

Old Paths

Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. Jeremiah 6:16

The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant. Psalm 25:14

Vol. 17, No.2

Straight and Narrow

February 2008



Ellen White and the Truth About God

**New DVD is ready!
Please see page 17 for details.**

In This Issue:

The Doctrine of God, Part I	p. 2
The Doctrine of Sin, Part I	p. 8
Prayer Requests	p. 11
The Incarnation, Part I	p. 12
Announcements	p. 16
New DVD on Ellen White	p. 17
Carob Peanut Butter Pie	p. 18
Youth's Corner	p. 18

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God (Psalm 90:2).

The Doctrine of God, Part I by Onycha Holt and Allen Stump

Dr. Clark Pinnock, professor emeritus of systematic theology at McMaster Divinity College, states in *The Openness of God*: “The concept of God is the most important topic in theology...No doctrine can be more important than the doctrine of God. It is the principle doctrine in any theology (pp. 101, 102).” This truth about the importance of the doctrine of God in theology is virtually accepted without question by all Christians, and, because we also recognize this doctrine to be of paramount importance, we begin our study on systematic theology this month with this topic.

Seventh-day Adventists have long espoused a doctrine of God, with it first being formally stated in 1872 in *A Declaration of the Fundamental Principles Taught and Practiced by the Seventh-day Adventists*. Adventists at that time proclaimed that this declaration was “with great unanimity, held by them,” and these principles were never changed until 1931, sixteen years after the death of Ellen White. (See *ISSUES: The Seventh-day Adventist Church and Certain Private Ministries*, p. 443.) This declaration of our fundamental principles was published in our yearbooks for several years, and it was also published in 1874 in the first issue of *The Signs of the Times*. In this document we read:

I. That there is one God, a personal, spiritual being, the creator of all things, omnipotent, omniscient, and eternal, infinite in wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, truth, and mercy; unchangeable, and everywhere present by his representative, the Holy Spirit. Ps. 139:7.

II. That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father...

After the death of Ellen White, revision of Adventist literature soon began. Noticeable changes in the well-read book *Daniel and Revelation* by Uriah Smith were seen as it was edited to reflect a trinitarian position. Changes were made in the theological book *Bible Readings for the Home*. Books made their way to press such as *Christian Beliefs: Fundamental Biblical Teachings for Seventh-day Adventist College Classes* by T. H. Jemison in 1959, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe...A Biblical Exposition of 27 Fundamental Beliefs* in 1988, and the second edition of *Reign of God* in 1997 by Dr. Richard Rice, which were written, in part, to help Adventists “correctly” understand the doctrine of God. Over the years, Seventh-day Adventist Bible Studies and Sabbath School Quarterlies (most recently the *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* for the second quarter of 2006 on the subject of the Holy Spirit) have been written on the topic of God, and many sermons have been preached, from Adventist pioneers onward, in an endeavor to ground the Seventh-day Adventist people in their understanding of God.

This present article will first give you an encapsulated summary of the biblical doctrine of God and will be followed

by discussions on key points. These sections will then be followed by pertinent Ellen White comments on the doctrine of God, as well as editorial comments on one of the texts sometimes used to establish a trinitarian concept of God. And all of this will end with a quiz to see how much you have understood and retained! So let’s get started! But before we do, please understand that the doctrine of Jesus Christ and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit will be covered in future articles.

Summary:

God is the **Father**—Ephesians 4:6; John 17:3; Galatians 1:3; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Hebrews 1:1, 2; Malachi 2:10. The following are some of the characteristics of the Father:

God is **immortal**—1 Timothy 1:17; **self-existent**—Acts 17:24, 25; **omniscient**—Job 37:16; Psalm 139:1-18; Psalm 147:5; 1 John 3:20; **omnipresent**—Psalm 139:7-18; Hebrews 4:13; **omnipotent**—Daniel 4:17, 25, 35; Matthew 19:26; Revelation 19:6; **the Creator**—Hebrews 1:2; Revelation 4:11; **sovereign**—Revelation 4:11; Psalm 135:6; Daniel 4:35; Ephesians 4:6; and God is **one**—Deuteronomy 4:35, 6:4; Isaiah 45:5; Zechariah 14:9; Galatians 3:20; Mark 12:29; 1 Corinthians 8:5, 6; James 2:19.

Other attributes of God (partial list)—**love**—Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:16; **grace**—Romans 3:24; 2 Chronicles 30:9; **mercy**—Psalm 145:9; Deuteronomy 4:31; **righteousness**—Ezra 9:25; John 17:25; **justice**—Revelation 22:12; **truth**—1 John 5:20; John 3:33; 2 Corinthians 1:18; **spirit**—John 4:24; **patience**—Numbers 14:18; **wisdom**—1 Timothy 1:17; **perfection**—Matthew 5:48; **purity**—Habakkuk 1:13; **holiness**—Psalm 99:9; **compassionate**—Psalm 86:15; **forgiving**—Exodus 34:7; **giver of good gifts**—James 1:17; **unchanging**—Malachi 3:6; **author of peace**—1 Corinthians 14:33; **consuming fire**—Deuteronomy 4:24.

Discussion

Many Christians consider the above Bible texts to be fairly self-explanatory and most of us have generally understood and accepted them to express certain qualities of God. All of the above characteristics of God are generally accepted, that is, except one. The interpretation of one quality of God in particular has been the subject of keen debate and controversy for millennia and has even been a source of martyrdom for some who have refused to accept it such as Michael Servetus. (See “No Fear Revisited” in the July 2006 issue of *Old Paths* and Daniel 7:8, 20.) This doctrine, however, was not misunderstood by our pioneers and need not be misunderstood by us today!

In 1872 our pioneers stated that there was “one God, everywhere present by his Holy Spirit...and one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of the Eternal Father,” but by 1959, two years after the publication of *Questions on Doctrine*, the college

textbook *Christian Beliefs-Fundamental Biblical Teachings for Seventh-day Adventist College Classes* by T. H. Jemison and prepared by The Department of Education of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists stated the Adventist belief in God in this way:

When referring to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit in their unity, the expression “the Godhead” is often used... The full meaning of the doctrine of the Godhead (or the doctrine of the Trinity) is beyond the understanding of human minds. It is taught in the Scriptures as fully as we need to know it, but there remain many questions and problems we cannot solve... The doctrine of the three Persons of the Godhead is vitally involved in the plan of salvation. It is not a theoretical doctrine about which men may feel free to speculate beyond what has been revealed. It is a *sacred truth* that reveals to us that *God the Father* sent *God the Son* into this world to redeem us, and that *God the Holy Spirit* applies the redemptive work to each of us. It is this *fundamental doctrine* that should occupy our attention in considering the Godhead, rather than the questions that are beyond our comprehension (pp. 71, 73; emphasis supplied).

What is the “fundamental doctrine” that is to occupy our attention? The so-called fundamental doctrine that “God the Father sent God the Son into this world to redeem us, and that God the Holy Spirit applies the redemptive work to each of us.” We should all be able to agree that any doctrine, whether “fundamental” or not, must be based in Scripture, but what biblical support does Elder Jemison give for this doctrine he calls a “sacred truth”? He offers scriptural references such as Matthew 3:16, 17; Matthew 28:19, 20; and John 14:16, 17, none of which place the Father, the Son, or the Spirit on a coequal, coeternal basis with each other. He further states:

The doctrine of the three Persons of the Godhead may be *inferred* in the Old Testament, but is not revealed here as fully as it is in the New... there are *mysteries* in the divine relationships that are beyond human comprehension. This applies to the eternal and absolute relationship between the Father and the Son. We cannot understand that relationship. Whatever the relationship is, it has existed from eternity. *It is not a biological father-son kinship such as human beings know*; yet when God desired to explain the relationship, He chose to use father-son terms that would be meaningful to us (*Ibid.*, p. 74, 79; emphasis supplied).

Let us move down to 1997 when Dr. Richard Rice, professor of theology, philosophy, and religion in the School of Religion at Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, California, explained the doctrine of the trinity in this way:

In giving himself to his creatures as the Son and the Spirit, the one God discloses his inner reality. He shows that his nature is not monotonous; it is not sheer undifferentiated oneness (*Reign of God*, p. 58).

Dr. Rice is saying here that the Father gave “himself... as the Son and the Spirit.” The Bible says, however, that “God so loved the world, that he *gave* his only begotten *Son* (John 3:16),” not that he gave *himself as* the Son. Dr. Rice is starting to build his case that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit were always coeternal and coexistent, for he states God’s “nature is not monotonous... not sheer undifferentiated oneness.” Does he give even one biblical text to support this bold claim of no “undifferentiated oneness”? He does not. But let’s go on:

Another factor that contributes to the concept of the trinity is the nature of love. Love is inherently social; it involves relationship between the lover and the recipient or object of love. In other words, love requires an object of devotion. Accordingly, if love is what God *is*, as Christians affirm, if love is the very essence of the divine reality, then there must never have been a time when God did not love. God must have experienced love within himself from all eternity. The understanding of Father, Son, and Spirit as relations of love within the divine reality makes this comprehensible (*Ibid.*).

What Dr. Rice is saying now is that the concept of the trinity is comprehensible if you accept his philosophy that because God is love and because love requires a giver and a receiver then there never could have been a time when love was not given or received; hence, there always has to have been at least two beings called God. Again, does Dr. Rice offer biblical support for this theory? He does not. Now, we can all agree that God is love (1 John 4:8) and that love is the foundational principle of God’s government: “Love is the underlying principle of God’s government in heaven and earth (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 49),” but to try to state in human terms qualities of God that have not been revealed in Scripture, especially when Scripture clearly states otherwise, is dangerous. How dare we say that because *reasoning* tells us that there *must* have always been more than one god, it must be so, when the Bible clearly states otherwise? If there were no other text than John 3:16 it would be enough to counter this reasoning, but we have much more. “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself (John 5:26)” is an example.

Dr. Rice continues:

The doctrine of the trinity thus unifies the revelation and the identity of God. It expresses the belief that God is really what he presents himself to be in his saving activity. *God appears in human history as Father, Son, and Spirit because that’s exactly what he is in himself. Our threefold experience of God corresponds to a threefoldness in the inner reality of God* (*Ibid.*, p. 59; emphasis supplied).

Perhaps you are now a little confused. When Rice states, “The doctrine of the trinity thus unifies the revelation and the identity of God,” could he possibly be admitting that a *man-made* doctrine is what unifies *man’s* understanding of God?

It took centuries for man to formulate this doctrine and the Harlot of Revelation continues to claim this teaching to be a “mystery” and the foundation of her theology:

The Vatican Council has explained the meaning [of the trinity] to be attributed to the term mystery...a mystery is a truth which we are not merely incapable of discovering apart from Divine Revelation, but which, even when revealed, remains “hidden by the veil of faith and enveloped, so to speak, by a kind of darkness” (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15047a.htm>)

The Doctrine of the Trinity is the central doctrine of the Catholic faith. Upon it are based all the other teachings of the Church (*Handbook for Today's Catholic*, p. 16).

The doctrine we have of God should never be based on manmade understanding and reasoning, however logical it may seem, but solely upon the plain revelation of truth in the Word of God.

Who *is* this God and who exactly *are* these three manifestations which Dr. Rice says have appeared in human history as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit? Is he saying that God *is* the Father and that he also *appears* as the Father and as the Son and as the Holy Spirit, which would not only be redundant and but also illogical if the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are three coequal and coeternal persons. It is illogical because you can just as logically say it is the Son who is God and that the Son *appears* as the Son, as well as appears as the Father and as the Holy Spirit, or it is the Holy Spirit who is God and that the Holy Spirit *appears* not only as the Holy Spirit but also as the Father and as the Son. No matter how trinitarians try to explain the trinity, it remains confusing. Far better it would be for us to take the Bible simply as it reads:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him (1 Corinthians 8:6).

And in the words of Jesus:

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent (John 17:3).

Some may not be aware that in 1955 and 1956 a few leading Adventists theologians, under the full approval of the General Conference, met with prominent Evangelicals to answer their questions about our faith. A book was published as a result of these meetings entitled *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine*. Listen to the words of the dean of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Dr. Denis Fortin, as he spoke them at the *Questions on Doctrine* 50th Anniversary Conference held at Andrews University in October 2007: “...*Questions on Doctrine* provided

a needed apologetic work on Adventist beliefs...” In other words, in 1957 *Questions on Doctrine* represented Adventist theological beliefs. Dr. Fortin also acknowledged that it continues to represent Adventist theology, for at the beginning of his presentation he stated that the theology of *Questions on Doctrine* is the theology that is currently being taught at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. This theology is thoroughly trinitarian.

The reason that Elder Jemison could say in 1959 that the trinity was only *inferred* in the Old Testament, as we quoted on page 3, is that the monotheism of God is strongly upheld in the Old Testament, in contrast to the polytheism of false religions.

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD (Deuteronomy 6:4).” This, the *Shema* (“Hear”), is the great text of monotheism. For over two thousand years it has been recited twice daily by devout Jews. The Jewish child is taught the verse as soon as he can learn to speak. The Jew repeats it on his deathbed if he is able to utter any sound at all. The Jewish martyrs recited it as they made ready to give their lives for their faith. It has been throughout the ages the most powerful single declaration of the significance of the Jewish religion...

What is the meaning of the word “one” (Hebrew *echad*) in Deuteronomy? In the first instance it means one and not many and is therefore a denial of polytheism. There is only one God and there are no others. Allied to this is the idea that God in His essence is indivisible. A deity like Baal could be split up, as it were, into various local deities, hence the plural form Baalim and Ashterot found in the Bible when speaking of the pagan gods. *God is one and indivisible* [emphasis supplied]. He is Lord of all. He cannot be united syncretistically with other gods.

...Monotheism is not a mere mathematical reduction of gods until only one is left. Monotheism does not simply affirm that there is, as a matter of fact, only one God although theoretically there might have been more than one. It teaches that the proper understanding of what “God” means can only result in the belief that there *can* [emphasis in original] only be one God. The polytheistic deities were thought of as separate beings...Monotheism denies the existence of such beings. There is only one Supreme Being who is Lord of all that there is. To speak of the possibility of the existence of more than one Supreme Being would be to talk nonsense for then none of the suggested beings would be supreme (Louis Jacobs, *A Jewish Theology*, pp. 21, 22).

The Christian claim is that the three persons of the Trinity, though separate, are, for all that, one. But from the Jewish point of view, *the Christian belief is a breach of pure monotheism and Jewish martyrs have given their lives rather than embrace the Christian faith* (Louis Jacobs, *Principles of the Jewish Faith*, p 85; emphasis supplied).

The doctrine of God's oneness is completely disannulled by the doctrine of the trinity. We see theologians, as Elder Jemison, explaining that the doctrine of the trinity must be accepted on faith because it is a great mystery that cannot be quantified in human terms. The *Adventist Review* agrees:

While no single scriptural passage states formally the doctrine of the Trinity, *it is assumed* as a fact by Bible writers and mentioned several times.

Only by faith can we accept the existence of the Trinity (*Adventist Review*, vol. 158, no. 31, p. 4; undated but published in July 1981 in a special issue devoted to the fundamental beliefs of Seventh-day Adventism; emphasis supplied).

And Raoul Dederen, professor emeritus of theology at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University at the time his article was published, wrote an article for the August 26, 1993 issue of the *Adventist Review* entitled "The Mystery of the Trinity."

We acknowledge that the trinity doctrine is a great mystery but a mystery of darkness that humans have brought on themselves through an alliance with Babylon, for as we have noted, the doctrine of the trinity is at the very foundation of the papacy's theology. (See *Handbook for Today's Catholic*, p. 16, quoted on page 4.)

God, however, is very clear in his Word about who he is. God the Father is the Supreme Ruler of the universe, not the trinity: "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all (Ephesians 4:6)." There cannot be two supreme rulers, for, as Jacobs explained in the quotation on page 4, then there is no *supreme* ruler. Only *one* can be supreme.

We also see scholars create philosophies to defend the trinity through human reasoning such as Dr. Rice does when he concludes, in part, that God *must* be a trinity because his character is love. In other words, because God is love (and no one disputes this) then "there must never have been a time when God did not love," and since "love requires an object of devotion" then he, the Father, "must have experienced" that love "within himself from all eternity" in the form of the Son and the Holy Spirit—the trinity! It is the Father, and not the Son or the Spirit, who must have experienced that love within himself, according to Rice, because on page 58 of his book he equates God and the Father to be the same person when he says that "the manifestation of God in Jesus disclosed the Father and Son as one." Thus we can say that Rice says the Son and the Spirit were within the Father from all eternity creating the trinity!

Bible Discussion

Enough confusion for now. Let's look at the clear Bible view of the doctrine of God. Let us start by noticing carefully what Jesus said:

And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; *The Lord our God is one Lord*: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for *there is one God; and there is none other but he*: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offering and sacrifices. And when *Jesus saw that he answered discreetly*, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question (Mark 12:28-34).

Unlike some others that questioned Christ, this scribe was a sincere seeker of truth. Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:4 in answer to his question "Which is the first commandment of all?" and then followed this text with Leviticus 19:18. The scribe responded, "Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God." If God is a trinity, this was a perfect time for Jesus to make it clear. Jesus did not say, however, "You are mistaken; there are two Gods" or "There are three Gods." Instead, the Scripture states that "Jesus saw that he answered discreetly." Furthermore, Jesus told him, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." Neither Moses nor Jesus ever spoke of a three-person God. Christ himself made this clear the night before the crucifixion when praying to his Father he said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee *the only true God*, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent (John 17:3)." Jesus ascribed to his Father the title of "the only true God." He did not say, "The only true Gods" nor did he say "the only true God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

Paul, writing to the church at Corinth, said:

For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but *one God, the Father*, of whom are all things, and we in him; and *one Lord Jesus Christ*, by whom are all things, and we by him. Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge (1 Corinthians 8:5-7a).

The creeds of men say "one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." The Scripture says "*one God, the Father*." Paul also says that we have "*one Lord Jesus Christ*." The trinity doctrine states that "the Father is Lord: the Son Lord: and the Holy Ghost Lord (From the article entitled 'Creed, the Athanasian'; *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Student's Source Book*, p. 299)." The Scripture states that there is "one Lord Jesus Christ." "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, *One God*

and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all (Ephesians 4:5, 6).” Here again, the “*One God*” is declared to be the “*Father*.”

Paul, in writing to Timothy, states: “For there is *one God*, and *one mediator* between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5).” Here are seen two separate and distinct beings. There is “one God” who is the Father. There is also “one mediator” between the “one God” and men. That “one mediator” is “the man Christ Jesus.”

The apostle James declares that even Satan and the evil angels know that there is one true God. “Thou believest that there is *one God*; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble (James 2:19).” James says we do well to believe “that there is one God.”

If we support the trinity doctrine, one god in three persons, or support tritheism, three gods in three separate beings, we will be out of harmony with these texts. One of the most basic truths of the Bible is the truth that there is one Supreme Being. Jesus taught us to address this Being as “Our Father.” Because this truth is so basic to the Scriptures and to the plan of salvation (John 17:3), Satan has sought to counterfeit it with the trinitarian doctrine which produces a position for himself in the counsel of God (Isaiah 14:12-14).

While the Bible teaches that there is one supreme God, it also teaches that God has “an associate—a co-worker who could appreciate his purposes, and could share his joy in giving happiness to created beings... Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father—one in nature, in character, in purpose—the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 34).” Perhaps the most famous of all Bible texts is John 3:16 and this verse tells us that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” This text reveals that this associate is his only begotten Son. This Son was with the Father in the counsel of peace spoken of by Zechariah:

And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both (Zechariah 6:12, 13).

The “man whose name is The BRANCH” is acknowledged by all trinitarians to be the Son of God. Of interest is the word “both” in verse 13. It is the Hebrew *shen-ah’-yim* (שניִים), a plural for exactly two! Thus, the picture portrayed in Zechariah is that of two workers: God and his Son. This concept is taught by Paul and the other writers of the New Testament epistles. It is at the beginning of nearly every book of the New Testament. Notice some examples:

Paul, an apostle of *Jesus Christ by the will of God*, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia (2 Corinthians 1:1).

Grace be to you and peace from *God the Father*, and from *our Lord Jesus Christ* (Galatians 1:3).

Grace be to you, and peace, from *God our Father*, and from *the Lord Jesus Christ* (Ephesians 1:2).

Paul, an apostle of *Jesus Christ by the will of God*, and Timotheus our brother, To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from *God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ* (Colossians 1:1-2).

James, a servant of *God and of the Lord Jesus Christ*, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting (James 1:1).

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of *God, and of Jesus our Lord* (2 Peter 1:2).

Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from *God the Father*, and from *the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father*, in truth and love (2 John 3).

Ellen White and the Doctrine of God

The sovereignty of God and his nature as the supreme ruler in the universe was clearly understood by Ellen White, for she wrote in the *Signs of the Times* on May 30, 1895 that Christ “was one *equal with God* in authority, dignity, and divine perfection (emphasis supplied).” Several places in her writings she, along with the pioneers, acknowledged Christ to be equal with the Father; however, she states that this equality was one given or conferred upon Christ by the Father and was not an equality that Christ naturally had. Note the following statements:

The Scriptures clearly indicate the relation between God and Christ, and they bring to view as clearly the personality and individuality of each.

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?” (Hebrews 1:1-5)

God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God. To Christ *has been given* an exalted position. He has *been made*

equal with the Father. All the counsels of God are opened to His Son (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, pp. 268, 269).

The great Creator assembled the heavenly host, that he might in the presence of all the angels confer special honor upon his Son. The Son was seated on the throne with the Father, and the heavenly throng of holy angels was gathered around them. *The Father then made known that it was ordained by himself that Christ, his Son, should be equal with himself*; so that wherever was the presence of his Son, it was as his own presence. The word of the Son was to be obeyed as readily as the word of the Father. His Son he had invested with authority to command the heavenly host. Especially was his Son to work in union with himself in the anticipated creation of the earth and every living thing that should exist upon the earth. His Son would carry out his will and his purposes, but would do nothing of himself alone. The Father's will would be fulfilled in him (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 17, 18).

Leaving his place in the immediate presence of the Father, Lucifer went forth to diffuse the spirit of discontent among the angels. . . . *The exaltation of the Son of God as equal with the Father was represented as an injustice to Lucifer*, who, it was claimed, was also entitled to reverence and honor (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 37).

In order for Christ to be exalted as equal with the Father, there must have been a time when he was not in every respect equal with him. This exaltation would not have been possible if Christ had been a coequal, coeternal being with the Father; however, if Christ was the literal Son of God, then the Father, being supreme, would have been able to elevate him.

The breadth of this subject is tremendous and we prayerfully ask the reader to consider the counsel of Proverbs 18:13: "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him." There are statements by Ellen White that *appear* to teach the trinitarian position, but we believe that a careful study will show that Sister White did not change her belief and espouse trinitarianism. (See chapter 9 in *The Foundation of Our Faith*—it can be read online—and the new DVD on Ellen White offered on page 17.)

Matthew 3:16, 17

Chapter 18 of *The Foundation of Our Faith* is entitled "Answers to Trinitarian Objections" and addresses many texts that have been used to endorse a trinitarian concept of God. We encourage you to read this chapter, as it addresses texts used by Elder Jemison mentioned earlier in this study. We have included the comments for Matthew 3:16, 17 here for your consideration. These verses state: "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Trinitarians insist that in these verses is a clear demonstration of the trinitarian nature of God. Without adding human bias or wishful thinking, what may we discover from reading this passage?

It is evident there are two persons present—one is Jesus and the other is the owner of the voice which declares "this is my beloved Son." Clearly, the speaker is God the Father. What is the identity of Jesus according to the passage? God himself identifies Jesus as "my beloved Son" and not as the second person of a coequal trinity. This alone denies the assertion that a trinity is depicted here. Does this passage, however, demonstrate the Holy Spirit to be a personal being apart, or separate, from the Father? Are there three persons present? While the Son is clearly a person and the Father is a person, what may we discover from the symbol used to represent the Holy Spirit? Here, the Spirit is represented as a dove. Never is the Holy Spirit represented by any symbol which indicates that it is a person. The Spirit has been represented by oil, water, wind, fire, and, in this verse, as a dove. It is really stretching the imagination to suggest that in this verse is seen a third person. In actual fact, the passage declares that it is the Spirit of God! It is the Spirit which belongs to God. Here, as everywhere else in Scripture, the Holy Spirit is represented as belonging to, or being the property of, God rather than being an individual person with his own identity.

Ellen White sheds light on this point. She says,

Never before had angels listened to such a prayer as Christ offered at his baptism, and they were solicitous to be the bearers of the message from the Father to his Son. But, no! direct from the Father issues the light of his glory. The heavens were opened, and beams of glory rested upon the Son of God and assumed the form of a dove, in appearance like burnished gold. The dove-like form was emblematical of the meekness and gentleness of Christ. While the people stood spell-bound with amazement, their eyes fastened upon Christ, from the opening heavens came these words: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (*The Review & Herald*, January 21, 1873)."

Conclusion

We hope this study has blessed you and we encourage you to continue your study in the important concept of the doctrine of God, for upon this is built further important doctrines, such as the doctrine of man, the doctrine of sin, the doctrine of Christ, and the doctrine of salvation. May God richly bless you as you establish yourself upon the immovable rock of Truth.

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD (Jeremiah 9:23, 24).

Quiz on page 17, second column

The Doctrine of Sin, Part I by Allen Stump

A little over two years ago, we published two articles entitled *Theology Made Simple*. In these articles we discussed the doctrine of sin—harmartiology. Harmartiology comes from the Greek words hamartia (ἁμαρτία), which means sin, and logos (λόγος), which means discourse. This article will draw upon some of this material due to the fact that important issues were covered in those papers that must not be excluded from this series of articles on systematic theology. This article and the ones to follow, however, will have additional content, as well as fresh perspectives.

The doctrine of sin, along with the doctrine of God, are vital doctrines because they are building blocks for other doctrines. The most basic principle of soteriology (the science of salvation) is our understanding of the nature of sin. Our view of sin also helps to carve out our understanding of the nature of Christ. Any time there is a shifting of theology or a new paradigm introduced on how mankind is saved, there is almost always a shift also in the understanding of the nature of Christ and/or the nature of sin. Whenever someone begins a study by defining sin differently than it has been defined expect to hear a new theology on the nature of Christ, or if that person should start with a new understanding of the nature of Christ expect that a different definition of sin has been formulated because the two almost always go together.

Some of the greatest theological discussions that have ever occurred within the professed Christian Church have been over the definition of sin. Do not think that this matter is of little importance. It is of great importance and is one of the most foundational principles of theology. Some of the greatest differences or similarities between different denominations will occur over their definition of sin and the resulting impact that it has upon the rest of the framework of doctrines that are believed and taught. The doctrine of sin is the main doctrine that separates Catholicism, Calvinism, and Arminianism.

We believe that the Bible and the Testimonies of Sister White give one great definition of sin and it is found in 1 John 3:4: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for *sin is the transgression of the law.*” While we reject the teaching that we are born into the world as sinners, we fully acknowledge that our human natures are fallen with a bent to sin and that outside of the drawing power of God in our lives we would never seek repentance and be reconciled with God.

Before we discuss this matter in detail, let us consider if we, as Adventists, really have a basis for claiming such a great importance for this doctrine. Some Adventists reject its importance because it is not specifically noted on a list of doctrines that Ellen White gave as pillars and landmarks of our faith.

[The passing of the time in 1844 was a period of great events, opening to our astonished eyes the cleansing of the](#)

[sanctuary transpiring in heaven, and having decided relation to God’s people upon the earth, \[also\] the first and second angels’ messages and the third, unfurling the banner on which was inscribed, “The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” One of the landmarks under this message was the temple of God, seen by His truth-loving people in heaven, and the ark containing the law of God. The light of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment flashed its strong rays in the pathway of the transgressors of God’s law. The nonimmortality of the wicked is an old landmark. I can call to mind nothing more that can come under the head of the old landmarks. All this cry about changing the old landmarks is all imaginary \(Ms. 13, 1889 — *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 30\).](#)

Here we see the sanctuary message, the three angels’ messages, the law of God and the Sabbath, and the nonimmortality of the wicked listed. The doctrine of sin is not directly mentioned and neither are the doctrine of God and the doctrine of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, doctrines that many historic Adventists, as well as mainline believers, declare to be very important. Furthermore, extremely important teachings such as the death and resurrection of Jesus and the even the gospel are not mentioned by name.

Stating the matter so as to limit our foundation to just what is mentioned in the above testimony is too simplistic! What do we mean when we speak of the “faith of Jesus,” and what do we mean by the first, second, and third angels’ messages? To call them pillars and not understand what they mean is disastrous! If you were to ask Dennis Fortin, George Knight, or Norman Gulley if they believe in the seventh-day Sabbath, the immutable law of God, the nonimmortality of the soul, the three angels’ messages, and the sanctuary doctrine, they would all say, “yes,” but there are very serious issues about what they believe concerning some of these matters!

Within the first angel’s message is found the everlasting gospel. Paul, in writing to the brothers and sisters in Galatia, left little doubt about the seriousness of preaching a false gospel. He stated:

[But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, *let him be accursed.* As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, *let him be accursed* \(Galatians 1:8, 9\).](#)

Any fundamental issue of the everlasting gospel cannot be excluded. Issues such as the virgin birth, the nature of Christ, his divinity, his death and resurrection, as well as other issues may all be considered under the everlasting gospel.

Further, within the first angel’s message is also found the command to “fear God (φοβήθητε τὸν Θεόν).” We are to be

in awe of God and show to him the upmost respect. How shall we properly do this with wrong or even inadequate views of the Almighty?

Do not let the importance of this critical doctrine escape you, for this issue determines the direction of your faith and gospel. The work of the gospel is to save man from sin. It is sin which has caused us to be lost, and the gospel is the good news of God's plan to save us from sin.

The basic presupposition of this gospel is that the heart of the cosmic controversy between God and Satan revolves around the issue of free choice. God took terrible risks with the universe to protect freedom of choice. Why did God allow the misery of sin? Because of the worthlessness of forced obedience and the necessity of the possibility to sin if righteousness was to be possible. Jesus came to this earth to be killed by Satan to allow all men to choose freely once again. And the agony of sin will not end until Satan *freely* bows down and confesses Jesus' Lordship. This means that the greatest tragedy of the universe is Satan's maligning of God, a tragedy even greater than my sins. Thus the issue to be resolved is how unfallen beings, angels and fallen beings will *choose* in the great controversy, either for God or for Satan. All of this means that the gospel can never be based on predestination of any kind, which essentially bypasses any right of man to choose for or against God. The gospel is built solidly on the foundation of free choice, the two most important words in the history and the future of the universe.

This leads to a decision about the nature of sin. Sin is not basically the way man *is*, but the way man *chooses*. Sin is when the mind *consents* to what seems desirable and thus breaks its relationship with God. To talk of guilt in terms of inherited nature is to overlook the important category of responsibility. Not until we have joined our own will to mankind's rebellion against God, not until we have actively entered into opposition to the will of God, does guilt enter in. Sin is concerned with a man's life, his rebellion against God, his willful disobedience, and the distorted relationship with God which ensues. Sin is concerned with a man's will rather than his nature. If responsibility for sin is to have any meaning, it cannot also be affirmed that fallen human nature makes the man inevitably guilty of sin. Inevitability and responsibility are mutually exclusive concepts in the moral sphere. Thus sin is defined as choosing willfully to rebel against God in thought, word, or action. ... Sin is our willful choice to exercise our fallen nature in opposition to God's will (*The Layworker*, January 1983).

Brothers and sisters, the door of salvation is swiftly closing. We are living at the end of 6,000 years of sin. The first three chapters of the Bible tell of the entrance of sin and the last three chapters tell of its eradication. I wish to assure

you that God will have a people who, by his grace and power, will overcome sin. In Isaiah we read:

In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in (Isaiah 26:1, 2).

God says he will have a "righteous nation" to enter his city. This is no sham or something done in name only, but a people whose lives have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus and empowered to live holy righteous lives. God can and will do it!

Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir (Isaiah 13:9-12).

The individuals who make up this righteous nation will be more pure than the finest gold. They will not be wicked in reality and Christian in name. In our world today, evil appears to prosper over the good, but God soundly declares that there is a day of judgment coming. God "will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity." Furthermore, in this boastful and proud world, God will "cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible." But even more than this, God is going to "destroy the sinners." If God is going to destroy sinners, then we had better be able to cease being sinners!

There are different concepts of how people become sinners. One school of thought says that we are sinners because we sin in thought, word, or deed. Another school of thought says that we are born sinners by nature. Let us think of this for a minute. A man or woman is a painter because they paint! That is why they are a painter. The person is not born with a paint brush and while it is possible that the person may be born with the talent that will enable them to paint beautifully, not until that person picks up the brush and begins to use it are they a painter. Further, if we are born sinners and God is going to destroy sinners, then for any one to be saved before Jesus returns there must be a change in the nature of that individual. This leads to serious issues that we will address in future issues of *Old Paths*.

If a person becomes a sinner by *sinning*, then we must understand what sin is so that we may cease from it. For this to happen, we must have a knowledge of what sin is. We must know what we are to fight against.

There should be a clear understanding of that which constitutes sin, and we should avoid the least approach to

step over the boundaries from obedience to disobedience (*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 234).

If we are to have pardon for our sins, we must first have a realization of what sin is, that we may repent and bring forth fruits meet for repentance (*Faith and Works*, p. 49).

Now let us look at the main Hebrew and Greek words that are translated *sin*, as well as words that carry the concept of sin although they are not translated using the word “sin”.

The Hebrew word *chata* (חָטָא) in the Qal stem means “to miss or err from the mark (Gesenius).” This is the word that is most often translated “sin” in the Old Testament. Related words that carry the concept of sin are: *ra* (רָע) “wicked” (Genesis 38:7); *rasha* (רָשָׁע) “wrong” (Exodus 2:13); *asham* (אַשָׁם) “offend” (Hosea 4:15) and “trespass” (2 Chronicles 19:10); *avon* (עָוֹן) iniquity (Genesis 44:16); *shagah* (שָׁגָה) “err” (Isaiah 28:7) and “wandered” (Ezekiel 34:6); *taah* (תָּעָה) “went astray” (Ezekiel 48:11); *pasha* (פָּשָׁע) “transgressed” (1 Kings 8:50).

From these usages we can see that sin was understood as disobedience to God. In the Bible there are sins of commission and sins of omission, but the emphasis was strongly on the side of sins of commission. Sin was not just missing the right mark but hitting the wrong mark.

The Greek word *hamartia* (ἁμαρτία) means “a failing to hit the mark (Thayer).” This is the word that is most commonly translated “sin” in the New Testament. Related words are: *kakos* (κακός) “evil” (Romans 13:3); *poneros* (πονηρός) “evil” (James 2:4); *asebes* (ἀσέβεια) “ungodliness” (Romans 1:18); *adikia* (ἀδικός) “unrighteousness” (Romans 2:8) and “iniquity” (1 Corinthians 13:6); *anomos* (ἄνομος) “lawless” (1 Timothy 1:9) and “transgressors” (Mark 15:28); *parabates* (παράβασις) “transgression” (Romans 5:14) and “breaking [the law]” (Romans 2:23); *planan* (πλάνη) “err” (Mark 12:24) and “deceive” (Mark 13:5); *paraptomai* (παράπτωμα) “trespasses” (Matthew 6:14), “sins” (Ephesians 2:5), and “faults” (James 5:16); and *hypokrisis* (ὑπόκρισις) “hypocrisy” (1 Peter 2:1).

Based upon the Bible, we see that God always has a very clear standard against which sin is committed. Sin is rebellion against God and a transgression of his law. Sin assumes a variety of forms as actions, thoughts, words, or deeds of commission (1 John 3:4) or omission (James 4:17).

As we noted earlier, 1 John 3:4 states: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” Notice that this follows the proper syntax for a definition: “Sin is ...” Paul, in Romans 7:7, clearly tells us the law John makes reference to here is the Ten Commandment Law: “I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” It is important to note that in Romans 7 Paul says he would not have known what sin was except by God’s law.

Ellen White wrote many things concerning sin and righteousness. While people have taken some of her statements concerning the Godhead and the incarnation to mean different things, her statements on the fundamental nature of sin are very clear, leaving little room to question her understanding of the matter. Notice how she clearly understood the Bible definition of sin:

The *only definition* we find in the Bible for sin is that “sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4) (*The Signs of the Times*, December 5, 1892). (Emphasis supplied in this article unless otherwise noted.)

“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law.” Here we have the *true definition* of sin; it is “the transgression of the law” (*Ibid.*, June 20, 1895).

It is the privilege of every sinner to ask his teacher what sin really is. Give me a definition of sin. We have *one* in 1 John 3. ‘Sin is the transgression of the law.’ Now this is the *only definition* of sin in the whole Bible (*Sermons and Talks*, vol. 1, p. 228).

These are just three representative statements that reflect a broad sample of Ellen G. White’s writings which clearly, without ambiguity, give one view of the definition of sin and they all resonate with the same clear, pure tone.

It might be important to note that 1 John 3:4 has also been translated, “Every one who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.” (R.S.V.) The phrase, “sin is lawlessness” is also so translated in the New King James Version, the New International Version, and the American Standard Version. Some take this to mean that instead of defining sin as an action of thought, word, or deed, sin is defined as a state of being. But what is lawlessness? Is it really a state of being as opposed to an action? The Greek word *anomia* (ἀνομία) translated “lawlessness” or “transgression of the law” means the negative (α) of the Greek word for “law” *nomos* (νόμος). Perhaps you have heard of the term “antinomian”. This is a theological term used for those who deny the obligatory status of God’s law upon humanity today, and it simply means those who are against the law of God. It comes from the Greek *anomia* and it means lawlessness. 1 John 3:4 has also been translated as:

Every one who is guilty of sin is also guilty of violating Law; for sin is the violation of Law. (Weymouth)

Every one who is guilty of sin is also guilty of violating Law; for sin is the violation of Law. (Darby)

Every one who is doing the sin, the lawlessness also he doth do, and the sin is the lawlessness. (Young’s Literal)

Notice these other verses that use *anomia*:

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (*anomia*) (Matthew 7:23).

Here anomia clearly is speaking of action rather than a state of being.


I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity (*anomia*) unto iniquity (*anomia*); even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness” (Romans 6:19).

As in Matthew 7:23, the use of *anomia* here cannot be in reference to a state of existence, especially one that we are born into for we are commanded not to yield to *anomia*.

The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and *them which do iniquity* (*anomia* - action) (Matthew 13:41).

Notice that Jesus does not say to gather out of his kingdom those that *are* iniquity but those that *do* iniquity.

Conclusion

In our study thus far we have seen that sin is something that results from conscience choices that we make. Understanding this clear meaning of sin will help us avoid the pitfalls that even some of the reformers fell into because they accepted, in varying degrees, the doctrine of original sin which is based on a faulty concept of sin. In our next issue, we will continue this study of sin, specifically addressing the concept of original sin in detail. May God richly bless you as you study these topics, for “The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light (Romans 13:12).” To be continued. ... 

Prayer Requests

This past month has been one of tremendous upheaval within the country of Kenya due to post-election violence. Sadly, much blood has been shed and many people have suffered great hardship and despair. Just before this issue went to press, President Mwai Kibaki and opposition leader Raila Odinga held a brief meeting on January 24 for the first time since the disputed elections. The two then emerged to pose for pictures while shaking hands. Former UN Chairman Kofi Annan has been a mediator. While this holds no promise of future stability, we pray, as the Lord commanded through Paul:

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty (1 Timothy 2:1, 2).

Several Adventists have suffered also in this conflict. The Glory Center and Hope Center orphanages have had several problems, including a lack of food. We understand that a load of food was recently purchased, but its supply

will be limited and with the conflict has come greatly inflated prices. Please pray for these dear people.




Dürer – Praying Hands

Some of our readers may remember us asking them to pray for Michael Sibanda in Zimbabwe. Michael has been on death row but recently his death sentence was reduced to life in prison. Sadly, Michael was falsely accused of murdering his wife. We send up a prayer of thanks to God for this reprieve. While we might wish for God to grant Michael total freedom, we will be submissive to God’s will. Since

Michael has been in prison, he has been a true evangelist and has shared the gospel with everyone he can, many of whom have accepted the truth. If God would see fit to release him, however, we would be very happy also for this. Above all, may God’s will be done in Michael’s life and in our lives as well.

The Florida camp meeting is less than a month away. The last two years have been important times at this annual gathering. Two years ago a Bible Conference was held and since then a great deal of theological discussion has occurred. We know by God’s Word that it is his will for all of his people to come into complete harmony and unity of the faith. Let us pray that hearts will be open to receive the Spirit of God and that the truth as it is in Jesus will prevail in all of our hearts.

Please pray that the new DVD, *Ellen G. White and the Truth About God*, will be greatly circulated. This presentation is full of material that many need to hear, so please pray for its success and try to distribute as many copies as possible to your Adventist friends. This DVD is not designed for the general public but is a special message for a special people. Thank you and God bless. 

The Doctrine of Christ — The Incarnation Part 1

This article begins a series on the incarnation of Christ and this doctrine is very important and has tremendous implications. The term *incarnation* is from two Latin words, *in carnis*, which simply mean “in the flesh.” We use this expression although it is not a term found in the Bible. It simply describes the humanity of Jesus Christ, the one who had been Michael, who came to this earth and dwelt in human flesh. There is great controversy and confusion over the subject of the incarnation. There is even a lot of confusion on this among Adventists who are restoring the truth about God, and, as Elder E. J. Waggoner said, “We need to settle, every one of us, whether we are out of the church of Rome or not (*General Conference Bulletin*, April 22, 1901).” I do not know what thoughts his sentence brings to your mind, but they were words Elder Waggoner’s used when he preached to the brethren on the incarnation over one hundred years ago.

Let us begin our study by turning to the book of 1 Timothy:

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5).

Notice how Paul phrases his explanation. He states in the first part of the verse that there is one God, the Father, and then that there is one Mediator between God and men. Between God and men we have the Mediator, Jesus Christ. By definition, a mediator is one who is between two different parties or individuals to reconcile them into a better relationship. God is the Father, Jesus Christ is the Mediator, and then we, whether we are men or women, are the “men” or the humanity.

In the beginning of Hebrews 9, Paul speaks about the different compartments of the sanctuary, and then in verse 6 he says:

Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God (Hebrews 9:6).

The priests had a daily ministration in the first compartment.

But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience (vs. 7-9).

Paul is stating that the earthly sanctuary failed to do that which Christ, through his ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, must do for the believer—cleanse and purify the conscience.

Verse 9 states that what needs to be made perfect is the “conscience.” The conscience is the inner awareness in our minds of righteousness that must exist to stand in the presence of a holy God. What Paul is speaking of here, in the basic sense, is the mind. Our minds are what need, ultimately and most importantly, to be perfected in us.

Continuing in Hebrews 9, we read:

Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God (vs. 10-14)?

This section of Hebrews says that while there were Old Testament ordinances—the different blood offerings, the offering of the heifer, which is mentioned here, the washings, and various other services—that may have accomplished a purification of *the flesh*, the blood of Christ is to accomplish something far more important. Christ’s death on the cross was given to purge our consciences from dead works so that we might serve the living God. Paul then goes on to say:

And for this cause [for this reason or so that this could happen] he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament [or covenant], they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance (v. 15).

For this cause, or for this reason, Christ is the Mediator, so that he can perform the purging of our consciences that were under the old testament, or covenant, that “they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance (Hebrews 9:15).” This is the reason Christ is the Mediator—to heal and purge our consciences. He is our Mediator so that we can be brought back to God, and the emphasis of what needs to be brought to God is our minds.

How was Adam created in the beginning? The Bible says he was perfect:

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth... And God saw every thing that he

had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day (Genesis 1:26, 31).

All that God did on the sixth day, including the creation of man, was very good. In Genesis chapter 2 we read further details of his creation:

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul (Genesis 2:7).

Notice that there are two components to man. First, God took the clay, or the earth, and he formed a body. A reasonable synonym for the body is flesh. God combined the body with the breath of life. Most of us have had an opportunity to understand what the breath of life is, and a reasonable synonym for breath is spirit.

Now let us consider the concept of the spirit for a moment. The apostle Paul quoted Isaiah 40:13 when he wrote Romans 11:34, so let us first read Isaiah and notice how the concept of the spirit is spoken of by Isaiah and then by Paul in Romans.

Who hath directed *the Spirit* of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him (Isaiah 40:13)?

Now, let us read Romans 11:34:

For who hath known *the mind* of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

Paul quotes Isaiah 40:13 from the Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament. Do you notice any major differences between the first portion of Isaiah 40:13 and the first part of Romans 11:34? In Isaiah we read, “Who hath directed the *Spirit* of the Lord,” and in Romans we read, “For who hath known the *mind* of the Lord?” We see that “mind” and “spirit” have been used in an interchangeable way. This verse from Isaiah is also quoted in 1 Corinthians 2:16, using the word mind instead of spirit.

Let us now look at Ezekiel 11:

And the *Spirit* of the LORD fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak; Thus saith the LORD; Thus have ye said, O house of Israel: for I know the things that come into your *mind*, every one of them (v. 5).

Notice at the beginning of this verse we find the word “Spirit,” and at the end of the verse we read the word “mind.” These two English words are from the same Hebrew word *ruwach* (רוּחַ), which is the Hebrew word for breath or wind. Ezekiel equates the Spirit and the mind to be the same thing.

Now, let us consider the body and the spirit of man. In a simple equation, the spirit plus the flesh equals the soul (or body + spirit = soul). God breathed into Adam’s nostrils, or flesh, the breath of life, or spirit, and the Bible says Adam became a living soul. Therefore, if you take away the spirit you do not have a soul, but you simply have the flesh. “The body without the spirit is dead (James 2:26a).” Think about the anatomy of man. What portions of him make up the flesh? Are his legs and arms part of the flesh or part of his

spirit? They are flesh. Let us get more specific and look inside man. Is his heart part of the flesh or part of the spirit? The heart is actually still part of the flesh. Now, the last question: Inside the cranial cavity of your skull lies a watery, convoluted piece of grey matter—the brain. Do not get tripped up on this, but is the brain part of the flesh or part of the spirit? The brain is simply an organ of the flesh, just like the kidneys, the heart, and all other parts of our anatomy are; however, the brain has a unique function and ability. The fleshly part of the human being is the tangible part that we can hold onto, that we can weigh and measure, see and touch, at various stages of development. It is that tangible part that we can identify easily. The spirit of man is the part that cannot be identified through regular physical senses. Is the spirit of man just as real as the flesh? Yes, it is just as real and just as vital as the flesh. The spirit is the part of a human being that makes up the identity of who and what he is, and it is not bodily in any way, but it works primarily through the thought processes of the brain, a part of the flesh.

Now, let us go back to the Garden of Eden for just a moment. God originally created Adam and Eve perfect. The Bible says that they were very good. There was no taint of sin or illness or any such thing upon them, but after they ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, their nature became changed. We would say before the fall they did not know sin—they were sinless and their nature was sinless—but after they sinned and fell, their natures changed. We would say that they now had a sinful nature, a nature that of itself was bent to do wrong. Did they have that kind of a nature before they fell? No.

At the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Eve was tempted to do wrong but that temptation came from without her. The temptation did not come from within her; it did not originate within her. This is an important point. Satan could have access to Adam and Eve, we are told, only at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. There was no other place he could reach them.

The tree of knowledge had been made a test of their obedience and their love to God. The Lord had seen fit to lay upon them but one prohibition as to the use of all that was in the garden; but if they should disregard His will in this particular, they would incur the guilt of transgression. Satan was not to follow them with continual temptations; he could have access to them only at the forbidden tree. Should they attempt to investigate its nature, they would be exposed to his wiles. They were admonished to give careful heed to the warning which God had sent them and to be content with the instruction which He had seen fit to impart (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 53).

After Adam and Eve sinned, did they have to go to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to find temptation? No, they did not and it was not simply because that was the only place Satan could be. The Bible says that we can also be tempted of our own lusts and our own desires: “But every

man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his *own* lust, and enticed (James 1:14).” Because we are born with a sinful nature, we have that liability for temptation within our own selves; we have that inclination or bent to do wrong that can pull us in the wrong direction.

Now, let me ask you a question. Adam and Eve were composed of two components—the body (or flesh) and the spirit. After they fell, what kind of a flesh did they have? They had sinful flesh. What kind of a spirit do you think they had? They had a sinful or carnal spirit. They had a carnal mind. Now what does the Bible say about the carnal mind?

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be (Romans 8:6, 7).

Paul says that the mind is carnal and is not subject to the law of God. That means that the mind, of itself, has no power or ability to obey, and in fact has no desire to obey. Except that the Spirit of God prompts us and pleads upon our hearts, we have no desire to repent and do what is right. “Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins (Acts 5:31).” This is the kind of nature that Adam and Eve obtained at the time they sinned, and when they had children, what kind of a nature could they then pass on to their children? The only kind that they had to pass on was a sinful nature.

Let us now travel forward in time approximately 4,000 years to the time of Christ. How many components were there to the man Christ Jesus? We know that humanity was made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). We know that God is a spirit being (John 4:24), so we know that God has a body and that God also has a spirit and we know that Christ had a body (Hebrews 10:5) and he also had a spirit (Luke 23:46).

Now let us consider Christ’s body, his flesh, for just a minute. What kind of flesh or body does the Bible say Jesus had? Romans 1:3 says he took upon himself the seed of David: “Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh,” and then later in Romans Paul says, “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh (Romans 8:3).” Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and “in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people (Hebrews 2:17).”

What do we know about the spirit or the mind of Christ? Was it a carnal mind? No, it could not have been a carnal mind because if he had had a carnal mind he could not have been our sacrifice, for the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God. In other words, the carnal mind cannot obey God and cannot be in harmony with God. Christ had to have a different mind. His mind was divine and naturally pure like the mind or spirit of the Father.

Let us notice what Philippians 2:5 says: “Let this mind [spirit] be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” If you look at the context of this verse you will see that Paul is speaking about putting others ahead of ourselves—he is dealing with the core root issue of selfishness. The mind of Christ was not a selfish or carnal mind. It was not a sinful mind that had carnal desires.

Ellen White makes an interesting statement about the nature of Christ:

Think of Christ’s humiliation. He took upon himself fallen, suffering human nature, degraded and defiled by sin. He took our sorrows, bearing our grief and shame. He endured all the temptations wherewith man is beset. He united humanity with divinity: *a divine spirit dwelt in a temple of flesh*. He united himself with the temple. ‘The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,’ because by so doing he could associate with the sinful, sorrowing sons and daughters of Adam (*The Youth’s Instructor*, December 20, 1900). (Emphasis supplied in this article unless otherwise stated.)

In this testimony, the key point to consider is the fact that Ellen White refers to two components to Christ. There was a “divine spirit” and it dwelt in the “temple of flesh.” Just before this, Ellen White defined the temple of flesh to be “suffering human nature, degraded and defiled by sin.” Notice the terminology carefully: degraded by sin but not by Christ’s sin but by the sin of humanity. Christ accepted a temple that was defiled by sin. The Bible says there was *no sin in Christ*. It is very plain, “for he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin (2 Corinthians 5:21).” “He took upon His sinless nature our sinful nature, that He might know how to succor those that are tempted (*Medical Ministry*, p. 181).” This means that of the flesh he had a sinful nature, but in his mind or spirit he had the mind of God. This is where his divinity lay. Christ was not divine when he was on earth because of the flesh he had. He was not divine because he had the omnipotent power with which he had created the worlds. He laid that aside when he came to this earth.

When Jesus was awakened to meet the storm, He was in perfect peace. There was no trace of fear in word or look, for no fear was in His heart. But He rested not in the possession of almighty power. It was not as the “Master of earth and sea and sky” that He reposed in quiet. That power He had laid down, and He says, “I can of Mine own self do nothing.” John 5:30. He trusted in the Father’s might. It was in faith—faith in God’s love and care—that Jesus rested, and the power of that word which stilled the storm was the power of God (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 336).

He laid aside his omnipresence. He laid aside his immortality and yet still maintained his divinity because a divine spirit or mind dwelt in his temple of flesh. What does this mean to us?

For this to happen we have to understand that sin is, according 1 John 3:4, the transgression of the law. “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4).” One of the reasons people have a misunderstanding of this great principle of sin is that they are mixed up on the incarnation. They say that Jesus could not have taken a sinful nature because that would have made him a sinner. They believe this because they equate the sinful nature with being a sinner. Inspiration, however, declares that Jesus was not a sinner even though it also says that he took upon his sinless nature our sinful nature. Sin cannot, therefore, be our natures. There is only one definition of sin according to the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy and that is the “transgression of the law” in thought, word, or deed. This is what sin is. It is very simple. “It is the privilege of every sinner to ask his teacher what sin really is. Give me a definition of sin. We have one in 1 John 3. “Sin is the transgression of the law.” Now this is the only definition of sin in the whole Bible (*Sermons and Talks*, vol. 1, p. 228).”

The mind of Christ was always pure, but his flesh was the sinful fallen flesh that we have. Let us just review quickly: What makes up the sinful fallen flesh? Do our arms? Are our legs part of it? Is our physical heart part of it? Yes. Is our brain part of it? Our brain is part of the fallen sinful flesh. We need to understand this important fact and that the brain of itself is able to produce thoughts, feelings, and emotions and to introduce them to the spirit or mind.

There are two sources for humanity’s temptation. One source is from outside of us and the other source is from within us. This brings us to the critical point of what we are discussing. When I say that we have temptations from without, I am referring to Satan and all of his agents that literally tempt us in a multitude of ways to do wrong. His agents can be other angels or they can be people. His agents might even be our own family members who are not under the control of Christ. People who are close to us can tempt us to do many things that are wrong, but we also realize, and none of us who are cognizant of our own minds and of what humanity is and has been would disagree, that temptations can come from inside of us. Even if Satan were not upon this earth, there are things that, we would have drawings toward, due to our own lusts and from being tempted within our own selves.

Was Jesus tempted from within? Even though Jesus was pure, spotless, holy, and undefiled in every thought and in every action, did he have within himself, because of the sinful nature—because of his physical fleshly brain—any thing that had a bent or gravitation toward sin? Of course he did. Read what Ellen White has said:

And when the fullness of time was come, He stepped down from His throne of highest command, laid aside His royal robe and kingly crown, clothed His divinity with humanity, and came to this earth to exemplify what humanity must do and be in order to overcome the enemy

and to sit with the Father upon His throne. Coming, as He did, as a man, to meet and be subjected to with [*sic*] all the evil tendencies to which man is heir, working in every conceivable manner to destroy his faith, He made it possible for Himself to be buffeted by human agencies inspired by Satan, the rebel who had been expelled from heaven (*Letter K-303-903*, p. 6).

We need to understand that the “new theology” says in effect, and sometimes says very plainly, that Christ never had any temptation from within to deal with. Beloved, if he did not have temptations from within, then he is not my Saviour. I have temptations from within to deal with and probably much more from within than from without. I need a Saviour who knows what it is like to struggle with things that are from within.

We also have acquired tendencies or propensities to sin, but this is one area that Jesus never fought against in his battle against sin. Acquired tendencies to sin develop because of our participation in sin.

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (*Hebrews 4:14, 15*).

This verse may be a little hard to understand because a negative is used twice, but it simply means that we *do* have a high priest who *is* touched with the feeling of our infirmities. “In all points” means in the principles (1 John 2:16). Jesus did not have rock and roll music to contend with, there were no movies to go to, but he did have to contend with foul music and foul things to look upon. He had things from without and things from within that could tempt him, and all the points we have to traverse over he had to traverse over as well.

You may think, “Well, he could do this because he had a divine mind, but I can’t do it.” The Bible says, however, that we can partake of the divine nature. “But he that is joined unto the Lord is *one spirit* (1 Corinthians 6:17).” Two spirits? Three spirits? No, *one spirit*. Is it a carnal spirit? If we are joined unto the Lord, what do we partake of? His divine spirit, the divine mind of Christ, beloved, and this is the key for us. The fact is that when we are born into this world we are born with disadvantages and problems. Jesus says we must be born again and become a new creature in Christ (John 3:8; 2 Corinthians 5:17). When we are a new creature, old things are passed away and then we become joined in the Lord and become one spirit. The miracle of the divine spirit that dwelt in a temple of flesh in the incarnation is reproduced in us and the divine spirit dwells again in a temple of human flesh.

Please carefully notice these quotations from E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones on the nature of Christ so that we can see the 1888 perspective of this. Ellen White said that

these men were messengers with a message. “The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 91).” The first quotation is from A. T. Jones:

Now as to Christ’s not having “like passions” with us: In the Scriptures all the way through He is like us and with us according to the flesh. He is the seed of David according to the flesh. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. Don’t go too far. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, not in the likeness of sinful mind. *Do not drag His mind into it. His flesh was our flesh, but the mind was “the mind of Christ Jesus.”* Therefore it is written: “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” If He had taken our mind, how, then, could we ever have been exhorted to “let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus?” It would have been so already. But what kind of mind is ours? O, it is corrupted with sin also (*1895 General Conference Bulletin*, no. 17, p. 327).

Listen to what Jones says a little later in the same discourse. Generally when we talk about the flesh we think of only that which is fleshly and we do not think of anything that involves thought processes, but notice what Jones says:

Now the flesh of Jesus Christ was our flesh and in it was all that is in our flesh—all the tendencies to sin that are in our flesh were in His flesh, drawing upon Him to get Him to consent to sin. Suppose He had consented to sin with His mind—what then? Then His mind would have been corrupted and then He would have become of like passions with us. But in that case He Himself would have been a sinner; He would have been entirely enslaved and we all would have been lost—everything would have perished (*Ibid.*, p. 328).

So Jones’ teaching was that in Christ’s flesh were tendencies that pulled him and that tried to get his spirit to consent to sin, but Christ never once consented, and if he had he would have failed at being our Saviour.

In his book *Christ and his Righteousness*, E. J. Waggoner states:

Moreover, the fact that Christ took upon Himself the flesh, not of a sinless being, but of a sinful man, that is, that the flesh which He assumed had all the weaknesses and sinful tendencies to which fallen human nature is subject, is shown by the statement that He ‘was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.’ David had all the passions of human nature. He says of himself, ‘Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.’ Ps. 51:5 (pp. 26, 27).

Just prior to this, Waggoner said:

A little thought will be sufficient to show anybody that if Christ took upon Himself the likeness of man in order that He might redeem man, it must have been sinful man that He was made like, for it is sinful man that He came to redeem. Death

could have no power over a sinless man, as Adam was in Eden, and it could not have had any power over Christ, if the Lord had not laid on Him the iniquity of us all (*Ibid.*, p. 26).

Here Waggoner quotes from Hebrews 2:16, 18 and he says that if Jesus were made in all things like unto his brethren he must have suffered all the infirmities and have been subjected to all the temptations of his brethren.

A lot of what we hear in the pulpits today sounds good, sometimes very good. Much of what we read in printed material appears logical and, in fact, may have much rich content, but we are also told, “The track of truth lies close beside the track of error, and both tracks may seem to be one to minds which are not worked by the Holy Spirit, and which, therefore, are not quick to discern the difference between truth and error (*The Review & Herald*, October 22, 1903).” False gospels make a lot of promises of salvation. They would have no power to deceive or even to be considered as gospel if they did not claim to save. When we accept these new theologies, they remove us from the realm of having a Saviour near us, to having a Saviour that is more compatible with the Church of Rome. So, I ask us, “Have we come out of Romanism or not?” To be continued.

Allen Stump



Announcements:

Florida Camp Meeting

This is the last call for the annual Florida Revival retreat being held this month, February 20-24, at the River Forest Campground, located in the southeast corner of the Ocala National Forest on the scenic St. Johns River. All are invited to attend.

We will broadcast the meetings of the Smyrna speakers (L. Beachy, A. Stump, A. Ford) as we are able. Please check the speaking schedule linked from our home webpage for time and dates of the meetings we will broadcast. In this way, we hope to bring some of the camp meeting to those who cannot attend.

For more information, please contact Jerri Raymond, (407) 291-9565. Hope to see you there!

West Virginia Camp Meeting:

The annual West Virginia camp meeting will be held June 10-14. We are looking forward to very interesting and informative meetings and will have more details next month.

Sabbath Web Updates

We write a Sabbath Report every week, with pictures, of our Sabbath School and Worship Service for our Internet family. We think you will enjoy reading it each week, so we invite you to visit us online at <http://www.smyrna.org> and click on the link for news and photographs of our services. We try to

Continued on page 18

Ellen G. White and the Truth About God DVD

Who was Ellen White? Early in the Advent Movement when believers were few, she was well-known among the little group of faithful souls, but this is the year 2008. It has been ninety-two years since Ellen G. White's death in 1915 and 163 years since the Great Disappointment in 1844.


During this time the Seventh-day Adventist Church has established a publishing work on several continents with sixty-three publishing houses and branches. The church has redefined their Declaration of Principles, which were first printed in 1872, to the current Biblical Exposition of 28 Fundamental Doctrines. The Adventist Church has created a health ministry of 168 hospitals and sanitariums and 442 clinics. Its educational system has reached around the world with 5,666 primary schools and 1,618 secondary and tertiary schools. Membership has grown from the little flock of 1847 to the more than 15 million today.

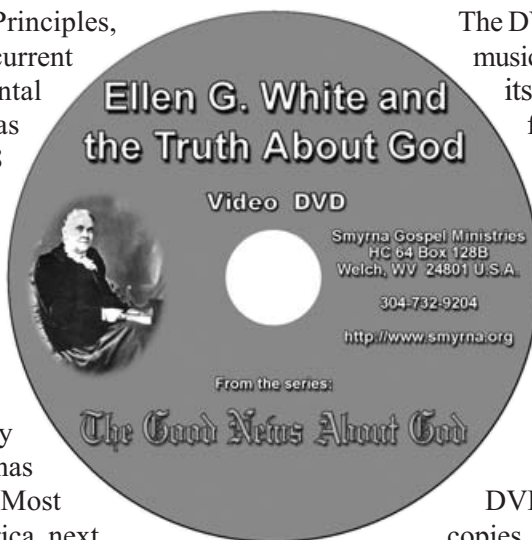
The culture of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has changed and has become more diversified since 1844. Most members are now found in Latin America, next in Africa, and thirdly in the United States. Brazil is the country with the largest population of Seventh-day Adventists and India is next. We do not know the average age of a Seventh-day Adventist today, but 5,666 primary schools tell us there is a healthy core of young families, many of which have never heard of James or Ellen White and who are unfamiliar with our pioneers and our history as a movement, even though there is now available to members of the organized church Children's Ministries, Women's Ministries, Sabbath School and Personal Ministries, Broadcast Ministries, Global Mission outreaches, and more, which can and should be used to teach these historic truths.

It is, therefore, of utmost importance that the new DVD in the series *The Good News About God* be in your home. In its two hours of footage you will learn who Ellen White is, and

you will learn how she and James worked tirelessly for the growth and establishment of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. More importantly, you will be able to trace the work of God in establishing his truth on earth. The understanding of the doctrine of God was clear to our pioneers and this DVD is packed full of documentation about the understanding our pioneers, especially Ellen White, held on the doctrine of God.

The DVD is a lively one, with many visual aids, music, and color. Many hours have gone into its production. In this presentation you will find over sixty statements of Ellen White on the issue of God and answers to the common questions that arise concerning what some people believe to be conflicting statements from her pen on this vital doctrine. The DVD clearly portrays Ellen White's understanding of God to have been consistent and clear over time rather than evolutionary.

We believe you will want to obtain this DVD for yourself and will want several copies to share with your Adventist friends who have questions or concerns about Ellen White's views on the doctrine of God or who may have conscientiously ill-informed views on this subject. We know that if you will devote just two hours to this DVD, you will be blessed! The suggested donation is \$6.00/DVD, plus postage, and, to help spread these as far as possible, \$40.00, plus postage, for a unit of ten DVDs. 



The Doctrine of God continued from p. 7

Quiz

Now comes the review! Let's see what you can remember. Answers will be given next month.

1. What does the Hebrew word *shema* (or *shama*) mean in relationship to the doctrine of God and what is the reference?
2. When did the Seventh-day Adventist denomination first write down a declaration of their beliefs? In what year was it changed?
3. List three texts that state that God is the Father.
4. According to Jesus, what is the first of all commandments? Where is this reference?
5. What text tells of the source of the Son's life?
6. Bonus Thought Question: How does the trinity doctrine nullify the ability of Christ to fulfill the role of mediator spoken of in 1 Timothy 2:5? *This article is to be continued.*

What did Ellen White mean when she wrote that "The Father and the Son alone are to be exalted (*The Youth's Instructor*, July 7, 1898)," and yet in the same year she published *The Desire of Ages* where she stated: "Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the third person of the Godhead?" Find the answer to this question and much more in the DVD!

Announcements from p. 16

update the report as soon after Sabbath as possible. If our listeners would like to send us pictures of them or of a nature scene, news of their worship experience, an inspirational poem, etc., we would be happy to include it in the Sabbath Report! You can send this to us by email or land mail, using the addresses on the back page of *Old Paths*.

Internet Broadcasts

We want to remind our readers that we broadcast our Sabbath worship service at eleven o'clock (EST) each Sabbath morning and our midweek prayer meeting on Wednesday evening at seven o'clock (EST).

These broadcasts can be accessed on the Internet via Skype, a communication program, or by simply listening over the telephone. To access Smyrna Chapel services by the Internet, you need to have Skype installed on your computer. Downloading Skype is free and easy at www.skype.com. Skype allows communication on levels from chat to audio/video conversations. You may directly access our Skypecast and/or be involved in a chat session by going to our home webpage and following the simple directions. If you are currently running Skype on your computer, you may enter +990008275126052 on your Skype call window to access our broadcast.

How to Listen to Prior Services

You may listen to recorded services by using Skype or by calling on the telephone. The numbers are different, however, so please note them. To use Skype, you enter +990008271111 on your Skype call window to access the recording section, and enter room number 5126052 when prompted. After reaching our recordings, you will be given the option of listening to the most current recording by

entering "0#" (zero and then the pound [#] symbol) on your Skype call window.

You may also listen to the recordings by telephone by dialing 1-605-475-8599 and entering room number 5126052 when prompted. After reaching our recordings in this way, you will again be given the option of listening to the most current recording by entering "0#" (zero and then pound [#] symbol) on your keypad.

A list of the most current Sabbath messages

Date	Message Title	Reference #
Dec. 27	Characteristics of the True Church	136901
Jan. 12	The Mind and Flesh of Christ	139452
Jan. 19	Sin and Perfection Part I	140726

The Foundation of Our Faith in French - Le Fondement de Notre Foi

We are very pleased to announce that *The Foundation of Our Faith* has been translated into French and can be accessed online at: (<http://etoiledumatin.org/nouvelles.html>).

Carob Peanut Butter Pie

- 14-21 oz tofu
- 2/3 cup unsweetened carob chips or powder
- 2/3 cup natural peanut butter
- 4-6 tablespoons honey or to taste

Melt chips, peanut butter, and honey in saucepan or double boiler, stirring constantly till smooth. Whiz tofu first in blender and then add small amounts of carob mixture, whizzing till smooth. Pour onto baked graham cracker crust made from Elyssa's recipe found in the November 2007 issue of *Old Paths* and chill two hours.

Adapted from recipe found in *Reflections*, December 2007.

Youth's Corner - King Gustavus of Sweden

King Charles IX of Sweden was getting old and he knew his son, Gustavus, would become king in his place before long, so King Charles arranged for the very best teachers to teach Gustavus. When Gustavus was ten years old, King Charles required him to attend all the council meetings the king had with his cabinet members and with Parliament so that Gustavus could see and understand firsthand how decisions were made in the government of Sweden. Gustavus attended these council meetings for seven years. The king also taught him

about military affairs, and when Gustavus was only sixteen years old he commanded the Swedish forces against Danish invaders in one city. When he was seventeen years old, his father died. Even though he was too young by Swedish law to become king, the Swedish Parliament overruled the age requirement, allowing him to be crowned king at age seventeen because they had been so impressed with his abilities. Gustavus not only understood his courtly responsibilities but the military needs of his country as well.

The important part of the story of King Gustavus' life we wish to focus on involves his role as commander of the army of Sweden, for not only was he king, but Gustavus was commander of the Swedish Army as well. Gustavus was king during 1611 - 1632 and at that time the fighting units in the nations around him were nomadic, ragtag groups of individual mercenary units, various sized groups in one part of the continent and various sized groups in another part. These groups were not united and did not work together within themselves let alone



King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden

ever they wished. They were not respected and were often feared.

But King Gustavus changed all this and the changes he made even Napoleon, centuries later, respected and tried to implement with his army. No longer were the soldiers in Sweden allowed to do wrong things. King Gustavus required his men not to become drunk, they were not to loot from anyone, whether in Sweden or in another country, they were not to swear, they were not allowed to blaspheme God in any way. The king required all of his men to be honest and to have honorable relationships with women. The soldiers had a moral code of conduct the king expected them to obey. In exchange for this required upright behavior, the soldiers received rewards for being in King Gustavus' army. They were given regular wages, and each soldier was given a parcel of land in Sweden. Every one of his soldiers became landowners. His army was respected not only in the neighboring countries but in the homeland as well.

King Gustavus also brought his men together in such a way that they became united as one group and chose to cooperate with one another. He organized the soldiers in groups of one hundred under a direct and plain chain of command, and these groups were then organized into larger groups. No longer were there independent groups of artillery here and infantry over there roaming the country, making their own individual decisions. Now a chain of command was followed and the artillery, infantry, and calvary were pulled together into one army. Perhaps Gustavus molded his army this way because of the way that Moses organized the children of Israel or maybe he had in mind Paul's inspired analogy of the Christian church as a body functioning harmoniously with many unified members.

in combination with other like-minded groups. Instead, they were concerned only about themselves and were very rude and crude in their behavior. Wherever they went they took what they wanted. They stole from the villagers, looted their possessions, and harmed men and women when-

King Gustavus did not stop with this. He established supply lines with supply bases set up along the lines so that his men were not left without needed supplies, and his army became the strongest army of the early seventeenth century.

The Bible tells us we are to be "kind one to another, tenderhearted (Ephesians 4:32)." We are not to hurt and kill each other, as the soldiers in King Gustavus' army did, but you and I are in a war also. This is why I have told you this story. King Gustavus fought during the Thirty Years' War against the (un)Holy Roman Empire which was trying to extend its borders into his area, and we are in a battle with Satan. In Ephesians 6:10-17 we learn about the armor of God and we need this armor in our war against Satan and his evil angels. Satan has an army that is bent on destroying us, but we have a Captain, the Lord of Hosts is his name, and we will be victorious if we depend on his supply lines, imitate his moral and upright character through the power he gives us, do as he commands, press together on his foundation of truth, and arm ourselves with the impregnable armor of God—truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, "and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Ephesians 6:17)."

Before fighting in his last battle which was against the Romish armies, King Gustavus, with all his men about him, knelt in prayer, and then upon rising they lifted their combined voices in singing the battle hymn found at the end of this story. King Gustavus was one of the few military commanders who had the respect and love of both his soldiers and citizens alike, and it was during this battle that the king's horse returned riderless. King Gustavus was later found slain on the battlefield. The king died, but his army won this battle and repressed the papists, due in large part to his leadership and efforts.

The words of the hymn they sang, known today as *Gustavus Adolphus*, are just as important to us in our battle against Satan as they were to the king and his army in 1632. We are a little flock and Satan madly seeks our overthrow, but our victory is sure!

Gustavus Adolphus

Fear not, O little flock, the foe
Who madly seeks your overthrow,
Dread not his rage and power:
What though your courage sometimes faints,
His seeming triumph o'er God's saints
Lasts but a little hour.

Be of good cheer, your cause belongs
To Him who can avenge your wrongs;
Leave it to Him, our Lord:
Though hidden yet from all our eyes,
He sees the Gideon who shall rise
To save us and His word.

Address Service Requested

SMYRNA GOSPEL MINISTRIES
HC 64 BOX 128 B
WELCH WV 24801-9606 U.S.A.

PRESTRT STD
US POSTAGE PAID
WELCH, WV
Permit # 35

Amen, Lord Jesus, grant our prayer!
Great Captain, now Thine arm make bare,
Fight for us once again:
So shall Thy saints and martyrs raise
A mighty chorus to Thy praise,
World without end. Amen.

Onycha Holt



Winter in Sweden, the home of King Gustavus

As true as God's own word is true,
Nor earth nor hell with all their crew,
Against us shall prevail:
A jest and by-word—they are grown;
God is with us, we are His own,
Our victory cannot fail.

Old Paths is a free monthly newsletter/study-paper published by Smyrna Gospel Ministries, HC 64 Box 128-B, Welch, WV 24801-9606 U. S. A. The paper is dedicated to the propagation and restoration of the principles of truth that God gave to the early Seventh-day Adventist pioneers. *Duplication is not only permitted, but strongly encouraged.* This issue, with other gospel literature we publish, can be found at our web sites. The urls are: <http://www.smyrna.org> and <http://www.presenttruth.info>. Phone: (304) 732-9204. Fax: (304) 732-7322.

Editor Allen Stump—editor@smyrna.org
Assistant Editor Onycha Holt—onycha@smyrna.org