* in 8:5) to appear in the presence of God on our behalf, by offering His own sacrifice. In that "good news" context mention of judgment follows (vss. 24-28). It would seem, then, that 9:23 should not be separated from 9:24, 25.

One more text needs comment. In Hebrews 10:26-31 the writer addresses the professed Christian who has "trampled" (*katapatesas*) "the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the spirit of grace" (Heb. 10:29). As Lenski insightfully says, "'To trample under foot' is illustrated by Matt 7:6 where the hogs trample pearls into the mire. To do this to 'the Son of God' brings to mind all that this epistle has said of his infinite exaltation from 1:2 onward. The writer does not say trample down some gift the Son of God brought as he says 'Moses law' but trample down this infinitely exalted Son who is very God himself."<sup>86</sup> These words applied to the Hebrew Christians, who had backslidden, remind us of the little horn magnifying itself to Christ ("leader of the host"), taking away His daily service (*tamid*), upon which it was trampling, Dan. 8:13, cf vs. 10). The trampling in Daniel and Hebrews has the same antiChrist thrust. This also can contribute to our understanding of the pre-advent judgment as we will note later.

These two passages (Heb. 9:22-28; 10:26-31) do seem to suggest some reference to the pre-advent judgment in Daniel. The first is a specific identity (cleansing the sanctuary/people) and the second refers to a common rejection of Christ that causes the negative verdict of the judgment. Although the judgment-court scene is not developed in Hebrews, as it is in Daniel, the writer's references to

type-antitype (horizontal/vertical) suggest that it was not far from his mind.<sup>87</sup>

In summary, Johnsson looks from Calvary back to the entire cultic services and rightly says "Better blood—even better than the day of atonement sacrifices." What he apparently does not do is to look forward and up from Calvary and say "better priesthood too." In the author of Hebrews' own summation in Hebrews 8:1, 2, he focuses on Christ's priesthood. F. F. Bruce reminds us, "More than any other New Testament book it [Hebrews] deals with the ministry which our Lord is accomplishing on His people's behalf now."<sup>88</sup> Johnsson is right in saying that the law-court model is only one way of expressing the work of Christ, but so were the sacrifices. Many Old Testament types found their antitype in Christ's sacrifice, yet, as Davidson reminds us, "all other aspects find their respective fulfillments in the course of Christ's priestly ministry."<sup>89</sup>

It is precisely in this ministry, and its cleansing work, that typology is doctrinally instructive, for it was the Old Testament type that Hebrews referred to when speaking of the New Testament antitype (Heb. 9:22, 23). Thus the cleansing of Hebrews 9 finds its type in the Day of Atonement, which corresponds to the pre-advent judgment predicted in Daniel 8:14. As Calvary was better than all previous sacrifices, so the cleansing is better in heaven's sanctuary, and Christ's present intercession (also in the judgment) is better than all previous mediation. For, according to the type/antitype correspondence, an escalation is involved.

#### Revelation Corroborates Daniel

There is some evidence that Revelation 4 and 5 may be parallel with Daniel 7.<sup>90</sup> In both references God is pictured sitting on His throne (Dan. 7:9, Rev. 4:2-3), other thrones surround God's throne (Dan. 7:9, Rev. 4:4), a book of records is mentioned (Dan. 7:10, Rev. 5:1-5)<sup>91</sup> and Christ is central, as receiving the judgment verdict (Dan. 7:13, 14) or alone worthy to unseal the book (Rev. 5:8-10)—an act to come at the execution of the verdict.<sup>92</sup>

Kenneth Strand has convincingly demonstrated that Revelation is divided into eight major prophetic sequences, with chapters 4-14 as historical-era visions, and chapters 15-20 as eschatological-judgment era visions. Judgment culminates each of the four escha-

tological sections.<sup>93</sup> The climatic focus, in both Hebrews and Revelation, is on the judgment.

There are some important parallels between Daniel and Revelation, which space precludes taking up.<sup>94</sup> The little horn of Daniel is designated the beast in Revelation, as the following comparison of Revelation 13 with Daniel 7 reveals:

<b>Beast (Rev 13)</b>	<b>Little horn (Dan 7)</b>
Speaks boastfully (vs. 5)	Speaks boastfully (vs. 8)
War against saints (vs. 7)	War against saints (vss. 21, 25)
In power for 42 months (vs. 5)	In power for 3 1/2 yrs (vs. 25)

Counterfeit worship is attributed to the little horn (Dan. 8:14) and to the beast (Rev. 13:4-8, 12-15). Death decrees to enforce counterfeit worship are mentioned in Daniel (Dan. 3:4-6; 6:5-12). In the same way that an image was raised on the plain of Dura, and all had to worship it or die (Dan. 3:4-6, 16-18), Revelation says a power "ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast" decreeing that death should come to all who refuse to worship it (Rev. 13:14, 15). Worship is the central eschatological issue. Mankind will be confronted with the ultimate decision—worship the beast or worship God. Beast-worship will bring God's fury/judgment (Rev. 14:9-11). The golden image was set up by Babylon. The beast is spiritual Babylon (Rev. 17:5). God's call is "Come out of her (Babylon) my people" (Rev. 18:2-5, cf 14:8). "Worship him who made the heaven, the earth, the sea and the springs of water" (Rev. 14:7), "Worship God!" (Rev. 22:9). This call finds its roots in the call for Israel to return from Babylonian captivity under Ezra and Nehemiah. The call to come from worshipping the beast to the worship of God is a crucial part of the pre-advent judgment hour message (Rev. 14:7).

So striking is this identity between the beast and the little horn that Gregory K. Beale believes "Revelation 13 is modeled on Daniel 7."<sup>96</sup> Revelation shows how the verdict against the little horn (Dan. 7:21, 22, 26, 27) is executed. This takes place in the final pre-advent<sup>96</sup> battle between Christ and the beast.<sup>97</sup> Armageddon (Rev. 16-19) is the final pre-advent confrontation of God against Babylon (little horn, beast, and followers Rev. 13:3), and presents the devastating judgment of God on the enemies of His people.

Then "I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one 'like a son of man' with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand" (Rev. 14:14). Here the second advent comes to view with Christ riding on a cloud, which Hans LaRondelle has persuasively proven to be "His cloud chariot"<sup>98</sup> for "He makes the clouds his chariot" (Ps. 104:3). Here Rev. 14:14 connects with the pre-advent judgment scene of Daniel 7, where the prophet sees "one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven" (Dan. 7:13). T. Longman believes that in Daniel 7:13, Christ is riding "the Divine War Chariot."<sup>99</sup> In Daniel 7, Christ moves Godward to receive the verdict of the pre-advent judgement, whereas in Revelation 14 He comes manward to execute that judgment. This double movement in heaven climaxes the double gathering on earth (Rev. 14:6-13; 16:12-16). The reception of the judgment verdict before implementation is powerful evidence for a pre-advent judgment.

Christ, on His cloud chariot, leaves heaven's temple, and three angels come out of the temple, and participate in executing judgment (Rev. 14:14-20).<sup>100</sup> It is appropriate that judgment (verdict and execution) should issue from the temple which the little horn/beast attacked (cf Christ's second advent on a white horse, with angels on white horses, coming to battle against the little horn/beast in Rev. 19:11-21).<sup>101</sup>

### What is the Good News About the Pre-advent Judgment?

**1. Christ is for us and against our enemy.** We are now ready to return to Hebrews. No New Testament book develops so completely the post-resurrection ministry of Christ as does Hebrews. Christ's intercession for His people is a part of Christ's better ministry as compared with that of Old Testament priests, even as His better sacrifice was better than the multiple cultic sacrifices. Although it is right to say that no systematic development of the law court is found in Hebrews, there is a systematic presentation of Christ's intercession, which is the major contribution Hebrews makes to the pre-advent judgment doctrine. Examination of the records (Dan. 7:10) is only one side of the judgment. The other is the intercession, or advocacy of Christ (cf 1 Tim. 2:5, 1 John 2:1). Christ is there in the presence of God on our behalf

(*huper hemon*, 9:24), where He is able to fully save (*panteles*, 7:25) and where He is ever living to intercede on behalf of them (*pantote zov eis to entugchanein huper auton*, 7:25).

This is the advocate-intercessor portrayed in Zechariah 3, where the cosmic/great controversy dimensions of the pre-advent judgment come into focus. Joshua, representative of God's people, is in dire need. While he was dressed in filthy garments Satan accuses him (Zech. 3:1-3). Zechariah's vision sees a law court scene with an accuser and a defender of the convicted. Joshua is referred to as "a burning stick snatched from the fire" (Zech. 3:2). Keil-Delitzsch notes that "the fire out of which Joshua had been saved like a brand was the captivity, in which both Joshua and the nation had been brought to the verge of destruction."<sup>102</sup> They had deserved the captivity.<sup>103</sup> They had rebelled against God, who gave them over to their captors (Dan. 1:1-2). They had nothing to recommend them, save their utter need. This could also be said of the backslidden Christians to whom Hebrews is addressed. (Both the Jews of the captivity and Christian Jews reading Hebrews had rebelled like the little horn). It is precisely for people who have sinned, but realize their need (the little horn never does), that Christ intercedes. So Joshua stood accused by Satan, and with clothing to prove the charges correct.

Joshua was desperate. Here he was at the judgment bar, and yet clothed in sin. Later Christ would speak of the king coming in to inspect the guests, and finding "a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes" (Matt. 22:11). That man evidently thought he could make it on his own in the judgment, that he was good enough, that his garments would suffice, that his life-record was sufficient. But he was thrown out (Matt. 22:13). Unlike this man, Joshua apparently knew his need, and could look only to God for help. Had not God led Israel back from Babylonian captivity just as He had out of Egypt? Could He not rescue them spiritually too? Joshua had nothing to recommend him. He simply stood there with utter faith in God alone. It must be stressed that Christ's intercession is not to change His Father Judge, but to answer Satan's accusation. Jesus said, "I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me" (John 16:26-27).

“Zechariah’s vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God’s people in the closing up of the great day of atonement.”<sup>104</sup> Zechariah 3 therefore is a type of the pre-advent judgment. While Satan rebuked Joshua, Christ<sup>105</sup> said “‘take off his filthy clothes.’ Then he said to Joshua, ‘See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you’” (Zech. 3:3-4). Oh the wonder of salvation! No doubt Joshua exclaimed words such as these “I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness” (Isa. 61:10). It is precisely this intercessor-advocate that comes to view in Hebrews, for Christ did not finish His intercession when the judgment began—He continues it, as demonstrated by Zechariah’s vision. It should also be remembered that the typical daily morning and evening sacrifices were also offered on the Day of Atonement.

The end-time remnant needs to capture the full impact of Zechariah and Hebrews relative to the continuing intercession-advocacy of the conquering Christ during the pre-advent judgment. Their focus must be on Christ and not on themselves. Revelation is precise: in the judgment hour the saints worship Christ as their Creator (Rev. 14:7), realizing that just as He brought them into this world so only He can get them into the next world.<sup>106</sup> End-time saints are pictured as naked (Rev. 3:18) just as Adam and Eve at the fall (Gen. 3:10,21). No fig leaves, or human works, can supply the need. Only the slain lamb can supply the covering, only the robe of Christ’s righteousness (Isa. 61:10; Rev. 6:11), the wedding garment supplied by the Lord (Matt. 22:11, 12), will suffice. The prodigal son needed the best robe to cover his tattered rags (Luke 15:22).

The pre-advent investigation involves the saints. It is only those who have their names in the book that are delivered (Dan. 12:1). It would seem that they pass the judgment because they are different from the little horn. They do not speak great words against Christ, or magnify themselves, or persecute the saints, or think to change God’s times and laws, or put themselves in Christ’s place, casting His truth to the ground.

Zechariah speaks of the pre-advent judgment from the great controversy perspective. The saints are attacked (in the investigation process in heaven) by their ultimate enemy, while Daniel

focuses on their being attacked on earth by the little horn enemy. Christ stands up for them in the investigation (Zech. 3) and in its execution (Dan. 7, cf Rev. 16-19).

Ellen G. White pictures the struggle. Satan “presents their sins before them to discourage them. He is constantly seeking occasion against those who are trying to obey God. Even their best and most acceptable services he seeks to make appear corrupt. By countless devices, the most subtle and the most cruel, he endeavors to secure their condemnation. Man cannot meet these charges himself. In his sin-stained garments, confessing his guilt, he stands before God. But Jesus our Advocate presents an effectual plea in behalf of all who by repentance and faith have committed the keeping of their souls to Him. He pleads their cause and vanquished their accuser by the mighty arguments of Calvary.”<sup>107</sup>

**2. Calvary is pre-eminent.** We are now ready to penetrate to the heart of what is underway in the pre-advent judgment, and for that matter, what will continue in the millennial and postmillennial judgments (Rev. 20:7-15). God does not need the judgments, because He is omniscient (Ps. 33:13-15; 56:8, 104:24; 139:2, 6; 147:4; Isa. 44:28, 46:9, 10; Mal. 3:16; Matt. 10:29,30, Acts 15:8, Rom. 11:33, Eph. 3:10). “The Lord knows those who are his” (2 Tim. 2:19). He holds these judgments for the sake of created beings.<sup>108</sup> In the pre-advent judgment the universe is looking at the records of human works, good and bad (Dan. 7:10). But more than that, they are looking to see whether individuals have accepted or rejected the saving work that Jesus did for them on the cross.<sup>109</sup> Their relation to the substitutionary judgment of the covenant-Saviour is determinative (cf John 16:26-27; 17:3).

It is precisely that, and nothing else, that determines personal destiny. So the pre-advent judgment is Christ-centered and not man-centered.<sup>110</sup> It is not so much what individuals have or have not done per se that is decisive. Rather it is whether they have accepted or rejected what Christ has done for them when He was judged in their place at the cross (John 12:31). It is also true that the judgment has more to do with vindication of God than vindication of man, for it involves the great controversy issue, and not just human salvation.

The judgment does not repudiate Calvary. It is the Crucified

who intercedes for us. The pre-advent judgment is part of the unfolding in salvation-history of what was accomplished at the cross. Calvary moves inexorably to the deliverance of God's people and the destruction of their enemies because both were accomplished by Christ on the cross. It is by the authority of Calvary that Christ delivers His saints and destroys Satan and all their enemies. So our gaze should be backward to Calvary and upward to Christ, rather than inward to character. Although we must be forgiven and forsake sin and be fitted for heaven, such comes through beholding Christ (2 Cor. 3:17,18). "If they kept their eyes fixed on Jesus, who was just before them, leading them to the city, they were safe."<sup>111</sup> Only Jesus can say, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). Only Christ can clothe prodigals with the robe (Luke 15:22). Only Christ can carry the lost sheep all the way home (Luke 15:5).

We need to understand fully Satan's scheme. What he has done on a general level, in deflecting attention from the authentic heavenly sanctuary service to his counterfeit earthly priesthood (little horn), he is doing on the personal level by deflecting attention away from mankind's only Substitute to humans themselves. Looking to an earthly priesthood or to our own personhood equally deflects the gaze away from Christ.

For many, their greatest need is not to be obsessed with the present judgment, but to be transformed by Calvary. Look away from your life to His, from your sins to His salvation. Long and deep was His struggle. No other being can ever understand how long was the night He lived in this world that forsook Him. Even His own people rejected Him—precisely because they clung to their own works instead of accepting His works for them. Busily attempting to earn their way to pass a judgment, rather than accepting His judgment in their place.

There is wondrous good news in the pre-advent judgment. For it does not stand by itself. It is surrounded by Calvary before it, Christ's intercession in it, and Armageddon beyond it. In all three events Christ works consistently for His people and against their enemies. (This is why the little horn is investigated in the judgment and receives the judgment verdict in Armageddon). In all three events Christ is "the same yesterday, today and forever" (Heb.

13:8). What Christ accomplished on the cross is simply unfolding in all subsequent salvation-history, including the pre-advent judgment. This is why the "hour of his judgment" is part of the "eternal gospel" (Rev. 14:6,7). In this judgment hour it is our crucified Saviour who "is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them" (Heb. 7:25).

### Endnotes

1 There are four major schools of interpretation in Daniel studies: 1. Preterist, that considers the scope of Daniel's prophecies reaching either to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, or Christ's first advent, or Jerusalem's destruction in AD 70. 2. Futurist (Dispensational and Non-Dispensational), that sees Daniel's prophecies as applicable to eachatological end-time. 3. Historicist, that sees the prophecies of Daniel covering the entire historical time-span from the Babylonian empire to the second advent. (These three schools subscribe to a sixth century B.C. date for the book of Daniel, and to authentic divine predictions.) 4. The historical-critical school, that, by contrast, denies the authenticity of prophecies, for all so-called prophecies in Daniel were written in the second century B.C., as *vaticinia ex eventu*. For a thorough documentation of these schools from, 1700 to 1900 see Samuel Nuñez, *The Vision of Daniel 8, The Interpretations from 1700 to 1800* (sic 1900), (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, Andrews University Press), 1987.

2 Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1920), p. 315.

3 Scholars rightly find in Calvary the antitype of the typical Day of Atonement (Lev 16), but almost all fail to see further correspondence in a pre-advent judgment. Once the additional correspondence is seen, the implications of the cross to understanding the pre-advent judgment needs to be explored.

4 Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, (Mountain View, California, Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1950), p. 480.

5 *The Great Controversy*, p. 483.

6 *The Great Controversy*, p. 486.

7 William H. Shea, *Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation*, (Lincoln, Nebraska: College View Printers), 1982, p. 125. (See pp. 123-125.)

8 Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 309, 310.

9 During Manasseh's reign the temple was desecrated with altars to other gods (2 Kings 21:4-5), and in it pagan priests and mediums ministered and children were offered as sacrifices (2 Kings 23:4-24). Judah did more evil than the nations God had destroyed (2 Kings 21:9).

10 Jeremiah prophesied judgments on Judah (7:34; 15:14; 21:5-6; 25:9-14; 32:29; 34:2, 22; 35:15; 37:3; 52:13-14), for she had forgotten God (2:32), become hardened in rebellion (6:28), forsaken the law (9:13) and her prophets and priests were godless, even desecrating the temple (23:11). Judgments came because "the Lord will take vengeance, vengeance for his temple" (51:11). Ezekiel prophesied



God's judgment because Judah had defiled God's temple (5:11), even flaunting idolatry in the temple (8:1-18). In vision God is pictured as coming to the OT temple to judge (1:1-2; 8:1).

11 It would seem that the loss of dominion by the little horn subsequent to the judgment has more to do with the judgment than with the fact that it also is subsequent to the other nations mentioned in Daniel.

12 Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel*, (Leicester, England: IVP, 1978), p. 146.

13 *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, p. 834.

14 *The Great Controversy*, p. 425.

15 See "Pre-advent judgment in Hebrews" section.

16 John Calvin, *Hebrews*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1989), p. xxviii.

17 Hans LaRondelle, "The Middle Ages with the Scope of Apocalyptic Prophecy," *JETS* 32/3, 1989 (345-354), p. 351.

18 Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture, A Study of Hermeneutical *tipos* Structures*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, (Berrien Springs, Michigan, AU Press, 1981), p. 397. Kenneth A. Strand, "An Overlooked Old-Testament Background to Revelation 11:1," *AUSS*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (317-325), p. 318.

19 Daniel and Revelation Committee Report in *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, ed Frank B. Holbrook, (Silver Spring, Maryland: Biblical Research Institute, 1989), p. 10.

20 The scapegoat represents the ultimate enemy, Satan, and its being led away into the wilderness to die corresponds to the millennial and post-millennial judgment upon Satan (Rev. 20:2,3; 7-10). By contrast, the little horn enemy operates during pre-advent historical time. Nevertheless, the correspondence between type and antitype concerns judgment upon an enemy of God's people.

21 Compare the deliverance from Babylonian captivity, after the 70 years, as a type of the call to come out of Babylon in Rev. 14 and 18.

22 If looked at sequentially, the destruction came first before the deliverance in the fiery furnace incident, and the reverse in the lions' den experience. Although the typology should not be overly pushed, there is correspondence in the double result of "deliverance-destruction" between these two historical events and the result of the pre-advent judgment. It would appear that these historical events give some insight into the result of the apocalyptic pre-advent judgment, which is climaxed in the deliverance of the saints and the destruction of their enemies in Daniel 12:1 (cf Rev. 16-19).

23 Hans LaRondelle rightly sees that "the historical narratives of Daniel's own experiences in Babylon and Persia carry also typological significance for the end time," *JETS* 32/3, 1989, p. 345. See Hans LaRondelle, *Chariots of Salvation*, (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1987), pp. 155-157.

24 I concur with William Shea's conclusion in *Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation*, p. 124.

25 H. H. Rowley gives the three interpretations of these four held through the Christian era, noting that the Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome "view has been by far the most popular traditional view." (*Darius the Mede and the Four World Empires in the Book of Daniel. A Historical Study of Contemporary Theories*, (Cardiff: Univ. of Wales Press Board, 1964), p.6. Rowley is representative of critical scholars who divide the second kingdom into Media and Persia. For a full

historical accounting see Samuel Nuñez, *The Vision of Daniel 8*, particularly pp. 396-408.

26 The execution of the judgment on the little horn includes the second advent (see Rev. 18-19).

27 H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1969), pp. 276-278. André Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, trans David Pellauer (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1979), p. 122. Louise F. Hartman and Alexander A Di Lella, *The Anchor Bible. The Book of Daniel*, vol 23, eds W.F. Albright and D.N. Freedman (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1978), pp. 208, 209.

28 An exception to scholars overlooking the eschatological implications is Hans LaRondelle, *JETS* 32/3, 1989, 345-354.

29 Maurice Casey, *Son of Man, The Interpretation and Influence of Daniel 7* (London: SPCK, 1979), pp. 45, 46.

30 *Jerome's Commentary of Daniel*, trans Gleason L. Archer, Jr. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1977), pp. 80, 81.

31 G. K. Beale, *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John*, (Maryland: University Press of America, 1984), p. 239.

32 See *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel*, trans Gleason L. Archer Jr. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1977), p. 80. Porphyry was not the first to question the authenticity of predictions. Celsus (c. A.D. 180) may well have been the first to question prophecy. See Gerhard F. Hasel, *70 Weeks, Leviticus, Nature of Prophecy*, ed. Frank B. Holbrook (Washington D.C.: Biblical Research Institute, 1986, p. 292.

33 *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel*, p. 15.

34 *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel*, p. 151.

35 See documentation for this in Gerhard F. Hasel, "The Book of Daniel and Matters of Language: Evidences Relating to Names, Words, and the Aramaic Language" in *AUSS*, 19, (1981), pp. 211-225.

36 See Samuel Nuñez, op. cit., pp. 111, 409, 410, 429-432.

37 Samuel Nuñez, op. cit., pp. 27-83.

38 *Calvin's Commentaries*, vol 13, p. 27.

39 *Calvin's Commentaries*, vol 13, p. 128f. Calvin rejects the idea that Antiochus is a type ("figure," "analogy") for the anti-Christ. Daniel is, to him, only relevant to the time before the first (not the second) advent of Christ.

40 1 Macabbees 1:54-5:1 tells the story from the setting "up the desolation upon the altar" till a new altar was built.

41 *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, trans William Whiston, vol 3 (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1988, pp. 181-183. The desecration of the temple included sacrificing swine upon the altar.

42 For example, Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, p. 164; and Norman W. Porteous, *Daniel, A Commentary* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1965), pp. 126, 127.

43 Siegfried J. Schwantes, "Ereb Boqer of Daniel 8:14 Re-examined" in *Symposium on Daniel*, p. 473.

44 A. C. Gaebelein, *The Prophet Daniel, A Key to the Visions and Prophecies of the Book of Daniel* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1968), p. 99. Italics supplied.

45 M. R. De Haan, *Daniel the Prophet* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, npd), p. 230. Italics supplied.

- 46 For an excellent exposition of the "year for a day" principle, see William H. Shea, *Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation* (Lincoln, Nebraska: College View Printers, 1982), pp. 56-93.
- 47 Gerhard F. Hasel, "The 'Little Horn,' The Saints, and the Sanctuary in Daniel 8," in *The Sanctuary and the Atonement*, pp. 198, 199.
- 48 I am indebted to Gerhard F. Hasel for this Biblical insight.
- 49 H.C. Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1969), p. 323.
- 50 John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of Daniel*, vol 2, trans Thomas Myers (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker book House, 1989), p. 26.
- 51 For example, Calvin said of the 2,300 days of Daniel 8:14, "Evidently we ought to understand natural days here, consisting of twenty-four hours each. Those who receive it of years and months are wretchedly mistaken, and even ridiculous in their calculations."—*Calvin's Commentaries*, vol 13, p. 108.
- 52 Gerhard Hasel's thorough study, documents the first 490 year segment of the 2,300 year prophecy, and conclusively rejects the Antiochus Epiphanes theory. Gerhard F. Hasel, "Interpretations of the Chronology of the Seventy Weeks," in *70 Weeks, Leviticus, Nature of Prophecy*, pp. 3-63.
- 53 William H. Shea, "Unity of Daniel" in *Symposium on Daniel*, p. 197.
- 54 H. H. Rowley, *The Unity of The Book of Daniel* (Cincinnati: off-print from the Hebrew Union College Annual, vol 23, part 1, 1950-51), p. 273.
- 55 *The Book of Daniel*, p. 122.
- 56 J. J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press for Harvard Semitic Museum, 1977), p. 132.
- 57 William H. Shea, "Unity of Daniel" in *Symposium on Daniel*, p. 168.
- 58 It is a tragedy that so many critical scholars by-pass the Christological content of Daniel 9:25-27 and Daniel 7:13.
- 59 Gerhard F. Hasel, *70 Weeks, Leviticus, Nature of Prophecy*, p. 5.
- 60 See Gerhard F. Hasel, "The 'Little Horn,' the Heavenly Sanctuary, and the Time of the End: A Study of Daniel 8:9-14" in *Symposium on Daniel*, pp. 387-391.
- 61 "Sacrifice" in the LXX, KJV and NIV; "offering" in Goodspeed and the Amplified OT, and "burnt offering" in the RSV. All of these words are supplied, and have no support in the Hebrew word **tamid** which includes the entire daily ministration.
- 62 See Niels-Erik Andreasen, "Translation of Nisdak/Katharisthesetai in Daniel 8:14" in *Symposium on Daniel*, pp. 475-496. Also Alberto R. Treiyer, "The Day of Atonement as related to the contamination and purification of the sanctuary" in *70 Weeks, Leviticus, Nature of Prophecy*, pp. 198-256.
- 63 Eric W. Heaton, *The Book of Daniel*, Torch Bible Commentary (London: SCM, 1956), p. 47.
- 64 Arthur J. Ferch, *The Son of man in Daniel Seven*, pp. 108-137.
- 65 John E. Goldingay, *Word Biblical Commentary, Daniel* (Dallas, Texas: Word Publishers, 1989), pp. 164-167.
- 66 Joyce G. Baldwin, *Tyndale OT Commentary, Daniel* (Downer's Grove, Ill: IVP, 1978), p. 141.
- 67 The Son of Man is Jesus (cf Dan. 7:13 with Christ's own words in Matt. 26:64). The Gospels record Jesus applying this term to Himself more than forty times.
- 68 Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel*, p. 146.

- 69 C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the OT in Ten Volumes*, Vol 9, trans of Daniel, M. G. Easton, (W. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1986), p. 244.
- 70 *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 540.
- 71 *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, p. 90.
- 72 See where the present writer has developed this. Norman R. Gulley, "Toward Understanding the Atonement," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 1, (Spring 1990), 57-89.
- 73 William G. Johnsson, *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, p. 96 (parenthesis supplied).
- 74 *Ibid.*, pp. 112-114.
- 75 *Ibid.*, p. 99.
- 76 *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, p.184 (parenthesis supplied).
- 77 George E. Rice, *AUSS* (1985), 23, pp. 34, 35.
- 78 Johnsson, op. cit., p. 119.
- 79 *Ibid.*, p. 118.
- 80 *Ibid.*, p. 119 (parenthesis supplied).
- 81 *Issues*, p.154. (See pp. 123-154.) See also Davidson, *Typology in Scripture*.
- 82 *Issues*, pp. 178, 179.
- 83 *Issues*, pp. 171-186.
- 84 For example in Hebrews 2:1; 3:12-15; 4:1, 7, 11, 14; 5:6, 12; 10:26, 35-37; 12:1-6, 12-16, 25; 13:1,2, 7-17, 22.
- 85 Hebrews 6:9; 7:7, 19, 22; 8:6 (twice); 9:23; 10:34; 11:16, 35, 40; 12:24.
- 86 R.C.H. Lenski, *Hebrews* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Pub. House, 1966), pp. 359, 360.
- 87 See Richard M. Davidson, "Typology in the Book of Hebrews," in *Issues*, pp. 121-186.
- 88 F. F. Bruce, *Hebrews (NICCNT)* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Eerdmans, 1984), p. xii (parenthesis supplied).
- 89 *Issues*, p. 184.
- 90 *The S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, pp. 766-771 supports this view, but C. Mervyn Maxwell, in *God Cares*, vol. 2 (Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1985, pp. 170-173), calls it in question. Maxwell believes the throne of Revelation 4, 5 is in the holy place, placed where the table of shewbread was situated, and later moves (cf Ezekiel's moveable throne) to the most holy place as shown in Daniel 7.
- 91 Ellen White notes that the decision to crucify Jesus by the Jewish leaders was registered in the book John saw in Revelation 4, 5. (See *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 294). According to this reference, the opening of the book of Revelation 4, 5 is still future. Therefore that act is later than the opening of the books of judgment of Daniel 7 in 1844.
- 92 Concerning the decision of the Jewish leaders to crucify Christ, Ellen White comments, "In all its vindictiveness this decision will appear before them in the day when this book is unsealed by the Lion of the tribe of Judah." *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 294.
- 93 Kenneth A. Strand, "The Eight Basic Visions in the Book of Revelation," *AUSS*, 25, (1987), pp. 107-121; "The 'Victorious-Introduction' Scenes in the Visions in the Book of Revelation," *AUSS*, 25, (1987), pp. 267-288.
- 94 Like Daniel, Revelation is divided into historical (1-14) and eschatological (15-21) chapters.

95 Gregory K. Beale, *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John* (New York: University Press of America, 1984), p. 247.

96 The pre-advent battle is to be understood as beginning prior to the advent and culminating with the advent (see Rev. 17-19).

97 The unholy triumvirate of dragon, beast and false prophet oppose the Trinity (Rev. 16:12-16, 19:11-20).

98 Hans LaRondelle, *Chariots of Salvation, The Biblical Drama of Armageddon* (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1987), pp. 67, 68.

99 T. Longman, "The Divine Warrior: The New Testament Use of an Old Testament Motif," *The Westminster Theological Journal* 44, (1982), pp. 290-307, see page 297.

100 These are the other three angels of Revelation 14. Their mission is to execute judgment on Babylon, whereas the three angel's messages (Rev. 14:6-13) are to gather people out of Babylon.

101 Revelation says all the world wonders after this beast (Rev. 13:3) and this includes the false prophet and dragon (Rev. 16:13, 19:20).

102 Keil-Delitzsch, *Commentary on the OT*, vol 10, p. 252.

103 Compare Deut. 28:36-64, 29:25-28.

104 Ellen G. White, , vol 5, p. 472.

105 The "angel of the Lord" (Zech.) 3:1-3 is Michael of Daniel 12:1, or Jesus Christ (cf Jude 9, Rev 12:7-11).

106 Compare Ellen G. White's first vision in which she saw that only those who kept their eyes on Jesus made it up the path to heaven. Those taking their gaze away from Him fell to the world below (*Early Writings*, p. 14).

107 *Testimonies*, vol 5, p. 471.

108 All non-human created beings plus the few human representatives in heaven (of whom are Enoch, Elijah, Moses, and 24 elders of Revelation 4, 5) witness the pre-advent investigation, all the redeemed witness the millennial investigation and all the lost witness the post-millennial judgment. In this way all intelligent created beings participate in the evaluation of God's judgments, and find Him to be just (Rev. 15:3). The issue in the great controversy, calling in question the justice of God, is thus answered.

109 This involves clinging not only to Calvary but to the Crucified's continuing intercession, which is a result of the cross.

110 If the judgment is merely looking at what men have done, and the scriptural principle "by beholding we become changed" is applied (2 Cor. 3:18), then a millennium of pouring over bad works would be dangerous. I believe that the judgments have far more to do with observing how patiently Christ has worked for each person, where each turned Him down, and so is far more Christ-centered than man-centered. Such an investigation is uplifting—it tells us more about the character of Christ than about the characters of fallen humans. To behold Christ's working will change us for the better, whereas to wallow in the morass of human sin would have the opposite effect.

111 *Early Writings*, p. 14.

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## THE HISTORICIST INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY: ITS PRESENT RELEVANCE IN THE LIGHT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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It is difficult for anyone today to avoid the truth of John's statement that, "The dragon was wroth with the woman and went to make war with the remnant of her seed which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:17).

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America increasingly is being assailed from without and from within, from the left and from the right. What Paul said to the Apostolic church certainly is true today. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:28-30).

As a church we have had our defectors, our accusers, and our prognosticators who claim to know from the prophecies exactly what will happen and when. In recent years we have had an increasing number of each of these, particularly in North America, who are undermining the pillars of our historic position on the

interpretation of prophecy. Although there is wide room for understanding the prophecies in the book of Daniel and the Revelation, nevertheless there are certain broad strokes of prophecy that are distinctive to Seventh-day Adventist teaching. When our historic prophetic interpretation of these broad strokes is undermined, the Adventist church will have lost its identity and mission. When dates like 457 B.C. (the beginning date for the 2300 days) are not only questioned but denied; when the three-and-a-half years of the Messiah are taken from the prophetic time line and disconnectedly placed in the immediate future; and when the two beasts of Revelation 13 are no longer the Papal system and the United States, but some other political entity and/or Satan himself, then our mission has lost its meaning.

For the honor of God and the sake of those of our members who are reaching out for light and guidance, it is time to be bold and not sit quietly by without speaking up. It is too late in the sequence of events in these last days of earth's history to sit quietly by without having the courage to defend what we have always believed on these issues, and still do.

#### A Brief Look at Methods of Interpretation

Most pastors and many laymen are already acquainted with the various misinterpretations of prophecy circulating among us and our historic Seventh-day Adventist interpretation. But a brief summary is appropriate.

**Historicist Interpretation.** Historicism, or the historical school, views the prophecies of Daniel as covering the entire historical time-span from the Babylonian empire to the second coming of Christ. Historicists recognize the little horn of Daniel 7 to be the historical papacy, the 2300-day prophecy of Daniel 8:14 as extending from 457 B.C. to 1844 A.D., and the events in the book of Revelation as forming a historical continuum from the early church to the second coming of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

It was the Historicist approach to Scripture that energized the Reformation and led Luther to recognize the pontiff of Rome as the Antichrist. In fact, the Reformers embodied their historicist interpretations concerning the Antichrist into their confessions of faith. It moved them forward to confront the pontiff of Rome and to resist

his claims even at the expense of their own blood.<sup>2</sup> This gives us a glimpse into the importance they placed on the historicist approach to Scripture.

**Preterist Interpretation.** Rome's answer to the Protestant approach to Scripture was twofold and in one sense contradictory, nevertheless it was extremely effective. Through Alcazar, the Spanish Jesuit from Seville, Rome advanced the preterist interpretation of Scripture. This school of thought holds to a hermeneutic that places eschatology, particularly the apocalyptic events in the books of Daniel and Revelation, in the past and views them as either already having taken place in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes or being in the process of taking place at the time of John's writing. This school of thought tends to see most of the messages of Revelation fulfilled by the time of Constantine the Great in the 4th century A.D., or to see them as a reflection of conditions and events in John's own time.<sup>3</sup>

**Futurist Interpretation.** The other approach Rome used to counter the Reformer's historicist approach was put forth by Ribera, a Jesuit from Salamanca, Spain, and Bellarmine, a Jesuit from Rome. The futurist school interprets the apocalyptic events in the book of Revelation as being future, not merely future from John's day, but future from our day. This school of thought tends to place the book of Revelation, at least from chapter four on, in a narrow seven year period just before the coming of Christ. Leaping over the immense era of papal dominance, it crowds the Antichrist into a small period of time just before the end.<sup>4</sup>

**Apotelesmatic Approach.** Little comment needs to be made concerning this interpretation circulating among some Adventists in which there are multiple fulfillments of prophecy. In this view Daniel 7 not only speaks of Antiochus Epiphanes but also of Roman Catholicism and any other religious movement or political ideology that in the future might pull down the Sanctuary truth and tread it and/or human rights underfoot. Some in our church apply the same prophecy to the past, present, and future and leave no "final" events as signs of Christ's second coming.<sup>5</sup>

**Re-application Theory.** This approach to interpretation says that prophets never were called upon to predict the future but only were inspired to apply the events to their time as they saw

them being fulfilled. Therefore we need to look at the prophecies anew and apply them again in our day as we understand them to be fulfilling. This re-application approach takes away the certainty of the broad strokes of past Adventist prophetic interpretation and places the responsibility of reapplication of the general lines of prophecy in the hands of each new Adventist generation.<sup>6</sup>

**Political Approach.** This method of interpreting the prophecies has surfaced repeatedly in our church. One such interpretation occurred when Uriah Smith allowed the newspaper headlines of the 1870's to dictate his understanding of Daniel. A similar approach to prophecy occurred during World War I and again during World War II when some Adventists taught that these wars were the War of Armageddon. Some considered the State of Israel in 1948 to be a fulfillment of prophecy, others have seen Communism as the beast of Revelation 13. Still others saw in the recent Gulf War more than the prophecies indicate.<sup>7</sup>

**Influence Theory.** The last approach to prophecy that I wish to mention is the method that interprets the various prophecies in such a way as to make their secondary meanings primary. For example, the beast symbols in Revelation, traditionally referring to Satan's activities only in a secondary sense are made primary. As a result no tangible beast power is looked for, such as the papacy or the United States, and the demonic activities which we cannot see are made the focus of study. Any visions Ellen White had confirming our historicist interpretation, although inspired, are said to be incorrect because she was influenced by the false interpretations of Scripture taught by those around her.<sup>8</sup>

There are other methods of interpretation and approaches to prophecy that could be mentioned, but seven is a good Biblical number at which to stop. Sufficient sources are available to substantiate the historicist position that Seventh-day Adventists have taken.<sup>9</sup>

#### A Brief Look at the Historicist Method of Interpretation in the Light of Adventist Beginnings

The historicist position is not Biblically unsound in spite of what some scholars claim, yet there remains another dimension to consider. In too many instances the heart ultimately dictates to

reason, causing us to rationalize and sculpture Scripture to our aesthetic taste or mold it into our image. While sound Biblical scholarship is of utmost importance, we must not forget the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the focus of our faith, nor the power of the Holy Spirit to bring us conviction. We are told, "The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God".<sup>10</sup> While the Biblical arguments have been presented ably in favor of the historicist method of interpretation, there always will be additional theological challenges to meet. Therefore, what is more urgently needed is the convicting power of the Holy Spirit.

Part of the problem is that too many of our members are unacquainted with our Adventist past and how the Lord through the Holy Spirit has guided this church and are therefore disconnected from their spiritual roots. In fact, there is a general disinterest in the United States today concerning our country's past and the principles on which it was founded. Seventh-day Adventists are not immune from the influence of the culture around them. Consequently, we take less interest in our past—where we've come from, who we are, and what our mission is in the light of history. Christopher Lasch in his book, *The Culture of Narcissism*, states insightfully that the devaluation of the past has become one of the most telling symptoms of our cultural crisis. He says that Americans have trivialized the past by equating it with outmoded styles and discarded fashions and attitudes. Today people resent anyone who draws seriously on the past in order to understand the present, or attempts to use the past as a standard by which to judge the present. But, he sees the past as a political and psychological treasury from which we draw the reserves that we need to cope with the future. He points out that our culture's indifference to the past, which at times easily shades over into active hostility and rejection, furnishes the most telling proof of our cultural bankruptcy.<sup>11</sup>

Although Lasch speaks from a secular point of view, his comments certainly are apropos to what I believe is happening among us. Some of us have lost our vision of what the Holy Spirit has done to make us a people, and what He has done to affirm us. As Ellen White has said, "Those who have a hold of the truth theoretically, with their finger tips as it were, who have not brought its principles

into the inner sanctuary of the soul, . . . will see nothing sacred in the past history of this people which has made them what they are."<sup>12</sup> It is this problem that I would like to address—the neglect or even rejection of what the Holy Spirit has done to help our forefathers understand the prophecies by directing them to use the historicist method of interpretation.

### What the Holy Spirit Initiated

As early as 1768, Johann Petri, a German Calvinist pastor, provided those in the Advent Awakening with the key to dating the 2300 day/year prophecy, concluding that the period would end in 1847.

In the 1790's Manuel Lacunza's manuscript on *The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty*, began circulating in Spain and Spanish South America. He took a stand on the premillennial literal advent of Christ in opposition to the popular Whitbyan position on the postmillennial coming of Christ.

Then in 1810, John A. Brown introduced the 2300 day/year prophecy into the discussion in *The Christian Observer* in Britain, dating the prophetic period from 457 B.C. to A. D. 1843.

In 1811 we have evidence that William Cunningham, from Scotland, a prolific writer on Biblical prophecy and chronology, believed that he was living in the time of the first angel of Revelation 14:6, 7 and that the messages of the second and third angels still were future.

In the 1820's Henry Drummond, a wealthy British banker, embraced the Advent message, renounced his political ambitions, and invited interested ministers and laymen to his Albury Park estate for an annual intensive study of the prophecies. Those participating agreed that the prophecies pointed to the last days. Many set the year of Christ's coming at 1847.

Some of this occurred before William Miller was born and all of it before he came to any solid conclusion concerning the 2300-day prophecy for himself.

Joseph Wolff, the son of a Jewish rabbi, gave his heart to Christ becoming so filled with the love of God that he longed to share the gospel with his Jewish brothers and sisters. He literally walked the soles off his shoes preaching the good news throughout the Middle

East and India. But one of the most amazing aspects of Wolff's mission occurred in 1837 when he preached to the American Congress. Wolff looked for Christ to come in 1847.

William Miller began to preach in 1831, but not until 1839 was he invited to preach in cities such as Boston. That was two years after Joseph Wolff had preached the imminent second coming to the American Congress.

There were others, such as William Davis of South Carolina. He also calculated that the 2300 days would end in 1847. Alexander Campbell, the founder of the Disciples of Christ, taught the cleansing of the sanctuary and the 2300 days in much the same way that Davis did.

Do we need to mention Australia, India, and the children in Scandinavia who were empowered by the Holy Spirit to preach the Advent message during 1842 and 1843?<sup>13</sup>

Although there were different understandings of what came to be known as the Sanctuary doctrine, this brief overview of our Adventist beginnings has something to tell us. It seems quite plain that this Advent movement of which you and I are a part came into being as a result of the direct working of the Holy Spirit—not merely the effort of William Miller or of James and Ellen White. The work the Holy Spirit did on the hearts of men and women everywhere at that particular time in earth's history ought to say something to us that we ought not to forget.

### What the Holy Spirit Affirmed

**The Prophetic Office.** The Holy Spirit was poured out in fullness on the Apostolic Church at Pentecost and has been with the church ever since. Throughout the history of the church, as outlined in the first few chapters of Revelation, the Lord has admonished His people to listen to what the Spirit has to say to the church, with lengthy counsel given to those who would live during the Laodicean period of the church's history.<sup>14</sup>

There are those who admit that the prophetic office was given to the early church to help it grow into the full stature of Christ, but then in the same breath they say that the prophetic gift is not needed today. Has the Christian church outgrown the need that the apostolic church had? Has it grown into the full stature of Christ?

The answer is obvious. The church today needs the guidance of the Holy Spirit through the gifts as never before.

Uriah Smith made this point clear in his challenging introduction to *Patriarchs and Prophets*. He ended his challenge by quoting 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21, "Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good."<sup>15</sup>

Smith also uses this analogy to demonstrate our need of the prophetic office. He says:

One illustration may help to set this matter in a still clearer light. Suppose we are about to start upon a voyage. The owner of the vessel gives us a book of directions, telling us that it contains instructions sufficient for our whole journey, and that if we will heed them, we shall reach in safety our port of destination. Setting sail we open our book to learn its contents. We find that its author lays down general principles to govern us in our voyage, and instructs us as far as practicable, touching the various contingencies that may arise, till the end; but he also tells us that the latter part of the journey will be especially perilous; that the features of the coast are ever changing by reason of quicksands and tempests; "but for this part of the journey," says he, "I have provided you a pilot, who will meet you, and give you such directions as the surrounding circumstances and dangers may require; and to him you must give heed." With these directions we reach the perilous time specified, and the pilot, according to promise, appears. But some of the crew, as he offers his services, rise up against him. "We have the original book of directions," say they, "and that is enough for us. We stand upon that, and that alone; we want nothing of you." Who now heed that original book of directions? those who reject the pilot, or those who receive him, as that book instructs them?<sup>16</sup>

**The 2300 day/year Prophecy.** What else has the Holy Spirit said to the church? In 1848, four years after the Disappointment, He spoke through the prophetic office, urging our forefathers to publish a paper.<sup>17</sup> One year later, in 1849 James White published *The Present Truth* in which he emphasized the importance of the Sabbath and the keeping of all the commandments.<sup>18</sup> In 1850, he published *The Advent Review* in which he reviewed the arguments used by the Millerites to establish the end date of the 2300 day/year prophetic period. He stated that it was his purpose to "quote largely from the writings of the leaders in the advent cause, and show that

they once boldly advocated, and published to the world, the same position, relative to the fulfillment of Prophecy in the great leading advent movements in our past experience, that we now occupy."<sup>19</sup> The objective that James White had in mind for *The Advent Review* was to show that the small Advent band of which he was a part was not ashamed to hold to the "original faith" of the Millerites, that is, the Historicist interpretation of the 2300-day/year prophecy ending in 1844.<sup>20</sup>

Approximately twenty years later in 1868, James White, in *Life Incidents, In Connection with the Great Advent Movement*, in speaking of those Adventists who left the original faith, stated:

But the position of those who discard the great movement which made them Adventists, and yet cherish some of the leading views of William Miller, and rejoice in the Advent name, is more inconsistent, and their course far more sinful in the sight of God, than that of those who made an entire surrender of both position and name. What a position in the sight of God, angels and men! They bless the Advent faith, hope and name, and curse the very means which has made them what they profess to be! . . .

And these men will speak proudly of their Advent faith, and bless the Advent name, while they curse the great Advent movement, which has brought the Advent doctrine before the present generation.<sup>21</sup>

He added:

But the true position is free from such absurdities and is harmonious in itself. It honors God, vindicates his word, and sustains Christian experience. It explains the past, definitely points out present duty, and lights up the glorious future. It presents a connected system of truth, the most beautiful in all its parts, that the mind of man ever contemplated.<sup>22</sup>

He concluded this section by stating that the subject of the termination of the 2300 days and the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary became one of the clearest points in the entire system of Second-Advent truth. Those who deny the work of the Spirit of God in the Advent movement and attribute the power which attended that work to human and satanic influences are in danger of committing the sin against the Holy Spirit, which Jesus said had no forgiveness.<sup>23</sup>

Although the questions being raised today against the 2300-day prophecy are not identical to those raised against it in the mid-1800's, the firmness of James White and other pioneers on this subject plainly evidences that there would be no need for future modification and change on these "landmark" prophecies.

**The United States in Prophecy.** The first Adventist exposition of the two-horned beast in Revelation 13 was made by J. N. Andrews in the early 1850's. He identified it as being the United States.<sup>24</sup> This application was accepted by our pioneers and confirmed a few years later in 1858 when *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. I, was published.

The message of the Holy Spirit is clear. Ellen White, in reporting a vision states:

I saw a company who stood well guarded and firm, and would give no countenance to those who would unsettle the established faith of the body. God looked upon them with approbation. I was shown three steps—one, two and three—the first, second and third angels' messages. Said my accompanying angel, Woe to him who shall move a block, or stir a pin in these messages. The true understanding of these messages is of vital importance. The destiny of souls hangs upon the manner in which they are received. . . . Step by step had GOD brought them along, until He had placed them upon a solid, immovable platform. Then I saw individuals as they approached the platform, before stepping upon it examine the foundation. Some with rejoicing immediately stepped upon it. Others commenced to find fault with the laying of the foundation of the platform. They wished improvements made, and then the platform would be more perfect, and the people much happier. Some stepped off the platform and examined it, then found fault with it, declaring it to be laid wrong. I saw that nearly all stood firm upon the platform and exhorted others who had stepped off to cease their complaints; for GOD was the master-builder, and they were fighting against him.<sup>25</sup>

Although this confirmation by the Lord focuses on the first, second, and third angels' messages, it is evident that the warning against the mark of the beast in the third angel's message also encompasses the two-horned beast of Revelation 13. Our historical position has been that the two-horned beast of Revelation is the United States and not merely the indistinguishable force of Satan. Nearly thirty years later, in 1884, Ellen White still held to J. N.

Andrews' exposition by stating in volume four of *The Spirit of Prophecy* that the greatest and most favored nation upon the earth is the United States. Yet it will be this country that will take the lead in making void the law of God by a national act that will give vigor to the faith of Rome.<sup>26</sup>

Four years before her death in 1915, she still held to the exposition that the two-horned beast of Revelation 13 is the United States.<sup>27</sup>

Our interpretation of the 2300 day/year prophecy and our understanding of Revelation 13 is not "dead wrong," as some have said and are saying. These kinds of accusations against the church brought by those who try to affirm the Adventist faith in reality deny the very truth they claim to believe.

### Conclusion

It is incumbent on all of us, especially on those of us who have felt the hands of ordination, to hold to the faith delivered by God to this people. In these days, when every wind of doctrine is blowing, when seemingly every interpretation of Revelation finds fertile soil, when many go through the prophetic books like a cafeteria and make up any dish they wish; we ought to be grateful to our heavenly Father for the confirmation we have of our major points of doctrine and historicist interpretations given to us by the Lord Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit through the prophetic office. The battle is not between rival churches contending for supremacy, but between the religion of the Bible and the religion of demonic falsehood and non-Biblical tradition.<sup>28</sup>

The Holy Spirit has spoken through visions and dreams, and confirmed the main lines of prophecy that our forefathers derived from Scripture. Notice this letter of Ellen White to her son W. C. White written in 1904 after sixty years in this message:

If ever there was a period of time when we needed the Holy Spirit's power in our discourses, in our prayers, in every action proposed, it is now. We are not to stop at the first experience, but while we bear the same message to the people, this message is to be strengthened and enlarged. We are to see and realize the importance of the message made certain by its divine origin. . . . Our souls need the quickening from the Source of all power. We may be strengthened and confirmed



in the past experience that holds us to the essential points of truth which have made us what we are—Seventh-day Adventists.

The past fifty years have not dimmed one jot or principle of our faith as we received the great and wonderful evidences that were made certain to us in 1844, after the passing of time. The languishing souls are to be confirmed and quickened according to His Word. . . . Not a word is changed or denied. That which the Holy Spirit testified to as truth after the passing of the time, in our great disappointment, is the solid foundation of truth. [The] pillars of truth were revealed, and we accepted the foundation principles that have made us what we are.<sup>29</sup>

Today it is not so much additional Biblical verification that we need, as essential as that is, but the power of the Holy Spirit to melt hearts and make these truths penetrate our innermost being. Speaking of the movement of 1844, Ellen White says: "Like a tidal wave the movement swept over the land. From city to city, from village to village, and into remote country places it went, until the waiting people of God were fully aroused. Fanaticism disappeared before this proclamation, like early frost before the rising sun. Believers saw their doubt and perplexity removed, and hope and courage animated their hearts."<sup>30</sup>

The Biblical evidence for the rightness of the historicist interpretation of Scripture is readily available, the basic research has been done, as long as time lasts there will always be theological questions to answer, but this alone is not our greatest need. We need to listen to what the Holy Spirit has been saying to the church all these years, and if we approach Scripture any other way than the way the Holy Spirit has led, we are rejecting His authority. Let us not add sin to sin and sin against the Holy Spirit. We need to bow in humble submission to the third Person of the Godhead and acknowledge His sovereignty within and above the Scriptures.

If we ever needed the convicting power of the Spirit to help us speak His word with confidence and boldness, it is now. If we want the power of the Holy Spirit, we need to be where the Holy Spirit is, that is, we need to be supportive of what He has done, and so much the more as we see the day of the Lord approaching.

It is time for us to intellectually stand where the Holy Spirit stands. It is time for our hearts to be in tune with His heart. It is

time for us to ask for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We need His presence as we never needed it before. It is incumbent upon us to ask for the Holy Spirit, for if we ask not, we receive not.

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## ADVENTIST IDENTITY AND EVANGELICAL CRITICISM

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A recent article in a popular evangelical journal states that "Seventh-day Adventism is experiencing an identity crisis. Ironically the present confusion is in direct contrast to the confidence of Adventism's pioneers."<sup>1</sup> The author, Kenneth R. Samples, associates that identity crisis with a "doctrinal controversy" which "can be traced to their interaction with evangelicals in the 1950's."

The interaction he identifies as "extensive meetings" between Walter Martin, author of *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism*,<sup>2</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, editor of *Eternity* magazine (both now deceased), and leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church. Those meetings, the journal writer says, "established an unprecedented openness between Adventists and evangelicals."

### Evangelical Criticism of Adventist Beliefs

Samples is of the opinion that, due to the influence of Martin and Barnhouse, a current he calls "evangelical Adventism" can be identified within the SDA church. A major factor characterizing this current is the belief that righteousness by faith consists of justification only, with sanctification as its fruit. The implication is that such a view was not held within Adventism prior to the influence of Martin and Barnhouse.

Samples suggests that the "crisis" in Adventism surfaced in

the 1980's with the firing or resignation of some "evangelical Adventists," the most prominent being Desmond Ford. Thus the impression is given that Adventism in the 80's was purging itself of those who held to an uncompromising stand on justification through faith alone.

The truth is that the gospel of justification through faith was believed and preached by Seventh-day Adventists long before the "interaction" of the 1950's. Many examples could be cited. A primary example is the 1929 publication of *Christ Our Righteousness* by Arthur G. Daniells. In simple, uncomplicated language Daniells articulated the doctrine of justification through faith alone: "It is the gospel that reveals to men the perfect righteousness of God. The gospel also reveals the way that righteousness may be obtained by sinful men, by faith."<sup>3</sup> The sinner yields, repents, confesses, and by faith claims Christ as his Saviour. The instant that is done, he is accepted as a child of God. His sins are all forgiven, his guilt is canceled, he is accounted righteous, and stands approved, justified, before the divine law. This is righteousness by faith.<sup>4</sup>

Daniells makes it clear that "the *knowledge* of sin; not the *deliverance* from sin" comes by the law.<sup>5</sup> "This wonderful truth [about justification and righteousness] should be perfectly clear to every believer; and it must become personal experience."<sup>6</sup>

Ellen White said that the message of righteousness through faith was (1) sent by the Lord specifically to the Adventist people in 1888 many of whom had lost sight of Jesus, (2) is the message to be given to the whole world, (3) is the third angel's message to be given with a loud voice resulting in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and (4) the evidence of its reception is obedience to all of God's commandments.<sup>7</sup>

The question must be posed as to whether some Adventists have listened so intently and so believingly to evangelical criticism that we are in danger of losing sight of what happened historically in 1888, and of our mission.

#### Evangelicalism's Own Crisis

One of the dangers for Adventism today is coming from a contemporary evangelicalism which itself is undergoing an identity crisis and doctrinal controversy. Critical pressure from evangelicals

has tempted some Adventists to abandon part of the message of justification/righteousness through faith which was brought to this Church 100 years ago. The rub is Ellen White's fourth point relative to justification: that the evidence of its reception is obedience to all of God's commandments.

The crisis within evangelicalism is revealed by two of its own theologians.

John F. MacArthur, Jr., a prominent evangelical pastor and Bible expositor, speaking of the erosion of the gospel within evangelicalism, says:

Sinners today hear not only that Christ will receive them as they are, but also that He will let them stay that way! . . . Multitudes approach Christ on those terms. . . . They have been deceived by a corrupted gospel.<sup>8</sup>

What is missing in the popular evangelical understanding of faith, is the "determination of the will to obey truth."<sup>9</sup>

Evidently, there are evangelical preachers today who are telling their listeners that all they have to do is believe the facts about Christ, whether or not they obey Him, and they will be saved; and that salvation does not necessarily result in changed behavior. "The teaching that Christian's are freed from observing any moral law is rampant in today's evangelical community."<sup>10</sup>

Donald G. Bloesch, professor of systematic theology at Duquesne Theological Seminary, recognizes that "The contemporary Church is in a state of theological ferment."<sup>11</sup> He proposes a "theology of evangelical devotion" to Christ. Hallmarks of that devotion are: (1) the believer being made righteous, and (2) victorious living. He writes:

Devotion to Jesus Christ separates us from the world in its sin as well as identifies us with the world in its suffering. . . . Sanctification must follow justification, since God makes righteous those who He declares righteous. . . . It is not the cross of Christ so much as the power of the risen Christ, the Spirit of Christ, that needs to be given special attention today.<sup>12</sup>

He also speaks of the kingdom of God as the "remnant of the faithful,"<sup>13</sup> and says that "justification is to be fulfilled in sanctification if it is to benefit us."<sup>14</sup>

These examples indicate that the minimization of sanctification is a major problem among evangelical theologians and preachers today. If it has not done so already, this inevitably will impact the grassroots level of evangelical churches in terms of ethics and morality.

### Discipleship: A Missing Obligation

Even among those who have great admiration for the martyred Dietrich Bonhoeffer, not much attention is given to his words. Writing for a Church that had preached justification through faith for over 400 years, he stated: "Cheap grace means the justification of sin without the justification of the sinner."<sup>15</sup> In speaking of Luther's return from the cloister to the world, Bonhoeffer wrote:

It is a fatal misunderstanding of Luther's action to suppose that his rediscovery of the gospel of pure grace offered a general dispensation from obedience to the command of Jesus, or that it was a great discovery of the Reformation that God's forgiving grace automatically conferred upon the world both righteousness and holiness. . . . It was not the justification of sin, but the justification of the sinner that drove Luther from the cloister back into the world. . . . In the depth of his misery, Luther had grasped by faith the free and unconditional forgiveness of all his sins. That experience taught him that this grace had cost him his very life, and must continue to cost him the same price day by day. So far from dispensing him from discipleship, this grace only made him a more earnest disciple. When he spoke of grace, Luther always implied as a corollary that it cost him his own life, the life which was now for the first time subjected to the absolute obedience of Christ. Only so could he speak of grace. Luther had said that grace alone can save; his followers took up his doctrine and repeated it word for word. But they left out its invariable corollary, the obligation of discipleship. . . . [Luther] always spoke as one who had been led by grace to the strictest following of Christ.<sup>16</sup>

Notice the relationship between free forgiveness (grace), and the obligation of discipleship (obedience) in Bonhoeffer's understanding of Luther. The orthodoxy of Luther's followers relative to free grace (justification) spelt the end and destruction of the Reformation as the revelation on earth of the **costly** grace of God. The justification of the sinner in the world degenerated into the justifi-

cation of sin and the world. Costly grace was turned into cheap grace without discipleship.<sup>17</sup>

In other words, the essence of the Reformation was abandoned. That abandonment is manifest today by the focus of evangelicalism on such concerns as ecumenicity, resolution of social issues, and the establishment politically of the kingdom of God upon earth. If the orthodoxy of Luther's followers meant the destruction of the Reformation's intent, if its major goal has not yet been fully attained, then history supports the belief that the Seventh-day Adventist church was called into being to recover and restore the Reformation's emphasis on what Bonhoeffer refers to as costly grace. This is not arrogance or exclusivism, simply the recognition of reality.

Contemporary evangelical Christianity, critical of the Seventh-day Adventist church, would have it join in the preaching of cheap grace and easy-believism. This kind of evangelicalism holds that any consideration of sanctification/holiness is legalism, that sanctification is nothing more than getting used to justification, and does not see Christian obedience as a part of faith and salvation. The influence of this kind of evangelicalism has made it possible for an Adventist preacher to say publicly, "Behavior has nothing to do with salvation."

### Justification and Sanctification are Inseparable

Genuine faith, that comes from Above, always includes the desire to obey. Without the desire to obey, the message of salvation is corrupted. According to Paul, the gospel is to be obeyed (Rom. 6:17; 1 Thess. 1:8). John the Baptist taught that Jesus was to be obeyed. For him, faith and obedience were synonymous (Matt. 3:8; John 3:36). In the life of the early church it was clear that faith and obedience were harmonious (Acts 6:7). In the great faith chapter, Hebrews 11, faith and obedience are inseparable. As far as the Bible is concerned, obedience is proof of faith, and disobedience is proof of disbelief. (See James 2:26.) As one of my professors was fond of saying, "Good works do not save you, but their absence will damn you." MacArthur says:

Jesus characterizes true righteousness—the righteousness that is born of faith (cf. Romans 10:6)—as obedience not just to the letter of

the law, but to the spirit of the law as well (Matthew 5:21-48). . . . Jesus sums up the gauge of real righteousness in this shocking statement from the Sermon on the Mount: "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).<sup>18</sup>

Because God's standards are beyond the reach of human endeavor alone, He graciously provides faith to believe, as well as all the resources of heaven to enable the believer to follow Him successfully in faith and obedience. While modern individuals may want to know the blessings of salvation, they do not necessarily want to acknowledge or submit to the authority, the Lordship, of Christ. Jesus as Savior, yes! Jesus as Lord, no! But it is in the very nature of sonship to obey. Jesus was obedient to His Father's will, and the Christian is to be obedient to the will of his Lord.

There are evangelicals today who would say that, while every believer is justified, not every believer will be sanctified, that justification does not necessarily result in changed behavior. But that is an incorrect separation of justification and sanctification, a false dichotomy. The truth is that every sinner whom God justifies He also sanctifies. That is to say, true saving faith will result in obedient living.

Those whom God declares righteous (imputes righteousness), He makes righteous (imparts righteousness). While justification and sanctification are distinct theological concepts, they are united in experience. A person cannot have one without the other. Only those who are justified **can** be sanctified, and it is only those who are being sanctified who can rightly **claim to be** justified. The believer is certainly not justified **because** he is being sanctified, but neither can he be justified **without being** sanctified.

It is not the person who knows certain facts about Jesus that will enter heaven, but the one who "does the will of my Father." One who is lawless will not enter heaven (Matthew 7:21-23).

Daniells indicates that justification/righteousness through faith results in obedience in that the new believers

"keep the commandments of God." They have experienced the marvelous change from hating and transgressing the law of God, to loving and keeping its righteous precepts. . . . This wondrous transformation can be wrought only by the grace and power of God, and it is wrought for those only who lay hold of Christ as their substitute, their surety,

their Redeemer. Therefore, it is said that they "keep the faith of Jesus."<sup>19</sup>

Having known and experienced the blessings of justification: regeneration, being born anew, and canceled guilt, "They should know by victorious experience that they have laid hold of, and are being kept by, 'the faith of Jesus,' and that by this faith they are empowered to keep the commandments of God."<sup>20</sup>

Justified freely by the grace of God in Christ appropriated through faith, and empowered by that grace to obey God's commandments, is the core of the 1888 message. What some contemporary evangelicals are urging Adventists to abandon is belief in the power of grace to transform the sinner into a faithful and obedient child of God. (See Eph.1:18-23, 3:14-21). It is that part of the Adventist understanding of justification/righteousness through faith that bothers evangelicals, but which has motivated a call for reformation by some of their own thinkers and preachers such as MacArthur and Bloesch.

Some evangelicals are prepared to relegate Seventh-day Adventists to the cult-heap if we persist in maintaining a balance between justification and sanctification in salvation. Which led Samples to ask: "In the late 1970's, Seventh-day Adventism was at the crossroads: Would it become thoroughly evangelical? Or would it return to sectarian traditionalism?" For Adventism to become "thoroughly" evangelical means abandoning its understanding of the interdependence of justification and sanctification in salvation, and opting for the contemporary evangelical view. The threat is implied that refusal to do so would bring with it the stigma of being classified, by contemporary evangelicalism, as sectarian.

### Shall We Follow Evangelicalism's Drift?

Perhaps we should challenge evangelicals with the question of whether they have strayed so far from basic Christianity that they are incapable of recognizing the Biblical accuracy of Adventism regarding justification/righteousness through faith? It was the balanced message of justification and sanctification that made Adventism so attractive to me twenty years ago. I saw in Adventism what I had been preaching for 10 years, and which was no longer appreciated by the denomination I previously served. Sanctification

was viewed with jaundiced eye as a form of legalism at worst, and as synergistic at best.

The saving faith of Christ and the commandments of God as the two foci in the doctrine of justification/righteousness through faith (see Rev. 14:12), are what George Knight refers to as "the great truths of evangelical Christianity" that were rescued in 1888 and placed within the larger and proper framework of the other great truths entrusted to Adventists.<sup>21</sup> Ellen White was of the opinion that the message received in 1888 "was no new light, but it was old light placed where it should be in the third angel's message."<sup>22</sup> Evidently the need for both of these truths (justification/righteousness through faith, and obedience) to be **rescued** within the Christian tradition was deemed crucial by 1888.

This is the message I heard preached, taught, and confessed twenty years ago when I arrived at Andrews University to attend the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, seeking to discover whether or not Christ lived in Adventism. In this sense, virtually everyone I encountered at the Seminary were evangelical Adventists. I did not know there were any other kind. I do now.

Fundamental to Adventism has been, and still is, justification/righteousness through faith. Much of the criticism of Adventism as legalistic has been based on ignorance, prejudice, changes within the evangelical understanding of justification, and/or unwillingness to accept the Lordship of Christ and Christian obedience as essential components of salvation and discipleship.

The developing crisis of Revelation 13 is the background for the loud cry of the three angel's of Revelation 14. Thus the message given to the Adventist church in 1888 was not to be viewed narrowly. While many Adventists needed to hear it too, the church was to be the agent by which that message was rescued and set in the context of other important truths such as the Sabbath, the sanctuary ministry of Christ, His return, and the message of judgement in Daniel 8 and Revelation 14, and then presented to the whole world in proclamation and mission. It was more than a call to Adventists to come to grips with basic Christianity. It was a call for Adventists to preach a balanced view of law and gospel as part of justification/righteousness through faith to the world.

### Have We Begun to Believe Our Critics?

The Holy Spirit was looking toward the future in 1888, and the present situation in evangelical Christianity may very well have been anticipated and foreseen. That precisely is why we need to be clear about our message, and be wary as we listen to evangelical critiques of that message.

If the Adventist church is undergoing an identity crisis, it may be because we have been listening to evangelical criticism for so long that we have begun to believe it. What is needed to maintain our identity is the restudy and revival of the Biblical message that made this movement such a powerful spiritual force in the world. Let us return to the feed troughs of our own spiritual tradition: Scripture and the writings of Ellen G. White. There are some things that we can learn from evangelicals, but there is much they need to learn from us. That will never happen if we abandon what God has given us by His Spirit through His Word and our history.

Samples concludes by saying:

if Seventh-day Adventism is going to be blessed of the Lord, its identity must come from a fidelity to the everlasting gospel. May the leaders and scholars within Seventh-day Adventism have the courage to return to the good news preached by the apostles and the Reformers. May it not be said that Seventh-day Adventism is more sure of its denominational distinctives than it is of the gospel.<sup>23</sup>

If it is to be true to itself and to the Reformation, Adventism must be certain of both the everlasting gospel and Adventist distinctives. Its time we stopped flinching every time an evangelical barks. There is no need to apologize for our message. If apologies are due, they should be made to God and to our own constituents if we are not preaching our message with the power and conviction inherent in it.

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## THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN CLEAN AND UNCLEAN ANIMALS IN LEV 11: IS IT STILL RELEVANT?

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Is the distinction of clean and unclean animals made in Lev 11:2-23, 41-45 (and in Deut 14:3-20)<sup>1</sup> still relevant today? The majority of Christians and even certain groups of Jews no longer observe these distinctions in their dietary habits. It is claimed by some that the adherence to the Biblical dietary instruction is an inconsistency on the part of observing Christians, being based—so it is alleged—on the ceremonial law, a law fulfilled in Christ and not binding for Christians.

This matter raises the essential issue whether the dietary instruction of Lev 11 (and Deut 14) is outside the framework of Old Testament ceremonial/ritual law. Are these food instructions part of universal Biblical law and “moral imperatives”<sup>2</sup> that are still valid for Bible-believing people today? These questions pose major issues that are faced as regards the distinction of clean and unclean animals and their relevance for dietary practice today.

The majority of modern commentators and exegetes interpret the clean/unclean distinction to be a ritualistic, cultic, and ceremonial in nature. That is to say, the clean and unclean animal distinction is part of the Israelite cult and belongs to the so-called

ceremonial law. This interpretation has had the primary, but not exclusive, support in the Christian Church over the centuries. In the early Christian centuries the subject of clean and unclean animals was given attention within the larger context of the laws of cleanness.<sup>3</sup> For example, the Eastern Church generally has given support to the laws of uncleanness for centuries. This historical fact reveals that it is not as easy to assign a given instruction in the Pentateuch to ceremonial law as some suggest and assume that the issue is resolved.

The frequent association of the Biblical instruction on dietary matters involves fundamental matters of Biblical interpretation. The essential issue is the question, Is the instruction of Lev 11 regarding the dietary distinction of clean and unclean animals the result of "pentateuchal food laws promulgated by the priests"<sup>4</sup> and thus limited in scope to ancient Israel,<sup>5</sup> its cult prescriptions, and ceremonial laws? Or, is Leviticus 11 (and Deuteronomy 14) divinely given instruction that belongs to what may be designated "universal law," namely, law that is not restricted in time to a specific people, ancient Israel, but is universally valid for God's people for all times and in all places. If the latter is the case, and if it can be shown to be so on Biblical grounds, then the distinction between clean and unclean animals will have continuing relevance for Bible-believers today?

Based on the remarks outlined above, it will be the purpose of this study to address the following matters: 1) Does the clean/unclean animal distinction of Lev 11 belong to the general category of clean/unclean distinction in ceremonial law? 2) What does the location of the clean/unclean animal distinction in Leviticus 11 reveal about its significance within the context of the book of Leviticus? 3) How do comparisons and contrasts of specific language used in the dietary law serve as determinative pointers to demonstrate that the clean/unclean animal distinction belongs to universal law? 4) What other internal indicators are provided by conceptual linkages between the dietary law and other parts of the Old Testament that likewise show Leviticus 11 to lie outside ceremonial/ritual law and, thus, to belong to universal law? 5) What rationale is provided in Leviticus 11 for its dietary guidelines and

how does this indicate its abiding relevance for Bible-believers today?

### Two Types of Clean/Unclean Distinctions

Foundational to any discussion of the clean/unclean distinction is the fact that the Old Testament refers to two clearly defined types of uncleanness. One type of uncleanness is permanent, non-ritual, non-cultic, and non-ceremonial in nature and purpose; the other type is distinctly ritual, cultic, and ceremonial in nature and design. The first type of uncleanness, the one that is non-ceremonial, is permanent in nature and, therefore, no action, ritual, or activity can remove it. The other type of uncleanness, the one that is ceremonial in nature, is clearly ritual and ceremonial in nature and a cultic action is prescribed, because it is in need of removal. It is an acquired uncleanness that is attached to something or someone previously ritually, cultically clean. The ritual, cultic uncleanness is temporary in nature and the person or thing which has become unclean stands in need of cleansing. We will return to this vital distinction between permanent, non-cultic, non-ritual, non-ceremonial uncleanness, on the one hand, and temporary, cultic, ritual, ceremonial uncleanness, on the other hand, in a moment.<sup>6</sup>

It must be noted that there are parts in the book of Leviticus that are outside the framework of ritual/cultic instruction such as most of Leviticus 17, 18 and 26, 27.<sup>7</sup> The book of Leviticus contains both ceremonial-ritual **and** moral-universal laws. The assumption that all material in the book of Leviticus is ceremonial in nature can hardly be sustained.

As will be further discussed below, Leviticus 11-15 is a new block of material within the book. Leviticus 11:2-23 is at the beginning of this larger block of material that deals with various clean and unclean matters of which not all are automatically ritual/cultic in nature. This cautions the careful student to be sensitive to distinctions in matters clean and unclean and calls for careful consideration.

It has been stated above at the beginning of this section that there are two kinds of clean/unclean distinctions.<sup>8</sup> These distinctions are basic to any understanding of cleanness and uncleanness in the Bible.<sup>9</sup>



First, it has to be concluded on the basis of the entire Biblical witness that there is a general cleanness that is innate to all humans and things, and most animals. Under certain circumstances that which is inherently clean can acquire uncleanness—it can become unclean. The acquired uncleanness comes through contact with a carcass (Lev. 11:29-40; Num. 19:11-17), bodily emissions (Lev. 15:2-28) and human skin disease, usually designated leprosy (Lev. 13, 14), and so on.<sup>10</sup> This acquired uncleanness is cultic or ceremonial in nature in the sense that it attached itself to what previously was clean, making that which was clean unclean.

The uncleanness thus acquired calls for a removal by means of some ritual prescription that has been provided. In the case of leprosy there was an elaborate cleansing ritual which included washing and/or bathing and sacrifices (Lev. 14:1-32). In the case of the acquired uncleanness which came through touching of a carcass there was washing of clothes and waiting until the evening (Lev. 11:24-28, 38, 39). The uncleanness acquired through the touching of a corpse lasted for seven days (Num. 19:11). In order to become pure from this acquired uncleanness, the defiled or unclean person needed to cleanse him/herself with the ashes from a specially prepared red heifer and with water running from a vessel ((Num. 19:1-19). Other prescriptions for removal of acquired uncleanness can be catalogued beyond the examples cited here.

The examples of acquired/attached uncleanness sufficiently demonstrate that acquired uncleanness demands some ritual or cultic action, or a combination of action(s) and time, through which uncleanness can be ceremonially removed and cleanness can be restored. This kind of acquired uncleanness is ritual and cultic in nature and is part of what is designated ceremonial law. It demands a ritual ceremony for its removal, and the divine instruction is part of the ceremonial law with its rituals of cultic purpose and design.

Let us discuss next the type of uncleanness which is not acquired, and thus non-ritualistic and non-ceremonial. This uncleanness can be said to be innate or inherent in certain animals alone.<sup>11</sup> These animals are called “unclean” in the Bible. Let us be more specific. The unclean animals of Leviticus 11:2-23 are not unclean because of an acquired/attached uncleanness. They have not become unclean from contact with anything that was unclean

as is typical in acquired uncleanness. They are unclean in themselves. They are declared by God to be “unclean” (*tame*) and/or “detestable” (*sheqets*).<sup>12</sup> In this sense we may speak of a designated uncleanness. The uncleanness designated by God plays a role only in regard to animals that are unacceptable for food, but in no other way.

A second observation is of equal importance. The innate, inherent, or designated uncleanness is an uncleanness which can never be removed by any ritual or cultic activity specified in ceremonial law. It is never removed by time, or a combination of cultic activity and time as in the case of the ritual/cultic uncleanness that has become attached to something that was originally clean. In other words, there is no possibility to remove innate and non-acquired uncleanness by cooking, boiling, washing, sacrifice, lapse of time, or by anything else. None of these activities, nor any combination of them, will make an unclean animal clean.

This demonstrates that the uncleanness of animals designated unclean/detestable is of a different origin and has a different purpose than cultic or ritual uncleanness. The ritual and cultic uncleanness is acquired by someone or something which was not previously unclean. Thus there is need, by means of some appropriate ritualistic/cultic action, to restore such to the former clean status. The innate or inherent uncleanness, to the contrary, is permanent and unremovable. It is not in need of a ceremonial cleansing. It is divinely designated unclean for food purposes.

A third observation is in order regarding the non-acquired uncleanness of animals in Leviticus 11. The uncleanness inherent in live animals cannot be transferred to those who come into contact with unclean animals.<sup>13</sup> The non-transferability of the inherent uncleanness indicates that it is of a different nature than ceremonial, ritual, cultic uncleanness. This is different from what was true of certain other ancient cultures among Israelite neighbors.<sup>14</sup> In Israel only the carcass of dead animals, regardless whether clean or unclean, brought about uncleanness by contact. No live animal by itself whether clean or unclean brings impurity to humans.

If the uncleanness of live animals were cultic or ritual in nature, there would be a cultic, ritual transference of uncleanness to persons or things that come into contact with such animals. But

this is not the case. Therefore, there is no need for a prescription for the removal of pollution/impurity caused by live unclean animals. In short, the non-transferability of uncleanness from live unclean animals seems to reveal that the uncleanness of animals is of a different kind than ritual, ceremonial uncleanness, i.e. it is non-cultic and non-ritual.

In view of these distinctions, the following may be concluded:

1) There is a ritual/cultic uncleanness, one that is acquired and is in need of removal by some sort of ritual (with or without time) as is prescribed in ceremonial law.

2) There is to the contrary also a non-ritual, non-cultic uncleanness which is non-acquired. It is innate and inherent to those creatures that are designated unclean/destestable, and it is non-ceremonial in nature and purpose.

3) Inherent uncleanness cannot be removed. It is permanent. There is no action or ritual provided for its removal, because it is different in origin, nature and purpose.

4) The non-ritual, non-cultic uncleanness of a live animal does not pollute or cause impurity or uncleanness whether cultic or other. This indicates that it is non-cultic in nature and not part of ceremonial law.

We may suggest on the basis of this evidence that the innate, inherent, or designated uncleanness has a different origin and purpose than the acquired, ritual uncleanness. Both are radically separate from each other in origin, purpose and design. They cannot be equated. Each has its own meaning and relevance. Each one functions differently.

### Non-Ceremonial Clean/Unclean Distinction of Lev 11:

#### Its Literary Context

The specific location of the instruction of clean/unclean animals within the literary context of the book of Leviticus is of determinative importance for its meaning and purpose.

The book of Leviticus contains universally recognized major blocks of material: chapters 1-7 contain the divine instruction on sacrifice; chapters 8-10 contain instruction regarding priests; chapters 11-15 treat matters relating to clean and unclean; chapter 16 concentrates on the Day of Atonement, the day of cleansing the

sanctuary; chapters 17-27 contain non-ritual and ritual laws with various exhortations.<sup>15</sup>

It is not our purpose to study the literary structure of the book of Leviticus, an undertaking much too complex and lengthy.<sup>16</sup> Instead we limit our observations to the most immediate context of the dietary law.

Is the dietary law of Leviticus 11 placed into this broader setting of general instruction of clean and unclean in the book, because all such instruction is ritualistic/cultic, and thus ceremonial in nature? This question is valid, because it has been stated that "it is uncertain whether the terms *clean/unclean* as they are used in this chapter have a ritual or religious basis, or whether they have hygienic implications."<sup>17</sup> What is the basis of the dietary law in Leviticus 11? Is it ritual and ceremonial or hygienic and universal?

We have seen above that there is a foundational distinction between two types of uncleanness. The literary structure of the book of Leviticus itself provides further insights regarding the non-ritualistic, non-ceremonial clean/unclean distinction of animals within the third block of materials (Lev. 11-15).

To begin with we will analyze the literary structure of Leviticus 11 itself.<sup>18</sup> This chapter contains several major segments. The following analysis contains in square brackets the major literary structure, namely, a chiasm,<sup>19</sup> in the well-known chiastic A-B-A pattern:

Introduction, vs 1

[A] Creatures both Clean and Unclean, vss. 2-23

1. Land Creatures, vss. 2-8

a. Regulation for eating land creatures, vss. 2-3a

b. Regulation for inedible land creatures, vss. 4-8

2. Water Creatures, vss. 9-12

a. Regulation for edible water animals, v. 9

b. Regulation for inedible water animals, vss. 10-12

3. Air Creatures, vss. 13-23

a. Regulation for inedible birds, vss. 13-19

b. Regulation for winged insects, vss. 20-23

1) Inedible winged insects, vs. 20

2) Edible winged insects, vss. 21-22

## 3) Inedible winged insects, vs. 23

## [B] Acquired Uncleanness from Contact with Carcasses and its Removal, vss. 24-40

1. Acquired Uncleanness from Touching or Carrying Carcasses of Land Creatures and its Removal, vss. 24-28
2. Acquired Uncleanness from Touching or Contact with Dead Swarming Creatures and its Removal, vss. 29-38
3. Acquired Uncleanness from Touching or Carrying Carcasses of Edible Creatures and its Removal, vss. 39-40

## [A'] Unclean Swarming Creatures and the Basic Rationale, vss. 41-45

1. Regulation of Inedible Swarming Creatures, vs. 41
2. Regulation of Inedible Small Land Creatures, vs. 42
3. Regulation Regarding Acquired Uncleanness from Inedible Swarming Creatures, vs. 43
4. Basic Rationale: Be Holy for I am Holy, vss. 44-45

## Conclusion, vss. 46-47

1. Law of Living Creatures of Large Animals, Birds, Water Creatures and Swarming Creatures, vs. 46
2. Distinction of [A] Unclean and [B] Clean, [B'] Edible and [A'] Inedible, vs. 47

The literary structure<sup>20</sup> of Leviticus 11 reveals that aside from the outer frame made up of introduction (vs. 1) and conclusion (vss. 46-47) there are three major sections of material which seem to have the chiasmic structure of A-B-A, which is familiar from many parts of the Old Testament and ancient Near Eastern literature. We have not concerned ourselves with literary sub-patterns of each major section.

Part A in the chiasm consists of vss. 2-23. It deals with clean and unclean creatures and which of these animals are edible (vss. 2-23). As mentioned before the uncleanness of the unclean creatures is not contagious and, therefore, different in kind as compared

to the uncleanness that is acquired and attaches itself to persons or things.

Part B in the chiasm is made up of vss. 24-40. This unit, which is placed between the other parts (vss. 2-23 and 41-45), treats the topic of acquired, ritual uncleanness from dead creatures—that is, animal carcasses—and how to achieve cleanness. It reveals that a clean animal killed for food does not bring about uncleanness to the person who eats it or has contact with it. It affirms, however, that a person or utensil that has come into contact with a carcass of a creature that died of natural causes, whether inherently unclean or not, becomes unclean. It prescribes regulations on how such acquired uncleanness is disposed of in the Hebrew ceremonial system.<sup>21</sup>

Part B seems to be placed into this middle position in the chiasm for several reasons: (1) It is located here because of the catchword principle of “carcass” (vss. 8, 11, 24, 25, etc). (2) It clarifies the distinction between non-cultic, non-ceremonial and ritual/cultic, ceremonial uncleanness. (3) It addresses the problem of the distinction between creatures which are killed for food and do not defile and creatures which die naturally and create uncleanness by contact. (4) It reveals the implications of both for holiness.

Part A' includes vss. 41-45. It is the third part of the chiasm, coming back to the matter of unclean creatures not to be eaten. There was one category of creatures which had not received attention in the previous taxonomy of creatures in vss. 2-23. The first major grouping of “creatures” (*chayyah*) of vss. 2-11 consisted of large land “animals” (*behemah*), the second one consisted of water creatures (vss. 9-12), and the third one included the winged creatures (vss. 13-23). The group that is missing in this taxonomy of creatures are the small creatures on land that crawl on the belly, small quadrupeds and many-legged creatures. This group is now dealt with in this third section.

In short, parts A and A' deal with the matter of universal law; in this case, dietary law. They handle non-acquired uncleanness. On the other hand, part B of the chiasm deals with the matter of acquired, ritual/cultic uncleanness of a ceremonial type that attaches itself to the person that handles the carcass of a creature which has died a natural death. Part B is placed here for two

reasons: (1) because of the catchword principle, and (2) because of the need to define which kind of carcass defiles ritually; namely, the one that dies a natural death, not the one that is slaughtered for food. Part B in the chiasm, provides thus an important clarification with regard to every dead animal which defiles. The answer is clear: only the animal that dies a natural death defiles ceremonially.

Having considered the immediate contextual relations, we need to probe into the larger context and inquire why the author of Leviticus has put the subject of clean and unclean animals and the subject of dietary law, universal law, at this place in the book. Aside from various possible reasons, there seem to be at least (a) literary and compositional reasons and (b) a thematic reason that seem to play a role. Let us consider these.

The literary and compositional reasons seem to be evident in two aspects. The first aspect resides in the fact that the entire third part of the book of Leviticus, namely chs 11-15, handles the subject of uncleanness/cleanness,<sup>22</sup> including non-acquired and non-transferable as well as acquired and transferable uncleanness, in a general manner. It would, therefore, be natural to deal with both kinds of uncleanness and with cleanness from the point of view of compositional technique and subject matter.

In addition to the chiasm of A-B-A, the author employs the literary device known as the "catchword principle." At times, Biblical writers place subjects or topics next to each other, without a particular logical or sequential order, on the basis of a "catchword" which mentions the subject or topic. This seems to be the case here as well. Notice that at the conclusion of the legislation pertaining to the sanctuary, which began as far back as Exodus 25 and is carried through Leviticus 10,<sup>23</sup> two key topics are mentioned. The first topic is referred to by the "catchwords" of "clean/unclean." They appear in Leviticus 10:10 in the phrase marking the distinction "between the clean and the unclean." This topic becomes the general theme of Leviticus 11-15. The second is the catchword "eating," which is found no less than six times in Leviticus 10:12-19 (vss. 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19), the section just preceding Leviticus 11. The topic introduced by this "catchword" is the matter of animal food proper or improper for consumption.

The "catchwords" of "clean/unclean" and "eating" cause the

topics of "clean/unclean" animals and the dietary law to be placed at this juncture at the beginning of Leviticus 11-15. If this literary device of "catchwords" that introduce topics has any merit, and it seems undeniable in this context, then it is possible to understand why a universal law can be placed in this literary context and why it should not be construed to be ceremonial in nature because of its particular placement in a given literary arrangement of the book.

The recognition of this inner literary and compositional technique seems to illuminate why something that is non-cultic and non-ceremonial in nature may precede (Lev. 11:2-23) and follow (Lev. 11:41-45) a section that is cultic and ceremonial in nature (Lev. 11:24-40). The assumption that all matters regarding clean/unclean are of necessity cultic and ceremonial simply because of their location in a book, or section of a book, or its proximity to matters cultic seems unwarranted as one understands the literary and compositional nature of the writing.

The larger thematic aspect calls now for brief attention. The theme of animals—those which are "clean" and edible and those "which are unclean in themselves"<sup>24</sup> and are designated "detestable" and inedible—is placed first in this section of Leviticus 11-15. Once this theme or subject is handled in chapter 11, the author proceeds to the subject of acquired ritual uncleanness and the cultic rituals for the removal of such acquired impurity in other parts of Leviticus 12-15.

In this manner the author moves from the general, non-cultic subject matter of innate uncleanness pertaining to creatures that are inedible, that is, from non-acquired uncleanness, to a broader cultic subject matter of acquired uncleanness which is ritual and ceremonial in nature. The compositional move from a general and brief treatment of clean/unclean animals to a specific and extended treatment of ritual, ceremonial uncleanness discloses a style of writing manifested also in other parts of the Pentateuch. Such compositional moves from the general to the specific may be seen in the creation narrative.<sup>25</sup> Genesis 1 presents the picture of creation in its general and comprehensive aspect. Genesis 2 follows with a treatment of expanded creation themes, even aspects not previously touched on, but deals more with the creation of Adam and Eve and their perfect home environment. Both have to do with

the topic of creation, yet they are not identical in their thematic emphases.

We have seen how a number of considerations regarding the non-ceremonial clean/unclean distinction in Leviticus 11:2-23, 41-45 seem to explain why this section is located where it is in the book. The regulations pertaining to the sanctuary itself that began in Exodus 25 are concluded in Leviticus 10. It is natural that the matter of cleanness and uncleanness needs now to be taken up by the Biblical writer.

It is not accidental that the new divine instructions is given to both "Moses and Aaron," as is stated in Leviticus 11:1 (cf. Lev. 13:1; 14:33; 15:1). This wording is in contradistinction to any previous instruction in the books of Exodus and Leviticus. Never before has God given any instruction to both leaders at the same time. God speaks through both leaders, addressing now Israel as a whole (Lev. 11:2). By means of the "catchwords" "clean/unclean" and "eating" these topics are taken up without putting them and everything else in Leviticus 11-15 into a cultic, sacrificial, or ritual/ceremonial context.

We now turn to a closer examination of the dietary law itself for further evidence that its instruction belongs to the category of universal law.

#### Specific Language in the Dietary Law

The key word in Lev 11 is "unclean". Its Hebrew form is *tame'* and it occurs a total of 34 times in this chapter.<sup>26</sup> The antonym is "clean" (Heb. *tahôr*). It is used only four times (Lev. 11:32, 36, 37, 47). A second key word in Leviticus 11:2-23, 41-45 is the Hebrew term *sheqets*, meaning "detestable."<sup>27</sup> The term "unclean" (*tame'*) is used in Leviticus 11 for land animals that are inedible. However, the water creatures in vss. 9-12 are *sheqets*, "detestable" (vss. 10, 11, 11, 12), and so are the winged creatures in vss. 13-23 and 41-42. The question that poses itself here is whether the designation "detestable" (*sheqets*) "appears to represent a more extreme cultic disqualification"<sup>28</sup> as compared with the designation "unclean (*tame'*)." Does the term *sheqets* indicate "simply prohibition as food"?<sup>29</sup> Different answers have been provided on these matters. It is noteworthy, however, that what is described in Leviticus 11:9-12

as "detestable" is described in the parallel passage in Deuteronomy 14:10 as "unclean." The winged creatures of Leviticus 11:20, 23 which are described as "detestable" are described in Deuteronomy 14:19 again as "unclean." This suggests that both terms cover nearly the same meanings, but "detestable" seems to contain broader connotations.

There may be additional reasons for the usage of this twofold terminology. David. P. Wright has suggested that "the use of the root *shqts* with the animals in vv 9-23 [of Lev. 11] does not refer to their being able to pollute by touch, only to their abhorrent nature in regard to eating."<sup>30</sup> He supports the idea that unclean/detestable animals do not create acquired uncleanness.

The usage of the Hebrew verb *sheqets* certainly indicates the serious nature of the prohibition against the eating of unclean creatures. The verbal form of the same word is used to denounce the detestable worship of graven idols (Deut. 7:25-26). This connection may indicate the gravity with which the unclean/detestable creature is to be viewed when it comes to its consumption as food. It is as if one partakes of or ingests an idol.

The summary sentence in Leviticus 20:25 declares that a person becomes "detestable" by consuming a creature that is unclean. The person that consumes an unclean animal does not become "unclean" but "detestable." If a person would simply become "unclean," then it may be assumed that such a person would be able to undergo a ceremonial ritual of cleansing to be freed from the acquired uncleanness. But this is not the case.<sup>31</sup> To be "detestable" means to be in a state too serious to be handled by ritual, ceremonial cleansing.

Let us consider next the regulations of the "sojourner/alien" (*ger*) in Israel and how these illuminate the universal law aspect of the dietary instruction in the book of Leviticus. The law of hunting (Lev. 17:13) refers to both the Israelite and the sojourner/alien (*ger*) and applies the rule that the hunted animal which "may be eaten" needs to have its blood poured out. This regulation for the animal which "may be eaten" from those that are hunted is not restricted to the Israelite alone but applies universally also to the "sojourner/alien" in Israel.

In Leviticus 17-18 there are a number of regulations that apply

to both Israelite and non-Israelite. The phrase "any man from the house of Israel, or from the aliens [*gerim*] who sojourn among them/you" (Lev. 17:8, 10, 12, 13) brings this out. These laws pertain to the Israelite and the "alien" or "sojourner"<sup>32</sup> and, therefore, cannot be restricted to Israelites and the cult of the Israelites. In other words, certain laws have a universal application; they are outside of the limited focus of ceremonial, ritual, cultic law. These laws are universal in nature.

The sacrificial laws of Leviticus 1-7 do not specifically mention the "alien" or "sojourner." They do not apply universally to all non-Israelites, unless the latter become full members of the covenant community.<sup>33</sup> But the universal law known from Genesis 9:4, before there was an entity known as Israel, which prohibits the eating of blood continues to apply universally to the Israelite and the "alien" in Leviticus 17:10-12. The law of hunting in Leviticus 17:13 thus is seen to belong to universal law as well in both design and application, because it applies to both the Israelite and the "alien" (*ger*).

In this law the distinction is made regarding "a beast or bird which may be eaten" (vs. 13). The reason, although not explicitly stated but understood, is that they are "clean." By implication there are other hunted animals and birds which may not be eaten, because they are unclean. The clean and unclean distinction is here applied to hunted game. This distinction applies to both the Israelite and the "alien." Since both the Israelite and non-Israelite is in view it seems to indicate that the distinction of the animals which may be eaten and those which may not be eaten is universally valid and cannot be restricted to the Israelite or Jew alone.

The non-ceremonial and universal laws of Lev 18 apply again to both Israelite and "alien" (*ger*). These laws include laws of forbidden marriage (Lev. 18:6-17), sins of unchastity (Lev. 18:18-21), homosexuality (Lev. 18:22), and bestiality (Lev. 18:23). These universal laws have caused the pagan nations to be cast out (Lev 18:24) so that the "land has spewed out its inhabitants" (vs. 25). Verse 26 sums up, "Neither the native nor the alien who sojourns among you" shall do any of these "abominations" (*tô'ebôth*).

It is particularly noteworthy that the unclean animals are part of the "abominations" (*tô'ebôth*). The term of "abominations"

(*tô'ebôth*) is used in the introductory statement (vs. 3) of the dietary law in Deuteronomy 14:3-21. The term "abomination" has various connotations, but it means essentially something that, by its nature, is defined in opposition to what is acceptable and/or permitted by God.<sup>34</sup>

Here there is an additional linguistic consideration that the dietary law of clean and unclean animals is a universal, non-ceremonial law. The pagan "nations" of Canaan indulged in "abominations" (*tô'ebôth*) that were prohibited in universal laws and they suffered the consequences of such activity by wholesale judgment (Lev. 18:24-30). Just so, the eating of unclean animals is an "abominations" (Deut. 14:3 *tô'ebôth*) of another universal law that is valid for all humankind.<sup>35</sup>

#### Conceptual Connections with Genesis

It is readily acknowledged by interpreters that the distinction between clean and unclean animals does not appear for the first time in Leviticus 11. The first distinction is found in Genesis 7:2-8, a text that is assigned by historical-critical scholars to the J stratum.<sup>36</sup> The source strata hypothesis is under such radical criticism that it can be left outside of our considerations.<sup>37</sup>

It is important to recognize that the passage in Genesis 7 precedes the ones of Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 in time and setting. The setting of all of Genesis 1-11 is universal in outlook.<sup>38</sup> It is pointed out that one cannot "imagine a time in which there were ever human beings which did not understand the distinction between clean and unclean [animals]."<sup>39</sup> It does not matter for our concerns whether the distinction mentioned in Genesis 7 "between the clean and the unclean animals . . . is a distinction based on their utility for humans, not on later legal ideas",<sup>40</sup> or whether it was known for the sake of sacrificial purposes,<sup>41</sup> or for something else. In any case, Noah sacrificed after the flood from "every clean animal and of every clean bird" (Gen. 8:20).

The distinction of clean/unclean is important in this early time and universal context. Not only were clean animals and birds used for sacrifice, but after the Flood, humans were permitted to eat animals (Gen. 9:3-5). The implication is that they were permitted to eat only clean animals. In this pre-Israelite passage in Genesis 9

there is also the statement that man shall not eat flesh with its blood in it (vs. 4). This is universal law and binding for all Christians, as the Apostolic Decree of Acts 15:20 indicates.

Essential to our discussion is the fact that the distinction between clean and unclean animals is known before the Israelites came into existence. Indeed, it is a distinction known in the antediluvian world, taking us back into pre-Flood times, in a passage and context that has a universal emphasis. It can, therefore, be maintained that the distinction of clean/unclean animals is applicable to humankind in general. It is unlimited in scope and design and outside the ceremonial legislation provided to ancient Israel in later times.

These facts affirm that the distinction of clean and unclean animals is not the product of Hebrew cultic legislation, but precedes it into antediluvian times. It has been stated that "the distinction between clean and unclean animals did not originate with Moses, but was confirmed by him as a long established custom, . . ." <sup>42</sup> Certainly the clean/unclean animal distinction does not have its beginning in the Mosaic legislation. <sup>43</sup> The clean/unclean animal distinction is joined to other fundamental institutions that antedate Israelite times and go back to the history of beginnings in the antediluvian period. The clean/unclean animal distinction is joined to such eternal verities as marriage (Gen 2:18-15), the Sabbath (Gen 2:1-3), and the like. <sup>44</sup>

There is a second major conceptual connection between the dietary law in Leviticus 11:2-23, 41-45 and the history of beginnings in Genesis 1-11. More precisely, the classification or taxonomy of animals in Leviticus 11 appears to correspond with the classification, taxonomy, and the sequence of animals in the creation narrative in Genesis 1:20-25. Genesis 1:20-25 has the sequence in the order of creation of the animal world from fish (vs. 20a), followed by birds (vs. 20b), to land animals (vss. 24, 25), that is to say, a sequence of creatures in the water, air, and on the land. Leviticus 11:9-31 has a similar sequence of water animals (vss. 9-12), flying things (vss. 13-23) and land animals (vss. 24-31). <sup>45</sup> Of course, verses 2-8 precedes in the presentation with a description of large land animals. Thus the full sequence does not follow entirely what we find in Genesis 1. Nevertheless, there is still a sequential connection

that can be noted. It may be suggested that here again there is a pointer to a larger world of thought than is allowed when Leviticus 11 is restricted to merely ritual/cultic connections.

It has also been inferred that the usage of two different designations of animals in Leviticus 11:2 reflects the creation account of Genesis 1. <sup>46</sup> The wording of Leviticus 11:2 indicates that there are "creatures" (*chayyôth*) <sup>47</sup> which in this context mean generically "living creatures" <sup>48</sup> that may be eaten from all the land "animals" (*behemôth*), a group subsumed under the general classification of *chayyôth*, "living things" or "living creatures." <sup>49</sup> This distinction between the generic group of *chayyah*, "living creature," and the specific group of *behemah*, "land animal," corresponds with the classification of Genesis 1:24. In this text the term *chayyah* is also generic and the term *behemah* is again a specific group of "land animals." <sup>50</sup> Evidently there exists a close connection between the creation narrative's classification and the taxonomy used in Leviticus 11.

The dependence of Leviticus 11 on Genesis 1 seems to be confirmed, <sup>51</sup> placing the two passages into the common conceptual framework of a universal outlook. Based on these connections it is suggested that there seems to be an attempt "to link them [the dietary laws] to the creation account." <sup>52</sup>

### The Rationale for the Dietary Law

Time and again the question has been raised, and justifiably so, why unclean animals are proscribed for human consumption and a source of food? There are more than a dozen or so suggestions <sup>53</sup> which will not be reviewed here in detail. Not all can have our attention within the restrictions pertaining to this study. Still we will touch on several of the more significant ones.

One explanation, put forth many years ago, holds that the animals were perceived as unclean because of their association with pagan religions. <sup>54</sup> This religio-cultic explanation has in its favor that there are a number of unclean animals (particularly the pig, <sup>55</sup> but also the dog, etc.) that were used in Egyptian, Canaanite, and other pagan cults. <sup>56</sup> In its disfavor is the fact that not all unclean animals are used in pagan cults <sup>57</sup> and also the fact that some clean animals (such as bull, cow, ram, goat, some clean fish) were used in

pagan cults.<sup>58</sup> There is also no indication anywhere that pagan cults play a role in these proscriptions.

W. Robertson Smith has taken up an earlier idea<sup>59</sup> and developed the concept that the clean/unclean distinction of animals is the remnant of totemism.<sup>60</sup> He has been followed particularly by Bernhard Stade.<sup>61</sup> Totemism is the belief in the kinship of man with animals and plants. "The sacred character of the totem excludes the species as common food, but the totem animal is the victim of the ritual meal of the clan."<sup>62</sup> The totemism interpretation has been given up, because of its inadequacy<sup>63</sup> and the lack for evidence of totemism in the Old Testament.<sup>64</sup>

Using the approach of phenomenology of religion W. Kornfeld more recently suggested that the idea of unclean animals was developed from known carnivores and creatures that ate carrion, and animals that live in the desert or waste places and ruins aside from chthonic<sup>65</sup> animals. In other words the unclean animals were life-threatening. The primary reason why they have been disqualified is to be discovered in their "life threatening practices and spheres of existence."<sup>66</sup> It is difficult to find enough support for these claims on the basis of the Old Testament itself. "This theory," it has been observed, "cannot explain the exclusion of such domesticated, herbivorous animals as the camel, donkey, rabbit, or horse."<sup>67</sup> This unsatisfactory hypothesis has not attracted much following.

A social-anthropological approach has been put forth and has been adopted by a growing number of scholars in recent times. It deserves more detailed attention. Mary Douglas, a social anthropologist utilizing the Durkheimian hypothesis that animal classification is reflective of societal values, has pointed out that "any interpretation will fail which takes the Do-nots of the Old Testament in piecemeal fashion."<sup>68</sup> She comes to the Biblical data on animals via the Lele tribe of Africa which has complex dietary regulations.

Douglas suggests that the species declared unclean in Leviticus 11 are those "which are imperfect in their class, or whose class itself confounds the general scheme of the world."<sup>69</sup> This she links to the concept of holiness which involves "keeping distinct the categories of creation."<sup>70</sup> She asserts, "To grasp this scheme we need

to go back to Genesis and the creation. Here a three-fold classification unfolds, divided between the earth, the waters and the firmament. Leviticus takes up this scheme and allots to each element its proper kind of animal life."<sup>71</sup>

In Douglas's view land animals have four legs and hoofs to walk on. She, however, overlooks the datum that only those four-footers who have split hoofs are clean. In the air birds need two wings to fly and two legs to walk. In the water fish have fins and scales to swim with. Once more Douglas overlooks the fact that scales are not used for swimming. In her view any creatures that cross these boundaries are anomalies and declared unclean. Animals that do not fit the proper order are unfit, or "dirt," in her view. Her concept of "dirt" has been severely criticized.<sup>72</sup>

In summarizing her position we cite H. Eilberg-Schwartz, "Douglas argues that the creation myth (Gen. 1:1-2:4) provides a conceptual model for understanding the universe. In Douglas's view, this account of creation provides a cognitive scheme in which reality is demarcated and defined. Anything that violates the classifications that are established in this story is treated as a flaw in creation and hence is considered abnormal and unclean."<sup>73</sup> The animals that conform to the classification of creation are considered clean and holy.

Douglas's hypothesis has been adopted by a number of scholars,<sup>74</sup> but it has also received incisive criticisms from others. Robert Alter has noted that Douglas's (and J. Soler's) suggestion does not explain why the chicken and the duck are considered clean since they are anomalous and do not fit the established classification.<sup>75</sup> The chicken has wings but does not fly and the duck has wings but lives largely on the water. This objection is considered to be "weighty,"<sup>76</sup> because it shows that the classification method employed does not consistently explain the variety of animals designated as unclean. Jacob Milgrom has to make major adjustments in Douglas's hypothesis to make it come close to the text of Leviticus 11 to make her anomaly view more valid.<sup>77</sup>

While there seems to be a conceptual linkage between Leviticus 11 and Genesis 1, as we have attempted to show above, it does not follow that the creation narrative gave rise to the dietary laws the way Douglas suggests. Leviticus 11 has a sequence of land



animals—water creatures—birds—winged insects—whereas Genesis 1 has the sequence of water creatures—birds—land animals. The classifications of Genesis 1 find only partial duplication in Leviticus 11, and at that in a partially differing order. Furthermore, not all clean animals follow the supposed creation classification. On the other hand, Douglas's attempt to seek a comprehensive answer and not a piecemeal one is on the right track. On the whole her theory remains problematical and is severely criticized for the lack of validity of her "original criterion (proper means of locomotion), but also the value of the general statement of her thesis that the notion of impurity underlying the biblical dietary laws is based on the anomaly of the prohibited animals relative to their respective classifications (e.g. cattle, fish, fowl)."<sup>78</sup> Douglas's theory does not stand, if her own criteria are applied.

One of the oldest explanations is the hygiene/health one. This is "probably the most popular explanation of the food laws . . . . The unclean animals were recognized by the ancients as a danger to health, and were therefore pronounced unclean," writes Gordon Wenham.<sup>79</sup> Roland E. Clements says, "What we have here is a simple and comprehensive guidebook to food and personal hygiene."<sup>80</sup> The hygienic position is supported also by others, including William F. Albright.<sup>81</sup> Roland K. Harrison is a modern commentator who makes a strong case for the hygiene/health rationale for the dietary laws. He lists various parasitic organisms and worms that can be contracted from unclean animals including fish.<sup>82</sup> Much more could be said on the subject of health as regards unclean and clean animals. Its validity cannot be easily overturned.

There are various reactions to the hygiene/health rationale of the dietary laws. Among the reactions are several that may be briefly considered. One objection is that "other peoples have held or hold certain animals to be unclean, yet their demarcations seldom coincide with the biblical."<sup>83</sup> The reason(s) why other people hold some animals to be unclean may have a variety of backgrounds and purposes, some of which are religious, cultic, divinatory, and so on.<sup>84</sup> Accordingly the demarcations do not need to align themselves since the backgrounds and purposes vary.

Another objection suggests that "some of the clean animals are more questionable on hygienic grounds than some of the unclean

animals."<sup>85</sup> This assertion remains unproven. Supposedly "it is far from clear that all unclean animals . . . are harmful to health."<sup>86</sup> We do not know as yet everything regarding the harm in short or long range terms of the consumption of the meat of unclean animals. Is it necessary to know all ramifications of the dietary instruction for it to be valid?

A third caveat claims that "the OT gives no hint that it regards these foods as a danger to health" and the dietary law lacks motive clauses.<sup>87</sup> As regards motive clauses in the Hebrew sentence structure, it is to be noticed that they lack in most of the laws and instructions in the book of Leviticus. But nowhere is there an indication that the lack of a motive clause relegates a ceremonial or a universal law invalid. Thus the patterns of the book applies to Leviticus 11. Whether the Old Testament gives no hint regarding the health issue depends on how one understands the call to "be holy" (Lev. 11:44-45). Holiness involves wholeness in all spheres, including the physical. Health is included in holiness.

It is objected that if hygiene was a motive, why are poisonous plants not "classed as unclean?"<sup>88</sup> The regulation for plants fit for eating is already given in Genesis 1:29-30, a universal instruction that still holds despite the permission to eat the meat of certain animals after the Flood. Why should it be repeated here where the question of animals is under discussion and not the question of plant food?

Gordon J. Wenham raises the issue, "If health were the reason for declaring certain foods unclean in the first place, why did our Lord pronounce them clean in his day?"<sup>89</sup> Or stated differently, "why did the early church allow their [OT regulations] abolition in the first century AD?"<sup>90</sup> These questions assume that the dietary laws were abolished by Christ and the apostles.

This issue deserves a full scale investigation which cannot be provided here. We are restricted to but a few essential observations. There is but one passage in the NT where a saying is attributed to Jesus that calls for some attention here. A brief sentence in Mark 7:19 is put in a parenthesis in English translations and often rendered, "(Thus He declared all foods clean)" (NASB). A discussion is going on whether this as a genuine statement from Jesus.<sup>91</sup>

Both the translation and the meaning of this clause is highly

disputed as a cursory look at the commentaries indicates. The words "thus He" in italics in the NASB indicate that the Greek participial construction is ambiguous, having no direct syntactical connection. This is a serious problem in itself. The translation provided in the NASB makes the masculine participle (*katharizôn*, lit. "cleansing") dependent on "he says" (*légei*) in vs. 18. Is this justifiable?

A number of competent commentators see the syntactical connection differently, namely as an anacoluthon in which the obvious conclusion is drawn that the normal digestive process "cleanses all food."<sup>92</sup> Still different is Matthew Black who takes the term "food" (*brómata*) as singular and the preceding participle "cleansing" (*katharizôn*) as a passive. He renders the sentence, "for it enters not into his heart but into his belly, *all the food being cast out and purged away.*"<sup>93</sup> In this case Jesus said nothing of the kind the NASB and other similar translations read. By now it is obvious that these divergences of opinion show that this little sentence is not as easily understood as it appears. If some of the suggestions referred to are correct, then the sentence would have nothing to do with Jesus declaring all foods clean. Caution is in order with this sentence, its syntactical relationship and its meaning.

The second observation pertains to the variant readings of Mark 7:19 in Greek manuscripts. A footnote in the Jerusalem Bible on this problematical phrase in verse 19 states that "the clause (possibly a gloss) is obscure and variously interpreted."<sup>94</sup> Aside from the reasons already stated above, there are four different forms of the Greek word "to cleanse" in a great variety of Greek manuscripts, each one leading to a different meaning of the difficult clause.<sup>95</sup> This is the reason for the KJV's translation, "purging all meats" made in 1611 of this disputed phrase. This rendering is supported by the Textus Receptus reading of the neuter participle *katharizon*, "cleansing," which is understood to modify the phrase "everything that goes in from without" (*pan to exothen eispreuomenon*) of vs. 18.<sup>96</sup> While more and more recent translations render this problematical clause as "Thus he declared all foods clean",<sup>97</sup> there is by no means any certainty that this is what this clause actually means. Literally the Greek words "*katharizôn panta ta bromata*" mean "cleansing all foods." In view of these major textual problems, it would be unwise for a serious student of the

Bible to conclude that it is certain that (1) Jesus is speaking and (2) that the phrase means for sure that he declared all foods clean and thus edible.

Our third observation pertains to the question of what Jesus would have meant with this sentence, if the translation of the NASB (and others) were to be followed, and if he actually said something like this. Here a brief comment on the word "foods" (*brómata*) may be helpful. Mark 7:19 appears in the larger context of the controversy of Jesus regarding Rabbinic food regulations (Mark 7:3-5). Within this context the idea of unclean animals would not even enter the idea of "foods," because unclean animals were not considered to belong to "foods" for a faithful Jew in Jesus' day.

A fourth consideration is in order. Does Mark 7:1-23, of which vs. 19 with the alleged Jesus' saying is a part, deal with the unclean/clean distinction of Leviticus 11 (and Deut 14) or with the clean/unclean distinction of ritual washings of the rabbis, namely with Jewish tradition? If the latter is the case, and the larger context points in this direction, then the alleged Jesus' saying has nothing to do with the dietary law of Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14.

What is Jesus arguing against within the larger context of Mark 7, the dietary law of the Pentateuch given by God or the oral law (*halacha*) added to God's laws by the rabbis? It is important to consider the entire passage of Mark 7:1-23 and to avoid working in atomistic form-critical separation of small units. Mark 7:2-5 clearly indicates that the issue is the "traditions of the elders" (vs. 3), and that the disciples ate foods without observing the proper regulations of the rabbis to wash hands according to a particular human tradition, making the clean food that they ate unclean because they did not wash hands in a prescribed way.

In verses 7-10 Jesus upholds the Law of God and contrasts this with the "tradition of men" (vs. 8), indicating that Jesus maintains God's laws, even introducing Moses in a positive sense in verses 7 and 10. Jesus is thus not anti-divine law but anti-human tradition. Joachim Jeremias points out that the key saying of Jesus in verse 15 "does not mean an abrogation of all regulations of the Torah concerning clean and unclean food (i.e. Lev 11; Dt 14:3-21: clean and unclean animals)"<sup>98</sup> but that Jesus denies the "Rabbinic purity

*halacha*.”<sup>99</sup> C. E. B. Cranfield also argues that in the context of Mark 7:1-13 Jesus “is taking the side of the written Law against the oral law [*halacha*].”<sup>100</sup> These scholars maintain that Mark 7:1-23 should not be separated, that the entire passage concluding in verse 23 is the proper context of verse 19. This position seems contextually valid. William H. Lane comments regarding Mark 7:19, “Jesus has no intention of denying that the purity laws occupy a significant place in the Mosaic code (Lev. 11:1-47; Deut. 14:1-20) or of detracting from the dignity of men who suffered death rather than violate the Law of God governing unclean foods (I Macc. 1:62f.). Rather he presses home the recognition that the ultimate seat of purity or defilement before God is the heart.”<sup>101</sup>

These interpreters demonstrate, on the basis of the context, that is inappropriate to conclude that Jesus did away with the distinction of clean/unclean in the dietary laws of the Torah. This view is supported on the basis of the parallel passage of Matthew 15:1-20 in which the saying of Mark 7:19 is missing. The debate in Mark is against the “tradition of men,” the Rabbinic purity laws, that prescribed how hands had to be washed before eating so that one would not ritually defile oneself in eating. If the problematical clause in verse 19 were to be rendered in the way of Jesus making a statement whereby he declared all “foods” ritually clean, then he would contextually simply declare that “foods” eaten with ritually “unclean hands” (vs. 5) according to Rabbinic tradition is not binding upon Jesus’ followers. Jesus did not remove the distinction of non-ritual clean/unclean animals of Leviticus 11 (Deut. 14) as the context makes clear and as the word “foods” (*brómata*) in Greek indicates. The latter term is never used to distinguish food derived from clean/unclean animals as compared to other kinds of food.<sup>102</sup>

We are unable to discuss in detail other New Testament passages that deal with the issue of food or food offered to idols. Acts 10-11, however, is frequently invoked as indicating that the distinction of unclean/clean animals is removed for the Christian. It has been shown that the distinction of “common” (*koinós/koinóo*) and “unclean” (*akáthartos*) is of vital importance and that the traditions of Judaism, not of the Old Testament, made the “clean” into something “common” or “defiled” through contact with the “un-

clean.” Thus the “clean” creatures were now made “common” by contact in the sheet with the unclean creatures.

Peter refuses to comply with the command, “Sacrifice and eat” (Acts 10:13). “By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything common [*koinós*] and unclean [*akáthartos*]” (vs. 14). Evidently Peter did not understand the saying of Jesus in Mark 7:19 in the sense of removing the distinction of clean and unclean animals of the Law. The “unclean” creatures were the ones so declared in the dietary laws of the Pentateuch. The “common” creatures were the ones designated “clean” in the dietary laws. However, in Jewish tradition they had become “common” by contact with the “unclean” ones. The Rabbinic declaration that the “clean” would become “common” by contact with the “unclean” was in direct opposition to the Old Testament where the “unclean” animals made nothing “common” or “unclean” by contact.

Therefore, the declaration, “What God has cleansed [*katharízo*], you must not call common [*koinós*]” (vs. 15, RSV), indicates that “you,” Peter, as a man, must not designate something “common” that God has declared to be otherwise. What God has declared clean,<sup>103</sup> must not be made into something that is “common” by man.

The whole issue in Acts 10-11 is not the matter of clean/unclean food but the problem of the association with Gentiles. They were not to be considered “unclean” or “common” and thus unworthy of being a member of the worshiping community of God. This unwarranted Rabbinic distinction as applied to human association was shown to be against God’s declaration and Peter and other Christians were not bound by such Jewish traditions of associations between Jews and Gentiles.<sup>104</sup> Here too the issue is not one of foods to be eaten, but it is a case of social association and fellowship between Jew and Gentile.

Now we need to return to the motive provided and the explicit rationale mentioned in Leviticus 11:44-45 for the dietary laws, namely the call “to be holy; for I am holy” (vs. 44). There is also the reminder, “For I am the LORD, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, to be your God; thus you shall be holy for I am holy” (vs. 45). These verses provide as it were their own rationale by linking the matter of clean/unclean animals to the two great themes of

holiness for God's people and the redemption theme from Egyptian slavery. Deuteronomy 14:2 is the introduction to the dietary law, "For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for his own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth" (RSV). W. Gispén notes that "holiness is the supreme motive of these [food] laws" and that the "only satisfying explanation of the distinction between clean and unclean is this that the Holy One by these regulations shows the necessity that His people is a holy people, a nation that is not as other nations."<sup>105</sup>

Holiness means both separation from the unholy and separation unto God. It may be noted as well that to be holy means to share in the uniqueness of God who is also holy. In following the instruction of the dietary law the believer engages in an *imitatio dei*,<sup>106</sup> that is, the believer follows the example of God Himself.

The *textus classicus* of the "holy people" idea is Exod 19:3-6. Israel had been redeemed from Egyptian slavery and is at the foot of Mt. Sinai about to enter into the covenant relationship with God. At this crucial juncture Israel's Redeemer declares, "You shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (vs. 6, RSV). The connection between the "holy nation" in Exodus 19:6 and the imperative "you shall be holy" as a people by not eating from the unclean animals, as specified in Leviticus 11:44-45, is particularly striking.

In Leviticus 11:44-45 we have the very first mention again of the theme of a holy people since it was first mentioned in Exodus 19:6. Among the various reasons for Israel to be a "holy" (*qadôsh*) people and to be separated or "consecrated" (*qadash*, Piel in Lev. 11:44) unto God, the dietary instruction of refraining to eat from the meat of unclean animals has special prominence. To be a "holy nation" means among other things also to follow the divine dietary instruction.

It is well known that the terminology in Hebrew for such interrelated ideas as "holy" (*qadôsh*), "holiness" (*qodesh*) and "sanctify" (*qadash*, Piel) derive of course from the same Hebrew root (*qdash*) and indicate the larger concept of holiness, wholeness, wellness, and the like. It is instructive that in the related Semitic language of Akkadian the verb *qadashu(m)* has the double meaning

of "holy" and "to be clean" which is also manifested in other terms deriving from the same root word.<sup>107</sup> There is thus beyond the writings of Moses a larger interrelationship between holy and clean.

The theme of the "holy people" is prominent in the book of Deuteronomy (7:6; 14:2, 21; 26:19; 28:9). In the book of Isaiah the future remnant are called "holy" (4:2, 3) for the first time.<sup>108</sup> Isaiah shows that while the Israel of old is to be destroyed, there will be true and "holy" remnant of faith that will carry on the Lord's purposes (Isa. 6:13). The God of the faithful and "holy" ones is designated "the Holy One of Israel." In the book of Daniel there are those who withstand all the pressures of the anti-God powers, even persecution in the end time, and they are called "the holy ones ['saints'] of the Most High" (7:21, 25, NRSV). At the end of history these "holy ones" of God, these saintly believers, will receive from the Son of Man the everlasting kingdom (Dan. 7:18, 22).

The New Testament uses the same terminology to describe Christian believers. Indeed the New Testament applies and identifies the Christian believers as "saints/holy ones." Exodus 19:6 is applied to the church as the community of "holy ones," that is, "saints." Peter writes, "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation [*ethnos hagion*], a people for God's own possession" (1 Pet. 2:9, NASB). Peter shows that the expression "a holy nation" of Exodus 19:6 is no longer literal, ethnic Israel, but the new community of believers, the church.<sup>109</sup>

It follows that the new community of true believers, this "holy nation" of God, will adhere to the holiness lifestyle designed for them by God. For this "holy" remnant such a lifestyle of holiness includes the universal dietary law, whereby their separateness from what is harmful and destructive and their wholeness in God is manifested.

In the Christian era, the community of true believers is the Israel of God that is to be "holy," engaging in the *imitatio dei*. In this identification we see why in the Old Testament the dietary law is given to Israel and to all who are to be holy. Today the Israel of God of the new covenant is the community of the faithful remnant which is also called to holiness and which is in continuity with all those who have followed the way of holiness as their way of life.

Acts 15:20 affirms that the new believers continue to "abstain

from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood" (NASB). Certainly these four binding prohibitions of the so-called Apostolic Decree reflect the universal laws of Leviticus 17-18<sup>110</sup> and Genesis 9. Implicit in this fourfold sequence, which is conceptually, terminologically, and in its subject matter linked to Leviticus 11:2-23, 40-45; 20:25-26 and Deuteronomy 14:3-20 as was shown above, is also the clean/unclean distinction implicitly referred to in Leviticus 17:13 as regards hunted beast and bird which may be eaten.

New Testament believers form the "holy nation" promised by God. It is a holy people that continues "to make a distinction between the clean animal and the unclean, . . ." (Lev. 20:25) and thus, in this area as in others, is asked "to be holy . . . in all your conduct" (1 Pet. 1:15, RSV).<sup>111</sup>

This concise conspectus of interrelated ideas of cleanness in food and holiness in lifestyle in all its ramifications only hints at the extensive Biblical picture of a "holy people," fully dedicated to their God and to Christ their Lord. It provides but a hint of the unmatched potential of this faithful, true, and "holy" remnant that lives now, in the end time.

### Conclusion

The results of our study indicate the following: (1) The dietary law of Leviticus 11:2-23, 41-45 (Deut. 14:3-20) is part of the universal law provided in the Old Testament which is independent of the ceremonial/ritual law. (2) Its placement in Leviticus 11 is due to "catchwords" and larger literary and compositional patterns and thematic concerns within its immediate and larger pentateuchal contexts. (3) Its linkages with the creation account and the flood narrative within the context of the universalism of Genesis 1-11 is assured on terminological and thematic grounds. (4) The special language of "clean/unclean," "detestable," and "abomination" and their relationships join it to universally valid divine law. (5) The contextually explicit rationale of "holiness" and "redemption" joins the dietary law to the "holy nation" theme upheld in the New Testament for all true believers who are the spiritual "holy nation" that is separated unto God to be "holy . . . in all your conduct" (1 Pet. 1:15). Holiness manifests itself in holy conduct. It reveals itself

among many things in a continuous distinction of what God has designated to be proper for human consumption. In consuming food appropriate for God's "holy" people, the church constantly manifests its Lord in an ongoing *imitatio dei*. In the Bible God is the ground for ethics, and God's true people live a life of godliness, a life of holiness, because they are a "holy people" (Exod. 19:6; 1 Pet. 2:9).

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> There are those who suggest that Lev 11:2-23 is dependent on Deut 14:4-20 such as Rolf Rendtorff, *Die Gesetze in der Priesterschrift, eine gattungsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1954), p. 45 n. 34; Klaus Koch, *Die Priesterschrift von Exodus 25 bis Leviticus 16, eine überlieferungsgeschichtliche und literarkritische Untersuchung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959), p. 76 n. 6, suggests that the appearance of *min* in Deut 14:13-18 is due to later assimilation to Lev 11:14-19. Martin Noth, *Das dritte Buch Mose* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), p. 76, suggests that Deut 14 is earlier than Lev 11, but that a part of Deut 14:13-18 has been influenced by an earlier version of Lev 11. A. L. Moran, "The Literary Connection Between Lv 11, 13-19 and Dt 14, 12-18," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* (28 1966): 271-77, argues for an ancient source for both Lev and Deut, but assigns priority to Deut over Lev. He suggests that the additional ten birds listed in Lev 11 were borrowed from the latter text and added to Deut. Kim-Kwong Chan, "You Shall Not Eat These Abominable Things: An Examination of Different Interpretations on Deuteronomy 14:3-20," *East Asia Journal of Theology* 3 (1985): 88-106, follows Moran's theory of dependence (pp. 90, 94). The matter of literary dependence is obviously a complex one and cannot be pursued within the confines of this paper. For the purposes of our subject it does not seem to be decisive in one way or another.

<sup>2</sup> E. Firmage, "The Biblical Dietary Laws and the Concept of Holiness," *Studies in the Pentateuch*, ed. J. A. Emerton (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1990) 177-208, speaks of the dietary laws as belonging to "the category of moral imperatives" (p. 184).

<sup>3</sup> See Dorothea Wendebourg, "Die alttestamentlichen Reinheitsgesetze in der frühen Kirche," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 95 (1984): 149-70.

<sup>4</sup> So John G. Gammie, *Holiness in Israel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), p. 10.

<sup>5</sup> So again Firmage, "The Biblical Dietary Laws," 184.

<sup>6</sup> Credit for various distinctions between the two types of uncleanness go to the Dr. Jiri Moskala.

<sup>7</sup> This is clearly recognized by Harrison, *Leviticus*, p. 37. See below n. 15.

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Jiri Moskala has made this distinction earlier on the basis of studies of a comparative nature within the concepts of cleansing rites.

<sup>9</sup> G. André and H. Ringgren, "tame," *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, eds. G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986), V:330-42.

<sup>10</sup> David P. Wright, "Leprosy," *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, ed. Paul J.

Achtemeier (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), p. 555, notes that the skin diseases of Lev 13 are not modern leprosy (Hansen's disease).

11 Firmage, "The Biblical Dietary Laws," 183, also speaks of animals as "inherently 'unclean'."

12 In Lev 11 the designation "unclean" is used for animals that are inherently unclean in vss. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 29, 31, 47. The translation "detestable" or "abhorrent" is employed for the Hebrew term *sheqets* also for animals that are inherently unclean as in Lev 11:10, 11, 12, 13, 20, 41, 42.

13 André, "tame," 332-32, writes erroneously that "an unclean animal renders unclean everything and everyone that comes into contact with it. . . . Anyone who picks it up or touches (*naga'*) it is unclean until evening. . . ." Evidently this is true only of the carcass of an unclean animal, but not of a live unclean animal.

14 J. C. Moyer, "Hittite and Israelite Cultic Practices: A Selective Comparison," *Scripture in Context II: More Essays in Comparative Method*, eds. W. W. Hallo et al. (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1983), pp. 29-33, describes the impurity of the pig and dog in Hittite culture. When these animals have contact with food they would pollute it.

15 See among the commentaries those by Martin Noth, *Leviticus* "Old Testament Library" (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1965), p. 12; J. R. Porter, *Leviticus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 82; Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), pp. 3-5; R. K. Harrison, *Leviticus: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980), pp. 36-37; Baruch A. Levine, *Leviticus. The JPS Torah Commentary* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), pp. 63-69.

16 William H. Shea, "Literary Form and Theological Function in Leviticus," *The Seventy Weeks, Leviticus, and the Nature of Prophecy*, ed. Frank B. Holbrook "Daniel and Revelation Committee Series, vol. 3" (Washington, D.C.: Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of SDAs, 1986), pp. 130-68, discovers a chiasmic structure with Lev 16 at the center.

17 Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy* "The International Commentary on the Old Testament" (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1976), p. 231, makes this statement regarding Deut 14. It applies equally with regard to its parallel chapter of Lev 11.

18 One such published attempt is the one by David P. Wright, *The Disposal of Impurity. Elimination Rites in the Bible and in Hittite and Mesopotamian Literature* "SBL Dissertation Series" (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1987), pp. 200-206.

19 Among the rich literature on chiasm, its usage and examples, see Y. T. Radday, "Chiasm in Samuel," *Linguistica Biblica* 9/10 (1971):21-31; idem, "Chiasm in Tora," *Linguistica Biblica* 19 (1972):12-23; idem, "Chiasm in Joshua, Judges and Others," *Linguistica Biblica* 27/28 (1973):6-13; I. Lundbom, *Jeremiah. A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975), pp. 61-112; A. R. Ceresko, "The Chiasmic Word Pattern in Hebrew," *CBQ* 38 (1976):303-11; Meir Weiss, *The Bible From Within. The Method of Total Interpretation* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1984).

20 The structure of Lev 11 and its careful composition is widely acknowledged, see Karl Elliger, *Leviticus* "Handbuch zum Alten Testament" (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1966), pp. 142-149.

21 A detailed discussion on the disposal of such impurity or acquired uncleanness is found in Wright, *The Disposal of Impurity*, pp. 200-206.

22 Studies that treat the complex subject of clean/unclean and purity/impurity in the Old Testament in a general manner, see W. R. Smith, *The Religion of the Semites: The Fundamental Institutions* (2nd ed.; New York: Schocken Books, 1972); J. Döllner, *Die Reinheits- und Speisegesetze des Alten Testaments in religionsgeschichtlicher Beleuchtung* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1917); Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966); W. Paschen, *Rein und Unrein: Untersuchung zur biblischen Wortgeschichte* (München: Kösel Verlag, 1970); Jacob Neusner, *The Idea of Purity in Ancient Judaism* (Leiden E. J. Brill, 1973); E. Feldman, *Biblical and Post-Biblical Defilement and Mourning: Law as Theology* (New York: Yeshiva University and KTAV, 1977); I. Zatelli, *Il campo lessicale degli aggettivi di purità in Ebraico biblico* (Firenze: Istituto di Linguistica e di Lingue Orientali, Università di Firenze, 1978). There are two studies that survey work done on the subject of purity and cleanness, see J. Henninger, D. Meeks, M.-J. Seux and H. Cazelles, "Pureté et Impureté," *Dictionnaire de la Bible. Supplément* (Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1979), IX:398-508; E. Cortese, "Le ricerche sulla concezione 'sacerdotale' circa puro-impuro nell'ultimo decennio," *Rivista Biblica* 27 (1979):339-57.

23 Here M. H. Segal, *The Pentateuch. Its Composition and its Authorship and Other Biblical Studies* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press of the Hebrew University, 1967), p. 45, makes the significant point that Lev 1-10 is "the completion and conclusion of the story of the tabernacle" which was begun in Exod 25.

24 The expression is from L. E. Toombs, "Clean and Unclean," *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1962), 1:645.

25 See the incisive study by Jacques Doukhan, *The Genesis Creation Story. Its Literary Structure* "Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, vol. 5" (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1978), pp. 35-80.

26 Lev 11:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 24, 24, 25, 26, 26, 227, 27, 28, 28, 28, 31, 31, 32, 32, 33, 34, 34, 35, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 40, 43, 43, 44, 47.

27 L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1958), p. 1009; William L. Holladay, Jr., *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publ. Comp., 1971), p. 383.

28 J. G. Botterweck, "ch<sup>z</sup>ir," *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, IV:297.

29 So Jacob Milgrom according to Firmage, "The Biblical Dietary Laws," 206.

30 Wright, *The Disposal of Impurity*, p. 202.

31 The uncleanness that is attached to a person for eating an animal that has died a natural or violent death stems from the blood contained in the carcass (Lev. 17:14, 15). The issue of Leviticus 17:15 is not the eating of unclean animals, but the eating of a carcass of an animal with blood in it, an animal that died a natural death or that was torn by a wild beast. Thus the uncleanness is not from the eating of unclean meat but the eating of a carcass with blood in it.

32 The definition of the "sojourner, alien" as provided in W. L. Holladay, Jr., *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971), p. 64, reads: "ger is a man who either alone or w. his family, leaves his village & tribe, because of war (2S 4:3), famine (Ru 1:1) pestilence,

blood-guilt, &c., & seeks shelter & sojourn elsewhere, where his right to own land, to marry, & to participate in the administration of justice, in the cult, & in war is curtailed." The *ger*, "sojourner, alien," was usually a non-Israelite who chose to live among Israelites without becoming an Israelite.

33 D. Kellermann, "*gur*," *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, eds. J. G. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975), II:447.

34 E. Gerstenberger, "*t'b*," *Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, eds. E. Jenni and C. Westermann (Zurich/Munich: Kaiser, 1976), II:1053.

35 Credit for pointing to these universal relationships between Lev 17-18 and Deut 14 goes to my colleague Dr. Richard Davidson.

36 For example, Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11. A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984), pp. 427-29; Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis* (6th ed.; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1963), pp. 62-64; O. Procksch, *Die Genesis* (Leipzig: Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1913), pp. 62-65; Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis. A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), pp. 114-16; Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis. A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), pp. 73-88.

37 For a critique with modern literature, see Gerhard F. Hasel, *Biblical Interpretation Today. An Analysis of Modern Methods of Biblical Interpretation and Proposals for the Interpretation of the Bible as the Word of God* (Washington, D.C.: Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1985), pp. 7-27.

38 Gen 1-11 is customarily designated "primeval history." It may be more advantageous to call it "history of beginnings." It is universally recognized to be "universal" in outlook and having the whole world in view. See A. E. Speiser, *Genesis "The Anchor Bible"* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1964) p. LIII; Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, pp. 1-64; Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17 "The New International Commentary on the Old Testament"* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990) p. 10; Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15 "Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 1"* (Waco, TX: Word Book Publishers, 1987) pp. xlvi-liii.

39 Gunkel, *Genesis*, p. 62.

40 Westermann, *Genesis*, p. 428.

41 So G. Ch. Aalders, *Genesis, Vol. 1* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981), p. 168.

42 C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament. The Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publ. Comp., n.d.), I:144.

43 Hansjörg Bräumer, *Das erste Buch Mose, Kapitel 1-11* (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus, 1983), p. 171.

44 A similar point is made by Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 177.

45 Howard Eilberg-Schwartz, "Creation and Classification in Judaism: From Priestly to Rabbinic Conceptions," *History of Religions* 26 (1987):361 n. 11.

46 *Ibid.*, pp. 360-61.

47 Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon*, p. 102.

48 Levine, *Leviticus*, p. 66.

49 J. G. Botterweck, "*behemah*," *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, eds. J. G. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975), II:10.

50 Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 25; Botterweck, "*behemah*," p. 9; etc.

51 Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, pp. 41-57, argues that the creation narrative of Gen 1 gave rise to the dietary laws.

52 Eilberg-Schwartz, p. 361.

53 Surveys and evaluations are presented among others by W. H. Gispen, "The Distinction Between Clean and Unclean," *Oudtestamentische Studiën*, ed. P. A. H. de Boer (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1948), V:190-96; I. Grunfeld, *The Philosophical and Moral Basis of the Jewish Dietary Laws* (London: The Hillel Foundation, 1961), pp. 5-22; Walter Kornfeld, "Die unreinen Tiere im Alten Testament," *Wissenschaft im Dienste des Glaubens. Festschrift für Abt Dr. Hermann Peichl* (Wien: Herder Verlag, 1965), pp. 11-27; *idem*, "Reine und unreine Tiere im Alten Testament," *Kairos* 7 (1965):134-47; J. Milgrom, "The Biblical Diet Laws as an Ethical System," *Interpretation* 17 (1963):288-301; Gordon J. Wenham, "The Theology of Unclean Food," *Evangelical Quarterly* 53 (1981):6-15.

54 This view is supported by Martin Noth, *Leviticus* (London: SCM Press, 1965), p. 62; *idem*, *The Laws in the Pentateuch and Other Studies* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), pp. 56-57; Döller, *Die Reinheits- und Speisegesetze*, pp. 231-32; and in part by Noordtzi, *Leviticus*, pp. 121-22; and others.

55 Frederick J. Simoons, *Eat Not This Flesh. Food Avoidances in the Old World* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961), pp. 13-43.

56 For ancient evidence, see Kornfeld, "Reine und unreine Tiere im Alten Testament," pp. 135-36, and more recent evidence, see R. de Vaux, "Les sacrifices de porcs en Palestine et dans l'Ancien Orient," *Von Ugarit nach Qumran*, eds. J. Hempel and L. Rost (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1958), pp. 250-65; Anton Jirku, "Leviticus 11, 29-33 im Lichte der Ugarit-Forschung," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 84 (1972):348.

57 Wenham, *Leviticus*, p. 167; Kornfeld, "Reine und unreine Tiere im Alten Testament," p. 136.

58 Porter, *Leviticus*, p. 84.

59 Mac Lennan, *The Worship of Animals and Plants* (1869) as cited in Kornfeld, "Die unreinen Tiere im Alten Testament," p. 12 n. 12.

60 W. Roberston Smith, *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1889), p. 143.

61 Bernhard Stade, *Biblische Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1905), I:135-42.

62 M. H. Pope, "Totemism," *Interpreter's Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1962), IV:674.

63 See Eduard König, *Theologie des Alten Testaments kritisch und vergleichend dargestellt* (Stuttgart: C. Belsers, 1922), pp. 28-29. Particularly insightful is the critique of Karl Wigand, "Die altisraelitische Vorstellung von unreinen Tieren," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 17 (1914):427-31.

64 Kornfeld, "Die unreinen Tiere im Alten Testament," p. 12.

65 *Ibid.*, p. 26.

66 *Ibid.*

67 Jacob Milgrom, "Ethics and Ritual: The Foundations of Biblical Dietary Laws," *Religion and Law: Biblical-Judaic and Islamic Perspectives*, eds. Edwin B. Firmage, Bernard G. Weiss and John W. Welch (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), p. 175.

68 Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, p. 49.

69 *Ibid.*, p. 55.

70 *Ibid.*, p. 53.

- 71 Ibid., p. 55.
- 72 Anna S. Meigs, "A Papuan Perspective on Pollution," *Man* 13 (1978): 304-318.
- 73 Eilberg-Schwartz, p. 358.
- 74 Jacob Milgrom, "An Investigation into the Meaning of 'unclean' in Our Culture," *Directions* (Los Angeles: The University of Judaism, 1981), pp. 4-6; J. R. Porter, *Leviticus* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 84; Wenham, *Leviticus*, pp. 168-71; idem, "The Theology of Unclean Food," pp. 9-11; Gammie, *Holiness in Israel*, pp. 10-11.
- 75 Robert Alter, "A New Theory of Kashrut," *Commentary* 68/2 (1979):49, where he actually objects to Jean Soler, "The Dietary Prohibitions of the Hebrews," *The New York Review of Books* (June 14, 1979):24-30, use of these animals. Soler and Douglas, however, have the same argument and so it applies to both.
- 76 So Eilberg-Schwartz, p. 359.
- 77 Milgrom, "Ethics and Ritual," pp. 176-183.
- 78 Firmage, "The Biblical Dietary Laws," 182.
- 79 Wenham, "The Theology of Unclean Food," p. 6.
- 80 Roland E. Clements, *Leviticus* "Broadman Bible Commentary" (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1971), II:34.
- 81 For instance, Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy* "The New International Commentary on the Old Testament" (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1976), p. 231. William F. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan* (Garden City: Doubleday & Comp., 1968), pp. 177-81, speaks of the dietary laws of Lev 11 and Deut 14 as "hygienic laws" or "hygienic regulations."
- 82 Harrison, *Leviticus*, pp. 126-31.
- 83 Wenham, "The Theology of Unclean Food," 6.
- 84 Kornfeld, "Reine und unreine Tiere im Alten Testament," pp. 134-36.
- 85 Wenham, *Leviticus*, pp. 167-68.
- 86 Wenham, "The Theology of Unclean Food," 6.
- 87 Wenham, *Leviticus*, p. 168.
- 88 Ibid.
- 89 Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, p. 168.
- 90 Wenham, "The Theology of Unclean Food," 6.
- 91 With Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26* "Word Biblical Commentary" (Dallas, TX: Word Book Publishers, 1989), p. 378, where he cites in his support such scholars as Taylor, Cranfield, Klostermann, Lambrecht, Gnllka and Quesnell.
- 92 So among others E. Klostermann, *Das Markusevangelium* "Handbuch zum Neuen Testament" (2nd ed.; Tübingen: Kohlhammer, 1926), p. 71; W. Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, p. 195; and others.
- 93 Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 217.
- 94 Alexander Jones, General editor, *The Jerusalem Bible* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1966), p. 75.
- 95 See the textual apparatus to vs. 19 in K. Aland, M. Black, B. M. Metzger and A. Wikgren, eds., *The Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bible Society, 1966), p. 150.
- 96 Robert G. Bratcher and Eugene A. Nida, *Translator's Handbook on the Gospel of Mark* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1961), p. 232.
- 97 The NKJV renders the disputed phrase, "thus purging all foods." It adds

in a marginal note to verse 19 the following, "NU sets off the final phrase as Mark's comment that Jesus has declared all foods clean." The acronym NU stands for the eclectic and critical text reconstructed in the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament (26th edition), thus N, and the third edition of the United Bible Societies, thus U.

98 Joachim Jeremias, *Neutestamentliche Theologie. Erster Teil: Die Verkündigung Jesu* (2nd ed.; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1973), p. 213.

99 Ibid., p. 202.

100 C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to St Mark* "The Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary" (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1963), p. 243.

101 William L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), p. 255.

102 H. Krapotschek, "broma," *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1976), 2:268-69.

103 The Aorist tense *ekathárisen* used here indicated that this was a punctiliar and historical act which points back to God's distinction of the "clean" and "unclean."

104 See the carefully argued points on this by Colin House, "Defilement by Association: Some Insights from the Usages of *koinós/koinōs* in Acts 10 and 11," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 21 (1983):143-55.

105 Gispén, "The Distinction Between Clean and Unclean," p. 196.

106 Firmage, "The Biblical Dietary Laws," 183.

107 H.-P. Müller, "qdsh heilig," *Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, eds. E. Jenni and C. Westermann (München: Kaiser, 1976), II:590.

108 Gerhard F. Hasel, *The Remnant. The History and Theology of the Remnant Idea from Genesis to Isaiah* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1974), pp. 263-68.

109 Norbert Brox, *Der erste Petrusbrief* (Leipzig: St. Benno-Verlag, 1986), pp. 104-107.

110 F. Hauck and S. Schulz, "pornê," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1968), VI:592-93.

111 The "casebook" and "codebook" dichotomy argued for regarding Biblical law (see Alden Thompson, *Inspiration* [Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1991], pp. 110-35) is exegetically unfounded and hermeneutically a superimposition of external criteria on the Bible. In his sections on "Two Perspectives on Diet" (pp. 126-30), Thompson reinterprets and rationalizes the dietary law to mean "Do everything possible to enhance and preserve life. As for diet, eat the best food available" (p. 129). The Old Testament and later on Jesus himself is not in support of this kind of rationalizing reinterpretation. The instruction about unclean animals does not mean "eat the best food available," and by implication, one can eat anything, if the best food is not available. God's instruction on clean/unclean food confronts this kind of manipulation of the dietary matters. A later study in the next issue of *JATS* will discuss Thompson's view on law in greater detail.



## LIBERATION THEOLOGY

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Liberation theology<sup>1</sup> has been the most popular theological theme of the last two decades. This theology is new,<sup>2</sup> different, and comes from the third world. Widely acclaimed as the theology of the future, it presents the most formidable challenge the Western dominant theologies ever have encountered—a theology “destined to rock the world.”<sup>3</sup> Liberation theology was born in 1968.<sup>4</sup> It skyrocketed into prominence and popularity in the seventies, leveled off in the early eighties, and has gone through some difficult times in the last few years.<sup>5</sup>

Liberation theology is a Roman Catholic phenomenon that has found wide acceptance in some Protestant circles. The response from the evangelical world has not been enthusiastic. They consistently criticize this theology for what they perceive as being a reduction of the Gospel to almost exclusively horizontal endeavors.<sup>6</sup>

### The Methodology

Liberation theology attempts to interpret the Christian faith from the perspective of the poor, the oppressed, the marginalized people of Latin America—the exploited class that comprises the majority of the population. The fundamental thesis of this theology is that God is on the side of the poor and the oppressed, and that their liberation is his main concern. Therefore, the responsibility of the Christian and the mission of the Church is to join God in this liberating task. Given the circumstances of the continent, the only

way the church and the individual Christian can fulfill their mission is by entering the political arena to help bring about structural changes that are necessary for social justice, even if in extreme cases it means revolutionary uprisings.

Liberation theologians denounce traditional approaches to theology as being too theoretical, too far removed from the world. The church is viewed throughout its history as having paid more attention to the vertical dimension of the gospel, and as having neglected, or at least relegated to a secondary plane, its horizontal dimension where people live their everyday lives, thus spiritualizing away the liberating content of the gospel. Theology, they insist, must be practical and active, not only in interpreting the world but as an agent in its transformation. It is precisely in its intent to be practical, to be relevant to the Latin American reality, that liberation theology departs methodologically from more traditional approaches to theology. It is in its methodology that the real difference lies. Gustavo Gutiérrez, the acknowledged spokesman and systematic theologian of the movement, underlines this fact succinctly when he states that liberation theology is not so much a new theme for reflection but “a new way to do theology.”<sup>7</sup> Then more specifically, he explains that “theology is reflection, a critical attitude. Theology follows. It is a second step. What Hegel used to say about philosophy can likewise be applied to theology. It “rises at sundown,”<sup>8</sup> that is to say, one can reflect only after engaging in action; theology is the byproduct of liberating *praxis*.

Juan Luis Segundo agrees: “Liberation theology deals not so much with content as with the method used to theologize in the face of our real life situation.”<sup>9</sup> There are three visible main steps in this new way of doing theology which set it apart as “new” and different from what went before. In the first place, it takes a different point of departure. Traditionally theology has begun with Scripture or tradition (with revelation—with the eternal truths given by God), and once understood, the principles were applied to the contemporary situation. Liberation theology has a radically different starting point for the crude historical reality of Latin America, the poverty of the vast majority of its people, and the underdevelopment of the continent. But it is more than an acknowl-

edgment of the situation, it includes an uncompromising act of solidarity with the poor and oppressed.

In the words of Gutiérrez "to characterize Latin America as a dominated and oppressed continent leads one to speak of liberation and above all the participation in the process."<sup>10</sup> According to Boff:

Before we can do theology, we have to do liberation. The first step for liberation theology is pre-theological. It is a matter of trying to live the commitment of faith. In our case, to participate in some way in the process of liberation, to be committed to the oppressed.<sup>11</sup>

The action/reflection dialectic is described as *praxis* in liberation theology. The term does not necessarily mean practice in the usual sense of theory being applied to a particular situation. It describes rather a circular traffic that always takes place between action and reflection. Tracy points out that *praxis* "is currently understood as a critical relationship between theory and practice whereby each is dialectically transformed by the other."<sup>12</sup> Their view of truth is dynamic rather than conceptual; truth is found at the level of history, not in the realm of ideas. The Gospel truth is done; one must work out the truth rather than discover it intellectually. Truth is not known in abstractness, but in *praxis*, in the midst of involvement in history; in reality there is no truth outside or beyond the concrete historical events in which man participates as agent. The criterion for knowing truth in this approach is not necessarily to be in agreement or disagreement with a previously given revelation, but with effectiveness in transforming history and liberating the oppressed. Historical *praxis* becomes the final tribunal where the truth or falsity of faith is judged.

After an unwavering commitment to liberating *praxis* comes an important second step in this methodology: to uncover the reasons behind the Latin American reality. Because the fundamental concern of liberation theology is with justice, with the liberation of the oppressed, it becomes indispensable to understand the structural causes of poverty. Boff points out that it is necessary

to analyze the causes of the poverty and misery, to see the causal nexus; because poverty is not born by spontaneous generation, neither does it fall from heaven; rather it is generated by unjust relations among men.<sup>13</sup>

This task is facilitated with the help of the social sciences—sociology, economics, political science, and anthropology. But what is the best option to uncover the human and political dimensions of the historical reality of Latin America? If social sciences with a capitalist perspective are used, doing so undoubtedly will yield a distorted picture. They say that poverty and underdevelopment are due to laziness or indolence<sup>14</sup> of the people, or simply lack of development. Enrique Dussel explains that Latin Americans will not accept that the poor are lazy. They are poor, he says, "not because they want to be, but because they are the victims of a system whose benefits go to those making its judgment."<sup>15</sup>

The most viable option would appear to be the one that analyzes the situation from the perspective of the masses, from the perspective of the poor and oppressed. At this juncture, they assume that Marxist analysis is the best option at their disposal. Núñez observes that

One of the principal characteristics of liberation theology is the efforts of its authors to make an in-depth study of the Latin American social problem. To that end, they avail themselves of the social sciences. At the time, they take for granted that the best economic and social analysis comes from Karl Marx.<sup>16</sup>

This analysis reveals that the problem of Latin America is not one of development or underdevelopment, as it was previously thought. Says Miquez Bonino:

The underdeveloped countries thus were considered backward having reached a lower level than the developed countries. They were obligated, therefore, to repeat more or less faithfully the historical experience of the developed countries in their journey towards modern society.<sup>17</sup>

But the situation is rather one of domination/dependence, in which "Latin American underdevelopment is the dark side of Northern development; Northern development is built on third-world underdevelopment."<sup>18</sup> Because the problem is one of domination/dependence, the only solution would seem to be a radical break from the present structures, from the *status quo*, a social revolution that would break the actual dependence. The fact that liberation theologians rely on the Marxist analysis of their societies does not

mean that all of them accept Marxism uncritically, but all acknowledge their debt to it. In the words of Segundo:

Whether everything Marx said is accepted or not, and in whatever way one may conceive his "essential" thinking, there can be no doubt that present-day social thought will be "Marxist" to some extent: that is, profoundly indebted to Marx. In this sense, Latin American theology is certainly Marxist.<sup>19</sup>

It is now, as a third step in the hermeneutical process, that liberation theologians turn to the Scriptures. First, we have noticed, comes an *a priori* commitment to the poor that functions as a determining principle; then the analysis of the historical reality of Latin America with a Marxist perspective which provides not only a diagnosis of the situation as one of dependence on capitalism, but also indicates that the only way out of the predicament is liberation, that is, a complete change of structures—political, economic, and social. One suspects that when liberation theologians go to Scriptures it is not in search of truth or directives, but rather to find justification or support for positions already taken. Scripture functions for them not as a given, directly inspired by God, but as a witness to what God has done in other historical circumstances. It is not normative, it plays only a secondary, supportive role. In the words of Brazilian liberation theologian Hugo Assmann:

The word of God is no longer a fixed absolute, an eternal proposition we receive before analyzing social conflicts and before committing ourselves to the transformation of historical awareness, analysis, and involvement, that is, from *praxis*. The Bible and the whole Christian tradition do not speak directly to us in our situation. But they remain as a basic reference about how God spoke in quite a different context, which must illuminate his speaking in our context.<sup>20</sup>

It is not difficult to understand that due to the previous commitment there naturally follows a tendency to be selective in the use of Scripture, to lift up those themes like the exodus, for example, and to neglect other Biblical themes that do not yield immediate meaning to the struggle for liberation. This is not an accusation, it is an integral part of the methodology. Without the slightest hesitation, Segundo justifies this approach:

I hope that it is quite clear that the Bible is not the discourse of a universal God to a universal man. Partiality is justified because we must find, and designate as the Word of God, that part of divine revelation which today, in the light of our concrete historical situation, is most useful for the liberation to which God summons us.<sup>21</sup>

This commitment to revolutionary *praxis* leads the Christian, in a spirit of authentic faith, to a new reading of the Bible and the Christian tradition. It poses the basic concepts and symbols of Christianity anew, in such a way that they do not hamper Christians in their commitment to the revolutionary process but rather help them to shoulder these commitments in a creative way.<sup>22</sup>

Because liberation theology develops out of the experience of the poor in search of liberation, "the political question is the first one that we must ask as we approach any biblical passage."<sup>23</sup>

As we have indicated, the Exodus of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage became "the privileged text" of Scriptures for liberation theology; it was especially so in the first decade of its development.<sup>24</sup> The Exodus seems to portray a situation similar to that of Latin America. Israel suffered under the cruel hand of Pharaoh who benefitted from the work of his slaves. But God, sensitive to their cry, took their side and worked on their behalf until their liberation was accomplished. The theme of the Exodus, and especially some verses of Exodus 3 were mentioned with "impressive frequency" in the documents of Latin America.

I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows. And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. . . . [to] bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt (Ex. 3:7-10).

In the same way that the Israelites in Egypt cried out in their misery and oppression, the people of Latin America, oppressed and enslaved, cry for a liberating exodus. Even when liberation theologians do not engage in serious exegesis of this "paradigmatic text," the idea, the theme is highly visible in their concerns. Latin America can confidently expect liberation because "the liberator God of the Exodus cannot contradict himself accepting oppression in another historical juncture."<sup>25</sup>

### Evaluating Liberation Theology

It is not an easy task to evaluate liberation theology in the space available, but some key points should be made. In accordance with the Biblical injunction to "test everything [and] hold on to the good" (1 Thess. 5:21, NIV), we must admit that there are some positive aspects in this new theology, some insights that we should gratefully acknowledge. The concern that liberation theologians demonstrate for the poor and their willingness to do something about it is highly commendable. It is true that the church has sometimes been so absorbed by the future that they have tended to neglect the here and now. But the gospel cannot be divorced from life. There can be no separation between orthodoxy and orthopraxis. It also is true that the preoccupation for social justice is a central concern of Scriptures. Concern for the poor, the widow, and the orphan permeates the pages of the Old Testament.<sup>26</sup> The incarnation unmistakably shows that God is concerned with those who are in disgrace, and does something about it.

At the same time, we must acknowledge that liberation theology, while expressing a deep and valid concern for justice and the poor has some inherent limitations that can easily lead to a distorted view of the gospel, to an impoverished soteriology, thus severely limiting its usefulness. We will point out two main areas of concern: the secondary role of Scripture and the pervasive influence of Marxist ideology. Liberation theologians, as part of their methodology, insist that God's word is heard in history, in the cry of the oppressed, and that truth is found in *praxis*, not in any objective revelation. It is not what God says in Scripture, but rather what he does in history that has priority. It would seem obvious that a criterion, an objective norm, is needed to evaluate *praxis*, and determine if it is going the right way. As Núñez has well pointed out:

According to evangelical doctrine, Christian conduct has its norm in the objective revelation of the Holy Scriptures. In that sense, the Christian has to know certain principles before acting. Faith and obedience, for example, are an answer to the revelation that God has given of Himself and His works in the Bible. There is already an object of faith and obedience. Otherwise, we would not know what to believe or what to obey.<sup>27</sup>

It would seem risky to engage in acts of social justice on behalf of the poor *before* listening to what God's Word might have to say about it. The Exodus story also tells us that when Moses engaged himself in "liberating *praxis*" killing the Egyptian before listening to the word of God, he had to retrace his steps and wait patiently for God's instructions. When liberation theology stresses the historical situation as the *locus theologicus*, thus replacing the revelation in Scripture by the revelation of contemporary events, it ignores the fact that there are two mysteries operating in history at the same time—the mystery of salvation and the mystery of evil. The devil, even though vanquished at the cross, still continues active in the world. Consequently, Christians stand in need of an objective norm to distinguish between the divine and the demonic in the events of history and to discern God's presence and absence in history. This is not to deny the hermeneutical importance of the historical situation, but the Bible must not be reduced to our situation.

Stek has observed correctly that a situational hermeneutics, when absolutized, means the silencing of Scriptures, because "it reduces the Bible to a tool (or weapon) that we grasp in our hands to promote whatever cause seems to us to hold hope for the world—for the world as we see it."<sup>28</sup> If the questions we address to the Bible are only those suggested by *praxis*, we may miss other questions that the Bible is addressing to us. Goldingay pointed out that

We have to pay attention to the Bible's agenda. And yet the only way to listen to the Bible's concerns, is to come with one's own, to see how it speaks to where we are, but also to allow our questions to be judged, as we find what are the other areas with which the Bible is concerned, about which it has not yet occurred to us to enquire. We must ask our questions, but we must also be wary of letting them be the criterion of how far the Bible needs to be listened to. When we find that there are parts of the Bible that do not speak directly to our concerns, it does not prove the Bible irrelevant; it opens up the possibility that we have not yet asked all the right questions.<sup>29</sup>

We already have noticed that central to the hermeneutics of liberation theology is the analysis of the continent with the help of social sciences, particularly Marxism. This is no doubt the most important factor influencing liberation theology, and where the

main criticism has constantly focused. Liberation theologians defend this procedure, insisting that there is nothing wrong to use Marxism as a tool of analysis, if one leaves out the objectionable aspects of the ideology. Camara ingeniously argues that Thomas Aquinas gave us an excellent example when he availed himself of the philosophy of Aristotle to help in the formulation of his theology. He observes that Aristotle was regarded by Aquinas' contemporaries as a pagan, a materialistic, a dangerous, and cursed sinner. Still Aquinas was able to "leave out" the objectionable elements of Aristotle's thought, and benefit from the positive.<sup>30</sup> If Thomas Aquinas was able to produce a new theological system based on the philosophy of a non-Christian philosopher, there is no reason why theologians today could not create a Christian theology with the help of Marx, another non-Christian philosopher. Camara's reasoning seems convincing to many people. Others, however, question to what extent Thomas Aquinas was successful in leaving out the negative. And this is precisely where liberation theology has become more vulnerable. The real issue has been to what extent can Marxism be used as a tool of scientific analysis without, at the same time, adopting other features of the ideology like its anthropology—not to mention its materialistic *Weltanschauung*.

Marxism is not just another philosophy, which would be relatively harmless, but a philosophy which seeks to change the existing power structures by means of organized political *praxis*.<sup>31</sup>

Critics from inside as well from outside the Roman Catholic Church have raised their voices persistently in warning against the possibility of the use of Marxism merely for its instrumental value. Pedro Arrupe, at the time Jesuit Superior General, sent a letter to the Jesuit Provincials of Latin America warning that it is not possible to accept the set of explanations that constitute Marxist analysis without subscribing to Marxist philosophy, ideology, and politics. He concluded that "those who adopt the [Marxist] analysis also adopt its strategy."<sup>32</sup> Peter Heblethwaite has remarked that as a consequence of these efforts Marxism has subtly invaded the church,

- but no one has so far suggested that Marxism leads to Christianity.
- The crucial determining element in the system is Marxism. Christi-

anity, therefore, is not so much synthesized as used and subordinated; when the church comes, it is Christianity that has to go.<sup>33</sup>

More recently the German scholar Pannenberg for the first time outlined his uneasiness about liberation theology. He criticized employing Marxism as a sociological tool. Marxism harbors an understanding of the human person that cannot be reconciled with Christianity. According to Pannenberg, the atheistic orientation is not an accidental element in Marx but it is closely connected with the anthropology underlying its social theory. For this reason, it is not possible to use Marxist economic descriptions without accepting also their atheistic reason and implications.<sup>34</sup>

When we read carefully into this theology, we find that these concerns are justified because liberation theologians have not succeeded in extricating themselves from the framework of this ideology. One gets the distinct impression that liberation theology is, to a large extent, patterned after the main features of Marxism, from the diagnosis of the ills of the continent to the strategies needed to obtain historical change, even to the goals of liberation itself. Due to the ideological bias of its social analysis, liberation theology tends to divide society sharply into two classes, viz., the rich and the poor, the oppressed and the oppressor. As Gutiérrez clearly states:

There is one characteristic in particular which holds a central place: the division of humanity into oppressors and oppressed, into owners of the means of production and those dispossessed of the fruit of their work, into antagonistic social classes.<sup>35</sup>

The instrument does not provide the way of looking at other possible sources of poverty and underdevelopment. Would the conquest and the development of Latin American civilization have anything to do with present conditions? It would seem proper to at least raise the question as to why Latin America is in such deplorable economic state after five centuries of almost uncontested Roman Catholic domination.<sup>36</sup>

Liberation theologians tend to identify poverty *only* with material poverty, to the neglect of the richer Biblical concept of the poor. In the Bible the words "poor" and "poverty" point to all levels of human life, material as well as spiritual. The poor, those who will inherit the earth besides being socially oppressed and economically

destitute, are at the same time those who remain faithful to God and are so conscious of their spiritual poverty that they rely wholly on the mercy of God for their salvation. If poverty is identified with material poverty exclusively, the liberation needed is something only temporal. It becomes primarily earthly well-being. Partial, this-worldly liberation is not the salvation "which meets *all* the needs of persons because it offers them forgiveness and absolution and a new life which begins now and reaches beyond death into the life with Christ in the New Jerusalem."<sup>37</sup>

At the same time, while liberation theologians do not deny that sin is essentially rebellion against God, they share the Renaissance view of man in which he was viewed not as a sinner, but as essentially a good creature who was destined to become better. Therefore, liberation theologians tend to overlook the root of sin and concentrate on its branches in the oppressive structures of society. Consequently, the good news of liberation is aimed primarily at such structural problems as injustice, poverty, and inequality. The analysis of the roots of injustice and the causes of alienation implicit in much liberation theology is so uniformly Marxist that no justice is done to the depth of the Biblical perspective of the human predicament. Sin is a state of corruption so profound, so entrenched in man's heart, that the elimination of poverty and oppression, were it possible, would not alter man's basic condition in any significant way. The alienation of man from God expressed in Genesis 3 will not be bridged by a utopian classless society while man's heart remains unchanged. The best social structures that man can devise quickly become inhuman if the sinful inclination of man's heart is not changed.

Words like "God acts in history" or "He acts in the real world" are found frequently in liberation literature. When the strategies for liberation are considered, however, liberation theologians speak of acting as though God were absent from history—everything depends on man. *Praxis* means man's involvement to change the world. The need of man's involvement in liberation *praxis* is constantly emphasized by liberation theologians. The process of liberation requires the active participation of the oppressed themselves. Gutiérrez tells us that the active participation of the oppressed in their liberation "is one of the most important themes running

through the writings of the Latin American church."<sup>38</sup> And Dussel points out that "our people in Latin America must liberate themselves, or else liberation will never come."<sup>39</sup>

It is easy to understand why this theology can grow and flourish in a Roman Catholic soil, but finds no response from evangelical Christians who believe in *sola gratia* and *sola fide* as the means of true liberation. Dorothy Sölle admits that "there is a certain anti-protestant point in the thesis that salvation is liberation."<sup>40</sup> Segundo is more specific when he admits that

Since the time of the Reformation at least, the characterizing feature of the Catholic Church in this area is the emphasis on the *merit* of human endeavors for *gaining entrance* to the eternal kingdom of God. And this notion of merit is of the utmost importance for liberation theology.<sup>41</sup>

On the other hand, the same author continues, "the disappearance of the notion of *merit* from Protestant theology, dating from the time of the Reformation, seems to have undermined the possibility of any theology of history."<sup>42</sup> Evangelical soteriology takes its stand firmly on the doctrine of justification by faith.<sup>43</sup> *Sola gracia* is the essence of Biblical salvation. Salvation is totally the work of God. There is no room for any type of pelagianism. The reduction of the Biblical message by an exclusively political reading is evident in the total absence of words such as cross, atonement, expiation, substitution, regeneration, justification, sanctification, depravity, and forgiveness from the writings of liberation theology. At the same time, other words such as conversion, sin, and evangelization are reinterpreted to the point that they bear little resemblance to their Biblical meaning. Ronald Sider, the author of *Rich Christians in An Age of Hunger*, who is clearly interested in the cause of the poor and in social justice, reacted with certain impatience to the horizontalism of liberation theology:

I must confess a deep uneasiness [about liberation theology]. . . . Is it too much to hope for a brief mention of the cross and atonement, Jesus' resurrection, or Christology, that goes beyond respectful admiration for the prophetic genius from Nazareth? Is evangelism (yes, I mean the urgent task of sharing the good news of Jesus' life, death and resurrection with the two billion who have never heard) truly irrelevant to a contemporary program of liberation?<sup>44</sup>

Emilio Núñez finds two great consequences to liberation theology's new approach to salvation: "Emphasis is given to the universality of the salvific act of God and to the historical and earthly character of salvation."<sup>46</sup> In the same vein, Orlando Costas, also a Latin American theologian, concludes that "building a just, peaceful, and fraternal society is what salvation is all about" in liberation theology.<sup>46</sup>

As we already have noticed, the particular hermeneutic of liberation theology leads to an essentially political re-reading of the Scriptures. Even the reading of the Exodus narrative portrays a liberation from political servitude. The political dimension becomes so exclusive a component, that the perspectives gleaned from the story are only those that square with the ideological presuppositions. Such reading yields many parallels that find easy correspondence with the present Latin American situation. It clearly is perceived that society in Egypt was divided into two antagonistic groups, viz., oppressors and oppressed, masters and slaves. Furthermore, God heard the cry of the poor and was concerned about their suffering.<sup>47</sup>

In answer to the cry of the oppressed, God sided *with* them and *against* the oppressors. Violence, class struggle, and bloodshed became inevitable due to the persistent refusal of the oppressors to let them go.<sup>48</sup> The initial response of the Israelites to their own liberation (at first they were too alienated to listen) finds its echo in the unresponsiveness of the masses in Latin America. This is why a thorough work of *conscientization* claims first priority.<sup>49</sup> The egalitarian distribution of manna—to each according to his needs—suggests that a socialist society best fulfills the purposes of God. Moses and Aaron, chosen from among the oppressed became the agents of liberation. "Sent by Yahweh, Moses began the long, hard struggle for the liberation of his people," says Gutiérrez.<sup>50</sup> The present generation, as was true of the Jews in the wilderness, might have to die in order to ensure freedom for the next.<sup>51</sup> Finally, the object of the Exodus, was liberation, an exclusively political act. "Latin American liberation theology has restored the Exodus to its political symbolism and has seen in Moses an authentic politician, guiding the people towards a better society," says Galilea.<sup>52</sup> In today's Latin America "it is important to keep in mind that be-

yond—or rather through—the struggle against misery, injustice and exploitation the goal is the creation of a new man."<sup>53</sup>

Gutiérrez's vision of a new society, so often mentioned in his writings, is that what will develop the new man is socialism. "Latin American socialism . . . will promote the advent of the new man."<sup>54</sup>

If we pay attention to history we will be cautious in equating a Marxist-oriented society with liberation, because all empirical evidence points to the fact that Marxist societies bring no real advance in human freedom. In practice, "the new class opposes *any* type of freedoms, ostensibly for the purpose of preserving 'socialist' ownership," comments Djilas.<sup>55</sup> Ellul concludes that "until now, without exception, in every country where it has been applied, Marxism has given birth to the worst sort of dictatorships, to strictly totalitarian regimes."<sup>56</sup>

Liberation theologians read the Bible with a "Marxist key" and often focus their attention on the Exodus because they see it pertinent to their concerns. However, they often strain this portion of Scripture from its overall perspective, thus badly mutilating its intent. The Exodus contains features and insights that can be missed or distorted easily unless it is viewed as an integral part of a larger story and is approached with a hermeneutic that does justice to the unity and integrity of Scripture. It is true that the Exodus story portrays Egypt as the oppressor and God as responding to the cry of the oppressed. It is true that the liberation of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage was an act of justice. What should not be overlooked, however, is that the poor slaves were at the same time God's special people. God not only heard their groaning, but also "remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob" (Ex. 2:24). The God of the Exodus was "the God of your fathers" (Ex. 3:13). It was by virtue of the special relationship that God has with "these" slaves, the descendants of Abraham, with whom he made a covenant, that Yahweh was able to assist them in their affliction. The psalmist declares that God "has not dealt thus with any [other] nation."<sup>57</sup> There were doubtless other groups of people in the ancient world who shared the lot of the Hebrews and who also groaned under their burdens; but Israel found favor with God, not only because they cried in their affliction, but because of their special relationship to the Redeemer.

Furthermore, the Exodus narrative indicates that the liberation was not achieved by their efforts—it was entirely of God's doing. The part the "slaves" were to play was "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will shew to you today" (Ex. 14:13). McKenzie, the noted Roman Catholic scholar, puts it this way:

The paradigmatic character of the exodus can thus be summarized: the need is desperate, and the candidate for salvation is helpless. The power of Yahweh is interposed in such a way that the persons saved need do nothing.<sup>58</sup>

If justice is done to its context, the Exodus story hardly encourages political activism or armed rebellion to overthrow any contemporary pharaoh forcibly in order to gain freedom.

Furthermore, we must not ignore the fact that liberation from Egyptian bondage is only half of the story. For the Hebrews, escape from Egypt to a land of freedom where they could live their lives with dignity, free from the threat of oppression, was not enough. They were free from slavery that they might engage in the service of God. "Let my people go, that they may serve me" (Ex. 7:16) was the key note and constant refrain throughout the episode. From the Red Sea the cloud led the ex-slaves to Sinai, where the covenant was renewed. Yoder has observed that "liberation is *from* bondage and *for* covenant, and *what for* matters more than *what from*."<sup>59</sup> The Exodus had pre-requisites—being the people of the covenant—as well as post-requisites—the devotion of their lives to the service of God, reaching out to be a blessing to the nations. That is why a program of social political liberation that aims only at enabling people to live their lives free from poverty and misery, and nothing more, is not what is contemplated in the Exodus account.

Finally, the abiding symbol that comes to us from the Exodus is not a raised hand, summoning the poor masses to struggle and revolt, but rather a lamb that was slain, pointing to "the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). It is one thing to borrow from the Bible the language and symbols of liberation. It is quite another to learn the Biblical meaning of liberation. Liberation theologians in their commendable efforts to bring liberation to the poor are severely handicapped because they are not radical enough. They do not go to the *radix*, the root of the problem.

They attempt instead to remove the leaves of poverty and oppression while the ugly roots are left untouched in the human heart. It is the transforming power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ alone that can bring about genuine liberation—freedom from guilt and slavery to sin which are the real cause of all injustice and oppression. It was Jesus himself who said "If the Son . . . shall make you free, ye will be free indeed" (John 8:36).

### Endnotes

1 Liberation theology is a generic term denoting several different emphases, i.e., black, feminist, and third world theologies. But even when their emphases vary, a common concern underlies these different perspectives. Each speaks of God as being on the side of the oppressed, and the gospel as the good news of liberation from their particular kind of oppression. This paper addresses Latin American liberation theology.

2 Not new in the sense that it is totally autochthonous—because there are many influences that have facilitated and inspired its emergence (See Alan Neely, "Liberation Theology in Latin America: Antecedents and Autochthony," *Missiology: an International Review*, 6 [1978]: 343-370). But new in the sense that for the first time in the history of the continent—almost half a millennium—a theological reflection of this magnitude emerges from Latin America, where the practice had been "to borrow" from Europe or the United States.

3 Alfred T. Hennelly, *Theologies in Conflict: The challenge of Juan Luis Segundo* (Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1979), p. 23. Walbert Bühlmann observed in 1977 that "In the course of the third millennium—who knows—a church historian may compare the eastern church to the morning star, silent, glittering, ever full of hope, and the western church to the moon which after a night almost as luminous as the day, is now growing dim and the third church to the sun, newly risen on the horizon, ruling the day." *The Coming of the Third Church* (Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1977), p. 24.

4 It is not easy to state precisely when liberation theology began. In 1968 the Latin American bishops met at Medellín, Colombia for the Second Continental Gathering (CELAM II) to discuss "The Church in the Present-day Transformation of Latin America in the Light of the [Second Vatican] Council." Even though the sounds of liberation were in the air prior to that date, it was Medellín that gave to this new approach to theology the stamp of approval and with it a momentum that it could hardly have achieved without this historical gathering. Enrique Dussel, the acknowledged historian of liberation theology sees the triumph of the Cuban revolution in 1958 as the first significant event in the process.

5 Besides events in the secular world which did not favor the socialist commitments of liberation theology, the most formidable obstacle that was encountered was no doubt the unsympathetic stand of Pope John Paul II. He was wary of the Marxist influence on liberation theology. He personally attended CELAM III, which met at Puebla, México in 1979, where he expressed some stern warnings against those theologians whom he considered too closely identified with the Marxist ideology. This culminated in the publication in 1984 of a document



prepared by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, prefect of the Sacred Congregation entitled "La teología de la liberación atenta contra la fe Católica" (Liberation Theology Attempts Against the Catholic Faith), and the interrogation of Brazilian theologian Leonardo Boff by the curia.

6 See Atilio René Dupertuis, *Theology of Liberation. A Study in its Soteriology* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1987), a doctoral dissertation; and Emilio A. Núñez, *Theology of Liberation* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985) for evaluations from an evangelical perspective. Dr. Núñez was born and reared in El Salvador. He writes from Guatemala, where he is professor of systematic and contemporary theology at Central American Theological Seminary.

7 Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation. History, Politics, and Salvation* (Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1973), p. 15. The Spanish edition first appeared in 1971, marking the debut of liberation theology in the international scene. This book has been translated into a dozen languages.

8 Ibid. p. 11.

9 Juan Luis Segundo, *The Liberation of Theology* (Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1976), p. 9.

10 Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p. 88.

11 Leonardo and Clodovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1986), p. 22. Hugo Assmann, also from Brazil, argues that "the greatest merit of liberation theology is perhaps its insistence on the historic starting point of its reflection . . . the situation of dominated (Latin) America."—*Opresión-Liberación. Desafío a los cristianos* (Montevideo, Tierra Nueva, 1971), p. 24.

12 David Tracy, *Blessed Rage of Order. The New Pluralism in Theology* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1975), p. 243. In Latin America, the term is used primarily to designate any activity aimed at political, economical, and social liberation; at the overcoming of alienation and oppression; at the creation of a new man in a new society. For a summary of the meaning of *praxis* in Marx, from whom this term is derived, see Steven G. Macke, "Praxis as the Context for Interpretation. A Study in Latin American Theology." *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 24 (1978): 31-43.

13 Leonardo Boff, "La iglesia es el sacramento de liberación," *Proceso*, 118 (February 5, 1979): 11.

14 See Ricardo Pietrantonio, "La libertad cristiana y los procesos históricos de liberación." *Cuadernos de teología* (Vol. X, #1, 1989): 45.

15 Enrique Dussel, *Ethics and The Theology* (Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1978), p. 22.

16 Núñez, *Liberation Theology*, p. 28.

17 José Míguez Bonino, *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), p. 82. Penny Lernoux points out that Marx helped Latin Americans clarify their situation of neocolonial dependence on capitalism through knowledge of reality which is the first step in transformation of society. "The Long Path to Puebla," p. 10, in John Eagleson and Philip Scharper, eds., *Puebla and Beyond. Documentation and Commentary* (Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1979).

18 Ibid., p. 17. For a fuller discussion of this concept, see Dupertuis, *Liberation Theology*, pp. 20-100.

19 Segundo, *The Liberation of Theology*, p. 35. Assmann is more explicit when he admits, "I am a Marxist and I can't see the reality of Latin America in

any other category," Gayrand Wilmore and James Cone, eds., *Black Theology: A Documentary History: 1966-1979* (Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1979), p. 513.

20 "Statement" by Hugo Assmann in Sergio Torres and Virginia Fabela, eds., *Theology in the Americas* (Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1978), p. 299.

21 Segundo, *The Liberation of Theology*, p. 33.

22 John Eagleson, ed., *Christians and Socialism* (Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1975), p. 174.

23 Justo L. González and Catherine G. González, *Liberation Preaching. The Pulpit and the Oppressed* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1980), p. 69.

24 In recent years, liberation theologians have been paying more attention to the New Testament, and to other themes, such as exile, the kingdom of God, resurrection, and the significance of Christ's identification with the poor and the outcast. Significant in this new emphasis is Jon Sobrinos' *The Church of the Poor* that appeared in 1981. Sobrinos' emphasis is that the church of the poor in Latin America is but the resurrection of the true church of the New Testament.

25 Severino Croatto, *Liberación y libertad* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Mundo Nuevo, 1973), p. 37.

26 See Donald E. Gowan, "Wealth & Poverty in the Old Testament: The Case of the Widow, the Orphan, and the Sojourner," *Interpretation*, 41 (1987): 341-353.

27 Núñez, *Liberation Theology*, p. 150.

28 John H. Stek, "Salvation, Social Justice and Liberation in the Old Testament," *Calvin Theological Journal*, 13 (1978): 133.

29 John Goldingay, "The Man of War and the Suffering Servant." *Tyndale Bulletin* 27 (1976): 87.

30 Don Helder Camara. "What Would St. Thomas Aquinas Do if Faced with Karl Marx," *New Catholic World* (May-June, 1977): 108-113.

31 Anselm Kyongsuk Min, *Dialectic of Salvation. Issues in Theology of Liberation* (State University of New York Press, 1989), p. 10.

32 Pedro Arrupe, "Marxist Analysis by Christians," *Origins* 10 (April 16, 1981): 692.

33 Peter Heblethwaite, "Christians and Instrumental Marxism," *The Month*, 8 (1975): 317.

34 See Standley J. Creuz, "German Scholar Faults Marxism as Liberation Theology's Basis," *Christianity Today* (May 15, 1987): 44.

35 Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, pp. 272, 273.

36 Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, a respected Argentinean educator and statesman and president of his country from 1868 to 1874, made an intriguing comparison between North American and South American civilizations: "Yankee civilization was the work of the plow and the primer; South American civilization was destroyed by the cross and the sword. They learned to work and to read, here we learned to idle and to pray."—Quoted in Leopoldo Zea, *The Latin American Mind* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), p. 82.

37 J. D. Gort, "Gospel for the Poor?" *Missiology: An International Review*, 30 (1979): 338. Emphasis in the original. The entire article on pp. 325-354 contains an excellent discussion on the Biblical meaning of "poor".

38 Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p. 113.

39 Enrique Dussel, *History and Theology of Liberation: A Latin American Perspective* (Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1976), p. 146.

40 Dorothee Sölle, "Resistance: Toward a First World Theology," *Christianity and Crisis* (July 23, 1979): 180.

41 Segundo, *The Liberation of Theology*, p. 131.

42 Ibid., p. 142.

43 Justification often has been depicted as entirely extrinsic, a totally forensic transaction, and the fact that the Holy Spirit also is active in justification, enabling the sinner to respond, believe, and obey has been ignored. Justification by faith often is understood to be the antithesis of salvation by works. Yet according to Scriptures, faith does not exclude works but gives rise to them.

44 Ronald Sider, "Theological Education and Liberation Theology: An Invitation to Respond" *Theological Education*, 16 (Autumn, 1979): 56.

45 Núñez, *Liberation Theology*, p. 179.

46 Orlando Costas, *The Church and It's Mission: A Shattering Critique From the Third World*. (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1974).

47 Exodus 3:7, 8.

48 The affirmation of violence is not general among liberation theologians; it is countenanced as a last resort when changes are not possible through non-violent means. For an interesting discussion about the "unjust violence" of the oppressed who feel forced to use it to achieve their liberation, see Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, pp. 108, 109.

49 The term *conscientization* "refers to learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality."—Myra Bergman in an explanatory note to Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Seabury Press, 1970), p. 19. Miquez Bonino points out that "the mobilization for a 'popular uprising' and the *takeover of power* requires a serious and extended work of politicization of the masses, helping them to become aware of the contradictions of the system under which they suffer."—*Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation*, 24 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), p. 81.

50 Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p. 156.

51 Gutiérrez observes that "what Karl Marx wrote more than a hundred years ago is still valid: 'The present generation is like the Jews whom Moses led through the desert. Not only does it have to conquer a new world, it also has to perish to give room to the men who are to live in the new world.'" Ibid., p. 146.

52 Segundo Galilea, "Liberation as an Encounter with Politics and Contemplation", *Concilium*, 6 (June, 1974): 31.

53 Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p. 158.

54 Ibid., p. 91. A new man and a new society cannot be reached through capitalistic paths because the moving force of every type of capitalism is private profit and private ownership for profit.

55 Milovan Djilas, *The New Class. And Analysis of the Communist System* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1957), p. 65.

56 Jacques Ellul, *Jesus and Marx. From Gospel to Ideology*. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988), p. 13.

57 Psalm 147:19, 20. See John H. Yoder, "Exodus and Exile: The Two Faces of Liberation," *Cross Currents*, 23 (1973): 297-309. He forcefully points out that Goshen is prior to Exodus, that "peoplehood is the presupposition, not the product of Exodus."

58 John L. McKenzie, *A Theology of the Old Testament* (Garden City: Doubleday and Company, 1974), p. 145.

59 Yoder, "Exodus and Exile," p. 304.

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## A THEOLOGY OF THE SABBATH

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### Introduction

Does the Sabbath play an essential role in salvation, or is the Sabbath only peripheral to salvation or perhaps, as some have claimed, even detrimental to it? Within what context does the Sabbath have its true and proper meaning? This talk adapted to a paper will attempt to develop not only the theme that the Sabbath is representative of the entire Christian experience, but that it is also an essential ingredient of initiation and maturation in the Christian life, a safeguard to Christian experience and a basis for the comprehensive unity of Christian doctrine.

### Role of Doctrine in Christian Experience

In order to place the doctrine of the Sabbath in its proper context within Christianity, it will be helpful to give consideration to the broader context of which the Sabbath is a part, namely the role of doctrine in Christianity. How does doctrine relate to the central theme of Christianity, salvation through Jesus Christ which restores mankind to the relationship with God that was first broken by sin (Romans 5:8-10; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20)?

Christianity needs to be described in terms of personal knowledge rather than speculative or empirical knowledge. Christ Himself defined salvation as knowing God and Jesus Christ (John 17:3). That this knowledge of God is not to be interpreted speculatively may be determined not only from the general Hebrew context, which viewed knowledge as practical rather than theoretical, but

also from within the immediate context which stresses God's plan to create unity and love between God and man (John 17:23, 24). This theme of the personal relationship of man with God is so central to Scripture that the analogy of marriage is used to describe it. Paul himself likened the relationship between Christ and the church to the marriage relationship (Ephesians 5:25). Hosea saw the broken relationship between God and Israel reflected in a broken marriage relationship. He emphasized God's purpose to reestablish relationships with His people (cf. Hosea 2:19, 20).

Ellen White likewise portrays Christianity as the intimate relationship of the believer with Jesus Christ:

As through Jesus we enter into rest, heaven begins here. We respond to His invitation, Come, Learn of Me, and in thus coming we begin the life eternal. Heaven is a ceaseless approaching to God through Christ. The longer we are in the heaven of bliss, the more and still more of glory will be opened to us; and the more we know of God, the more intense will be our happiness. As we walk with Jesus in this life, we may be filled with His love, satisfied with His presence. All that human nature can bear, we may receive here. But what is this compared with the hereafter? There "are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them."<sup>1</sup>

If then Christianity may be defined in terms of personal relationship between man and God, why should Christians be concerned about doctrine? Why not simply be concerned with relationships?

It is not the primary goal of Christianity to expound the authority of Scripture nor to establish correct doctrine. The goal of Christianity is the reestablishment of our relationship with God. What role then do Scripture and doctrine play? Scripture, and doctrine stemming from it, are among other things essential to our relationship with God because they provide the authoritative foundation, guide and content of the relationship. (As an aside, the theological far-right tends to go astray when it makes doctrine the total goal of Christianity, and the far-left tends to go astray when it makes the experience of the relationship the foundation of Christianity.) Doctrine plays its rightful role when it founds, guides and enhances our relationship with God.

Two central themes permeating Ellen White's *The Great Controversy* are righteousness by faith and the authority of Scripture. Righteousness by faith, or the restoration of man's relationship with God, is the *goal* of Christianity; Scripture is the *norm* or test of Christianity—that restored relationship. Doctrine is essential to the establishing of saving relationships because doctrine describes the content of such relationships. Doctrine reveals the nature of God, the nature of man, and the proper relationship that is to exist between them. The first two categories are essential to personal relationships. But let us illustrate the third since it may not be so obvious. The nature of a proper relationship will obviously vary greatly depending upon whether one is relating to his wife, son, daughter, secretary, President of the United States, or the Queen of England. To ignore the distinctions between those relationships would finally be to distort, if not to destroy, what might otherwise be a very healthy relationship. Thus doctrine informs the aspiring Christian. It describes the God who offers man a relationship, it illumines the nature of man himself (self-knowledge is also essential for maturing relationships), and it describes the relationship which may properly exist between God and man.

Doctrine is an essential ingredient in Christian experience for another related reason. "It is a law of the mind, that it will narrow or expand to the dimensions of the things with which it becomes familiar."<sup>2</sup> If we admire God most in our life, the character will be formed according to His character. However, if our conception of God is false, then our character will be shaped by an idol rather than the true God. As one's character is formed in harmony with the true God, it becomes possible to develop a fuller, more mature relationship with Him.

Thus, doctrine must be viewed not only from the theoretical level, but also from the practical and in such a way as to illumine the role which each doctrine plays in initiating, defining, and instructing man's relationship with God. (This has important implications for witness, for we do not simply share a theory, but a transforming message which has pervaded our own lives and which has brought us closer to Christ than would ever have been possible apart from the fullness of God's message which He intends to disclose through this church.) The proclamation of the Sabbath is

not just an additional point to be checked off in a baptismal class. Rather, it is the revelation of the nature of the God to whom we wish to relate, and it provides the possibility of our coming ever closer to God.

If an individual fails to accept some truth in isolation, his Christian life is not necessarily marred. But if he rejects permanently the person of God, his life is changed for eternity. Since the Sabbath involves God's revelation of Himself to us and indicates His desire to enter into personal relationship with us, we must study the Sabbath from the standpoint of what it says to us about this God, what it tells us about man himself, and how it defines the proper relationship between God and man. This will allow us to understand the Sabbath in its bearing upon the Christian life as a whole so that the Sabbath may play its role in bringing individuals to Christ by initiating them into the joy of, and bringing them to maturation in, the fullest possible love relationship with Him.

#### Personal God of the Sabbath

The Sabbath reaffirms the general teaching of Scripture that the heart of Christianity is the development of a personal relationship with God, for it tells us that God Himself is personal. It is significant that God was with man the very day of man's creation. It should be of supreme interest to us today that the all-powerful, creating, sustaining God of the universe has set aside a special time in which to become acquainted with us. God is personal and, in spite of His almightiness, He desires to know us individually because He loves us. The Sabbath, therefore, provides the occasion for fulfillment of God's purpose in man's creation. God created man in His own image in order that He might fellowship with man. The Sabbath, therefore, is a special period of time for intimate communion with God.<sup>3</sup>

The fact that God established His memorial in time rather than in space also points to the personal nature of God. God created His temple in time rather than in space, because He wants us to know Him, to be reminded of Him, and to worship Him as a person rather than as a thing. Personal relationships are not based upon space alone. They are primarily formed in time to shift man's eyes from the material to the spiritual, and from a greed for things to a

love for God, from the temptation to relate to God as an object to the joy of entering a personal relationship with Him.

The Sabbath is a perpetual sign and everlasting covenant of the relationship between God and His people in order that they might know who it is that created them (Exodus 31:17) and sanctifies them (Exodus 31:13; Ezekiel 20:12), and that they might recognize Him as the Lord their God (Ezekiel 20:20).

The Sabbath as a sign of the Creator points to His ownership and authority. As Creator, He is distinguished from other gods; His sphere of ownership and authority is heaven and earth. Thus a meaningful observance of the Sabbath indicates the acceptance of God as Creator/Owner and acknowledges His authority over all creation including oneself.<sup>4</sup> The Sabbath, then, is a sign that points to creation, to redemption, and, as an everlasting covenant, to eschatological fulfillment.<sup>5</sup> The observance of the Sabbath is thus a mark or sign that those who honor the day acknowledge Jehovah as their God.<sup>6</sup>

#### Sabbath and the God of Creation

The Sabbath is first of all associated with God's finished work in creation (Genesis 2:1-3). From Mt. Sinai God placed importance upon the Sabbath because "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it" (Exodus 20:11, RSV). The New Testament points to Christ as the member of the Godhead responsible for creation (Colossians 1:16; John 1:3). The Sabbath thus becomes full of meaning for the Christian. It is a reminder that the One who came to save us was also our Creator. It is a reminder that man is not the work of his own hands. It is a reminder that, in the beginning, man came forth from the hand of God. The Sabbath is a sign of a relationship between God and His people, because it commemorates the day when, having made man, God ceased from His labors in creation (Exodus 31:15, 17).

What does the doctrine of the Sabbath say about the nature of God, the nature of man, and the proper relationship between them? God is the Creator, we are His creatures. The Sabbath thus points

to the power, authority, and Lordship of Christ the Creator, and it indicates our dependence, as creatures, upon Him.

In the twentieth century man sees himself as the creator—he is the maker of the automobile, the designer of moon and planet rockets, the developer of home conveniences, the conqueror of disease, and the creator of his own destiny. Forgetting his true origin, he now sees himself as the autonomous ruler of the world, if not the universe. What message does man need more today than to be reminded that he lives in dependence upon the Creator God? The Sabbath, when kept meaningfully, is a tie between Christ and His people because it demonstrates man's recognition of his dependence upon God as Creator and Sustainer. The worshiper who truly observes the Sabbath is manifesting, living out in practical form, his dependence upon Christ.

#### Sabbath and the God of Redemption

The Sabbath was and is a memorial of Israel's deliverance from slavery in Egypt and, by analogy for the Christian, of deliverance from sin (Deuteronomy 5:17).<sup>7</sup> It reminds us that the One who had the power to create man out of nothing has the power to deliver man from his situation in sin and to recreate him in the image of God. As a sign of sanctification, it points to God's power to restore man to His own image. It represents God's desire to bring man back into full harmony with Himself. "I gave them My Sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them" (Ezekiel 20:12, NASB; cf. Exodus 31:15). The Sabbath then not only reminds the Christian of the creatorship of Christ but also of His redeeming power.

#### Sabbath and the God of Eschatology

The Sabbath also has eschatological implications, for it points to the future fulfillment of God's purposes in creation and redemption. Isaiah spoke of a new heaven and a new earth in which all people would gather together "from one Sabbath to another" before the Lord (Isaiah 66:22, 23).<sup>8</sup>

In John 14 we are reminded that it is Christ who is preparing the heavenly home for His children. The Sabbath thus looks forward in a prophetic sense to the time when Christ will recreate the

earth for the enjoyment of His children. Furthermore, the Sabbath is itself a foretaste of the spiritual rest that the Christian will have in the new earth (Hebrews 4).<sup>9</sup>

The Sabbath then is an indication of God's love and of His desire to restore our relationship with Him completely by barring all traces of sin from the heavenly land and the earth made new. Meaningful Sabbath observance now is a living demonstration of one's faith that Christ is preparing a home where our relationship with Him will be fully restored.

When the Sabbath has been kept meaningfully, then its observance is a witness to the fact that the believer has entered the rest that comes from complete trust in our Sustainer-Redeemer and that the believer is willing to leave even his future in the hands of his heavenly Father.

Thus the Sabbath is a reminder of God's total plan for His children. It is a great arch spanning time from a perfect creation to a perfect recreation. It represents Christ's activity in the creation of man, in the redemption of man, and in the recreation of man's original home.

#### Sabbath Rest

The word "Sabbath" is related to the Hebrew verb translated "to rest" (Genesis 2:2) which carries with it the ideas of "to cease," "to abstain," "to desist from." God "rested" or "ceased from" His work on the Sabbath day (Genesis 2:2, 3; Exodus 20:11; 31:17). The cessation of God's work was not a necessity to Him, but rather an example for man who is in the image of God.<sup>10</sup>

As Hebrews 4 points out, the rest that God intends for His people is not only physical but also spiritual rest. God had delivered Israel from Egypt and brought her safely to the land of Canaan. There she entered the physical rest that God had intended. But due to unbelief and disobedience, she never entered God's intended spiritual rest. A warning is then given for Christians to enter God's rest by ceasing efforts to obtain salvation by works and by placing trust alone in God's salvation. The rest that the Christian enters through faith in Christ is compared with the rest of the Sabbath day (Hebrews 4:9). The spiritual rest of the Sabbath is a symbol of the spiritual rest one finds now when placing his faith in Christ.<sup>11</sup>

### The Sabbath, a Time for Rejoicing

The Sabbath is to be a delight (Isaiah 58:13). It was a time for Israel to rejoice in her deliverance from slavery (Deuteronomy 5:15). The Sabbath is observed as a time of delight by the Christian as he worships God in the exuberance of life, praising Him for His wonderful creation. Furthermore, the Christian rejoices in deliverance from sin and in the recreating gift of salvation, and he longs expectantly for the day of the Lord in which man will be eternally reunited with God in complete fulfillment.

### Sabbath Observance

So what does one do now on a day set apart for fellowship with God? What activities lend themselves to the observance of the day established as a memorial of creation, redemption, and the expressed hope of eschatological reunion with God? On what principles does one come to decisions regarding the appropriateness of Sabbath activities? Since God Himself made the request for the weekly appointment, it would seem appropriate that He be the one to establish its activities, its perimeters and parameters.

Just as God blessed, sanctified (Ezekiel 20:20; 44:24), and made holy the Sabbath day (Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:11), so man is commanded to keep the Sabbath "holy" (Exodus 20:8; Deuteronomy 5:12) first by refraining from work (Exodus 20:10, Deuteronomy 5:14).<sup>12</sup> The Sabbath is thus to be a day of "complete rest, holy to the Lord" (Exodus 31:15; cf. 20:10). The command to "observe" the Sabbath (Deuteronomy 5:15) is a reference to man's obligation to keep his part of the covenant.<sup>13</sup> The goal of the Sabbath is "to keep it holy" (Deuteronomy 5:12; Exodus 20:8), that is, to consecrate it to the service of God.<sup>14</sup>

Jeremiah indicated that destruction could be avoided if Israel would respond in true repentance. This would be evidenced by keeping the Sabbath holy and by doing no work upon it, by refraining from desecrating the day, or by carrying burdens upon it. If Israel should respond thus, the Lord would keep His covenant relationship with them and save them from destruction.<sup>16</sup> Nehemiah also forbids any trade on the Sabbath. "He stopped the foreign traders from peddling their wares on the Sabbath by closing the gates of Jerusalem from sunset on Friday to sunset on Sabbath

and made the winepress operators, farmers, fruit growers, and transportation workers to sanctify the Sabbath."<sup>16</sup> Even the body of Christ was not anointed on the Sabbath day, rather the women rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment (Luke 23:55-24:1).<sup>17</sup>

The purpose of the Sabbath is that we might live (Ezekiel 20:13, 21). However, God resolves to pour out His wrath in the annihilation of those who profane the Sabbath (Ezekiel 20:13, 21, 24; 23:38). Amos rebukes those who long for the Sabbath to be over in order that they might go about their everyday business. The glory of proper Sabbath observance is described in its fullness in Isaiah 58:13, 14. If man refrains from his own business affairs,<sup>18</sup> from doing his own ways and from conversation related thereto, then he will be freed for joyful relationship with God. "The idea of delight with regard to the Sabbath combines both worship of the Lord and finding enjoyment through and in Him and what He provides both spiritual and physical."<sup>19</sup>

The Sabbath was made for man (Mark 2:27). Its universality is rooted in Creation and reinforced by the fact that as a sanctuary in time it comes to everyone. Thus it was not established to be observed by one nation, sect, or class. Rather its privileges and obligations are universal. The injunction to observe the Sabbath includes sons and daughters, male and female servants, and even guests (Exodus 20:10).<sup>20</sup>

Obedience to the law of Sabbath observance is not an end in itself. Rather, proper observance of the Sabbath provides a climate for a relationship with God. The dedication of our time to God gives Him priority in our lives.

### Sabbath and the Authority of God's Word

Ellen White points out that the Sabbath commandment is unique, containing "the seal of God's law." It alone "brings to view both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. It declares Him to be the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and thus shows His claim to reverence and worship above all others. Aside from this precept, there is nothing in the decalogue to show by whose authority the law is given."<sup>21</sup>

The arbitrariness of the Sabbath points to the authority of

God's Word. The Sabbath is to be kept simply because God has declared it. There is no other logical or natural reason for its observance. Raoul Dederen has emphasized this point for us:

In an arbitrary manner God appointed that on the seventh day we should come to rest with His creation in a particular way. He filled this day with a content that is "uncontaminated" by anything related to the cyclical changes of nature or the movements of the heavenly bodies. That content is the idea of the absolute sovereignty of God, a sovereignty unqualified even by an indirect cognizance of the natural movements of time and rhythms of life. As the Christian takes heed of the Sabbath day and keeps it holy, he does so purely in answer to God's command, and simply because God is his Creator. Thus, the Sabbath command comes nearer to being a true measure of spirituality than any other of the commandments, and, as in the days of Israel of old, it is often more of a test of loyalty to God than is any of the others. To be willing on the Sabbath day to withdraw from the tyranny of the world of things in order to meet the Lord of heaven and earth in the quiet of our souls means to love God with all our hearts, souls, minds, and bodies.<sup>22</sup>

The Sabbath thus points to the absolute sovereignty of God and His Word, a sovereignty unqualified even by an indirect cognizance of the rule of other powers. As Sakae Kubo points out, "ultimately the keeping of the Sabbath on the seventh day is an active obedience and self-renouncing faith and the recognition of God's sovereignty over us."<sup>23</sup>

Even the arbitrariness of the day is a safeguard to our experience with God. And it is an indication that God is God and man is man, and that man must not place himself in a position whereby he attempts to manipulate God. To do so would be to create his own idols.

If the purpose of the Sabbath is to be of service in the establishment of man's relation with God, we may ask, Why was the day arbitrarily designated by God? Suppose God had said, "Let us meet together once a week in fellowship and worship. You pick the day and I will be there." The temptation for man to manipulate that day would have been too great and the day would eventually have been crowded out by the everyday concerns of mankind. Thus it is that God has established the day as a safeguard, as a reminder of our relationship with Him and He has established it in such a way

so as to guard man against the problems of idolatry that come from setting priorities ahead of God. The sovereignty of God's Word is preserved for those who willingly acknowledge the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is thus an arbitrary "tree of knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden." It is a test of and a witness to true allegiance to the God of the universe.

The seventh day is the day that God has separated from the rest of the days (Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:11), and thus the Sabbath is designated as holy (Exodus 16:23; 31:14, 15; 35:2; Isaiah 58:13).<sup>24</sup> The Sabbath is to be kept because God has so commanded (Deuteronomy 5:12). The Sabbath will be a test in the last days, dividing between those who wish to give allegiance to God's Word and those who wish to give allegiance to other powers. Revelation 14 presents a message calling man to worship Him who made heaven and the earth and sea (vs. 7) and takes note of the final perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and have faith in Jesus (vs. 12).<sup>25</sup>

What are the implications if one who understands the God-given significance of the Sabbath either rejects it or fails to observe it as God has designed? In effect, such an one is saying, "God, I do not believe You are the Creator, the Redeemer, nor the basis of any future hope. I am placing confidence in myself and establishing myself as authority, for I do not believe or accept the fact that You have established a special day with specific perimeters and parameters as a time and a basis for the development of a mutual relationship between us." In effect, then, we are saying, "God, if a relationship is to be developed, it must be upon my terms rather than upon Yours."

#### Sabbath a Safeguard to Man's Relationship with God

Scripture points to the Sabbath as a representation of the entire Christian life. In principle, it encompasses man's entire relationship with God. The Sabbath holds together the past, present, and future. It is an indication that God has acted on the behalf of man in the past, that He is acting on man's behalf in the present, and that He will act for man in the future.

The Sabbath is like a hedge protecting man's friendship with God. God has given the Sabbath because He knows that those who

worship meaningfully on that day will grow and mature in their love-relationship with Him. The Sabbath becomes a hedge about man's relationship with God, first of all by providing the time that is essential for the development of that relationship. The Sabbath also clarifies the relation between God and man. It points to God as the Creator in an age when man would like to fill that role in the universe. In an age when man is ruled by the material, it points him to the spiritual and to the personal. It lifts man above the humdrum of mechanical living to real life that relates to God and man. What are the implications of forgetting the Sabbath day to keep it holy? Such a failure on the part of man can only lead to the distortion and eventual destruction of his relation with God. For to do so is virtually to forget that God is the Creator and to conceive of oneself or someone else as the All-wise Planner and Designer. It is to forget that Christ is the Redeemer and to place dependence by contrast upon one's own skills. And it is to ignore the fact that God is in control of the future. God wants us to remember the Sabbath because He wants us to remember Him. Thus, as Raoul Dederen points out, "The Sabbath issue involves far more than the mechanics of keeping the right day as a holy day of rest and worship. Essentially, it is a matter of belief or disbelief in Jesus Christ as Creator and Redeemer, as revealed in the Scripture; therefore it bears upon the future orientation of one's entire way of life."<sup>26</sup> The failure to observe the Sabbath as God designed finally means the failure to accept the Word of God as authority in one's life.

Since all human beings have been created by the hand of God, since redemption and a heavenly home are part of God's plan for all human beings, the Sabbath is equally meaningful to the experience of all human beings—even modern human beings. Since these things remain—the creation of God, the Creator-creature relationship, man's dependence upon God, redemption, a future heavenly home, and the authority, Lordship, and love of Christ—there also remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. God said "remember" because He wants human beings to remember Him—even twentieth century human beings.

## Endnotes

- 1 E. G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 331-332.
- 2 E. G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 127. Cf. *Testimonies*, p. 202: "The mind and heart must be disciplined and brought under proper restraint in order for the character to harmonize with the wise laws that govern our being."
- 3 Cf. Raoul Dederen, "Reflections on a Theology of the Sabbath," *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, ed. Kenneth A. Strand, p. 296.
- 4 Gerhard F. Hasel, "The Sabbath in the Pentateuch," *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, ed. Kenneth A. Strand, (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publ. Assoc., 1982), p. 35, 36.
- 5 *Ibid.*, 36, 37.
- 6 F. D. Nichol, ed., *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publ. Assoc., 1955), 4:464. "Several chapters in the latter part of the book of Isaiah 56:1-8; 58:13, 14; 66:13 contain very important references to the Sabbath. The Sabbath is mentioned repeatedly in Isaiah 56:1-8. We find here an identification of the Sabbath as Yahweh's Sabbath 'my sabbath,' (vs. 4), a theme that is known elsewhere in the Old Testament. Blessedness is pronounced over the person 'who keeps from profaning the sabbath' (vs. 2). The opposite of this beatitude is the profanation of the Sabbath. To 'keep my sabbaths' (vs. 4) means to hold fast 'my covenant' (vs. 6). Sabbathkeeping is identified with covenant keeping. 'Whoever keeps the covenant keeps the sabbath, and whoever profanes the sabbath breaks the covenant' (Leviticus 26:42, 45). The reason for singling out the Sabbath as the particular occasion for maintaining the covenant between God and His community is the fact that the Sabbath is understood as the covenant sign (Exodus 31:13, 17; Ezekiel 20:12, 20)," Gerhard F. Hasel and W. G. C. Murdoch, "The Sabbath in the Prophetic and Historic Literature of the Old Testament," *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, p. 47.
- 7 Cf. Dederen, p. 298, 299; Hasel, p. 32.
- 8 Hasel and Murdoch, p. 49.
- 9 Dederen, p. 300.
- 10 Hasel, p. 23-25.
- 11 Cf. Sakae Kubo, *God Meets Man* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publ. Assoc., 1978), p. 67; Bacchiocchi, Samuele. *From Sabbath to Sunday* (Rome: Pont. Bibl. Institute Press, 1977), p. 25, 63-69; *Divine Rest for Human Restlessness* (Rome, 1980), p. 137-40.
- 12 Hasel, p. 25.
- 13 Hasel, p. 33.
- 14 Hasel, p. 25-27, 33. Many Biblical passages contain counsel regarding appropriate activities for the Sabbath. "The Pentateuch has a number of specific instructions regarding activities prohibited on the Sabbath. Exodus 16:23 prohibits baking and cooking on the Sabbath, indicating rest also from the daily chores of women. Exodus 34:21 enjoins the Sabbath rest also in the seasons of plowing and harvesting, indicating that the Sabbath is not kept holy only during times of normal activity. Exodus 35:3 directs that no fire is to be kindled, and Numbers 15:32 that no wood is to be gathered. These specific prohibitions illustrate the broad aspects of keeping the Sabbath holy. Yet, priests do not profane the Sabbath



when they put the shewbread in order (Leviticus 24:8) and bring additional sacrifices (Numbers 28:9." In the case of the collection of manna in the wilderness, described in Exodus 16, the Sabbath became a test of man's relationship with God. "Some Israelites went out 'either through unbelief or through curiosity' to collect manna" (vss. 25-27). God's rebuke was, "How long do you refuse my commandments and my laws" (vs. 28)? A refusal to keep the seventh-day Sabbath means a refusal to obey God's will as expressed in His commandments and laws. The Sabbath has the character of a test of obedience and faith. God demands of His faithful a particular life style."

15 Hasel and Murdoch, p. 49, 50: "The book of Jeremiah contains a key prose sermon on the observance of the Sabbath (chapter 17:19-27). Jeremiah reveals that he was to preach publicly a sermon that demonstrates the conditional nature of the prophecies of doom. Destruction could be avoided if sinful Israel would evidence true repentance. The reference to the Sabbath commandment comes in connection with the phrase 'as I commanded your fathers' (vs. 27; cf. chap. 7:1-8, 30), and it is explicit in the expression 'sabbath day' (yom hassabbat, chap. 27:21, 22, 24; cf. Ex. 20:8, 10, 11; Deut. 5:12, 14, 15) and in the precepts 'keep holy the sabbath' (Jer. 17:22, 24; Ex. 20:9, 10; Deut. 5:14). If Israel would be obedient to God's law (Jer. 7:8-10; cf. chaps. 5:30, 31; 6:13-15; 14:14) by turning from its apostasy (chaps. 6:20; 7:21, 22, 30, 31; 19:5) and from desecrating the Sabbath through refraining from the carrying of burdens (chap. 17:21, 22, 24, 27) and from working (verses 22, 24), and would keep the Sabbath holy (vss. 22-24) and obey the Lord wholeheartedly (vss. 24, 27), then the Lord could maintain His covenant relationship with them and save them from fiery destruction (vs. 27). Sabbathkeeping is a condition of salvation, but not the only one, because wholehearted obedience, though inclusive of the Sabbath, goes beyond the keeping of the covenant sign. It includes right living in all areas of life—moral, social, and religious (chap. 22:1-9)."

16 Hasel and Murdoch, p. 52. "The penitential prayer in Nehemiah 9:6-37 mentions the 'holy sabbath' (verse 14) as a gift from God through Moses, The so-called code of Nehemiah (chap. 10:31-40), which put obligations on the community that were sealed by a covenant, forbids any trade on the Sabbath (verse 31). It is likely that this regulation resulted from the practices noted in Nehemiah 13:15-22, but undoubtedly it is rooted in the pentateuchal laws that command the keeping of the Sabbath. Evidently when Nehemiah came to Jerusalem, he found a lax attitude toward Sabbathkeeping. The precept against buying or selling on the Sabbath is also extended to 'a holy day' (yom qodes), which means either the other holy days in the sense of the yearly festivals (Numbers 23, 28, 29) or more likely any holy days, including the monthly new moons and all other festivals. This reform was necessitated because of the widespread disregard for the Sabbath in Judah and Jerusalem. The Sabbath was 'profaned' (Neh. 13:17, 18) by working and trading (verses 15-22). Nehemiah also reminded the returnees that it was 'this very thing for which our God brought upon us and upon this city all this misfortune.' Here the reformer Nehemiah reflects the announcements of the prophets (Jer. 17:19-27; Eze. 20:12-24), who referred among other things to the violation of the Sabbath as the cause of future misfortune."

17 Cf. Walter F. Specht, "The Sabbath in the New Testament," *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, ed. Strand, p. 104.

18 Hasel and Murdoch, p. 48. "Recent lexicographers have suggested that the best rendering of the term *hepes* in our text is 'business, affair,'"

19 Hasel and Murdoch, p. 49; cf. Dederen, p. 297: God's rest on the seventh day has theological implications not only for fellowship but also for obligation: "God, because He is the God of history, is also the God of the covenant and of the promises. Man is the goal of Creation; but Creation, because it means fellowship, is also obedience, partnership in a covenant. This covenantal relationship, strongly emphasized in the Scripture, affirms anew the astonishing proximity of the creature to the Creator. It testifies, on the one hand, to God's sovereign power in history. His goodness and loyalty to His covenanted people, while on the other it calls for man's allegiance—allegiance expressed, among other ways, in his grateful observance of the Sabbath rest, the 'sign' of this covenant. This underscores the religious character of the Sabbath, which is no longer merely God's gift, but also a day 'to the Lord,' the sabbath 'of the Lord,' a day 'holy to the Lord' and consecrated to Him. As Ellen G. White has expressed it, 'Its observance was to be an act of grateful acknowledgment, on the part of all who should dwell upon the earth, that God was their Creator and their rightful Sovereign; that they were the work of His hands and the subjects of His authority'."

20 Cf. Hasel, p. 32.

21 E. G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 452.

22 Dederen, p. 302.

23 Kubo, p. 41

24 Hasel, p. 25.

25 Bacchiocchi, p. 189; *SDA Bible Commentary 4*: 646, comments on Ezekiel 20:12.

26 Dederen, p. 295.

## SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION: AN ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF THOMAS KUHN'S CONCEPT OF PARADIGM AND PARADIGM CHANGE FOR THEOLOGY

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In the opinion of both supporters and detractors of Thomas S. Kuhn's major work *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*,<sup>1</sup> his ideas have had "a wider academic influence than any other single book of the last twenty years."<sup>2</sup> Langdon Gilkey compares the impact of Kuhn's work to that of Marx who "once shifted our understanding of historical development and possibly Gould [who] will do the same for biological evolution."<sup>3</sup> Kuhn's concepts and ideas have been accepted readily not only in philosophy but also in the social sciences, the humanities and recently even in theology.<sup>4</sup> There seems to be a trend to accept and incorporate Kuhn's ideas into theology.<sup>5</sup> One of the chief characteristics of Kuhn's work can be seen in his epistemology and the recent change in the way epistemology is done.<sup>6</sup> This can be noted in the way he interprets the authority of science, especially the process whereby scientific theories change.<sup>7</sup> Because, according to Gutting, "science is the only generally recognized cognitive authority in the world today,"<sup>8</sup> Kuhn's approach is significant in that he proposes a new interpretation of this authority. Kuhn himself is convinced that his ideas

could produce a decisive transformation in the present image of science.<sup>9</sup>

What was this image of science<sup>10</sup> that Kuhn was about to change? How are models or theories constructed—in science as well as in (systematic) theology? How are we to understand the way in which science works and progresses? Kuhn set out to answer these questions with his "paradigm" concept. In order to better grasp the novelty of his thought and some of its implications for theology, we will look first at some characteristics of the "traditional image of science" that Kuhn was about to change and then contrast this with Kuhn's alternative concept. Then we will point out some implications of Kuhn's position. In doing this we limit ourselves mainly to Kuhn's major work, *The Structures of Scientific Revolution*.

### Traditional Science

For the past three centuries one scientific concept has exercised a pervasive influence on the world's thinking, as can be seen in the popular beliefs about science. Many people for example view science as providing an objective knowledge that is based exclusively on "facts".<sup>11</sup> It is supposed that from data of recorded observations and experimental measurements, scientific propositions and mathematical laws of nature can be deduced in a truly impersonal and detached way by a set of explicit rules. This empirical tradition in science can be traced back to Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626). He assumed that science studied the real world. For Bacon

Science did not just study "phenomena" in a Kantian sense; it did not just observe a world order derived from the categories of the human mind already read into it in the act of perception. The world was "out there," and scientists had the task of discovering its laws.<sup>12</sup>

The steps that Bacon laid out to discover these laws became to be known as the scientific method. It is characterized by first, gathering data; second, formulating a general rule that accounts for the data; third, deriving predictions from the hypothesis; fourth, checking the predictions by making experiments; fifth, if the predictions prove true, the hypothesis is given the status of a (tentative) law that is subject to further testing; sixth, if the

predictions proves false, one returns to step one and attempts to derive another hypothesis.<sup>13</sup> According to Poythress, the underlying assumptions of Bacon's method were that data are hard facts, about which there is and can be no dispute. Hypotheses, in turn, arise from seeing a pattern in the data and making an inductive generalization. Predictions from a hypothesis are derived by simple deduction from the hypothesis itself. Discarding or retaining a hypothesis depends merely on whether the additional experimental data support it. Finally, confirmed hypotheses are added to the existing list of general laws. Thus, progress in science consists in piecemeal additions to the list of known laws.<sup>14</sup> Ian Hacking<sup>15</sup> has pointed out that the scientific model, Kuhn was about to change included a combination of several aspects. These will be referred to briefly below.

**Realism.** Science is an attempt to discover what is real in the world. Truths about this world are true regardless of what people think. Observations and experiments provide the foundations for hypotheses and theories about the real world "out there".<sup>16</sup>

**Demarcation.** There is a sharp distinction between scientific theories and subjective beliefs. In other words, one has to distinguish the psychological or social circumstances in which a discovery is made from the logical basis for justifying belief in the facts that have been discovered.<sup>17</sup> Karl Popper has said that the objectivity and rationality of progress in science is not due to the personal objectivity and rationality of the scientist.<sup>18</sup> In other words, the non-rational intuitions through which scientists were sometimes inspired do not invalidate the objectivity, testability, and rationality of science as such.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, scientific concepts are rather precise and the terms used in science have a definite and fixed meaning.<sup>20</sup>

**Science is Cumulative.** Connected with this rationalistic view of science is the view that science cannot really break with tradition. It preserves the success of its predecessors.<sup>21</sup> Past observations, laws, and theories are seen as permanent additions to the scientific knowledge. The result is that science was assumed to be a record of the steady accumulation of objective knowledge about nature as it really is.<sup>22</sup>

**Inductive/Deductive Structure.** The scientific basically has

two parts: the inductive and the deductive. In the inductive, the scientist gathers individual bits of hard data that are considered to be the indisputable basis for knowledge and generalizes it to hypotheses. In the deductive, the scientist derives predictions and general laws from these hypotheses. Each law summarizes a pattern found inductively in the data.<sup>23</sup> The theories and predictions that result are then tested in order to falsify or confirm them.<sup>24</sup>

Although no single philosopher has proposed these points in this exact sequence, they form a useful collage of a widespread popular conception of science.<sup>25</sup>

### Kuhn's Alternative Concept of Science

Kuhn rejected the classic view of science, that is, the view associated with Bacon's scientific method. He sees a difference between two fundamental kinds of situations: "normal science" and "scientific revolutions."<sup>26</sup> In order for a field of investigation to be scientific it must mature.<sup>27</sup> When a community of investigators accepts a particular achievement as foundational, i.e. as supplying at least temporarily a standard set of phenomena to be considered and a method for their consideration it becomes "mature." After one particular school of interpretation succeeds in setting standards for all further research in the field, this new achievement inaugurates a period of "normal science,"<sup>28</sup> devoted to "puzzle-solving."<sup>29</sup> As long as scientists continue to solve the puzzles that they find, they go forward in a way that superficially resembles Bacon's inductive ideal.<sup>30</sup> Normal science aims at elucidation based on puzzle-solving, not surprise based on innovation.<sup>31</sup> The question Kuhn must face in view of his characterization of normal science is: How does scientific change occur? Everything about normal science seems to be oriented toward preventing fundamental change in a field of inquiry.

Although normal science is conservative, from time to time the anomalies in some branch of knowledge get out of hand and there seems no way to cope with them. This creates a crisis that is characterized by an atmosphere of urgency to solve these anomalies.<sup>32</sup> This crisis leads eventually to the next stage: the scientific revolution.<sup>33</sup> A revolution occurs when a scientific community abandons one time-honored way of regarding the world and of

pursuing science in favor of some other, usually incompatible, approach to its discipline.<sup>34</sup>

The shift from one paradigm to another "cannot be made a step at a time, forced by logic and neutral experiments."<sup>35</sup> Paradigms are terminated not by deliberation but by "a relative sudden and unstructured event like the gestalt switch."<sup>36</sup> Consequently, a new paradigm prevails only when the older generation has been "converted" to it, or had died off and been replaced by a new generation.<sup>37</sup> In this conversion experiment "neither proof nor error is at issue."<sup>38</sup> A paradigm shift, therefore, is thus "a highly subjective process."<sup>39</sup> Revolution occurs because the old paradigm is increasingly unable to solve pressing anomalies and new paradigms present new ways of looking at things, which in turn create new problems for people to get on with. This leads us to the concept of "paradigm" in Kuhn.

**Paradigms.** Normal science is characterized by a paradigm. The concept of paradigm is basic in Kuhn's history of science.<sup>40</sup> A clear and uniform understanding of this important term has been made difficult by the wide variety of usages of this term by Kuhn himself. Masterman, in looking through the first edition of Kuhn's work isolated no less than twenty-one different uses of the term paradigm.<sup>41</sup> Shapere has criticized Kuhn for

inflating the definition 'paradigm' until that term becomes so vague and ambiguous that it cannot easily be withheld, so general that it cannot easily be applied, so mysterious that it cannot help explain, and so misleading that it is a positive hinderance to the understanding of some central aspects of science.<sup>42</sup>

In acknowledging the problems with his use of paradigm Kuhn attempted to clarify his intent in the "Postscript" to the second edition of the work we are discussing. He basically distinguishes between two different uses of paradigm. One is the sociological use, which "stands for the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community."<sup>43</sup> Then there is the paradigm as achievement, where it denotes "concrete puzzle-solutions" that provide models for further research.<sup>44</sup> However, in providing this double answer Kuhn is faced with a great problem. According to his definition a paradigm not

only defines a normal scientific community of investigation but at the same time a paradigm is identified as that which is shared by a community.<sup>45</sup> Which comes first, the paradigm or the community? Kuhn himself admits that "a Paradigm is what the members of a scientific community share, and, conversely, a scientific community consists of men who share a paradigm. Not all circularities are vicious . . . but this one is a source of real difficulties."<sup>46</sup> As a way out of this circularity Kuhn proposes a turn to sociological methods for identifying a community as a first step and way out of the circle.<sup>47</sup>

Another point that should be noted is that observations are paradigm-dependent. For Kuhn there is no neutral observation language. Paradigms determine the way a scientist sees the world.<sup>48</sup> For him there is no theory-independent way to reconstruct phrases like "really there." Not only are observations paradigm dependent but criteria too. Competing paradigms offer differing judgments as to what sorts of solution are acceptable. There are no external standards on which to base a choice between paradigms, for standards are themselves products of paradigms.<sup>49</sup> One would need a "super-paradigm" to decide between different paradigms but in a debate among paradigms there are no objective criteria.<sup>50</sup> Because scientists with rival paradigms may gather quite dissimilar sorts of data, the features which are important for one may be incidental for the other. Rival paradigms solve different types of problems; they are incommensurable.

**Incommensurability.** If two paradigms can be compared to each other, at least in principle, in order to find out which is more rational or closer to the facts, they are commensurable. Kuhn, however, holds that rival paradigms are incommensurable.<sup>51</sup> There is no neutral language that can serve as an objective criterion itself because language itself is learned under a paradigm. Thus, incommensurability limits the role of logical compelling arguments in scientific change. The result is that the debate over paradigm choice is not a logical argument. It is not "the sort of battle that can be resolved by proofs," and "change cannot be made a step at a time, forced by logic and natural experience."<sup>52</sup> Paradigms are terminated, not by deliberation and interpretation, but by a relatively sudden and unstructured event.<sup>53</sup> Incommensurability has ceased

to be a logical affair, and conversion has become a purely psychological matter.<sup>54</sup> Incommensurability is a doctrine that puts Kuhn at odds with most of modern science.<sup>55</sup> We now turn to a last aspect that is connected with the above discussion—the non-cumulative character of science.

**Noncumulative Science.** Revolutionary science is clearly non-cumulative for Kuhn.<sup>56</sup> Since a new paradigm demands the destruction of a prior one “cumulative acquisition on unanticipated novelties proves to be an almost non-existent exception to the rule of scientific development.”<sup>57</sup> For Kuhn new theories are not additions to, but rather, replacements of those older laws and theories, replacements that constitute nothing less than scientific revolutions.<sup>58</sup>

#### Evaluation

Thomas Kuhn's thoughts have not gone unchallenged. Several areas have been strongly criticized. Here we will concentrate only on the major criticisms that have been leveled against Kuhn's work, then we will try to point out some implications for contemporary theology where the ideas of Kuhn have been assimilated.<sup>59</sup>

**Kuhn's Concept of Paradigm.** Almost all commentators agree that Kuhn's use of this concept is loose and variable.<sup>60</sup> Shapere insists that the distinction between paradigms and different articulations of a paradigm, and between scientific revolutions and normal science is at best a matter of degree.<sup>61</sup> If paradigms actually determine the structure of the world, as Kuhn maintains, the existence of anomaly is itself difficult to understand.<sup>62</sup>

In Kuhn's own initial definition, paradigms are “universally recognized scientific achievements that *for a time* provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners.”<sup>63</sup> In other words, a paradigm by definition has only provisional character for a limited period of time. There is no such thing as a permanent, trans-historical or trans-cultural paradigm. According to van Huyssteen, Kuhn's “vision does open up vital perspectives on the question of the origins of our traditional theological models,” because Kuhn offers “the possibility of evaluating the development of systematic-theological models in sociohistorical terms.”<sup>64</sup> In other words, theo-

logical reflection or systematic theology is always only a group-bound activity.<sup>65</sup>

Kuhn's account of science fundamentally depends upon the distinction between normal science and revolutionary science. Apart from the difficulty in identifying when a change is a “revolution” and when it isn't, the sharp contrast between normal and revolutionary science has been questioned.<sup>66</sup> Differences between the two are differences of degree rather than of kind. There also is more continuity across a revolution than Kuhn depicts; there may be changes in such items as assumptions and instrumentation, but there are no total discontinuities.<sup>67</sup>

In this context it should be mentioned that Kuhn's understanding of progress is derived explicitly from an etiological evolution logic<sup>68</sup> which is formulated in neo-Darwinian terms.<sup>69</sup> One consequence of this underlying premise is, as Johann Baptist Metz puts it, that such an evolutionary model does not “permit a normative use of history, let alone a ‘canonical’ one.”<sup>70</sup> Consequently this makes relativism, at least to a certain degree, unavoidable, as we will see later.

**Kuhn's Relativism.** Probably more important than the criticisms just listed are charges that point to a relativism in Kuhn's thought. If observations as well as criteria are paradigm-dependent, there is no rational basis for choice among competing paradigms.<sup>71</sup> Although some claim that Kuhn's strong emphasis on sociological, psychological, historical, and other factors in scientific revolutions does not mean a lapse into irrationality one has to realize that there is a new definition of rationality. Rational simply means “that on which a certain scientific community has decided jointly.”<sup>72</sup> Because each paradigm determines its own criteria, any argument for it is circular. The choice seems to be arbitrary and subjective, a matter of psychology more than of logic.<sup>73</sup> It is precisely on this point that Kuhn's critics are most vehement, accusing him of relativism, subjectivity, and irrationality.<sup>74</sup>

Because relativism simply means that “truth” is to be determined according to the internal consistency of a paradigm,<sup>75</sup> epistemological relativism seems unavoidable.<sup>76</sup> In commenting on the influence of Kuhn's ideas in theology, Jerald Brauer says that one

of the main characteristics of modern Christianity is the massive presence of pluralism.<sup>77</sup>

Kuhn has objected to the charge of irrationality.<sup>78</sup> Some of Kuhn's critics, however, are far from satisfied in this regard. Thus Shapere, in a review of Kuhn's recent writings, repeats his earlier concerns by saying that "it is a viewpoint as relativistic, as anti-rationalistic, as ever."<sup>79</sup>

At this point an observation by Stephen Toulmin is worth our attention. Toulmin has pointed out that the reasons why Kuhn's book has been so influential lie less in the answers Kuhn has given to the fundamental questions about conceptual change in science than in the broader background of the questions.

By insisting on the radical character of scientific change, Kuhn completed the historicization of human thought that had begun in the eighteenth century, and so finally undercut the older views about the immutable order of nature and human knowledge. The task for those who are interested in the theological implications of contemporary natural science is, therefore, not to replace one static but outdated system of doctrine (paradigm) by another, equally static but more up-to-date system: instead, it is to carry further the work of Troeltsch and those other theologians who have reflected on the specific relevance of Historicismus to the projects of theology and cosmology.<sup>80</sup>

Troeltsch has given the principles of historical criticism a classical formulation.<sup>81</sup> In an earlier essay on history and metaphysics, he declared that the historical-critical method, once it gains entrance, brooks no limits. Developed to deal with natural events, it is bound, if applied to the supernatural, to dissolve it into the natural and to interpret it as analogous to everything else.<sup>82</sup> This, clearly, sounds like a promising candidate for the title "paradigm change" in theology.<sup>83</sup> Indeed, many leading scholars, like David Tracy, have stated that "the acceptance and use of historical-critical methods is one defining characteristic of the new paradigm in theology."<sup>84</sup> As Toulmin has stated it: "If a supra-historical standpoint from which we could definitively judge is not available to human beings, a structuring must take place immanently and relatively."<sup>85</sup> One consequence for theology is that the Christian identity of meaning cannot be found in the Bible.<sup>86</sup> In addition, another aspect of Kuhn's position deserves attention, namely, what

has been called Kuhn's psychologism.<sup>87</sup> Psychologism states that a text's meaning cannot be the same for two different people because they look at the text from different subjective standpoints. The historicist position proposes the same argument *a fortiori* for interpreters and authors who stand at different cultural times and spaces. The implication of these views is obvious. A text does not have a fixed meaning, determined by the original author, that serves as an objective set of facts by which various interpretations are measured. Rather, the meaning of the text is determined by the interpreter. The subject—object distinction is not regarded as fixed, and the question of objective validity in interpretation is ruled out.<sup>88</sup>

Kuhn also has been charged with inconsistency in his reasoning. Holcomb has reasoned that Kuhn's notion that all criteria are paradigm-dependent is "self-referentially inconsistent."<sup>89</sup> If the truth of Kuhn's relativistic thesis is paradigm-laden, by previous argumentation, it has no force for anyone who has not yet accepted it. A result would be that Kuhn cannot talk about the "history of science," but only about the history of science as conceived in his paradigm.<sup>90</sup> This suggestion has the crucial consequence of shifting the focus from objectivity "to the real issue, namely truth."<sup>91</sup>

**The Question of Truth.** For Kuhn there are no external, paradigm-independent standards that determine whether the paradigm in question is true or false. Ian Barbour views this question of criteria for paradigm choice as the most important issue in the controversy over Kuhn's book.<sup>92</sup> Kuhn clearly denies that we can get closer to the truth by means of new and changing paradigms.<sup>93</sup> He states that "whatever scientific progress may be, we must account for it by examining the nature of the scientific group, discovering what it values, what it tolerates, and what it disdains."<sup>94</sup> Kuhn rejects what he calls "objective" or "absolute" truth in favor of a pragmatic or instrumental view of truth.<sup>95</sup> "As in political revolutions, so in paradigm choice—there is no standard higher than the assent of the relevant community."<sup>96</sup> Truth no longer corresponds to nature but to what humans accept; in other words, it is sociologically defined.<sup>97</sup> For theology, this means that religious doctrines can be outlined only provisionally<sup>98</sup> because they arise neither from revelation nor as an attempt to describe the real

external world. They originate rather in the desires of men to find suitable instruments with which to bring about certain desirable results. In other words, there are no absolutely true doctrines because all ideas are tools subject to improvement. Because doctrines are based on experience, they will change as experience changes.

Consequently unity in theology will not be a unity of a particular interpretation which results in a particular teaching, that is, no unity in doctrine, but it will be a unity in sensing the common need of interpreting our present world of experience in all its ambivalence, contingency, and change.<sup>99</sup> In this context Sally McFague has said that "we are, then, on the brink of another 'reformation.'"<sup>100</sup> Indeed we are! Kuhn's use of the concept of paradigm and paradigm-change amounts to nothing else but the old fallacy that man is the measure of all things.

### Conclusion

Kuhn has proposed a new interpretation of science. From the positive standpoint it should be noted that we have to give Kuhn credit for having broken new ground in the philosophy of science. He has done much to call into question "the fundamental self-understanding of modernity with its illusory dichotomy between science and ideology."<sup>101</sup> He has done a significant job in demythologizing much of the absolute nature of science that has dominated the scholarly world for so long. Science is now being perceived more as a "human activity" and the contrast between so-called objective truth and metaphysics is being considered as obsolete.<sup>102</sup> Also, his insight that scientific theories cannot be overthrown by experiments and observation alone merits serious attention.

In contrast to the longstanding empirical tradition, which assumed that science studies the real world through objective, logical experiments and observations that are based on indisputable facts; Kuhn maintains that it is impossible to find out anything about the real world because there is no paradigm-independent way to reconstruct it. Data never are simply hard facts that are completely independent from any theory. The lack of an overarching framework that gives guidance makes the scientific community the

ultimate authority in science. Truth no longer corresponds to reality but to what humans accept. Ideas become true insofar as they help us to make successful connections between various parts of our experience. Truth becomes part of the process of experience and, because experience constantly changes, truth does to. In other words, for Kuhn there are many plural truths, as many truths as there are concrete successful actions. Truth becomes pragmatic in the sense that that which works is accepted as truth. An authoritative revelation from God to man that retains its meaning and authority beyond changing times and cultures virtually is excluded from a paradigm in the Kuhnian sense. The unity of the church consequently is no longer a unity of teaching that results from revealed truth but is merely a unity that is accepted in its search for new approaches in the changing sea of ambiguous meaning.

Let me conclude with a word of caution in regard to the use of Kuhn's notion of paradigm, especially when it is too carelessly translated into other fields of study, such as theology. Even well-known theologian Eberhard Jüngel does "not consider it [the concept of paradigm] to be so helpful that theology is bound to adopt this terminology. It probably confuses more than it clarifies."<sup>103</sup> No one knows where the philosophy of science is going next. It has been said that the one who marries current science is destined to be a widower soon.<sup>104</sup> Noted scholar Stephen Toulmin has said that

the call for 'new paradigms' in theology should not ask us to assemble the more up-to-date scientific ideas of post-Darwin, post-Einstein, post-Freud era into a novel cosmological construction that claims the same fundamental authority and permanence that were claimed for Aristotle and Newton earlier. That will simply lay up fresh trouble for theology a century or two down the road, when scientists have rethought the problems of their own disciplines, to the point of making radical changes for which theologians would once again be ill prepared. It may well be the case, indeed, that theology can hope for no secure and permanent reliable foothold in the natural sciences.<sup>105</sup>

For us it is a matter of intellectual responsibility to understand the scientific theories of philosophy on their own terms. Otherwise, as Cordell Strug has put it, the theologian who refers to "paradigms, models, and things like that" to justify his beliefs is no better

than the undergraduate who refers to "Freud, existentialism, Zen and stuff like that" to justify his.<sup>106</sup> In addition there is a danger that the thesis will contain elements, unnoticed in its original context, that will question the possibility of theology just as much as older theories did.<sup>107</sup> Therefore, it is not wise to adopt Kuhn's thesis of paradigm change for use in SDA theology. Instead we are safe only in working out principles that are derived solely from Scripture and are in harmony with, and not in contradiction to, God's everlasting Word.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, second edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

<sup>2</sup> Gary Gutting, ed. *Paradigms & Revolutions. Applications and Appraisals of Thomas Kuhn's Philosophy of Science* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1980), p. v. Even critics of Kuhn's work acknowledge that "it is bound to exert a very wide influence among philosophers and historians of science alike." Cf. Dudley Shapere, "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions," in *Paradigms & Revolutions*, ed. Gary Gutting, p. 27. Frederick Suppe, on the other hand, labels the position shared by Kuhn and others "passe." Cf. Frederick Suppe, *The Structure of Scientific Theories* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977), p. 633.

<sup>3</sup> Langdon Gilkey, "The Paradigm Shift in Theology," *Paradigm Change in Theology*, ed. by Hans Küng and David Tracy, transl. by Margaret Köhl (New York: Crossroad, 1989), p. 367.

<sup>4</sup> Kuhn himself is convinced that his theses "are undoubtedly of wide applicability." *SSR*, 208. Two representatives from different theological camps may show the influence of Kuhn's thought in recent theology. Cf. Hans Küng, *Theology for the Third Millennium. An Ecumenical View*, trans. by Peter Heinegg (New York: Doubleday, 1988), pp. 123-169; Vern S. Poythress, *Science and Hermeneutics. Implications of Scientific Method for Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1988), pp. 32-102. Cf. also the discussion in Hans Küng and David Tracy, eds. *Paradigm Change in Theology*, transl. by Margaret Köhl (New York: Crossroad, 1989). Rüdiger Bubner claims that Kuhn's ideas have been greeted with lively assent in German philosophy. Rüdiger Bubner, "Paradigm Change: Some Continental Perspectives," in *Paradigm Change in Theology*, p. 242.

<sup>5</sup> Recently Wentzel van Huysteen has said that in his view Kuhn's ideas have "created a basis for a new, alternative, conceptual model in theology." Wentzel van Huysteen, *Theology and the Justification of Faith. Constructing Theories in Systematic Theology*, transl. by H. F. Snijders (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), p. 61. But see also the extensive review article by John S. Feinberg: "Rationality, Objectivity, and Doing Theology: Review and Critique of Wentzel Van Huysteen's Theology and the Justification of Faith," *Trinity Journal* 10/2 (1989): 161-184.

<sup>6</sup> This seems to be one of the major concerns of Kuhn himself. In one place

he says: "I really want to know what sort of thing knowledge is, what it is all about, and why it is that it works the way it does." Quoted in Ian Hacking, review of *The Essential Tension*, by Thomas S. Kuhn, in *History and Theory* 13 (1979): 224. Cf. also J. P. Moreland, "Kuhn's Epistemology: A Paradigm Afloat," *Bulletin of the Evangelical Philosophical Society* 4 (1981): 33.

<sup>7</sup> Steven T. Ostovich, "History, Theology, and the Philosophy of Science," (Ph.D. dissertation, Marquette University Graduate School, Milwaukee, 1986), p. 150.

<sup>8</sup> Gutting, p. 1. On the definition of science and some popular misconceptions of science see also the discussion in J. P. Moreland, *Christianity and the Nature of Science. A Philosophical Investigation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989), pp. 17-42.

<sup>9</sup> Kuhn, *SSR*, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> In this paper, the word science generally refers to natural sciences, not social sciences.

<sup>11</sup> Moreland lists several characteristics of what science is believed to be. J. P. Moreland, *Christianity and the Nature of Science*, pp. 23-42.

<sup>12</sup> Poythress, p. 32.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 32, 33. Cf. also Hilary Putnam, "The 'Corroboration' of Theories," in *Scientific Revolutions*, ed. by Ian Hacking (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 63. This conception of scientific method was further formulated, refined, and set in the context of a comprehensive philosophical viewpoint by the school of logical positivism, beginning in the early twentieth century. See Del Ratzsch, *Philosophy of Science* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1986), pp. 21-39. For our purposes, however, we may ignore variations in conception and concentrate on common features.

<sup>14</sup> Poythress, pp. 35, 36. Charles Hodge may be seen as a representative theologian who has employed this scientific method in doing theology. For him the individual texts of the Bible are the data which the theologian/scientist uses inductively to formulate principles in the form of general doctrinal truths which are in turn checked for their consistency with the whole Bible. Cf. Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1970), 1:9-17.

<sup>15</sup> Ian Hacking, ed. *Scientific Revolutions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), pp. 1-5.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1, 2.

<sup>18</sup> Karl Popper, "The Rationality of Scientific Revolutions," in *Scientific Revolutions*, ed. by Ian Hacking (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 95.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Hacking, 2.

<sup>21</sup> Popper, *Rationality*, p. 95.

<sup>22</sup> Ostovich, p. 158; see also Israel Scheffler, *Science and Subjectivity* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967), p. 9. Cf. Janet A. Kourany, "The Nonhistorical Basis of Kuhn's Theory of Science," *Nature and System* 1 (1979): 47.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Poythress, 36; Hacking, 1.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Putnam, p. 74.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Actually Kuhn mentions three kinds of situations in the development of a particular scientific field. We have left out what he calls "immature science"



which is the first stage because the result under this condition is not considered science in the first place.

27 Thomas S. Kuhn, "Reflections on my Critics," in *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, ed. Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave (Cambridge: University Press, 1970), p. 245.

28 "Normal science" means research firmly based upon one or more past scientific achievements, achievements that some particular scientific community acknowledges for a time as supplying the foundation for its further practice." Kuhn, *SSR*, p. 10.

29 *Ibid.*, pp. 35-42. Kuhn also calls this activity "mop up work." *Ibid.*, p. 24.

30 Poythress, pp. 46, 47.

31 Puzzles in normal science are tests not of the system of explanation but of the skill and ingenuity of the scientist; failure to solve a problem is blamed on the scientist, not on the system. Kuhn, *SSR*, p. 80.

32 *Cf. Ibid.*, p. 91.

33 *Ibid.*, pp. 77-91.

34 *Cf. Ibid.*, pp. 89-91.

35 Kuhn, *SSR*, 150.

36 *Ibid.*, pp. 122, 150. A Gestalt is a way of seeing, an observational grid, a perceptual approach or perspective. Thus a paradigm change involves replacing one way of seeing the world with another. This shift from one perspective to another does not occur gradually by the accumulation of more perceptual information but all at once. *Cf. Moreland, Christianity and the Nature of Science*, pp. 200, 201.

37 On conversion as a feature of revolutions in science see: I. Bernard Cohen, *Revolution in Science* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 467-472.

38 Kuhn, *SSR*, pp. 151, 204, 4, 5.

39 *Cf. Ian Barbour, "Paradigms in Science and Religion," in Paradigms & Revolutions*, ed. Gary Gutting, p. 225.

40 Dudley Shapere, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, p. 27.

41 Margaret Masterman, "The Nature of a Paradigm," in *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, ed. Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, pp. 59-89. See also Moreland, *Christianity and the Nature of Science*, pp. 195, 196.

42 Shapere, "Scientific Revolutions," 38.

43 Kuhn, *SSR*, p. 175.

44 *Ibid.*

45 *Cf. Alan E. Musgrave, "Kuhn's Second Thoughts," in Paradigms & Revolutions*, ed. Gary Gutting, 39-41.

46 Kuhn, *SSR*, p. 176.

47 *Ibid.*, 176-181.

48 *Ibid.*, p. 111.

49 Kuhn, *SSR*, p. 109.

50 Barbour, p. 225. "There are no external standards for settling a dispute because, in a revolution, the standards themselves change" (Ostovich, p. 177).

51 Kuhn, *SSR*, p. 103. Incommensurability means that they cannot even be compared to each other for rational assessment because nothing outside the paradigms can serve as common ground for such assessment. See Moreland, *Christianity and the Nature of Science*, p. 199.

52 Kuhn, *SSR*, pp. 148, 150.

53 *Ibid.*, p. 122.

54 Musgrave, p. 50.

55 Ostovich, p. 177.

56 Kuhn, *SSR*, p. 140.

57 *Ibid.*, p. 96; *cf. p. 91.*

58 Kourany, p. 49.

59 Matthew L. Lamb has pointed to this relationship when he says: "Many parallels could be drawn between developments in the philosophies of science and those in modern and contemporary theologies. . . . This process has many parallels in modern and contemporary developments within theology as these have attempted to cope with the fundamental import of . . . the interactions between Christian religious traditions and human experience."—Matthew L. Lamb, "The Dialectics of Theory and Praxis within Paradigm Analysis," in *Paradigm Change in Theology*, pp. 86, 87.

60 *Cf. Masterman*, pp. 61-66; Shapere, pp. 29, 38.

61 Shapere, p. 32.

62 Arthur J. Moen, "Paradigms, Language Games, and Religious Belief," *Christian Scholars Review*, 9 (1979): p. 21.

63 Kuhn, *SSR*, p. viii, italics supplied.

64 Van Huysteen, p. 62.

65 *Ibid.*

66 Barbour, pp. 226, 227. S. E. Toulmin finds frequent small changes more typical of science—"micro-revolutions"—that do not fit either of Kuhn's two classifications. Furthermore, he argues that the struggle of alternative views occurs not simply in rare crises but more or less continually. S. E. Toulmin, "Does the Distinction between Normal and Revolutionary Science Hold Water?" in *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, ed. Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, pp. 39-47. *Cf. also J. W. N. Watson, "Against 'Normal Science,'" in Ibid.*, pp. 25-37.

67 Barbour, p. 227. *Cf. Shapere*, p. 34. There are other criticisms leveled against Kuhn's concept of science that we have no time to go into here, but see Musgrave, p. 42; Karl Popper, "Normal Science and its Dangers," in *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, ed. Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, pp. 51-58; Paul Feyerabend, "Consolations for the Specialist," in *Ibid.*, pp. 197-230. Kourany has shown that even according to Kuhn's own sources several examples of alleged theory replacements, like Dalton's atomic theory, the theory of energy conservation, the role of the caloric theory and its replacement, etc. do not justify his claim. *Cf. Kourany*, pp. 50-52. Interestingly Kuhn has now abandoned the notion of paradigm in favor of the twin notions of "exemplar" and "disciplinary matrix." *Cf. Kuhn, SSR*, pp. 182, 187. How adequate that distinction is remains, however, "a subject of current debate." Suppe, p. 150.

68 This means that evolution aims at nothing except—evolution.

69 "The developmental process described in this essay has been a process of evolution from primitive beginnings . . . but nothing that has been or will be said makes it a process of evolution toward anything." Kuhn, *SSR*, pp. 170, 171.

70 Johann Baptist Metz, "Theology in the New Paradigm: Political Theology," in *Paradigm Change in Theology*, p. 355.

71 Moen, *Paradigms*, p. 21.

72 Van Huysteen, p. 61.

73 *Cf. Imre Lakatos, "Methodology of Scientific Research Programs," in Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, ed. Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, pp.

93, 178. David Hull says that such a view "seems to require that the choice of one scientific theory over another entails an inferential leap which is at least beyond the power of current formulations of logic, if not inherently nonrational." David Hull, *Philosophy of Biological Science*, p. 11, as quoted in Moreland, *Kuhn's Epistemology*, p. 41.

74 Cf. Harmon R. Holcomb III, "Circularity and Inconsistency in Kuhn's Defense of His Rationality," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 25 (1987): 471.

75 Ian Barbour maintains that there is a "pragmatic element in Kuhn's thesis" where a proposition is true if it works in practice. Ian Barbour, *Religion in an Age of Science* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1990), p. 35.

76 Moen, *Paradigms*, p. 20.

77 Jerald Brauer, "A New Paradigm for Theology? Introductory Remarks," in *Paradigm Change in Theology*, pp. 206, 207. Scheffler describes Kuhn's approach in the following strong and perhaps somewhat unjustified words: "Reality is gone as an independent factor; each viewpoint creates its own reality. . . . But now see how far we have come from the standard view. Independent and public controls are no more, communication has failed, the common universe of things is a delusion, reality itself is made by the scientist rather than discovered by him. In place of a community of rational men following objective procedures in the pursuit of truth, we have a set of isolated monades, within each of which belief forms without systematic constraints."—Scheffler, p. 19. Despite some overreaction Scheffler is right in his observation that Kuhn seems to rule out truth as a criterion of scientific progress. Note that Scheffler explicitly mentions the search for truth. Cf. also Suppe, p. 151.

78 Kuhn, *SSR*, pp. 185, 199, 200.

79 Shapere, "The Paradigm Concept," *Science* 172 (1971): 708.

80 Stephen Toulmin, "The Historicization of Natural Science: Its Implications for Theology," in *Paradigm Change in Theology*, pp. 233, 234.

81 These are: the principle of criticism or methodological doubt, the principle of analogy, the principle of correlation. Ernst Troeltsch, "Über die historische und dogmatische Methode in der Theologie," in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 2 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1913), pp. 729-753.

82 Ernst Troeltsch, "Geschichte und Metaphysik," *ZThK* 8 (1898): 5, 6, as quoted in Brian Gerrish, "From 'Dogmatik' to 'Glaubenslehre': A Paradigm Change in Modern Theology?" in *Paradigm Change in Theology*, p. 161.

83 See Brian Gerrish, p. 161.

84 David Tracy, "Hermeneutical Reflections in the New Paradigm," in *Paradigm Change in Theology*, p. 37. Cf. also Schubert M. Ogden, "Response to Josef Blank: Biblical Theology and Philosophy in the New Paradigm," in *Paradigm Change in Theology*, p. 294; and Edward Schillebeeckx, "The Role of History in What is Called the New Paradigm," in *Paradigm Change in Theology*, p. 312.

85 Toulmin, p. 249.

86 Schillebeeckx, p. 312. Paul Ricoeur has said that "we cannot take a fully-fledged theological paradigm from the canonical texts themselves, without a dialogue—which may be highly conflictual—between the theological concerns of our time and those of the biblical texts." Paul Ricoeur, "Response to Josef Blank," in *Paradigm Change in Theology*, p. 285.

87 Moreland, *Kuhn's Epistemology*, p. 48.

88 See Moreland, *Kuhn's Epistemology*, p. 48. In this connection the influential hermeneutical approach of Hans-Georg Gadamer with the concept of the

"fusion of the two horizons" should be mentioned, which has found wide entry in recent theology. On this cf. Frank M. Hasel, "Some Aspects of Hans-Georg Gadamer's Hermeneutical Approach," unpublished research paper, Andrews University, 1989.

89 Holcomb, p. 472.

90 *Ibid.*, p. 475.

91 Jack W. Meiland, "Kuhn, Scheffler, and Objectivity in Science," *Philosophy of Science* 41 (1974): 179.

92 Barbour, 226.

93 "We . . . have to relinquish the notion, explicit or implicit, that changes of paradigm carry scientists and those who learn from them closer and closer to the truth." Kuhn, *SSR*, p. 170. In a similar fashion Küng proposes the way through pluralism to ever greater truth, rather than making one method, model or paradigm absolute. Hans Küng, "Paradigm Change in Theology: A Proposal for Discussion," in *Paradigm Change in Theology*, p. 10.

94 Kuhn, "Reflections on My Critics," in *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, edited by I. Lakatos and A. Musgrave (Cambridge: University Press, 1970), p. 238.

95 Moreland, *Kuhn's Epistemology*, p. 41.

96 Kuhn, *SSR*, p. 94.

97 Holcomb, pp. 470, 476.

98 Steven T. Ostovich, *Reason in History. Theology and Science as Community Activities* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1990), pp. 240-242. Cf. also Huysteen, p. xviii: "One of the most significant and incisive shifts in modern systematic-theological thought must surely be the swing away from a type of theology in which seemingly immutable conceptual models cause theological statements to be seen as precise and true dogmatic propositions, toward a new sensitivity to the relational nature of the language of religious experience."

99 See David Tracy, pp. 55-58.

100 Sally McFague, "An Epilogue: The Christian Paradigm," in *Christian Theology. An Introduction to its Traditions and Tasks*, ed. by Peter C. Hodgson and Robert H. King (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), p. 378. Gary Gutting seems right on target when he states that "the real significance of Kuhn's work is that the ultimate locus of science's rational authority is the scientific community." Gutting, p. 11. Similarly on page 3: "This emphasis on the scientific community's judgment as the ultimate locus of science's rational authority is the most fundamental feature of his account of science."

101 Lamb, p. 65.

102 See Ariel A. Roth, "What is happening to the Philosophy of Science?" *Origins* 17/1 (1990): pp. 3-7.

103 Eberhard Jüngel, "Response to Josef Blank," in *Paradigm Change in Theology*, p. 297.

104 J. P. Moreland, *Scaling the Secular City. A Defense of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1987), p. 196.

105 Toulmin, pp. 236, 237. Similarly Thomas F. Torrance: "Christian theology in the context of Scientific Revolution," in *Pluralisme et Oecumenisme en Recherches Theologiques* (Paris: Duculot, 1976), p. 301.

106 Cordell Strug, "Kuhn's Paradigm Thesis: A Two-Edged Sword for the Philosophy of Religion," *Religious Studies* 20 (1984): p. 269.

107 Strug, p. 269.

## THE BIBLE AND ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

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The use of alcoholic beverages has become America's number-one public enemy, costing over \$117 billion a year and claiming at least 100,000 American lives per year, 25 times as many as all illegal drugs combined.<sup>1</sup> The real human cost of alcohol transcends any statistical estimate of deaths, disabilities or dollar figures. A 1987 Gallup Poll indicates that one family out of four is troubled by alcohol.<sup>2</sup> This means that more than 61 million Americans are affected by some alcohol-related problems such as retarded children, divorces, violence in the home, various forms of crimes, sickness and death.

Christian churches bear considerable responsibility for the alcohol epidemic raging in America today, because through their beliefs, teachings, and preaching they are able to influence the moral values and practices of society more than any other institution. What pastors preach from their pulpits on the subject of drinking determines to a large extent the stand Christians take toward alcoholic beverages. A majority of the 100 million drinkers in America today are churchgoers who have been taught that the Bible sanctions a moderate use of alcoholic beverages. Because alcohol is a habit-forming narcotic that weakens one's capacity for self-control, moderate drinking has led over 18 million Americans to become immoderate drinkers.

**Abandonment of Abstinence.** Since the repeal of Prohibition in 1933 most evangelical churches gradually have abandoned their stand for total abstinence, adopting instead a moderationist

position toward alcohol use. A major factor that has contributed to this trend has been a weakening of the conviction that total abstinence is a clear Biblical and moral principle to be respected like other God-given principles. Billy Graham expressed this view when he said: "I do not believe that the Bible teaches teetotalism . . . Jesus drank wine. Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding feast. That wasn't grape juice as some of them try to claim."<sup>3</sup> No longer having a compelling Biblical and moral conviction to remain or become abstinent, more and more Christians have given in to the social pressure of drinking alcohol. The extent of the drinking problem has been brought home to me during recent lecture tours across North America and overseas. Pastors and church members frequently ask me to explain certain Bible texts used by members of their congregation to justify their moderate drinking of alcoholic beverages. Confronted with frequent pleas for help, I felt that in good conscience I could no longer ignore the problem. The results of my research have been published in *Wine in the Bible: A Biblical Study on the Use of Alcoholic Beverages*. This article represents a nutshell summary of the highlights of this research.

**An Apparent Contradiction.** As I began reading what Scripture teaches about the use of wine, it soon became evident that the Bible speaks on this subject in an apparently contradictory way. On the one hand, the Bible unreservedly disapproves of the use of wine (Lev. 10:8-11; Judges 13:3, 4; Prov. 31:4, 5; 23:31; 20:1; Hab. 2:5; Eph. 5:18; 1 Tim. 3:2, 3). On the other hand, it wholeheartedly approves of its use as a divine blessing for people to enjoy (Gen. 27:28; 49:10-12; Ps. 104:14, 15; Isa. 55:1; Amos 9:13; John 2:10, 11).

Advocates of moderation attempt to resolve this apparent contradiction by arguing that Scripture condemns the immoderate use of alcoholic beverages and commends their moderate use. This belief is based on the assumption that the Bible speaks only about fermented wine ("one wine theory") which it considers as a divine blessing when used with moderation. Consequently, any condemnation of wine in the Bible refers not to the kind of wine (alcoholic), but to the amount consumed.

A major weakness of this view is that Scripture both condemns and commends wine itself, irrespective of the quantity used. Wine is denounced as "treacherous" (Hab. 2:5) and as "a mocker" (Prov.

20:1) that "bites like a serpent and stings like an adder" (Prov. 23:32). To avoid the shame and suffering caused by drinking fermented wine, Scripture admonishes not moderation but total abstinence: "Do not look at wine" (Prov. 23:31). The reason for this absolute prohibition is the fact that gazing at something attractive is the first step toward partaking of it. Others try to resolve the apparent contradiction between the Biblical approval and disapproval of wine by arguing that the positive references represent a divine concession to human weakness rather than a divine approval. A main problem with this interpretation is that some passages speak of "wine," not as a divine concession but as a divine blessing for the people to enjoy. For example, the Psalmist says that God gives "wine to gladden the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread to strengthen man's heart" (Ps. 104:14, 15). Here "wine" is joined together with food and oil as a basic divine blessing that enjoys God's approval.

**The Meaning of "Wine".** The apparent contradiction between the Biblical disapproval and approval of wine is dictated by the assumption that the Hebrew and Greek words for wine (*yayin* and *oinos*) always mean "fermented wine". Is this assumption correct? To find an answer to this question I investigated the Biblical and historical usage of the term "wine," beginning from the English *wine*, and then proceeding backward to the Latin *vinum*, the Greek *oinos*, and finally the Hebrew *yayin*. The result of the survey is abundantly clear: these four related words have been used historically to refer to the juice of the grape, whether fermented or unfermented.<sup>4</sup>

Only a few examples can be cited in this brief article. The New Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language (1971) defines "must" as "Wine or juice pressed from the grapes but not fermented." In this definition "wine" clearly is used to denote unfermented grape juice.

**The Meaning of the Greek Oinos.** Examples of the dual usage of *oinos* abound in secular Greek. In his book, *Metereologica*, Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) speaks of unfermented grape juice (*glukus*), saying: "though called wine [*oinos*], it has not the effect of wine, for it does not taste like wine and does not intoxicate like ordinary wine."<sup>5</sup> In this text Aristotle explicitly informs us that

unfermented grape juice was called *oinos* ("wine") although it did not have the taste or the intoxicating effect of ordinary wine.<sup>6</sup>

In the Septuagint, an intertestamental Greek translation of the Old Testament, "the Hebrew word for grape-juice, *tirosih*," as Ernest Gordon points out, "is translated at least 33 times by the Greek word *oinos*, wine, and the adjective 'new' is not present. *Oinos* without qualification, then, can easily mean unfermented wine in the New Testament."<sup>7</sup>

A possible use of *oinos* in the New Testament to denote unfermented wine, is found in Matthew 9:17 where Jesus says that "new wine is put into fresh wineskins." In view of the fact that no fresh wineskins can resist the pressure caused by fermenting new wine, it is reasonable to assume that the "new wine" spoken of by Jesus was wine fresh from the press which had been strained and possibly boiled, and then placed immediately into fresh wineskins to insure the absence of fermentation-causing substances. Ancient authors attest to this practice.

**The Meaning of the Hebrew Yayin.** As in Greek the Hebrew term for "wine" (*yayin*) was used to refer to either fermented or unfermented wine. The *Jewish Encyclopedia* explains that "Fresh wine before fermenting was called '*yayin mi-gat*' (wine of the vat; Sanh 70a)."<sup>8</sup> The *Halakot Gedalot*, which is the earliest Jewish compendium of the Talmud, says: "One may press out a cluster of grapes and pronounce the *Kiddush* over the juice, since the juice of the grape is considered wine [*yayin*] in connection with the laws of the Nazirite."<sup>9</sup>

The use of *yayin* in the Old Testament to denote unfermented grape juice is not always self-evident because it does not come under condemnation like the fermented *yayin*. However, in several passages, the context indicates that the word designates unfermented grape juice (Jer. 40:10, 12; Neh. 13:15; Lam. 2:12; Gen. 49:11; Songs 1:2, 4; 4:10).<sup>10</sup> For example, Isaiah 16:10 tells of God's judgment upon Moab, manifested through the removal of the divine blessing from the vineyard and the grape juice: "And joy and gladness are taken away from the fruitful field; and in the vineyard no songs are sung, no shouts are raised; no treader treads out wine [*yayin*] in the presses; the vintage shout is hushed" (Isa. 16:10). The "wine"

the treaders tread out in the pressing vat, is unfermented grape juice since fermentation is a time-controlled process.

The above sampling of Biblical and historical testimonies suffice to show that the Bible speaks of both fermented wine, which it disapproves, and unfermented grape juice, which it approves.

#### Biblical Approval and Disapproval of "Wine"

**Biblical Approval of Unfermented Wine.** The vineyard, with its products of grape and wine, was vital in Biblical economy and theology. A glance at a concordance suffices to recognize this fact. The word *yayin*, occurs 141 times in the Old Testament and the word *oinos* occurs 30 times in the New Testament.

In several instances the context indicates that the positive references to "wine" have to do with unfermented and unintoxicating grape juice. Because of its natural and nourishing properties, grape juice was used to represent the divine blessing of material prosperity (Gen. 27:28; 49:10, 11; Deut. 33:28), the blessing of the Messianic age (Joel 2:18, 19; Jer. 31:10-12; Amos 9:13, 14), the free offer of God's saving grace (Isa. 55:1), the wholesome joy God offers to His people (Ps. 104:14, 15; 4:7), and the acknowledgment of God through the use of grape juice as tithe, offerings and libations (Num. 18:12; Deut. 14:23; Ex. 29:40; Lev. 23:13).

"Wine" as unfermented grape juice is approved in the Scripture because it provides us with a wholesome and delightful beverage to gladden our hearts without making us "merry." Psalm 104:14, 15 states: "Thou dost cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate, that he may bring forth food from the earth, and wine [*yayin*] to gladden the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread to strengthen man's heart."<sup>11</sup>

In this song of thanksgiving the Psalmist enumerates God's bountiful provisions for the needs of His creatures. He refers to the plants providing us with food and to "wine," the juice of the grape which cheers the heart by its pleasantness. The ideas contrasted here are sustenance and sweetness. God provides us with sustaining nourishing food, and with a sweet delightful drink, grape juice. The capacity of grape juice to cheer the heart is attested in Psalm 4:7, which says: "Thou hast put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine [*tirosh*] abound" (See Judges 9:13).

The word translated "wine" here is *tirosh*, a term which is explicitly used in numerous Old Testament passages to refer to grape juice. What the Psalmist is saying in this passage is that, while the ungodly derive their chief joy from the abundance of grain and grape juice, the believer experiences an even greater joy when he is the recipient of the light of God's countenance. The truth expressed in this text is different from that in Psalm 104:14-15, yet it does show that grain and grape juice were commonly viewed as sources of joy. This gives us reason to believe that the "wine" (*yayin*) mentioned in Psalm 104:15 is the same unfermented "wine" (*tirosh*, grape juice) of Psalm 4:7, because both passages speak of a natural grape beverage which gladdens human hearts.

It is important to remember that many ancient people loved sweet drinks. While today many think of milk and grape juice as babies' beverages and of coffee and wine as adults' drinks, in Bible times milk and grape juice were desirable beverages for both young and old. Pliny tells us that sometimes people added a considerable amount of honey to grape juice to make it even sweeter.<sup>12</sup> The sweeter a beverage, the more desirable it was. It is worth noting in this regard that the land of Canaan is praised as a land flowing with "milk and honey," two products known for their sustenance and sweetness.

**Biblical Disapproval of Fermented Wine.** The negative references to "wine" have to do with fermented and intoxicating wine, which Scripture uses to represent immorality, apostasy and divine wrath (Isa. 19:14; Rev 14:10; 16:19; 17:2; 18:3). The Biblical condemnation of the use of intoxicating wine is expressed in a variety of ways.

Some texts condemn outright the use of wine (Prov. 23:29-35; 20:1; Hab. 2:5; Eph. 5:18). Solomon, for example, admonishes in a most categorical way to refrain from even looking at wine in order to avoid the shame and suffering caused by it (Prov. 23:31). Lest a person be seduced by the attractiveness of fermented wine, Solomon goes on to describe its deadly nature by comparing it to the poisonous bite of a serpent and the sting of an adder (Prov. 23:32).

Others texts explain the physical and moral consequences of the use of alcoholic beverages. Some of the consequences mentioned are: they distort the perception of reality (Isa. 28:7; Prov. 23:33);

they impair the capacity to make responsible decisions (Lev. 10:9-11); they weaken moral sensitivities and inhibitions (Gen. 9:21; 19:32; Hab. 2:15; Isa. 5:11, 12); they cause physical sickness (Prov. 23:20, 21; Hos. 7:5; Isa. 19:14; Ps. 60:3); and they disqualify for both civil and religious service (Prov. 31:4, 5; Lev. 10:9-11; Eze. 44:23; 1 Tim. 3:2, 3; Titus 1:7-8).<sup>13</sup>

One of the clearest Biblical teachings is that drinking disqualifies a person from serving as a civil or religious leader. The wise Solomon clearly states that kings and rulers must abstain from wine: "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine [yayin], or for rulers to desire strong drink" (Prov. 31:4). The reason for this explicit injunction is immediately given, "lest they drink and forget what has been decreed, and pervert the rights of all the afflicted" (Prov. 31:5).

This text makes a value judgment on alcoholic wine itself, rather than on the quantity drunk. The text does not say, "it is not for kings to drink *much* wine." Rather it says, "It is not for kings to drink wine." What is here prohibited, as elsewhere in Scripture, is not, as many claim, the abuse but the actual use of alcoholic beverages.

Abstinence from intoxicating wine is required in Scripture, not only of civil officials such as kings and rulers, but also of religious leaders, such as priests in the Old Testament and bishops/elders/deacons in the New Testament. In the Old Testament priests were explicitly required to abstain from alcoholic beverages: "Drink no wine or strong drink, you nor your sons with you, when you go into the tent of meeting, lest you die" (Lev. 10:9). The reason given is that alcoholic beverages would impair their capacity to discern and to teach God's holy precepts: "You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the clean and unclean; and you are to teach the people of Israel all the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them by Moses (Lev. 10:10, 11; see Eze. 44:23). We shall see below that the same requirement of abstinence from alcoholic beverages is applied to church leaders in the New Testament.

The fact that the priests had to abstain from alcoholic beverages in order to preserve sanctuary holiness implies that alcohol as a beverage is viewed in the Scripture as profane and unholy. The

reason for this is to be found both in the intrinsic nature of alcohol, that is, in its power to intoxicate (Prov. 23:29, 30; 20:1; Hab. 2:5) and in its effects, that is, in its capacity to impair the discernment between the holy and the profane, and between right and wrong (Lev. 10:11; Eze. 44:23). In view of the fact that we as Christians are "a royal priesthood" (1 Pet. 2:9) called to "keep sane and sober" (1 Pet. 4:7) in a world often insane and intemperate, God's injunction to abstain from alcoholic beverages to preserve our moral discernment is especially relevant for us today.

The foregoing considerations indicate that the Biblical approval or disapproval of "wine" is determined not by the amount of wine consumed but by the nature of the "wine" itself. The positive references to "wine" have to do with unfermented, unintoxicating grape juice. In contrast, all the indictments of "wine" have to do with alcoholic, intoxicating wine. The latter is condemned irrespective of the quantity used.

### The Preservation of Grape Juice

A major objection against the view that Scripture approves the use of unfermented grape juice is the alleged impossibility in Bible times of preserving grape juice unfermented. To test the validity of this popular assumption I investigated the testimonies of ancient writers regarding the art of preserving fruits and wines in general and grape juice in particular.<sup>14</sup> To my surprise I discovered that the ancients were far more knowledgeable in the art of preserving fruits and wines than is generally believed.

**Fermented Wine.** Contrary to popular opinion, the problems the ancients encountered in preserving fermented wine were as great as, if not actually greater than, those faced in preserving unfermented grape juice. To prevent fermented wine from becoming acid, moldy, or foul-smelling, vintners used a host of preservatives such as salt, sea-water, liquid or solid pitch, boiled-down must, marble dust, lime, sulphur fumes, or crushed iris.

Marcus Porcius Cato (234-150 B.C.), who is considered the father of both Latin prose and literature on agriculture, refers to the use of some of these preservatives, saying:

If necessary, add to the new wine a fortieth part of must boiled down from untrod grapes, or a pound and a half of salt to the culleus

[a liquid measure]. If you use marble dust, add one pound to the culleus; mix this with must in a vessel and then pour into the jar. If you use resin, pulverize it thoroughly, three pounds to the culleus of must, place it in a basket, and suspend it in the jar of must; shake the basket often so that the resin may dissolve. When you use boiled must or marble dust or resin, stir frequently for twenty days and press down daily.<sup>15</sup>

**Unfermented Grape Juice.** In comparison to fermented wine, the preserving grape juice from becoming fermented was a relatively simpler process. Ancient sources inform us that it was accomplished in four main ways: (1) by boiling down the juice to a syrup, (2) by separating the fermentable pulp from the juice of the grape by means of filtration, (3) by placing the freshly pressed grape juice in sealed jars which were immersed in a pool of cold water, and (4) by fumigating the wine jars with sulphur before sealing them.<sup>16</sup>

Columella, a renowned agriculturalist who lived in the first century A. D., discusses at great length the different methods used to preserve unfermented grape juice. In speaking of its preservation by boiling, he writes: "Some people put the must in leaden vessels and by boiling reduce it by a quarter, others by a third."<sup>17</sup> He goes on to explain that "afterwards, when it has cooled, you should pour it into vessels, cover it and seal it up; in this way it will keep longer and no harm will befall it."<sup>18</sup> The custom of preserving grape juice by boiling it down into a syrup has survived through the centuries in the Near East and Mediterranean countries. This beverage is known as *vino cotto* (boiled wine) in Italian, *vin cuit* in French, *nardenk* in Syriac and *dibs* in Arabic.

There are indications that the ancient Jews preserved wine by boiling it. John Kitto's *Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature* says:

The Mishna states that the Jews were in the habit of using boiled wine. "They do not boil the wine of the heave-offering, because it diminishes it," and consequently thickens it, thus rendering the mingling of water with it when drunk necessary; but it is immediately added, "Rabbi Yehudah permits this because it improves it" (*Teromoth Perek 100, 11*).<sup>19</sup>

The fact that the Old and New Testaments do not discuss the art of preserving grape juice, does not mean that it was unknown in Bible times. The Jews were not less knowledgeable in the art of

preservation than the surrounding nations. Josephus tells us that the Romans were astonished to find in the fortress of Masada, wine, oil, fruits and cereals freshly preserved, although they had been stored for several years.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, rabbinical sources specifically mention the use of boiled wine.<sup>21</sup>

The reason for the silence of Scripture on the means used for preserving grape juice is to be found in the nature of the Bible itself, a book which deals primarily with those aspects of life which are related to salvation history. In the Bible we find no treatise on agriculture, as among classical writers. The reason is not a lack of interest in or a lack of knowledge of farming, but a reluctance to deal with issues unrelated to the religious life of God's people. We have reason to believe that the Jews knew some of the methods of preservation known and used in the ancient world.

### Wine in the New Testament

The example and teachings of Christ are normative for Christian belief and practice. If, as many well-meaning Christians believe, Christ *made* fermented wine at the wedding of Cana, *commended* it in the parables of the new wine skins and the old wine, *admitted* to having used it in His description of His lifestyle ("eating and drinking") and *commanded* it to be used until the end of time at the institution of the Lord's Supper, then there hardly can be anything intrinsically wrong with a moderate drinking of alcoholic beverages.

### Jesus and the Wedding at Cana

Many well-meaning Christians believe that the "good wine" Jesus made at Cana (John 2:10) was "good" because of its high alcoholic content. This belief rests on three major assumptions. First, it is assumed that the Jews did not know how to prevent the fermentation of grape juice; and because the season of the wedding was just before Spring Passover (see John 2:13), that is, six months after the grape harvest, the wine used at Cana had ample time to ferment. Second, it is assumed that the description given by the master of the banquet of the wine provided by Christ as "the good wine" means a high-quality alcoholic wine. Third, it is assumed that the expression "well drunk" (John 2:10) used by the master of the

banquet indicates that the guests were intoxicated because they had been drinking fermented wine. Consequently, the wine Jesus made must also have been fermented. In view of the importance these assumptions play in determining the nature of the wine provided by Christ, we shall briefly examine each of them.

The first assumption is discredited by numerous testimonies from the Roman world of New Testament times describing various methods for preserving grape juice. We have seen that the preservation of unfermented grape juice was in some ways a simpler process than the preservation of fermented wine. Thus, the possibility existed of supplying unfermented grape juice at the wedding of Cana near the Passover season.

**"The Good Wine."** The second assumption that the wine Jesus provided was pronounced "the good wine" (John 2:10) by the master of the banquet because it was high in alcoholic content, is based on the taste of twentieth-century drinkers who define the goodness of wine in proportion to its alcoholic strength. But this was not necessarily true in the Roman world of New Testament times where the best wines were those whose alcoholic potency had been removed by boiling or filtration. Pliny, for example, says that "wines are most beneficial when all their potency has been removed by the strainer."<sup>22</sup> Similarly, Plutarch points out that wine is "much more pleasant to drink" when it "neither inflames the brain nor infests the mind or passions"<sup>23</sup> because its strength has been removed through frequent filtering.

The Talmud indicates that drinking to the accompaniment of musical instruments in festive occasions such as a wedding was forbidden.<sup>24</sup> The latter is confirmed by later testimonies of rabbis. For example, Rabbi S. M. Isaac, an eminent nineteenth-century rabbi and editor of *The Jewish Messenger*, says:

The Jews do not, in their feasts for sacred purposes, including the marriage feast, ever use any kind of fermented drinks. In their oblations and libations, both private and public, they employ the fruit of the vine—that is, fresh grapes—unfermented grape-juice, and raisins, as the symbol of benediction. Fermentation is to them always a symbol of corruption.<sup>25</sup>

Although Rabbi Isaac's statement is not quite accurate, since Jewish sources are not unanimous on the kind of wine to be used

at sacred festivals, it still does indicate that some Jews used unfermented wine at wedding feasts.

**"Well Drunk."** The third assumption that the expression "well drunk" (John 2:10) indicates that the wedding guests were intoxicated and thus "the good wine" provided by Christ must also have been intoxicating, misinterprets and misapplies the comment of the master of the banquet, and overlooks the broader usage of the verb. The comment in question was not made in reference to that particular wedding party, but to the general practice among those who hold feasts: "Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine" (John 2:10, RSV). This remark forms parts of the stock in trade of a hired banquet master, rather than an actual description of the state of intoxication at a particular party.

Another important consideration is the fact that the Greek verb *methusko*, translated by some "well drunk," can also mean "to drink freely," as rendered by the RSV, without any implication of intoxication. In his article on this verb in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Herbert Preisker observes that "*Methuskomai* is used with no ethical or religious judgment in John 2:10 in connection with the rule that the poorer wine is served only when the guests have drunk well."<sup>26</sup>

**Moral Implications.** The verb *methusko* in John 2:10 is used in the sense of satiation. It refers simply to the large quantity of wine generally consumed at a feast, without any reference to intoxicating effects. Those who wish to insist that the wine used at the feast was alcoholic and that Jesus also provided alcoholic wine, although of a better quality, are driven to the conclusion that Jesus provided a large additional quantity of intoxicating wine in order that the wedding party could continue its reckless indulgence. Such a conclusion destroys the moral integrity of Christ's character.

Moral consistency demands that Christ could not have miraculously produced between 120 to 180 gallons of intoxicating wine for the use of men, women, and children gathered at the Cana's wedding feast, without becoming morally responsible for their intoxication. Scriptural and moral consistency requires that "the good wine" produced by Christ was fresh, unfermented grape juice. This is supported by the very adjective used to describe it, namely



*kalos*, which denotes that which is morally excellent, instead of *agathos*, which means simply good.<sup>27</sup>

### New Wine in New Wineskins

Christ's statement that "new wine must be put into fresh wineskins" (Luke 5:38; Matt. 9:17; Mark 2:22), is seen by moderationists as an indication that Jesus commended the moderate use of alcoholic wine. This view rests on the assumption that the phrase "new wine" denotes wine freshly pressed, but already in a state of active fermentation. Such wine, it is said, could only be placed in new wineskins because old skins would burst under pressure.

**Fermenting New Wine?** This popular interpretation is imaginative but not factual. Anyone familiar with the pressure caused by gas-producing fermentation knows that no bottle, whether of skin or glass, can withstand the pressure of fermenting new wine. As Alexander B. Bruce points out,

Jesus was not thinking at all of fermented, intoxicating wine, but of "must," a non-intoxicating beverage, which could be kept safely in new leather bottles, but not in old skins which had previously contained ordinary wine, because particles of albuminoid matter adhering to the skin would set up fermentation and develop gas with an enormous pressure.<sup>28</sup>

The only "new wine" which could be stored safely in new wineskins was unfermented must, after it had been filtered or boiled. Columella, the renowned Roman agriculturist who was a contemporary of the apostles, attests that a "new wine-jar" was used to preserve fresh must unfermented:

That must may remain always sweet as though it were fresh, do as follows. Before the grape-skins are put under the press, take from the vat some of the freshest possible must and put it in a new wine-jar [amphoram novam], then daub it over and cover it carefully with pitch, that thus no water may be able to get in.<sup>29</sup>

**Symbolic Meaning.** This interpretation is further confirmed by the symbolic meaning of Christ's saying. The imagery of new wine in new wineskins is an object lesson in regeneration. As fittingly explained by Ernest Gordon,

The old wineskins, with their alcoholic lees, represented the Pharisees' corrupt nature. The new wine of the Gospel could not be put into them. They would ferment it. "I came not to call the self-righteous but repentant sinners." The latter by their conversion become new vessels, able to retain the new wine without spoiling it (Mark 2:15-17, 22). So, by comparing intoxicating wine with degenerate Pharisaism, Christ clearly intimated what his opinion of intoxicating wine was.<sup>30</sup>

"It is well to notice," Gordon continues, "how in this casual illustration, he [Christ] identifies wine altogether with unfermented wine. Fermented wine is given no recognition. It could be put into any kind of wineskin, however sorry and corrupt. But new wine is like new cloth which is too good to be used in patching rags. It is a thing clean and wholesome, demanding a clean container. The natural way in which this illustration is used suggests at least a general, matter-of-fact understanding among his Jewish hearers that the real fruit of the vine, the good wine, was unfermented."<sup>31</sup>

### Was Jesus a Glutton and a Drunkard?

More than nineteen centuries ago Jesus was accused of being "a glutton and a drunkard" because He came "eating and drinking" (Luke 7:33, 34; Matt. 11:19). In Jesus' description of His own lifestyle as "eating and drinking" (Matt. 11:19; Luke 7:34) moderationists find an unmistakable proof that He openly admitted having used alcoholic wine. Moreover, it is argued, Jesus must have drunk alcoholic wine for His critics to accuse Him of being a "drunkard."

**Social Lifestyle.** This interpretation ignores several important considerations. The phrase "eating and drinking" is used idiomatically to describe the difference between the social lifestyle of Jesus and that of John the Baptist. John came "eating no bread and drinking no wine" (Luke 7:33), that is to say, he lived a lifestyle of full social isolation, while Christ came "eating and drinking," that is to say, He lived a lifestyle of free social association.

**No Mention of "Wine."** A significant point, often overlooked, is that Jesus did not mention "wine" in describing His own lifestyle. Whereas of John the Baptist Jesus said that he came "eating no

bread and drinking no wine," of Himself He simply said: "The Son of Man has come eating and drinking." If Jesus had wanted it to be known that, contrary to John the Baptist He was a wine-drinker, then He could have repeated the word "wine" for the sake of emphasis and clarity.

By refusing to specify what kinds of food or drink He consumed, Christ may well have wished to deprive His critics of any basis for their charge of gluttony and drunkenness. The omission of "bread" and "wine" in the second statement (Matthew omits them in both statements) could well have been intended to expose the senselessness of the charge. In other words, Jesus appears to have said, "My critics accuse me of being a glutton and drunkard, just because I do not take meals alone but eat often in the presence of other people. I eat socially. But my critics actually do not know what I eat."

Even assuming that His critics actually saw Jesus drinking something, they would have accused Him of being a drunkard, even if they saw Him drinking grape juice, or water, for that matter. On the day of Pentecost critics charged the apostles with being drunk on grape juice (*gleukos*, Acts 2:13). This helps us understand that no matter what Jesus drank, His unscrupulous critics would have maligned Him as a drunkard.

**Critics' Accusations Unsafe to Accept.** To infer that Jesus must have drunk wine because His critics accused Him of being a "drunkard" means to accept as truth the charges of Christ's enemies. On two other occasions his critics accused Jesus, saying: "You have a demon" (John 7:20; 8:48). If we believe that Christ must have drunk some alcoholic wine because His critics accused Him of being a drunkard, then we must also believe that He had an evil spirit because His critics accused Him of having a demon. The absurdity of such reasoning shows that using critics' accusations is not safe grounds for defining Biblical teachings.

Jesus answered the baseless charge of His critics, saying: "Yet wisdom is justified by all her children" (Luke 7:35). Textual evidence is divided between "children" and "works," but the meaning of this cryptic statement remains the same, namely, that wisdom is to be judged by its results. The wisdom of God is vindicated by the works of goodness to which it gives birth. Thus, to infer on the basis

of the aspersions of His critics that Jesus drank wine, shows a complete lack of wisdom. The results of His life of self-denial speak for themselves.

### The Communion Wine

Fundamental importance is attached to the "wine" of the Last Supper because Christ not only used it, but even commanded it to be used until the end of time as a memorial of His redeeming blood. (See Matt. 26:28-29; Mark 14:24-25.) It is widely believed that the wine of the Last Supper was alcoholic for two main reasons: (1) the phrase "fruit of the vine" was allegedly as the functionally equivalent of fermented wine, and (2) the Jews supposedly used only fermented wine at the Passover. This belief is discredited by several important considerations.

**"The Fruit of the Vine."** The language of the Last Supper is significant. In the synoptic gospels Jesus calls the contents of the cup "the fruit of the vine" (Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18). The noun "fruit" (*gennema*) denotes that which is produced in a natural state, just as it is gathered. Fermented wine is not the natural "fruit of the vine" but the unnatural fruit of fermentation and decay. The Jewish historian Josephus, who was a contemporary of the apostles, explicitly calls the three clusters of grapes freshly squeezed in a cup by Pharaoh's cupbearer as "the fruit of the vine".<sup>32</sup> This establishes the fact that the phrase was used to designate the sweet, unfermented juice of the grape.

**"All" to Drink the Cup.** If the contents of the cup were alcoholic wine, Christ could hardly have said: "Drink of it, all of you" (Matt. 26:27; see Mark 14:23; Luke 22:17), particularly in view of the fact that a typical Passover cup of wine contained not just a sip of wine, but about three-quarters of a pint.<sup>33</sup> Christ could hardly have commanded "all" of His followers to drink the cup, if its content were alcoholic wine. There are some to whom alcohol in any form is harmful. There are those to whom the simple taste or smell of alcohol awakens in them a dormant or conquered craving for alcohol. Could Christ, who taught us to pray, "Lead us not into temptation," have made His memorial table a place of irresistible temptation for some and of danger for all?

**The Law of Fermentation.** Further support for the unfer-

mented nature of the Communion wine, is provided by the Mosaic law which required the exclusion of all fermented articles during the Passover feast (Ex. 12:15; 13:6, 7). Jesus understood the meaning of the letter and spirit of the Mosaic law regarding "unfermented things," as indicated by His warning against "the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees" (Matt. 16:6). "Leaven" for Christ represented corrupt nature and teachings, as the disciples later understood (Matt. 16:12). The consistency and beauty of the blood symbolism cannot be fittingly represented by fermented wine, which stands in the Scripture for human depravity and divine indignation. We cannot conceive of Christ bending over in grateful prayer to bless a cup containing alcoholic wine which the Scripture warns us not to look at (Prov. 23:31). A cup that intoxicates is a cup of cursing and not "the cup of blessing" (1 Cor. 10:16); it is "the cup of demons" and not "the cup of the Lord" (1 Cor. 10:21); it is a cup that does not symbolize fittingly the incorruptible and "precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:18, 19). This gives us reason to believe that the cup He "blessed" and gave to His disciples did not contain any "fermented thing" prohibited by Scripture.

**Historical Testimonies.** Jewish and Christian historical testimonies support the use of unfermented wine at Passover/Lord's Supper. Louis Ginzberg (1873-1941), a distinguished Talmudic scholar (for almost forty years he was chairman of the Department of Talmudic and Rabbinic Studies at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America) provides what is perhaps the most exhaustive analysis of the Talmudic references regarding the use of wine in Jewish religious ceremonies. He concludes his investigation by saying:

We have thus proven on the basis of the main passages both of the Babylonian Talmud and that of Jerusalem that unfermented wine may be used lekatehillah [optionally] for Kiddush [the consecration of a festival by means of a cup of wine] and other religious ceremonies outside the temple.<sup>34</sup>

Ginzberg's conclusion is confirmed by *The Jewish Encyclopedia*. Commenting on the time of the Last Supper, it says:

According to the synoptic Gospels, it would appear that on the Thursday evening of the last week of his life Jesus with his disciples entered Jerusalem in order to eat the Passover meal with them in the

sacred city; if so, the wafer and the wine of the mass or the communion service then instituted by him as a memorial would be the unleavened bread and the unfermented wine of the Seder service.<sup>35</sup>

The custom of using unfermented wine at Passover has survived through the centuries not only among some Jews, but also among certain Christian groups and churches. For example, in the apocryphal *Acts and Martyrdom of St. Matthew the Apostle*, which circulated in the third century, a heavenly voice instructs the local Bishop Plato, saying: "Read the Gospel and bring as an offering the holy bread; and having pressed three clusters from the vine into a cup, communicate with me, as the Lord Jesus showed us how to offer up when He rose from the dead on the third day."<sup>36</sup> This provides a clear testimony of the use of freshly pressed grape juice in the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

The practice of pressing preserved grapes directly into the communion cup is attested by councils, popes and theologians, including Thomas Aquinas (A. D. 1225-1274).<sup>37</sup> The use of unfermented wine is well-documented, especially among such Eastern Churches as the Abyssinian Church, the Nestorian Church of Western Asia, the Christians of St. Thomas in India, the Coptic monasteries in Egypt, and the Christians of St. John in Persia, all of which celebrated the Lord's Supper with unfermented wine made either with fresh or dried grapes.<sup>38</sup>

In the light of the foregoing considerations we conclude that the "the fruit of the vine" that Jesus commanded to be used as a memorial of His redeeming blood was not fermented but unfermented and pure grape juice, a fitting emblem of Christ's untainted blood shed for the remission of our sins.

The claim that Christ used and sanctioned the use of alcoholic beverages has been found to be unsubstantiated. The study of the language of the Last Supper, the Passover law of fermentation, the consistency of the symbol and the survival of the use of unfermented grape juice at the Lord's Supper, all indicate that Jesus abstained from using intoxicating substances and gave no sanction to His followers to use them.

### Wine in the Apostolic Church

The importance of the Apostolic Church as a model for Chris-

tian beliefs and practices extends to its teachings on the use of alcoholic beverages. The way the apostles understood, preached, and practiced the teachings of Jesus and of the Old Testament regarding alcoholic beverages is fundamental to determine whether we as Christians today should take our stand on the side of moderation or on the side of abstinence.

There are thirteen specific New Testament references to "wine" (*oinos*) outside the four Gospels,<sup>39</sup> eight of which occur in the book of Revelation. In the Apocalypse, "wine" is used mostly to represent either human depravity or divine retribution. In addition to the texts mentioning "wine" specifically, the New Testament contains more than twenty passages admonishing Christians to be "sober" or "temperate." In most cases these admonitions are directly related to drinking practices. We shall briefly examine first some of the wine-texts and then some of the admonitions to abstinence.

#### Acts 2:13: "Filled with New Wine"

Scarcely had the apostles begun their Messianic proclamation when they were accused of drunkenness. On the day of Pentecost the first company of believers received the gift of tongues enabling them to preach the Gospel in the languages of the people gathered for the feast at Jerusalem. While thousands believed in Christ as a result of the miracle, others began mocking the disciples, saying: "They are filled with new wine" (Acts 2:13).

Some assume that the mockers would not have accused Christians of being drunk unless they had seen some Christians drinking alcoholic wine on previous occasions. The weakness of this reasoning is that it assumes that the accusation of the mockers was based on factual observation of Christian drinking. Mockers, however, do not necessarily base their slander on factual observation. Moreover, if the mockers really wished to charge the disciples with drunkenness, they would have accused them of being filled with wine (*oinos*) and not with grape juice (*gleukos*).

**The Irony of the Charge.** In view of the established meaning of *gleukos* as un-intoxicating grape juice, the irony of the charge is self-evident. What the mockers meant is "These men, too abstemious to touch anything fermented, have made themselves drunk on

grape juice." Or as Ernest Gordon puts it in modern speech, "These guys are drunk on soft drink."<sup>40</sup> One can hardly fail to see, in the irony of the charge that the apostles were drunk on grape juice (their usual beverage), an indirect but important proof of their abstinent lifestyle, and inferentially, of the abstemious lifestyle of their Teacher.

Historical confirmation of this practice is provided by the testimony of Hegesippus, who lived immediately after the apostles. Writing regarding "James, the brother of the Lord, [who] succeeded to the government of the Church in conjunction with the apostles," Hegesippus says: "He was holy from his mother's womb; and he drank no wine nor strong drink, nor did he eat flesh."<sup>41</sup> We can assume that the strict abstinent lifestyle of James, who for a time served as the presiding officer of the Jerusalem Church, served as an example for Apostolic Christians to follow.<sup>42</sup>

#### Ephesians 5:18: "Do not Get Drunk with Wine"

A powerful Biblical indictment against intoxicating wine is found in Ephesians 5:18, where Paul admonishes the Ephesians, saying: "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18, RSV). The passage consists of two major statements placed in contrast (antithesis) to each other: "drunk with wine" versus "filled with the Spirit."

The antithesis suggests that the contrast is not between moderation and excess, but between fullness of wine and fullness of the Spirit. The two statements point to an inherent incompatibility of nature and operation between the sources of such fullness, namely, inebriating wine and the Holy Spirit. Such a mutual incompatibility precludes the sanction for a moderate use of intoxicating wine.

**What is Debauchery?** Paul's admonition "Do not get drunk with wine," is followed by a warning which in the RSV is rendered "for that is debauchery." A literal translation of the Greek text would read: "And do not get drunk with wine, in which [*en ho*] is debauchery [*asotia*, literally, unsavableness]." The RSV rendering of *en ho*, "in which" with "for that" makes the condition of being drunk with wine, rather than wine itself, the subject of "debauchery." This construction of the sentence is not based on any exegetical necessity of the text, but on the assumption that the moderate

use of fermented wine was allowed in New Testament times. Historically, numerous translators and commentators have seen "wine" rather than the state of drunkenness as the cause of debauchery. The reason is the position of *oino* ("with wine"), which in Greek comes immediately before the relative "in which." Support for this is provided also by the fact that the words, "Do not get drunk with wine," as *The Interpreter's Bible* commentary points out, "are cited from Prov. 23:31 (the LXX according to Codex A),"<sup>43</sup> where the text condemns the use of intoxicating wine ("Do not look at wine when it is red"), rather than its abuse.

Among the ancient translations which render Ephesians 5:18 as a condemnation of intoxicating wine itself, mention can be made of the famous Latin Vulgate (about A. D. 400), which reads: "*et nolite inebriari vino, in quo est luxuria*" ("And be not inebriated with wine, in which is voluptuousness"). The connection between *vino* "wine" and *quo* "which" is unmistakable in this Latin translation, because the relative *quo* has the same neuter gender of *vino*, upon which it depends.

**Modern Translations.** Numerous modern translations follow the Vulgate in its faithful literalness. For example, the French Synodal Version reads: "*Ne vous enivrez pas de vin: car le vin porte à la dissolution*" ("Do not inebriate yourselves with wine, for wine leads to dissoluteness"). To remove any possibility for misunderstanding, the translators have repeated the word "wine" in the relative clause. The same clear connection is found in the French translation of David Martin, in the French Version d'Ostervald, in the margin of the New American Standard Bible, in the Robert Young's translation, in the Good News German Bible ("*Die Gute Nachricht*"), in the Italian Protestant version Riveduta by Giovanni Luzzi, as well as in the Italian Catholic Version produced by the Pontifical Biblical Institute.

In the light of the numerous ancient and modern translations that have rendered the relative clause of Ephesians 5:18 as a condemnation not of drunkenness but of wine itself, it would appear that, because of their predilection for wine, some English translators have chosen, as Ernest Gordon puts it, to "save the face of wine while condemning drunkenness."<sup>44</sup>

### 1 Tim 5:23: "Use a Little Wine for the Sake of Your Stomach"

When the subject of wine in the Bible is brought up, the first text which seems to come to mind to most people is 1 Timothy 5:23, where Paul counsels Timothy saying: "No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments." This text has been used during the past nineteen centuries by countless people to justify drinking alcoholic beverages. Thus, it is important for us to establish the nature of Paul's counsel and its application for us today.

**The Nature of Paul's Advice.** Paul's advice to Timothy must be regarded first of all as an expression of paternal concern, not as a mandatory injunction. The apostle is not ordering his beloved son in the Gospel to drink wine freely; rather he advises him to use a little wine "for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments"

The prudent caution of the apostle's language is most significant. He does not say, "No longer drink water," but rather, "No longer drink only water." He does not say, "Drink wine," but rather "use a little wine with water." He does not say, "for the physical pleasure of your belly," but rather, "for the medical need of your stomach." Even if the "wine" were fermented, this text does not support its regular use as a beverage in any way. He did not say to Timothy, "Drink . . ." but "Take . . ." The verb "take" is used by a doctor when prescribing the dosage of a medication to a patient. Similarly, the adjective "little" implies a moderate use of wine. This sounds more like a doctor's prescription to a patient than a general principle for all people.

**Timothy Had Been an Abstainer.** Another fact often ignored is that the advice "No longer drink only water" implies that Timothy, like the priests and Nazirites, had abstained until that time from both fermented and unfermented wines, presumably in accordance with the instructions and example of Paul. Earlier in the same epistle, Paul tells him to require of a Christian bishop to be not only abstinent (*nephalion*), but also a non-participant at drinking places and parties (*me paroinon*, 1 Tim. 3:2, 3). It is reasonable to assume that the apostle would not have instructed Timothy to require abstinence of church leaders without first teaching him such a principle. The fact that Timothy had been

drinking only water implies then that he had been following his master's counsel scrupulously.

The abstinence of a Christian minister was presumably based on the Old Testament legislation prohibiting priests from using intoxicating drinks (Lev. 10:9-10). The natural feeling would be that a Christian minister should be no less holy than a Jewish priest, especially since the reason for the Mosaic law remained the same: "You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean; and you are to teach the people of Israel all the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them by Moses" (Lev. 10:10, 11). The principle of abstinence was not violated by Paul's recommendation because the use of a little wine was recommended for medicinal purposes rather than for the pleasure of the belly.

**The Kind of Wine.** It is assumed generally that the wine Paul recommended to Timothy was alcoholic. But this is by no means certain, for two reasons. First, because the term *oinos* ("wine"), as we have shown, was used in a generic way to denote either fermented or unfermented wine. Second, because there are historical testimonies attesting the use of unfermented wine for medical purposes.

Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) recommended the use of a sweet grape juice, called *glukus* in Greek, because, he wrote, "though called wine [*oinos*], it has not the effect of wine . . . and does not intoxicate like ordinary wine."<sup>45</sup> Athenaeus, the Grammarian (A.D. 280), specifically counsels the use of unfermented "sweet wine" (*glukon oinon*) for stomach disorders. He writes: "Let him take sweet wine, either mixed with water or warmed, especially that kind called *protropos*, the sweet Lesbian *glukus*, as being good for the stomach; for sweet wine [*oinos*] does not make the head heavy."<sup>46</sup> Here we have advice which sounds strikingly similar to Paul's, with the difference that Athenaeus qualifies the kind of wine recommended, namely, the sweet wine, called "lesbian" (*effoeminatum*), because its alcoholic potency had been removed.

Similar advice regarding the medical use of wine is given by Pliny (A. D. 79), a contemporary of Paul and author of the celebrated *Natural History*. He recommends using a boiled, unfermented wine called *adynamon* for sick persons "for whom it is feared that wine

may be harmful."<sup>47</sup> He also recommends avoiding the side effects of alcohol by using wines whose alcoholic content were removed through filtration: "Wines are most beneficial when all their potency has been overcome by the strainer."<sup>48</sup>

In light of these testimonies, it is reasonable to assume that the wine recommended by Paul to Timothy may well have been unfermented. Ellen White supports this conclusion, saying: "Paul advised Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach's sake and oft infirmities, but he meant the unfermented juice of the grape. He did not advise Timothy to take what the Lord had prohibited."<sup>49</sup>

### Admonitions to Abstinence

The apostolic admonitions to abstinence are expressed through the Greek verb *nepho* and the adjective *nephalios*. (Used in 1 Thess. 5:6-8; 1 Pet. 1:13; 4:7; 5:8; 2 Tim. 4:5; 1 Tim. 3:2, 11; Titus 2:2). There is noteworthy unanimity among Greek lexicons on the primary meaning of the verb *nepho* as "to abstain from wine" and of the adjective *nephalios* as "abstinent, without wine."<sup>50</sup>

This meaning is attested in the writing of Josephus and Philo, who were contemporaries of Paul and Peter. In his *Antiquities of the Jews*, Josephus writes of the priests: "Those who wear the sacerdotal garments are without spot and eminent for their purity and sobriety [*nephalioi*], not being permitted to drink wine as long as they wear those garments."<sup>51</sup> Similarly, Philo explains in his *Special Laws* that the priest must officiate as *nephalios*, that is, totally abstinent from wine, because he has to carry out the directions of the law and must be in a position to act as the final earthly court.<sup>52</sup>

If Josephus, Philo, and a host of other writers used *nepho/nephalios* with the primary meaning of "abstaining from wine," we have reasons to believe that Paul and Peter also used these terms with the same meaning. This conclusion is supported, as we shall see, by the context in which these terms are used. Yet these words have been usually translated figuratively in the sense of being "temperate, sober, steady." Such inaccurate translation has misled many sincere Christians into believing that the Bible teaches moderation in the use of alcoholic beverages, rather than abstinence from them. Let us examine some of the apostolic admonitions to abstinence.

**1 Thessalonians 5:6-8.** In his letter to the Thessalonians, Paul admonishes the believers to "be sober" in view of Christ's sudden and unexpected coming, saying: "So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober [*nephomen*]. For those who sleep sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But, since we belong to the day, let us be sober [*nephomen*], and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation" (1 Thess. 5:6-8).

This passage consists of a number of contrasting parallels: light and darkness, day and night, waking and sleeping, to be sober and to be drunk. In light of the contrasts between the sons of the day who are sober and those of the night who are drunk, it is evident that the exhortation to "be sober" means not merely to be mentally vigilant but primarily to be physically abstinent.

This conclusion is supported by the connection between sobriety and wakefulness: "Let us keep awake and be sober" (vs. 6). The first verb, *gregoromen*, refers to mental watchfulness and the second, *nephomen*, to physical abstinence. Otherwise it would be a needless repetition: "Let us keep awake and be awake." It is evident that Paul connects mental watchfulness with physical abstinence, because the two go together. Mental vigilance in the New Testament is often connected with physical abstinence. This will become clearer as we consider the passages that follow.

**1 Peter 1:13.** The admonition to physical abstinence, expressed through the verb *nepho*, occurs three times in the first epistle of Peter (1:13; 4:7; 5:8). It is noteworthy that in these texts, Peter's exhortation to abstinence is given in the context of readiness for the imminent return of Christ. This implies that Peter, like Paul, grounds his call to a life of abstinence and holiness in the certainty and imminence of Christ's return. The first usage of *nepho* by Peter occurs in 1 Peter 1:13: "Therefore gird up your minds, be sober [*nephontes*], set your hope fully upon the grace that is coming to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Peter correlates mental vigilance ("gird up your minds") with physical abstinence ("be sober").

The admonition to "be abstinent" assumes a radical form in 1 Peter 1:13 because it is followed immediately by the adverb *teleios*, which means "perfectly" or "completely." The correct translation

then is, "be completely or perfectly abstinent." Most translators, presumably because of their predilection for drinking, have chosen to make *teleios* a modifier of the following verb *elpisate* ("set your hope"), thus, rendering it "set your hope fully" (RSV) or "hope to the end" (KJV). But the idiom used elsewhere in the New Testament for "to the end" is not *teleios* per se, but a compound such as *mechri telous* or *heos telous* (Heb. 3:6, 14; 1 Cor. 1:8; 2 Cor. 1:13).

It is noteworthy that the Vulgate, Jerome's famous Latin translation which has served as the official Catholic Bible throughout the centuries, translates *teleios* as a modifier of *nephontes*, thus, "*sobrii perfecte*" ("perfectly sober"). In my view Jerome's translation reflects accurately the intent of Peter, who repeats his call to abstinence twice again in his epistle. Thus, the correct translation should be: "Therefore gird up your minds, being wholly abstinent, set your hope upon the grace that is coming to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

**1 Peter 4:7.** Peter's second use of *nepho* occurs in 1 Peter 4:7: "The end of all things is at hand; therefore keep sane [*sophronesate*] and sober [*nepsate*] for your prayers." Here again Peter exhorts Christians to keep mentally vigilant and physically abstinent. The meaning of *nepho* as abstinence from wine is suggested also by the context, where Peter contrasts the past lifestyle of "licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry" (1 Pet. 4:3) with the new lifestyle of temperance and abstinence. The passage may be paraphrased as follows: "The end of all things is at hand; therefore be sober in mind and abstemious in life in order that you might be able to maintain a healthy devotional life at this critical time."

**1 Peter 5:8.** Peter's third usage of *nepho* occurs in 1 Peter 5:8: "Be sober [*nepsate*], be watchful [*gregoresate*]. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some one to devour." As in the previous two instances, Peter associates mental vigilance with physical abstinence, because the two are mutually dependent. Intoxicating drinks diminish the power of conscience and reason, thus weakening inhibitions to evil-doing. The ultimate result is that the Devil is better able "to devour," literally, "drink down" (*katapino*) such persons.

The contrast between *nepsate* (from *ne piein*, "not to drink")

and *katapiein* (from *kata piein* "to drink down") has been recognized by Adam Clarke, who comments:

It is not every one that he can swallow down. Those who are sober and vigilant are proof against him; these he may not swallow down. Those who are drunk with the cares of this world, and are unwatchful, these he may swallow down. There is a beauty in this verse, and striking apposition between the first and last words, which I think have not been noticed; Be sober, *nepsate*, from *ne*, not, and *piein*, to drink—do not swallow down—and the word *katapien*, from *kata*, down, and *piein*, to drink. If you swallow strong drink down, the devil will swallow you down. Hear this, ye drunkards, toppers, tipplers, or by whatsoever name ye are known in society, or among your fellow-sinners, strong drink is not only your way to the devil, but the devil's way into you. Ye are such as the devil particularly may swallow down.<sup>53</sup>

Summing up, the five usages of *nepho*, two by Paul and three by Peter, all show an amazing consistency in urging both mental vigilance and physical abstinence. It also is significant that all five admonitions to abstinence are given in the context of the preparation for the imminent return of Christ.

**Nephalios as Physical Abstinence.** The adjective *nephalios* is used three times by Paul in his description of the qualifications desired of bishops, women, and older men. The first two instances occur in 1 Timothy 3:2, 11: "Now a bishop must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate [*nephalion*], sensible [*sophrona*], dignified, hospitable, an apt teacher, no drunkard [*me paroinon*]. . . . The women likewise must be serious, no slanderers, but temperate [*nephalious*], faithful in all things." The third instance is found in Titus 2:2, "Bid the older men be temperate [*nephalious*], serious, sensible [*sophronas*], sound in faith, in love and in steadfastness."

Earlier we noticed that the adjective *nephalios* is used by contemporary authors such as Philo and Josephus to denote abstinence from wine. This literal interpretation is supported by the fact that in 1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 2:2 the adjective *nephalios* occurs together with *sophron*, the first to denote physical abstinence and the second mental vigilance. The connection between the two requires a literal interpretation of *nephalios*, as abstinence from wine.

**"No Drunkard."** Some argue that the literal interpretation of *nephalios* as abstinent is contradicted by *me paroinos*, rendered "no drunkard" by the Revised Standard Version. Their reasoning is that Paul could not have enjoined a bishop first to be abstinent and then "no drunkard," that is, moderate in the use of wine. This apparent contradiction is resolved by recognizing that the meaning of *paroinos* goes beyond "addicted to wine, drunken"<sup>54</sup> to the complementary idea of being *para* "near" *oinos* "wine," that is, near a place where wine is consumed. "The ancient *paroinos*," as Lees and Burns explain, "was a man accustomed to attend drinking parties, and, as a consequence, to become intimately associated with strong drink."<sup>55</sup>

Albert Barnes, a respected New Testament commentator, explains the meaning of *paroinos*, saying:

The Greek word (*paroinos*) . . . means, properly, by wine; that is, spoken of what takes place by or over wine, as revelry, drinking-songs, etc. Then it denotes, as it does here, one who sits by wine; that is, who is in the habit of drinking it. . . . It means that one who is in the habit of drinking wine, or who is accustomed to sit with those who indulge in it, should not be admitted to the ministry. The way in which the apostle mentions the subject here would lead us fairly to suppose that he did not mean to commend its use in any sense; that he regarded it as dangerous and that he would wish the ministers of religion to avoid it altogether.<sup>56</sup>

The meaning of *paroinos* as "near wine," that is, near a drinking place, is supported by ancient and modern Greek lexicons. The *Lexicon Graeci Testamenti Alphabeticum*, published in 1660, defines *paroinos* in Greek and Latin as *para to oino, apud vinum*, which may be translated "near or in the presence of wine."<sup>57</sup> Liddell and Scott define the related word *paroinios* as "befitting a drinking party."<sup>58</sup>

Understood in this sense, *me paroinos* does not weaken *nephalios*. On the contrary, it strengthens it. What Paul is saying is that a bishop must be not only abstinent, but he must also withhold his presence and sanction from places and associations which could tempt his abstinence or that of others. This fits well with Paul's admonition in 1 Corinthians 5:11, "I wrote to you not to associate with any one who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of immorality or greed, or is



an idolater, reviler, *drunkard*, or robber—not even to eat with such a one.”<sup>59</sup>

The fundamental reason given by Paul for living abstinent and godly lives is eschatological:

For the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world, awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds (Titus 2:11-14, RSV).

Healthful and holy living is commended in the Scripture not merely for the sake of personal health and goodness, but primarily for the sake of God's desire to dwell within us in this present life (see 1 Cor. 3:16, 17; 6:13) and to fellowship with us in the life to come. It is this hope of being ready to receive Christ, and to be received by Him on the day of His glorious appearing, that should motivate every Christian to “purify himself as he is pure” (1 John 3:3). It is to this hope that Peter appeals when he urges mental vigilance and physical abstinence in the three texts examined earlier. His admonition to “gird up your minds, be completely abstinent” is followed immediately by the exhortation “set your hope upon the grace that is coming to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:13, RSV). For Christians who believe in the certainty and imminence of Christ's Return, the apostolic admonitions to abstain from intoxicating beverages, assumes added significance: it represents a tangible response to God's invitation to make concrete preparation for the second coming of Christ.

### Conclusion

The Biblical teachings regarding the use of alcoholic beverages can be summarized in one sentence: the Scripture is consistent in teaching moderation in the use of wholesome, unfermented beverages and abstinence from the use of intoxicating fermented beverages. The practical implication of this conclusion can also be stated in one sentence: when we accept the Biblical teaching that drinking alcoholic beverages is not only physically harmful but also morally

wrong, we will feel compelled not only to abstain from intoxicating substances, but also to help others to do the same.

### Endnotes

1 The figures are provided by the 1986 report of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, as quoted in “Coming to Grips with Alcoholism,” *U.S. News & World Report* (November 30, 1987):56.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 57.

3 “Carter Will Restore Confidence, Graham Says,” *Miami Herald* (December 26, 1976), section A, p. 18.

4 The survey is found in “The Meaning of ‘Wine,’” *Wine in the Bible: A Biblical Study on the Use of Alcoholic Beverages*, chap. 2.

5 Aristotle, *Metereologica* 388. b. 9-13. See also *Metereologica* 388. a. 34 which states: “There is more than one kind of liquid called wine [oinos] and different kinds behave differently. For new wine contains more earth than old, and so thickens most under the influence of heat, but solidifies less under the influence of cold.” The reference to the thickening of new wine under the influence of heat implies that new wine was preserved unfermented by boiling it down.

6 On a similar vein in *Metereologica* 384. a. 4-5, Aristotle says: “For some kinds of wine [oinos], for example must [gleukos], solidify when boiled”

7 Ernest Gordon, *Christ, the Apostles and Wine. An Exegetical Study* (Philadelphia, 1947), p. 14.

8 “Wine,” *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1906 ed., vol. 12, p. 533.

9 Cited by Louis Ginzberg, “A Response to the Question Whether Unfermented Wine May Be Used in Jewish Ceremonies,” *American Jewish Year Book*, 1923, p. 409.

10 My analysis of these texts is found in *Wine in the Bible*, pp. 67-69.

11 Emphasis supplied.

12 Pliny, *Natural History* 14, 11, 85.

13 My analysis of the Biblical teachings on the consequences of drinking intoxicating wine is found in *Wine in the Bible*, pp. 95-101.

14 The testimonies of ancient writers regarding the art of preserving fermented and unfermented wine are cited and analyzed in *Wine in the Bible*, Chapter 4.

15 Marcus Cato, *On Agriculture* 23, trans. William Davis Hooper, *The Loeb Classical Library* (Cambridge, Mass., 1960).

16 For documentation and discussion of each of the four methods of preserving grape juice unfermented, see *Wine in the Bible*, pp. 114-127.

17 Columella, *On Agriculture* 12, 19, 1, trans. E. S. Forster and Edward H. Heffner, *The Loeb Classical Library* (Cambridge, Mass., 1955).

18 *Ibid.*, 12, 26, 1.

19 “Passover,” *Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature*, 1845 ed., vol. 2, p. 477.

20 Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 7, 8, 4.

21 See, for example, *Abodah Zarah* 30a, trans. I. Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud* (London, 1936), pp. 148, 149.

22 Pliny, *Natural History* 23, 24, trans. W. H. S. Jones, *The Loeb Classical Library* (Cambridge, Mass., 1961).

23 Plutarch, *Symposiac* 8, 7.

- 24 See *Sotah* 48a; also *Mishna Sotah* 9, 11.
- 25 Cited in William Patton, *Bible Wines, Laws of Fermentation* (Oklahoma City, n. d.), p. 83. Emphasis supplied.
- 26 Herbert Preisker, "Methe, Methuo, Methuskomai," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Grand Rapids, 1967), vol. 4, p. 547, emphasis supplied.
- 27 "It must be observed," notes Leon C. Field, "that the adjective used to describe the wine made by Christ is not *agathos*, good, simply, but *kalos*, that which is morally excellent or befitting. The term is suggestive of Theophrastus' characterization of un-intoxicating wine as moral (*ethikos*) wine" (*Oinos: A Discussion of the Bible Wine Question* [New York, 1883], p. 57).
- 28 Alexander Balman Bruce, *The Synoptic Gospels in The Expositor's Greek Testament* (Grand Rapids, 1956), p. 500. A similar argument is presented by Ernest Gordon (n. 10), p. 20.
- 29 Columella, *On Agriculture* 12, 29.
- 30 Ernest Gordon (n. 7), p. 20.
- 31 *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- 32 Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 2, 5, 2.
- 33 According to J. B. Lightfoot, each of the four Passover cups contained "not less than the fourth part of a quarter of a *hin*, besides what water was mingled with it" (*The Temple-Service and the Prospect of the Temple* [London, 1833], p. 151). A *hin* contained twelve English pints, so that the four cups would amount to three-quarters of a pint each.
- 34 Louis Ginzberg (n. 9), p. 414.
- 35 "Jesus," *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1904 edition, vol. 5, p. 165.
- 36 *Acts and Martyrdom of St. Matthew the Apostle*, eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Grand Rapids, 1978), vol. 8, pp. 532, 533.
- 37 For references and discussion, see *Wine in the Bible*, pp. 168, 169.
- 38 Information about these churches is provided by G. W. Samson, *The Divine Law as to Wines* (New York, 1880), pp. 205-217. See also Leon C. Field, *Oinos: A Discussion of the Bible Wine Question* (New York, 1883), pp. 91-94; Frederic R. Lees and Dawson Burns, *The Temperance Bible-Commentary* (London, 1894), pp. 280-282.
- 39 Rom. 14:21; Eph. 5:18; 1 Tim. 3:8; 5:23; Titus 2:3; Rev. 6:6; 14:8; 14:10; 16:19; 17:2; 18:3, 13; 19:15.
- 40 Ernest Gordon, (n. 7), p. 20.
- 41 As quoted by Eusebius, *Church History* 2, 23, 4, eds. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids, 1971), vol. 1, p. 125.
- 42 An investigation into the lifestyle of such Jewish Christian sects as the Ebionites, the Nazarenes, the Elkesiates, and the Encratites, might provide considerable support for abstinence from fermented wine in the Apostolic Church. Some information in this regard is provided by G. W. Samson, *The Divine Law as to Wines* (New York, 1880), pp. 197-210. The value of his research, however, is diminished by the lack of accurate references.
- 43 *The Interpreter's Bible* (New York, 1970), vol. 11, p. 714.
- 44 Ernest Gordon (n. 7), p. 31.
- 45 Aristotle, *Metereologica* 387.b. 9-13.
- 46 Athenaeus, *Banquet* 24 2, 24.

- 47 Pliny, *Natural History* 14, 18.
- 48 *Ibid.*, 23, 24.
- 49 Ellen G. White, "The Marriage in Cana of Galilee," *The Signs of the Times* (Sept. 6, 1899): 6.
- 50 See, for example, articles on "Nepho," G. W. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1961); James Donnegan, *A New Greek and English Lexicon*, 1847 edition; Thomas S. Green, *A Greek-English Lexicon to the New Testament*, 1892 edition; E. Robinson, *A Greek and English Lexicon of the New Testament* (New York, 1850); G. Abbott-Smith, *A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament*, 1937 edition; and on "Nephalios," Hesychius of Alexandria, *Hesychii Alexandri Lexicon*, 1858 edition; Demetrios C. S. Byzantios, *Lexicon Epitomou tes Ellenikes Glosses*, 1939 edition.
- 51 Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 3, 12, 2, trans. William Whiston, *Josephus Complete Works* (Grand Rapids, 1974), p. 81.
- 52 Philo, *De Specialibus Legibus* 4, 183.
- 53 Adam Clarke, *The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* (New York, 1938), vol. 2, p. 869.
- 54 "Paroinos," Henry G. Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 1968 edition.
- 55 Lees and Burns (n. 38), p. 367.
- 56 Albert Barnes, *Notes, Explanatory and Practical on the Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon* (New York, 1873), p. 140.
- 57 "Par-oinos," *Lexicon Graeci Testamenti Alphabeticum*, 1660 edition.
- 58 "Paroinos," in both Henry G. Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 1968 edition; and G. Giannakopoulou and E. Siapenou, *Ariston Ellenoggaikon Lexicon*, 1971 edition.
- 59 RSV, emphasis supplied.

## ELLEN WHITE'S ROLE IN MINISTERING TO GOD'S END-TIME REMNANT

By Paul A. Gordon  
Ellen G. White Estate

The Bible presents only a small sample of world history from the time it was written, largely focusing on the experience of the chosen people of God. There were a lot of things happening among other nations that do not get even a passing nod from the Bible writers. Scripture might be more accurately described as a chronicle of the controversy between good and evil in history. Ellen White supports this concept, when she says:

In the annals of human history, the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as if dependent on the will and prowess of man; the shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, above, behind, and through all the play and counterplay of human interest and power and passion, the agencies of the All-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will (*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 499, 500).

More than coincidentally, these comments are made in connection with the grandiose plans of Nebuchadnezzar to establish a "golden" kingdom in Babylon that would last forever. Ancient Babylon stood only 55 miles south of Baghdad, Iraq, in the Euphrates river valley. Saddam Hussein has made similar grandiose plans—in the same area of the world, today. But God still is in

control. When we draw the curtain of Bible prophecy aside, we discover that all such plans are doomed to failure.

Ellen White says much the same thing about her writings on the great controversy theme as she does about the Bible:

To unfold the scenes of the great controversy between truth and error; to reveal the wiles of Satan, and the means by which he may be successfully resisted; to present a satisfactory solution of the great problem of evil, shedding such a light upon the origin and final disposition of sin as to make fully manifest the justice and benevolence of God in all His dealings with His creatures; and to show the holy unchanging nature of His law, is the object of this book (*The Great Controversy*, p. xii).

For God's own reasons, the lives of some people and events of Bible times are recorded in great detail, while others scarcely get a verse or two. Some might think that the detailed chronicles are the most important. But this is not a satisfactory conclusion.

How can we say, for example, that the two chapter creation account in Genesis 1-2 is less important than the almost endless details about the Kings of Israel and Judah? The accounts of the Bible prophets also seem to be uneven. There were the little known prophets, who wrote no books. Then there were others, like Samuel, Daniel, and Elijah, who either wrote major messages, or received detailed coverage. Yet, each prophet received the prophetic call and was given an important work to do.

In the New Testament, the disciple John concluded his account of the life of Christ with a confession:

And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written (John 21:25).

In our time, the life, experience, and writings of Ellen White have been preserved in large quantity. From her prolific pen have come about 100,000 pages that we have on hand. A great host of witnesses, who worked with her and knew her, give additional details of her work. Sometimes the volume of the record seems almost overwhelming. But even at that, we do not have everything. In 1867, a question was asked:

Your last vision was given December, 1865. Many inquire, "If the

visions are so important for the church, why so long before the subject of Health Reform was brought out?

Her answer:

I have written thousands of pages since that time of personal testimonies which most of the people know nothing about. I have written hundreds of letters relative to the establishment of a Health Institute of which still more are ignorant (*Review and Herald*, Oct. 8, 1867).

We do not have a single one of these testimonies and letters written during this brief time period. All of those personal testimonies were hand written. No copy is preserved today. Many of the Bible prophets wrote more than we know, too. But, again, the amount written or preserved does not necessarily determine the relative importance of any prophet. Because we live closer to Ellen White's lifetime, and because we have methods for preserving what she wrote, we have a larger quantity available than for any Bible prophet.

Every prophet was important. God does nothing in a haphazard way. When He needed to reveal Himself to the human family, He most often called upon a prophet to bring a message. Amos says it most clearly: "Surely the Sovereign Lord does nothing without revealing His plan to His servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7, NIV). The visions provided the major substance of the prophetic message. Whether they were making predictions or enunciating principles of right living, prophets always spoke by delegated authority from God. How else could Noah have preached about a coming flood? Or how could Paul have preached with such conviction about truth? Or how could Jeremiah have said, in almost every chapter of his book, "This is the word of the Lord?"

Ellen White was just as specific: "I have no special wisdom in myself; I am only an instrument in the Lord's hands to do the work He has set for me to do" (*Selected Messages*, Bk. 3, p. 46).

She was told in vision: "In all your communications, speak as one to whom the Lord has spoken. He is your authority" (*Life Sketches*, p. 433).

She also tells us: "My work . . . bears the stamp of God or the

stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter" (*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 230).

Note two important facts in the above statements. First, the prophet is modest about herself. Second, she is absolutely sure of her message. Bible prophets demonstrate the same characteristics.

### Ellen White's Role

Ellen White spoke about her role for the end time remnant repeatedly. In her first statement of understanding of her work, she said quite directly that the Bible "promised to give visions in the last days, not for a new vote of faith, but for the comfort of His people and to correct those who err from Bible truth" (*Early Writings*, p. 78). What was her work designed to accomplish?

1. *It was to be a message of comfort.* Ellen White's first vision, in December, 1844, showed her that Jesus was still leading the disappointed Adventists. Between 1844 and 1851, alone, Ellen White had eleven visions in which she saw Jesus as our High Priest, interceding in the heavenly sanctuary. She was shown that when that work was finished, He would come the second time to the earth. These visions obviously provided a backdrop for her husband's comments, when speaking of the disappointed Adventists, soon after 1844:

We have witnessed the flowing tears . . . as the literal Sanctuary in heaven has been pointed out, and the literal Jesus shown to be standing before the mercy seat (that is over the ark of the Ten Commandments) still pleading His blood for the errors of His people (*Review and Herald*, Feb. 17, 1852).

Contrary to what some may claim, Adventists continue to take comfort from this fact. We have placed our confidence in Christ's blood for assurance of eternal life. And both the cross and His intercession in heaven are necessary. Ellen White puts it simply: "The intercession of Christ is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 489).

The first passover, when Israel left Egyptian slavery, teaches the same truth. The Israelites were instructed to kill a lamb. But they also were required to sprinkle the blood on the doorpost. Without that sprinkling, the firstborn in the family would die.

Comfort is given on the personal level as well as for the church

as a whole. Six months after her husband, James, died, Ellen White wrote to a newly widowed friend:

My dear afflicted sister, I know by experience what you are passing through. I have been going over the road with you that I have so recently traveled (Letter 1e, 1882).

Again, even in the midst of strong correction to a girl with many problems, Ellen White did not forget to give comfort: "I do not consider your case hopeless; if I did, my pen would not be tracing these lines. In the strength of God you can redeem the past" (*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 562).

2. *It was to contain messages of correction for "those who err from Bible truth."* We might be tempted to say: "Of course. Why not?" But there is quite a difference between false and genuine prophets. Genuine prophets give correction, regardless of the object of the correction. The false usually focus on flattery and praise. Their correction is either erratic or non-existent. Ellen White's messages repeatedly kept the church unified in belief and practice. They still do this by bringing us back to God's Word.

3. *It was intended to bring confirmation and support for truth.* The sanctuary is not the only doctrine where Ellen White's visions provided help. From the beginning, there was a great temple of truth to build. She and her husband, James, met with the "scattered flock" in Sabbath conferences in 1847-1849. In these conferences, those present studied from the Bible to see what it taught. Finally, the results of their study was confirmed by vision. (See *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, pp. 97-99, for example.)

4. *It helps defend the faith.* The first defection from the Adventist church occurred in 1854, before we had even taken our name. It was fostered by the "Messenger Party." Interestingly enough, Ellen White seemed to welcome their final separation from the church. When they formed their own organization, she perhaps smiled as she said: "A place is now open for all such where they can go and find pasture with those of their kind" (*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 122).

Self-appointed reformers continue to our day. Many of them call for Adventists to "come out of Babylon"—inferring that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is Babylon. But this is not what the "shaking" and "purging" are all about. The Advent movement is to

continue to the end. It is the rebels that are to be purged out. Taylor Bunch, many years ago, made this point:

Just as the Lord "purged" the Exodus movement by shaking out the rebels, so He will purge modern Israel of its rebels by "shaking" or "spewing" them out. In those two parallel movements the Lord does not call the faithful out in order to purify the church, but He purges or shakes out the rebels (*The Exodus Movement in Type and Antitype*, p. 5).

Throughout her ministry, Ellen White often was called upon to deal with extremes, offshoots, and heresy. Her counsel contains principles that still are valuable help for similar problems today.

An understanding of "the holy flesh" fanaticism, around the turn of the century, for example, helps us to know that true religion does not consist of a bedlam of emotion and noise. The counsel regarding pantheism, at about the same time, still has meaning in dealing with the "new age" movement and other so-called religious philosophies in our time.

5. *The counsel given has value for individual needs.* Just as the Bible writers did, Ellen White wrote on typical needs. All of us can learn from what has been written to others. Ellen White was shown in vision, that she should publish some of these personal testimonies:

If one is reproved for a special wrong, brethren and sisters should carefully examine themselves to see wherein they have failed and wherein they have been guilty of the same sin (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 659).

This personal correction reached to the major leaders in the church. In 1872, J. N. Andrews was laboring on a detailed response to those who opposed the seventh-day Sabbath. Ellen White's counsel to him, although written long ago, sounds applicable to this day:

Long, labored arguments will interest but a few, for the people have to read as they run. Plain, pointed arguments, standing out as mileposts, will do more toward convincing minds generally than will a large array of arguments which cover a great deal of ground, but which none but investigating minds will have interest to follow. Our success will be in reaching common minds (*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 39).

While Andrews was spending long hours trying to answer every objection, she cautioned him, in words we still can understand:

Satan will stir up opponents enough to keep their [defenders of the faith] pens constantly employed, while other branches of the work will be left to suffer (Ibid).

6. *The messages contain counsel for preachers, teachers, medical personnel, and other full-time church employees.* There is a large amount of counsel in this area. It always will have practical value. Ellen White calls for high personal standards of conduct and positive attitudes between administrators and those working under their direction. She defends the abused. Methods of work, in preaching, teaching, healing, and many other areas, are clearly delineated.

Ellen White was even a major advocate of a church retirement program in order that those who had given their lifetimes in service, would not be dependent upon the charity of others. The present retirement plan can be traced directly to her encouragement.

7. *It encouraged organization, with all of its ramifications.* There was a need for organization of the church from its beginning. In a very direct way, publishing, medical facilities, and schools became a part of the organizing process. And there was a need for a financial structure. Systematic benevolence was followed by tithing. A mission work was begun, and subsequent re-organization so that each area of the world could take care of its own governance needs. The prophetic voice always played a significant part in developing a strong working organization.

8. *It calls us to a deep spiritual experience.* Ellen White's most circulated book is *Steps to Christ*. It teaches in a practical way how we can come to Jesus and how to live the Christian life. The prophetic messenger took a leading role in advancing belief in righteousness by faith. Her counsels on victorious Christian experience surpass anything written, outside of the Bible. Yet this aspect of her writing might be the least appreciated or known, especially among Adventists.

9. *It encourages correct standards and lifestyle.* Response to the counsel given involves reform in many areas. There is clear guidance for choosing a life work or a marriage partner. And there is counsel for all family related needs, too. Adventists have had

healthful living principles for decades, that are just now being understood and appreciated in the world around us. Ellen White's pen has given us an advantage in educational concepts, in dress standards, and a general lifestyle that is unequalled. This aspect of her writing probably is widely discussed among Adventists, but is less uniformly accepted.

10. *It provides insight into the future.* Future events to expect, how to prepare for Christ's second advent, and how to live in this judgment time are presented clearly. The need for the Holy Spirit and His power for living our lives and finishing the preaching of the gospel, is invaluable.

There are two sides to these insights. They bring both *information* and *preparation*. We can discover what is going to happen. We can also discover what must be done to prepare for it now, before probation closes and Jesus returns to earth.

Incidentally, the major part of Ellen White's work did not deal with predictions. It has been estimated that less than five percent of her writings contain a predictive element. Her writing is more important for its insight and understanding, than for merely being aware of what is going to happen in the future.

There is a major difference between false and genuine prophets on this very point. False prophets make predictions their major claim for attention. But often their predictions contain no call for change or reform. The genuine prophet, in contrast, speaks about the future in the framework of repentance and reformation.

11. *It calls for commitment.* This commitment includes more than becoming a church member. It involves understanding how to use our talents and gifts to help hasten the advent of Christ. We are given ample counsel about stewardship of our time, money, and talents.

12. Finally, *it is both historical and timeless.* We need to be able to tell the difference between these two sides of Ellen White's work. Times change, as do circumstances. This is an important reason for reading both the Bible and the writings of Ellen White, looking for principles.

We must not allow the historical to overshadow the timeless. If the Bible is relegated only to telling history, it become no more than an interesting story book. It will only gather dust on the shelf.

Its stories and its history must be brought into a present perspective. We need to know that the experiences of its characters have lessons for our lives today.

The same can be said for Ellen White's writing. It, too, will only become a dust catcher if we think of it merely as interesting history. In some ways we tend to be harder on the more recent gift than on the ancient. The Pharisees of Christ's day were, too. They professed loyalty to the prophets "of old" while at the same time they were plotting the death of Christ.

### Appreciating the Prophetic Gift

At the beginning of this study we made the point that the Bible only records a sample of what was happening. What we have has been preserved under divine direction. It is a record of God and His special people, His intervention in their behalf, and the eventual resolution of the controversy between good and evil.

The Bible considers right or wrong by means of ethical rules and principles. And the modern prophetic voice does the same:

The Word of God abounds in general principles for the formation of correct habits of living, and the Testimonies, general and personal, have been calculated to call . . . attention more especially to these principles (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 664).

John saw the end-time remnant church as having "the testimony of Jesus Christ"—the Spirit of Prophecy. If we understand all of the prophetic symbols and times correctly, we are in that end time.

Have we had a prophet in our midst, or is it all a hoax? I believe we have had one, and I rejoice.

No apologies need to be made for the presence of the prophetic gift in the church known as the "end-time remnant." Our church's earliest leaders pointed to the prophetic gift among them, as one further evidence that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the "remnant" spoken of in Scripture. Further, they saw it as an evidence that the beliefs of the church are Bible-based. After all, the Bible predicted through its last writer, that the remnant would be blessed with a prophetic ministry.

## READERS' RESPONSES

### A Final Word from the Editor

Leo R. Van Dolson

The large number of letters received in response to our last issue has been encouraging. Two of the writers mention that they not only read, but carefully study each issue from cover to cover. Allow me to take this opportunity to thank our readers who have responded so favorably. However, the ATS executive committee has taken an action that we should not use space to publish letters to the editors, unsolicited articles, book reviews, or extended responses to published articles. Because of limited funding and the necessity of keeping the number of pages in the journal to a minimum, it is our policy at present to publish only papers presented at international society meetings. But that does not mean that we do not enjoy receiving your reaction. These reactions help us understand better what we might do to be more helpful to you in what we do print. Even the two negative letters I have received, prompt me to point out once again that the views expressed are those of the people making the presentations, not of the editors or the society. My suggestion would be that, if any of you readers wish clarification or have questions for the authors, you write directly to them.

For the most part, the papers published in this issue were presented at the Adventist Theological Society meeting in New Orleans on November 16, 17, 1990. That means we are a year behind in publishing. The committee has decided that we will do our best to catch up by putting articles in this journal and the next one from subsequent meetings. For that reason, three of the articles in this journal are papers that were presented at the international ATS meeting at Keene, Texas on March 7-10, 1991. These include the articles by Richard Davidson, Paul Gordon and Jack Blanco. Unfor-

tunately, there have been a few presentations that were not received from the presenters by the editors for inclusion in this publication. Perhaps we'll be able to include these in future issues.

Bill and Genevieve Bothe reported attending a club meeting in Southern California at which the person giving the Sabbath School lesson remarked that for some time she had been uneasy about what she sensed was happening in our church. She was skeptical at first of our publication, which was sent to her unsolicited as a result of our last mailing being sent to a large group of non-subscribers through the generosity of one of our supporters. But after becoming intrigued with what she read, she held the journal up for all to see, telling them that it was one publication they should all read. She explained that Ed Zinke had mentioned in his article the difference between the historical-critical method of interpretation and the historical-Biblical method to which the ATS subscribes. The Bothes reported that a large group descended on her after Sabbath School to learn how to subscribe. Perhaps some of you will have an opportunity to share this journal with others who are eager to better understand the Biblical position on many of the issues that now face this church.

## ATS presents a fascinating new book *Speaking in Tongues*

by Gerhard F. Hasel

This gripping book, *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* (1991), places this subject within the larger picture of the "third wave" of the modern charismatic movement of the latter 1980s in which also various so-called **celebration churches** have their roots. Dr. Hasel, whose book has been in the making for more than a decade, is answering a host of the most difficult questions people have asked about the phenomenon of "speaking in tongues" so prevalent in our day. If you have ever wondered about one of the following questions, then the book, *SPEAKING IN TONGUES*, is a must for you:

- \* Is "speaking in tongues" a form of speaking an unknown language?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" the language of angels?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" as practiced today from God, Satan, or another source?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" bringing about doctrinal unity among Christians?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" supported by Popes for Roman Catholics?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" part of the celebration church movement?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" among pagan priests, witch doctors, spiritualists, mediums, and humanists the same as that practiced by Christians?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" to be identified with the outpouring of the Latter Rain in the time of the end?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" among Christians today to be identified with the gift of tongues in the New Testament?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" a private prayer language for modern believers?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" in private to be encouraged when a congregation does not wish it to be used in public worship?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" the baptism of the Holy Spirit promised by Jesus Christ?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" necessary for a life of sanctification?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" the key to great spiritual power in one's life?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" the miraculous gift of speaking foreign languages?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" the end time gift for all true believers?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2 the same gift described by Paul in 1 Corinth as depicted in Act 14?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" a take it or leave it matter in Christian life?
- \* Is "speaking in tongues" part of the spiritual gifts or is it simply a natural gift used in a spiritual way?