

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



Victoria Falls, Zambia

For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring. (Isaiah 44:3)

Prayer Requests

The latter part of September and most of October found Pastor Stump first visiting France for a week to attend a camp meeting co-ordinated by Brother Marc Fury and then to Zambia for two weeks and the Democratic Republic of the Congo for a week to hold meetings.

The meetings in France, with a theme of our landmarks and pillars, were a special blessing to the sixty-plus who attended.

In Zambia we traveled to the northern side of Lake Mweru to visit with about 200 brothers and sisters eager to drink in all the truth we could share about the identity and character of God and Christ and righteousness by faith. We also conducted some evening public meetings with the help battery-powered lights. We also held excellent meetings in Lusaka, the capital of Zambia, with several believers attending.

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Bible Questions and Answers Concerning Man

By A. T. Jones

If a Man Die, Shall He Live Again?

This question is not one that is asked now so much as it ought to be. The question that is now asked a good deal more than it ought to be is whether man really dies—whether there is really any such thing as death. And as it is, in the great majority of cases, decided that man does not die, that “there is no death, what seems so is transition,” in the view that man never ceases to live, it would not be an appropriate question at all to ask, Shall he live again

But, as we have abundantly shown, the Bible considers this subject from the standpoint of the fact that man does die; that when he is dead he is wholly unconscious, and that all prospect of future existence depends upon an affirmative answer, from the Word of God, to the question as to whether he shall live again. In Job 14:14 is written the question to which we have here referred, “If a man die, shall he live again?” And in Isa. 26:19 we have the direct answer to the question: “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

The only hope of future life which the Word of God presents is in the resurrection of the dead. This is the hope of the righteous; it is the Christian’s hope. Paul, in discussing this subject of the resurrection of the dead, proves first that Christ is risen, and then says: “Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.” 1 Cor. 15:12–14. It is evident that there were some at Corinth, even as there are some now, who professed to believe in Christ, and at the same time believed not in the resurrection of the dead. But Paul settles that at once by saying, “If there be no

resurrection of the dead,” your faith in Christ is vain. This proves plainly that our hope and faith in Christ meet their fruition only at and by the resurrection of the dead.

This is so important that the Spirit of God, by the apostle, repeats it. Again he says: “If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.” Here it is declared that to deny the resurrection of the dead is to deny the resurrection of Christ, is to leave the professed believer yet in his sins; and therefore it subverts the gospel and the salvation of Christ. This is followed by another most important conclusion, and that is, If the dead rise not, “then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.” It would be impossible to more forcibly show that all hope of future life depends upon the resurrection of the dead. If there be no resurrection of the dead, then the dead are perished. And this is stated, not of the wicked dead, but of the righteous dead, “they also which are fallen asleep in Christ,” even these have perished if there be no resurrection of the dead. In verse 32, this is repeated in another form: “If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.”

Such argument as that is very seldom heard in these our days. The argument now is, What advantageth it us to practice the life of Christian self-denial if the soul be not immortal? What advantageth it us to do these things if we do not go to heaven when we die? And so it is sung,-

“Oh, you must be a lover of the Lord,

Or you can’t go to heaven when you die!”

The truth is that, though you be a lover of the Lord, you can’t go to heaven when you die, but you can go at the resurrection of the dead; and that is at the coming of the Lord. For so it is written: “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the

first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." Verses 22, 23. "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:16,17. "So" means "in this manner." In this manner it is that we go to heaven. In this manner we meet the Lord.


The hope of life by Christ, at the resurrection of the dead, is the hope in which Paul lived, the hope in which he exercised himself, the hope which he preached. When he stood before the council, he said: "I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question." Acts 23:6. And afterward, when he answered his accusers before Felix, he said; "I have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust ... Let these same here say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council, except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day." Acts 24:15-21. Again, when he stood before Agrippa, he said: "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers; unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" Acts 26:6-8.

Now put these things together: (a) He stood and was judged for the hope of the promise made of God. (b) This was the promise made unto the fathers. (c) Unto this promise the twelve tribes-all Israel-hope to come. (d) For this hope he was accused of the Jews. (e) But he was accused-called in question-of the Jews, "touching the resurrection of the dead." (f) Therefore the hope of the promise of God, made unto the fathers, is the hope of the promise of the resurrection of the dead. (g) This is made emphatic by his question to Agrippa, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" When Paul was at Athens, "he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection." Acts 17:18.

Therefore it is plainly proved that the hope which God has set before us in Christ and His blessed gospel, is the hope of the resurrection from the dead unto everlasting life and eternal glory. And as this resurrection all depends upon the glorious appearing of our Saviour, therefore the second coming of our Saviour is inseparably connected with this, the Christian's "blessed hope." Thus saith the Lord: "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious

appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2:11-13.

This is that for which Job looked. He says: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." Job 14:14. This change is at the resurrection, for says Paul, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." 1 Cor. 15:51, 52. Again says Job: "If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness...And where is now my hope?" Chap. 17:13-15. Here it is: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not a stranger. My reins within me are consumed with earnest desire for that day." Chap. 19:25-27, margin.

Time and space would fail us to quote the words of this hope, expressed by David, and Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and Daniel, and Hosea, and Micah, and all the prophets and apostles. We can only cite again the words that this is the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers, unto which promise we instantly serving God day and night hope to come. Why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should raise the dead? The righteous dead shall live again, at the coming of the Lord, and therefore we look and anxiously wait for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus. Like faithful Job, our reins within us are consumed with earnest desire for that glorious day. And as He assures us, "Surely I come quickly," our hearts reply, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." 



Youth Nugget

Fall! *Isn't God so good to make all of this color*, I thought, as I raked leaves a few days ago, *and tonight I am going to look at the stars*. It is so much nicer to watch them in the fall, for the sky is clearer.

What does God say about the stars? Let's find out.

In 1 Corinthians 15:41, the Bible says that each star is different. Each one has a glory that is different in its own special way, just like we are. It would be strange if everyone looked alike; it is the same with the stars.

Second Peter 1:19 talks about light shining in a dark place. Our hearts are in darkness until we accept Jesus, the "day star." It is like being lost in a dark cave and walking out of the cave through a tunnel after we finally see the light and follow it. The cave is being lost in sin. The tunnel is when we finally realize our sin and, with Christ's help, go through the tunnel toward the light. The light is when we reach the point where we ask forgiveness and we follow God and become his child.

Wow! Stars mean a lot in the Bible.

Ashleigh Holt

The Church of the Living God

How do you define the word *church*? To many people a church is a great cathedral, where God is worshipped. To others the word *church* is associated with a national state-church, like the Lutheran Church in Germany. To still others the word *church* conjures up the idea of a church denomination, such as the Baptist Church, the Roman Catholic Church, or the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary gives nine definitions for the word *church*:

CHURCH, n. 1. A house consecrated to the worship of God, among Christians; the Lords house. This seems to be the original meaning of the word. The Greek, to call out or call together, denotes an assembly or collection. But, Lord, a term applied by the early Christians to Jesus Christ; and the house in which they worshipped was named from the title. So church goods, bona ecclesiastica; the Lords day, dies dominica.

2. The collective body of Christians, or of those who profess to believe in Christ, and acknowledge him to be the Savior of mankind. In this sense, the church is sometimes called the Catholic or Universal Church.

3. A particular number of christens, united under one form of ecclesiastical government, in one creed, and using the same ritual and ceremonies; as the English church; the Gallican church; the Presbyterian church; the Romish church; the Greek church.

4. The followers of Christ in a particular city or province; as the church of Ephesus, or of Antioch.

5. The disciples of Christ assembled for worship in a particular place, as in a private house. Colossians 4:15.

6. The worshipers of Jehovah or the true God, before the advent of Christ; as the Jewish church.

7. The body of clergy, or ecclesiastics, in distinction from the laity. Hence, ecclesiastical authority.

8. An assembly of sacred rulers convened in Christ's name to execute his laws.

9. The collective body of Christians, who have made a public profession of the Christian religion, and who are untied under the same pastor; in distinction from those who belong to the same parish, or ecclesiastical society, but have made no profession of their faith.

Most people today use the term *church* in a variety of the above-mentioned ways, and we have to know the context to

understand which meaning we are to apply. Even Ellen White at times used the word *church* with great diversity.

In the Bible, however, the word *church* has one meaning—the called-out ones. The word *church* is not used in the Old Testament, though the concept is there in different words. In the New Testament the Greek word translated *church* is *ekklesia* (ἐκκλησία). *Ekklesia* comes from two words that mean the called-out or called-out ones. *Ekklesia* is usually translated *church* but in Acts 19:32, 39, and 41, it is translated *assembly*. This usage is interesting because the assembly mentioned in Acts 19 was clearly not a meeting of believers but an assembly of a mob. This helps us to understand that there are different kinds of churches, or called-out groups.

The mob mentioned in Acts 19 was an assembly, or church, but in the same sense, a group of Muslims meeting in a mosque would be a church. A group of Jews meeting in a synagogue would be a church. A large congregation meeting

in a great cathedral would be a church, and even people gathered in a political rally form a type of church. Just being an assembly, however, does not make that assembly the *biblical church of God*.

Buildings are not churches. Chapels, homes, and other buildings are simply places where the called-out ones, the church, meet. You see the church is people. The question of the church is not one of what, but rather of whom.

If the church is composed of called-out people, we need to find out who has called them out and from what have they been called.

The Bible calls the followers of God and Christ both the church of God and the churches of Christ. For example, Paul noted: "The churches of Christ salute you" (Romans 16:16). The preposition *of* denotes possession and in the Greek, Christ is in the genitive form

which shows possession. The churches belong to Jesus Christ. He has purchased the church with his own blood (1 Peter 1:19). The very first time in the Scripture the word *church* is used is in Matthew 16:18, where Jesus refers to the church as "my church."

The Bible also teaches that the church belongs to God the Father:

Unto the church of God which is at Corinth. (1 Corinthians 1:2)



The Cathedral of Nimes, but it is not a church.

For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. (1 Corinthians 15:9)

Since the church belongs to God and Christ, it can never belong to any man, state, or group; therefore, the church can never be run, controlled, or directed by any man, state, nor group.

The church has been called out from the world and especially from Babylon which is the heart and soul of the world. John writes:

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. (1 John 2:15–17)

While the believer is left in the world, he is not to be of the world but rather, he/she is to be the light of the world (Matthew 5:14–16). Within the world is Babylon—“every false and apostate religion” (*The Great Controversy*, p. 381). God is calling his people out of the world and out of the religious confusion in the world which is called Babylon. The message of the fourth angel of Revelation is a call from Christ himself to come out of Babylon: “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (Revelation 18:4). Commenting upon this, Ellen White wrote:

The light that was shed upon the waiting ones penetrated everywhere, and those in the churches who had any light, who had not heard and rejected the three messages, obeyed the call and *left the fallen churches*. (*Early Writings*, p. 278; all emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted)

Those who respond to the call in Revelation 18 to come out of Babylon are here said to come from the fallen churches, thus equating the fallen churches with Babylon.

First Usage

As noted earlier the first place in the Bible that the term *church* is used is found in Matthew 16:18. The context is vital to understanding the complete and accurate picture of the church. The context surrounds the great confession of Peter:

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art

Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matthew 16:13–18)

Jesus was asking the disciples what the popular opinion of the multitudes was concerning himself. Various answers were given, but then Jesus asked them all the probing question that is a question that we all have to answer: “But whom say ye that I am?” Peter, ever quick to speak, declared: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus was clearly pleased with this answer, for he declared that it was of no ordinary origin but, rather, was divinely inspired by God himself. Then Jesus declared that upon “this rock” he would build his church.

What was the rock upon which Jesus would build his church? Some think that it was Peter, for the name *Peter* in Greek (*petros*) means rock, but *petros* is not the Greek word translated *rock* in verse 18. The rock upon which Christ would build his church is, in the Greek, *petra*. *Petra* means a large rock. In fact, an ancient city by this name is to be found in the country of Jordan, and it was carved out of solid rock!

The Catholic Church believes that Peter is the rock, but Jesus said that the gates of hell would not prevail against this rock (*petra*). The gates of hell did prevail against Peter. On the night that Jesus was betrayed, Peter denied his lord three times (Matthew 26:69–74). Even after Pentecost Peter allowed prejudice to enter, and Paul had to rebuke him face-to-face (Galatians 2:11).

The rock upon which Jesus would build his church is the truth that Peter had confessed—Jesus is the Son of God. Ellen White noted:

The truth which Peter had confessed is the foundation of the believer’s faith. (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 412)

Peter had expressed the truth which is the foundation of the church’s faith ... (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 413)

So the first place we find the word *church*, we also find the central, fundamental, and foundational teaching of Christ’s church, that he is God’s only begotten Son.

The concept of church as the *ekklesia* should not have been a new concept to Israel. In the LXX we find the word *ekklesia* in many places, and it is translated usually as assembly (sometimes company, congregation, or assemblies).

And the chief of all the people, even of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly (*ekklesia* in LXX) of the people of God, four hundred thousand footmen that drew sword. (Judges 20:2)

I have preached righteousness in the great congregation (*ekklesia* in LXX). (Psalm 40:9)

The mission of the church is to teach the everlasting gospel. This gospel is all about God and Christ and is summed up in John 3:16: “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.”

The gospel centers around the gift of Christ who lived, died, arose, ascended, ministers, and will come again. In the gospel the center and focus is Jesus, not me. Jesus is the subject of the gospel; it is “not I but Christ.” Christ does all this *for* me; I am the object of this love. In sentence structure, Christ is the subject, the actions of Jesus are the verbs, and the sinner is the recipient of that love, or the direct object.

Subject	Verb	Direct Object
Christ	lived	for me
Christ	died	for me
Christ	ascends	for me
Christ	ministers	for me
Christ	sheds his love	for me

In the Reformation this concept was called *pro me*, from the Latin for *for me*. The gospel is centered around the work of God and Christ. Any teaching that does not focus on the the foundation of the church and the mission of the gospel is lacking the key ingredients needed to be a part of Christ’s church.

Interestingly, the first chapter of *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers* is entitled “The Church of Christ” and has these subheadings: The Object of His Supreme Regard, The Church the Property of God, Organization and Development, The Remnant Church Not Babylon.

Please remember that this book is a compilation from the writings of Ellen White. Its design and layout were not given by Ellen White.

In the beginning of a book of counsel for ministers, one would expect to find counsel on the gospel and its presentation but instead, we find the center of focus to be the church, not Christ. In the beginning of this book, we read such statements as:

I testify to my brethren and sisters that the church of Christ, enfeebled and defective as it may be, is the only object on earth on which He bestows His supreme regard. (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 15)

The church, being endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the wealth of His mercy, His love, His grace, is to appear in full and final display. (*Ibid.*, p. 18)

While these statements are true and have a proper place, they exemplify an emphasis that is designed to place *the church* in a high and exalted position, so that one will not speak against *this church* (this reference carries the meaning of a denomination).

What Makes the Different Churches Different?

At this point we should examine what makes the different churches different. Is it the food they bring to potluck or the architecture of the building in which the people meet? No, of

course not. It is the doctrines, or the teachings, of the different groups that separate them.

Luther and Zwingli, though in agreement on many items of faith, such as sola fide (by faith only); sola gratia (through grace only); and sola scriptura (the Bible only); differed, for example, on the Lord’s Supper. Is the bread the actual body of Christ or not? Is the juice the literal blood of Jesus or simply a symbol? Luther still said they were the literal body and blood of Jesus, but Zwingli said they were not, and there was no reconciliation on this issue. The followers of these men became groups known of the Lutheran Church and the Reformed Church. John Calvin later came into the picture with his views of regeneration and predestination, and from this we have the Presbyterian Church.

Is the gospel of Luther, Zwingli, or Calvin good enough



Luther and Zwingli differed over communion.

for today? While Luther was a man of God, chosen for his time and coming out of great and terrible darkness, he was still far from the pure light of the everlasting gospel, as revealed in the three angels’ messages. For example, Luther loved confession. The Latin words *ego te absolvo* (I forgive you) were as music to his ears. He believed the communion wafer to be the literal body of Jesus. Luther, like Zwingli and Calvin, believed in the trinitarian doctrine and upheld Sunday sacredness. Surely such is not good enough for today—the day of the final atonement!

What Is Babylon?

We noted earlier that the church is to come out of the world and specifically out of Babylon. Inspiration says:

The term “Babylon” is derived from “Babel,” and signifies confusion. It is employed in Scripture to designate the various forms of false or apostate religion. (*The Great Controversy*, p. 381)

Concerning Babylon, the symbol of the apostate church . . . (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 179)

Portrayed in Revelation 17 is a harlot who is called, “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH” (v. 5). This Babylon is specifically the church of Rome, the Papacy.

The woman (Babylon) of Revelation 17 is described as “arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness:...and upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots.” Says the prophet: “I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” Babylon is further declared to be “that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” Revelation 17:4–6, 18. The power that for so many centuries maintained despotic sway over the monarchs of Christendom is Rome. (*The Great Controversy*, p. 382)

Yet this harlot is said to have daughters. I was greatly blessed to have a daughter. Her name is Heidi Stump. She has my name because she is a legitimate daughter. When conceived in marriage, children always take the name of the father. When children are conceived by prostitutes, though, many times the name of the father is not even known. The children always take the name of the mother. If the mother’s name is Babylon, then the children have the same name.

Babylon is said to be “the mother of harlots.” By her daughters must be symbolized churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world. (*Ibid.*, pp. 382, 383)

These daughters, therefore, are the fallen Protestants:

The message of Revelation 14 announcing the fall of Babylon, must apply to religious bodies that were once pure and have become corrupt. Since this message follows the warning of the Judgment, it must be given in the last days, therefore it cannot refer to the Romish Church, for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries. Furthermore, in the eighteenth chapter of the Revelation, in a message which is yet future, the people of God are called upon to come out of Babylon. According to this scripture, many of God’s people must still be in Babylon. And in what religious bodies are the greater part of the followers of Christ now to be found? Without doubt, in the various churches professing the Protestant faith. (*The Great Controversy*, p. 383; 1888 edition)

The fallen denominational churches are Babylon. (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 61)

One thing is for sure—the true church of God is set in the Bible and in the testimonies in contradistinction to Babylon. So let us find out more about what the Bible says concerning God’s church.

The Pillar and Buttress of Truth

Let us go back to the Bible to see more characteristics about the true biblical Church of God. A key text is found in First Timothy:

These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in *the house of God, which*

is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Timothy 3:14, 15)

Paul is writing to Timothy, hoping to visit him at Ephesus as soon as possible. In the case of delay, however, he sent instruction on how to guide the church which Paul defines as “the house of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” A house is a place of abode, where one lives. God wants to live in this people (1 Corinthians 3:16). Since his people, not a building or organization, compose the church and God dwells in them, the church can rightly be called the house of God. Then Paul declares that the church is the pillar and ground of truth!

The Greek word “ground” is *hedraĩōma* (ἑδραϊωμα), “a stay, a prop.” The kindred adjective is *hedraĩos* (ἑδραϊος). The idea is that the church is the pillar, and as such, the prop or support of the truth. (*Wuest’s Word Studies in the Greek New Testament*)

The noun form used in First Timothy can be thus translated buttress (ESV), foundation (NIV), support (NASB), or bulwark (NRSV).

The noun *hedraĩōma* occurs in 1 Tim. 3:15. The church is here a solid defense against the confusion of myths, offering individual faith and thought a sure ground with its confession (v. 16). (*The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Abridged in One Volume*, p. 200).

If the true church of God is the foundation of truth, it certainly will not be teaching the wine of Babylon, especially the doctrine of the trinity which is the “central doctrine of Catholic faith. Upon it are based all the other teachings of the Church” (*Handbook for Today’s Catholic*, p. 16). According to Revelation 14:5, the 144,000 have a pure faith, for in their mouths is no guile. The Greek word translated guile is not *pseudomai* (ψεῦδομαι) which means lie but rather, *dolos* (δόλος) which means deceit (literally fish bait). The 144,000 will not be teaching lies or anything that will deceive people. Fish bait is used to catch fish. The fish believe that they are getting needed food, something good, but the bait is only used to catch them and bring about their destruction. The 144,000 will have no such damning errors in their teachings.

The Church Keeps All the Ten Commandments

Another characteristic of the true church is that they keep all of the Ten Commandments and have the faith of Jesus. “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:12). God’s church will keep all ten of his commandments, including the first and fourth, two commandments that have been trampled down by trinitarianism and Sunday sacredness. Empowering the true church is the faith of Jesus. Jesus living out his pure and strong life within the believers enables them to keep all of God’s commandments.

Ellen White visited Europe in 1886. While there she saw things that she had never experienced in the United States.

She saw the way a church-state operated. She saw some of the great cathedrals of Europe. In fact, shortly after seeing the Cathedral of Nimes, France, she wrote to her elder sister and her sister's husband, who had not accepted the Sabbath truth. In that letter, she said:

God has a church. It is *not the great cathedral, neither is it the national establishment, neither is it the various denominations; it is the people who love God and keep His commandments.* "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). Where Christ is even among the humble few, this is Christ's church, for *the presence of the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity can alone constitute a church.* (*The Upward Look*, p. 315)

Here we find a very clear-cut statement that the church is not any of the various denominations but rather, the true church is the people who love God and keep his commandments. Ellen White also says that the presence of Christ alone can constitute the church. This the Bible also teaches. Speaking of Christ, Paul writes:

Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; *But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.* (Hebrews 3:2-6)

The Church Has the Testimony of Jesus

According to Revelation 12:17 and 19:10, the true church will have the testimony of Jesus. They will be a people who will heed the counsels of Jesus and not lightly regard divinely-sent counsels.

From the beginning, *faithful souls* have constituted the church on earth. (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 11)

Not just any pew-sitter or placeholder constitutes the church, but faithful souls who have built upon the seven pillars of truth (Proverbs 9:1). The foundation of all the pillars is the doctrine of Jesus being the Son of God. He who is "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6) is the very foundation of the believer's faith.

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 3:11)

And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. (Ephesians 2:20)

Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. (1 Peter 2:6)

Physical Birthright Does Not Equal Spiritual Birthright

When God called Abraham out of Ur, he began the formation of a chosen people, a church but in a larger sense, we are told that "the observance of the Passover began with the birth of the Hebrew nation" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 75). So on the night of the first Passover, the Old Testament Church was born. To this people many promises were made, and the Jewish people came to see themselves as those who would always be the favorites of God.

The Jewish people cherished the idea that they were the favorites of heaven, and that they were always to be exalted as the church of God. They were the children of Abraham, they declared, and so firm did the foundation of their prosperity seem to them that they defied earth and heaven to dispossess them of their rights. But by lives of unfaithfulness they were preparing for the condemnation of heaven and for separation from God. (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 294)



Physical birth does not guarantee a spiritual birthright.

What could have made Israel so sure of their foundation that they could not be removed from their position as the chosen of God? A misunderstanding of Jeremiah had given them this foundation.

Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith

the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD. (Jeremiah 31:35-37)

Each day the priests and rulers could see the sun rise, the tides go in and out, and the moon and stars at night. Their promise seemed sure. When Jesus cleansed the temple at the beginning of his ministry, he said: "Take these things hence; make not *my Father's house* an house of merchandise" (John 2:16). Jesus addressed the temple as "his Father's house," yet three and a half years later, as he was leaving the temple for the last time, he said: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matthew 23:38). What had been *his Father's house* became *their* house, and it was desolate. The Greek word translated *desolate* is *eremos* (ἐρημος) and means empty. It is used of deserts and wilderness areas, as well as a

flock neglected by its shepherd. Thus the word *desolate*, which can mean “devoid of warmth, comfort, or hope,” aptly describes the condition of Israel, though they knew it not.

Not only had the sacred presence departed from the temple, but also from the city, as well. David had written, concerning Jerusalem:

Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, *the city of the great King*. (Psalm 48:2)

In the parable of the great feast, however, Jesus called the city the “murderers ... city” (Matthew 22:7).

No doubt when the priests heard Christ’s pronouncements against the city and the temple, they declared: “Blasphemy, he speaks against the holy city and the holy temple!” Furthermore, they had scripture (Jeremiah 31:35–37) to back up their position. Even Jesus had said “the scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35).

However, the Jews had overlooked the condition of that the promise. The promise was based upon that people having God’s law written in their heart.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, That I will make a new covenant With the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers In the day that I took them by the hand To bring them out of the land of Egypt; Which my covenant they brake, Although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, And write it in their hearts; And will be their God, And they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: For they shall all know me, From the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: For I will forgive their iniquity, And I will remember their sin no more. (Jeremiah 31:31–34)

Furthermore, the Jews did not discern that, according to Daniel 9:24, there were 70 weeks given to them as a people, and they were about to expire.

In connection with the Jewish nation and *any* after groups that have claimed the favor of God, we ask the question, Is God a respecter of persons, and can he be? Not according to Acts 10:34. Peter speaking about the acceptance of the Gentiles said, “Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.” Certainly God is true (Romans 3:4) and his word is true (John 17:17). The Jews had no free pass into the heavenly Canaan, despite what some thought. While they thought that they had sure promises of the ship going through, sure promises that they would not be the sinners in Zion that would be shaken out, and sure promises that they could never be a part of Babylon, they were, as a people, deadly wrong!

If God is no respecter of persons today, then can any church or denomination have a sure ticket to Canaan regardless of their faithfulness? Of course not!

Why cannot the papacy be God’s church? We could give many reasons but will just list two main areas: She cannot be the true church because she has a long list of abominations for doctrines, beginning with her central doctrine of the trinity, and because of her alliance with the civil governments so as to execute her will (such as burning her enemies at the stake). For the first reason she becomes a harlot and for the second reason, she is a beast! Faithfulness is essential to be and to remain as God’s church.

A Changing Church

In Revelation 12 we read of the church as a pure virgin who had hidden herself in the wilderness (*eremos*) in a seemingly abandoned place for 1,260 years. In presenting this prophecy Adventists have been quick to note that when she emerges from hiding she is the same woman, with the same pure teachings. Just as a train which goes into a long tunnel comes out the other end as the same train, so the church comes out from her hiding as the same church. For anyone to try to change the teachings of the church or to try to align her with civil authorities would be apostasy and considered a betrayal of sacred trusts. Christ, through his testimony, informs us of the seriousness of such treason:

The church is God’s fortress, His city of refuge, which He holds in a revolted world. Any betrayal of the church is treachery to Him who has bought mankind with the blood of His only-begotten Son. (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 11)

Thus to betray God’s church, his people, is treachery to the Son of God. It may come as a great shock to some that the Seventh-day Adventist denomination has significantly changed some of its foundational doctrines (see Appendix 1, p. 14) and also has appealed to civil authorities to enforce her will in situations, such as the church name trademark issue and removing peaceful protesters and literature evangelists from public places during General Conference sessions.

These changes are not simply cosmetic changes but serious breaches of doctrinal integrity. Major shifts in the doctrine of God, the doctrine of the sanctuary and the atonement, and the doctrine of the incarnation have taken place. These changes came in over a period of about fifty years, and for a time the church, through its historian LeRoy Froom, tried to cover up these changes, as if they had never happened. However, the light of truth on the matter came out in such bright rays that denial could no longer be an option. Later George Knight took up the mantle of church historian and approached the issue in a 180 degree manner. Knight waxed bold to declare that, indeed, Adventists had changed and changed dramatically but according to Knight, under “the dynamic nature of present truth” (*Ministry*, October 1993, p. 10).



Ministry Magazine Oct. 1993

The October 1993 issue of *Ministry* magazine has a cover showing someone who looks like James White dressed in 19th century clothing looking into a full length mirror and seeing himself in 20th century clothing. The lead article is entitled “Adventists and Change.” The picture says a thousand words.

H i s t o r i c

Adventism looks into the mirror and see a modern, new, and different church! In this article Knight unconditionally states:

Most of the founders of Seventh-day Adventism would not be able to join the church today if they had to subscribe to the denomination’s Fundamental Beliefs.

More specifically, most would not be able to agree to belief number 2, which deals with the doctrine of the Trinity. For Joseph Bates, the Trinity was an unscriptural doctrine, for James White it was that “old Trinitarian absurdity,” and for M. E. Cornell it was the fruit of the great apostasy, along with such false doctrines as Sundaykeeping and the immortal soul.

Knight goes on to mention J. N. Andrews and E. J. Waggoner as also denying the trinity doctrine. Knight’s message is plain and simple: These were good, but misinformed, men over the most central doctrine of the Bible. It is a denial by Knight that the woman who came out of hiding in 1798 is the same woman who went into the wilderness in AD 538!

Former General Conference President Neal C. Wilson, the father of current GC President Ted Wilson, stated: “Our doctrines cannot be changed without changing the nature of the church” (Adventist Review, November 8, 1979; speech given at the Annual Council in Washington, D.C. in October 1979). The timing of this statement is remarkable, since the church was at that time planning on a new statement of fundamentals to be presented for a vote at the upcoming General Conference Session at Dallas, Texas, the following year!

Wilson is plain—if you have different doctrines, you have a different church, exactly what we saw earlier. Ellen White also recognized this principle when she wrote:

The Lord has declared that the history of the past shall be rehearsed as we enter upon the closing work. Every truth that He has given for these last days is to be proclaimed to the world. Every pillar that He has established is to be strengthened. *We cannot now step off the foundation that God has established. We cannot now enter into any new organization; for this would mean apostasy from the truth.* (Notebook Leaflets, vol. 1, p. 51; 1905; see also *Maranatha*, p. 203)

To Ellen White apostasy from the truth was equal to a new organization. While at times Ellen White called for administrative *reorganization*, she never called for a *new* organization. In fact, when speaking of the omega of deadly heresies, she said that *if* the omega were received, “a new organization would be established” (*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 204).

The facts are clear that the teachings of the denomination have changed, that there is a new organization today, and that this is apostasy from the truth! Today the denomination is worshipping a false Christ, a Tammuz, under the name of the second person of the trinity. This change did not come in overnight, but was gradual.

Interestingly the apostasy of Israel in the time of Elijah began during the reign of Solomon and continued gradually until Israel was so confused that they did not know whom they were worshipping. The name Baal means *Lord* or *husband*. So when the Israel cried out, “O Baal here us” (1 Kings 18:26), many may have thought that they were calling upon Jehovah.

In our next installment of this series on the church, we will examine the issue of the *church* and Babylon. Can the true church ever become a part of Babylon? Before we close, however, let us learn a lesson from the Reformation.

Sylvester Prierias was a papal worker and an opponent of Martin Luther. Prierias said:

If the pope were so scandalously bad that he led multitudes of souls to the devil, still he could not be removed from office.

(*Luther, Gospel, Law, and Reformation*, part 1, p. 138)

Martin Luther read this and was astonished:

... he [Luther] wonders if everyone in Rome has gone crazy. If the pope leads people to hell, then you can’t do anything about it? If the pope sells stuff, makes money by driving people to despair and to hell, and this is how he funds the papacy, that’s OK? You can’t do anything about it? (*Ibid.*)



Neil Wilson

Luther's reply is striking:

Be astonished O heaven, Shudder, O earth. Behold, O Christian, what Rome is. (*Ibid.*)

And what had Rome become? Luther now sees the papacy with 20/20 acuity:

Rome is Antichrist; Rome is the principle of the devil; it is an institution that is anti-Christian, that comes right straight from the devil because it's saying, "I, the pope, can drive everyone to the devil. Even if they all go to hell, I can make my money that way, and you can't do anything about it." (*Ibid.*)

Now Luther understands how he will relate to the papacy from henceforth:

[Luther] decided that the pope is Antichrist; that's the deep decision that makes the Reformation necessary. **You don't compromise with Antichrist.** You don't try to reform the Antichrist. ... You break away from it, you have nothing to do with it, you start anew from the Gospel of Christ instead of from the word of Antichrist. That makes the Reformation necessary. (*Ibid.*, pp. 138, 139)

October 31, 1517, when Luther nailed his 95 theses to the church door at Wittenberg, is declared by some to be the date that formally begins the time of the Reformation. While that was certainly a great event, it was not designed to begin the public movement it did, but rather to begin a scholarly debate upon the subject. The theses were written in Latin, not German the common language of the people, and the church door in that day was the bulletin board for such invitations for debate.

But let us fast forward to December 10, 1520. Pope Leo X has issued a bull against Luther, demanding he recant or be excommunicated. Luther takes his copy of the bull and publically burns it at Wittenberg. Earlier on the third of October, when he received the bull, he declared:

I rejoice in having to bear such ills for the best of causes. Already I feel greater liberty in my heart; for at last I know that the pope is Antichrist, and that his throne is that of Satan himself." (D'Aubigne, *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, p. 204)

In burning the bull Luther made a public withdrawal from and declaration of the papal power being antichrist. Now he finally felt free, and the Reformation truly began (see Appendix 2, p. 16).

Now you can be free, beloved. It frees your mind when you no longer have to try to figure out how to compromise with somebody that you think is just plain wicked, devilish! You don't compromise with antichrist. **THIS IS WHAT GAVE LUTHER THE RIGHT TO SPLIT WITH THE CHURCH!**

However, today there is a move back to Rome by many of the churches. With the acceptance of preterism and futurism, most professed Protestants have given up the teaching that



Luther burning the papal bull of Leo X

Rome is antichrist. If the pope is no longer the antichrist, what right do they have being separated?

Luther said at the Diet of Worms, "*My conscience is captive to the word of God.*" Is yours?

To be continued

Allen Stump

Romanists have persisted in bringing against Protestants the charge of heresy and willful separation from the true church. But these accusations apply rather to themselves. They are the ones who laid down the banner of Christ and departed from "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jude 3. (The Great Controversy, p. 51)

"Basil" continued from p. 18

Why not start a little herb garden on the kitchen windowsill, and start with basil and oregano—both grow easily. In fact you can start a basil plant from a cutting—suspend the stem of a short cutting in water for about two week until roots develop and then plant. Pinch off any flower stems because foliage on that stem will stop if flowers are allowed to mature, and use your plant often because picking the leaves helps the plant to grow.

Ornycha Holt



Fresh

*F*resh air will purify
the body, and help to
healthy. The invigoration
reflected upon the mind
and clearness, as well
composure and serenity
stimulus to the appetite
of food more perfect,
sweet sleep. (Christian
Hygiene, p. 104)

h Air

purify the blood, refresh
make it strong and
ation produced will be
nd, imparting to it tone
as a degree of
ty. It gives a healthful
te, renders the digestion
and induces sound,
Temperance and Bible

Ellen G. White



Appendix I: Doctrinal Comparisons

Ellen White repeatedly stated that God gave the pioneers of our movement truth. In fact she stated, “It is as certain that we have the truth as that God lives; and Satan, with all his arts and hellish power, cannot change the truth of God into a lie” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 595; 1881).

Many of our people do not realize how firmly the foundation of our faith has been laid. My husband, Elder Joseph Bates, Father Pierce, Elder Edson, and others who were keen, noble, and true, were among those who, after the passing of the time in 1844, searched for the truth as for hidden treasure. I met with them, and we studied and prayed earnestly. Often we remained together until late at night, and sometimes through the entire night, praying for light and studying the word. Again and again these brethren came together to study the Bible, in order that they might know its meaning, and be prepared to teach it with power. When they came to the point in their study where they said, “We can do nothing more,” the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me, I would be taken off in vision, and a clear explanation of the passages we had been studying would be given me, with instruction as to how we were to labor and teach effectively. Thus light was given that helped us to understand the scriptures in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God, was made plain to me, and I gave to others the instruction that the Lord had given me. (*Special Testimonies*, Series B, no. 2, pp. 56, 57)

The first statement of fundamental principles published by Seventh-day Adventists was printed in the year 1872. Its authors were James White and Uriah Smith. In 1874, Elder James White published this statement of fundamental principles in the first issue of *The Signs of the Times*. This same statement was published in every denominational *Yearbook* that carried a statement until after Ellen White died (1915). Sixteen years later the next statement was published. This 1931 statement of fundamental principles was trinitarian and paved the way for the 1955–1956 SDA/Evangelical conferences. The next statement did not come for almost fifty years, when it was voted at the 1980 session at Dallas, Texas, and remains the current statement. Below we have reprinted some key statement comparisons between the original 1872 statement and the current statement. It should be clear that we do not have the same doctrines as we received in the beginning of our movement.

God

(1872) “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.”

(1980–Current) “There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three co-eternal Persons. God is immortal, all-powerful, all-knowing, above all, and ever present. He is infinite and beyond human comprehension, yet known through His self-revelation. He is forever worthy of worship, adoration, and service by the whole creation. (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 4:4–6; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 Tim. 1:17; Rev. 14:7.)”

The book *Issues*, published by the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, calls the 1872 statement “distinctly non-Trinitarian” (p. 39). The current statement is clearly trinitarian and is actually framed from the Council of Constantinople (AD 381) which, according to church historian J. N. D. Kelly, was the first time “the formula of one God existing in three coequal Persons [was] formally ratified” (*Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 88). This formula is the Basis for the constitution of the World Council of Churches. The Basis of their constitution states:

The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.”

It should be noted that membership in the World Council of Churches is based upon “agreement with the *Basis* upon which the Council is founded” (all emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted).

Beloved, we must not have companionship with Babylon. The doctrine of God is not something that can be compromised. It is the most vital fundamental doctrine of all Scripture. Ellen White declared that one of the pillars of our faith was a true knowledge of God:

Those who seek to remove the old landmarks are not holding fast; they are not remembering how they have received and heard. Those who try to bring in theories that would remove the pillars of our faith concerning the sanctuary or concerning *the personality of God or of Christ* are working as blind men. They are seeking to bring in uncertainties and to set the people of God adrift without an anchor. (*Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 235)

Jesus Christ – His Incarnation

(1872) “That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father, the one by whom God created all things, and by whom they do consist; that *he took on him the nature of the seed of Abraham for the redemption of our fallen race*; that he dwelt among men full of grace and truth, lived our example, died our sacrifice, was raised for our justification, ascended on high to be our only mediator in the sanctuary in Heaven, where, with his own blood he makes atonement for our sins; which atonement so far from being made on the cross, which was but the offering of the sacrifice, is the very last portion of his work as priest according to the example of the Levitical priesthood, which foreshadowed and

prefigured the ministry of our Lord in Heaven. See Lev. 16; Heb. 8:4, 5; 9:6, 7; &c.”

(1980–Current) “God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through Him all things were created, the character of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is accomplished, and the world is judged. Forever truly God, He became also truly man, Jesus the Christ. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived and experienced temptation as a human being, but perfectly exemplified the righteousness and love of God. By His miracles He manifested God’s power and was attested as God’s promised Messiah. He suffered and died voluntarily on the cross for our sins and in our place, was raised from the dead, and ascended to minister in the heavenly sanctuary in our behalf. He will come again in glory for the final deliverance of His people and the restoration of all things. (John 1:1–3, 14; Col. 1:15–19; John 10:30; 14:9; Rom. 6:23; 2 Cor. 5:17–19; John 5:22; Luke 1:35; Phil. 2:5–11; Heb. 2:9–18; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4; Heb. 8:1, 2; John 14:1–3.)”

The pioneers of Adventism all agreed that Jesus accepted the fallen nature of Adam in the incarnation, and their statement of fundamental principles reflected this position. The current statement leaves the issue of the incarnation open. Ellen White wrote:

What love! What amazing condescension! The King of glory proposed to humble himself to fallen humanity! He would place his feet in Adam’s steps. He would take man’s fallen nature and engage to cope with the strong foe who triumphed over Adam. He would overcome Satan, and in thus doing he would open the way for the redemption of those who would believe on him from the disgrace of Adam’s failure and fall. (*Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, February 24, 1874)

The Atonement

(1872) “That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, . . . that he, . . . died our sacrifice, was raised for our justification, ascended on high to be our only mediator *in the sanctuary in Heaven, where, with his own blood he makes atonement for our sins;* which atonement so far from being made on the cross, which was but the offering of the sacrifice, is the very last portion of his work as priest according to the example of the Levitical priesthood, which foreshadowed and prefigured the ministry of our Lord in Heaven. See Lev. 16; Heb. 8:4, 5; 9:6, 7; &c.”

(1980–Current) “In Christ’s life of perfect obedience to God’s will, His suffering, death, and resurrection, God provided the only means of atonement for human sin, so that those who by faith accept *this atonement* may have eternal life, and the whole creation may better understand the infinite and holy love of the Creator. This *perfect atonement* vindicates the righteousness of God’s law and the graciousness of His character; for it both condemns our sin and provides for our forgiveness. The death of Christ is substitutionary and expiatory, reconciling and transforming.

The resurrection of Christ proclaims God’s triumph over the forces of evil, and for those who accept the atonement assures their final victory over sin and death. It declares the Lordship of Jesus Christ, before whom every knee in heaven and on earth will bow. (John 3:16; Isa. 53; 1 Peter 2:21, 22; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4, 20–22; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15, 19–21; Rom. 1:4; 3:25; 4:25; 8:3, 4; 1 John 2:2; 4:10; Col. 2:15; Phil. 2:6–11.)”

The pioneers of Adventism knew that the final atonement was to take place in the heavenly sanctuary. This final atonement began in 1844. In contrast, the current statement speaks of “the atonement” which is provided by “Christ’s life of perfect obedience to God’s will, His suffering, death, and resurrection.” Notice that this stops short of including the heavenly sanctuary or Christ’s work there!

Christ’s Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary

(1872) “That the sanctuary of the new covenant is the tabernacle of God in Heaven, of which Paul speaks in Hebrews 8, and onward, of which our Lord, as great High Priest, is minister; that this sanctuary is the antitype of the Mosaic tabernacle, and that the priestly work of our Lord, connected therewith, is the antitype of the work of the Jewish priests of the former dispensation. Heb. 8:1–5, &c.; that this is the sanctuary to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days, what is termed its cleansing being in this case, as in the type, simply the entrance of the high priest into the most holy place, to finish the round of service connected therewith, by blotting out and removing from the sanctuary the sins which had been transferred to it by means of the ministration in the first apartment, Heb. 9:22, 23; and that this work, in the antitype, commencing in 1844, occupies a brief but indefinite space, at the conclusion of which the work of mercy for the world is finished.”

(1980–Current) “There is a sanctuary in heaven, the true tabernacle which the Lord set up and not man. *In it Christ ministers on our behalf, making available to believers the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross.* He was inaugurated as our great High Priest and began His intercessory ministry at the time of His ascension. In 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, He entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry. It is a work of investigative judgment which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin, typified by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. In that typical service the sanctuary was cleansed with the blood of animal sacrifices, but the heavenly things are purified with the perfect sacrifice of the blood of Jesus. The investigative judgment reveals to heavenly intelligences who among the dead are asleep in Christ and therefore, in Him, are deemed worthy to have part in the first resurrection. It also makes manifest who among the living are abiding in Christ, keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and in Him, therefore, are ready for translation into His everlasting

kingdom. This judgment vindicates the justice of God in saving those who believe in Jesus. It declares that those who have remained loyal to God shall receive the kingdom. The completion of this ministry of Christ will mark the close of human probation before the Second Advent. (Heb. 8:1–5; 4:14–16; 9:11–28; 10:19–22; 1:3; 2:16, 17; Dan. 7:9–27; 8:13, 14; 9:24–27; Num. 14:34; Eze. 4:6; Lev. 16; Rev. 14:6, 7; 20:12; 14:12; 22:12.)”

From where did the phrase “*the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross*” come? It is almost verbatim from the apostate book *Questions on Doctrine*, where we read:

When, therefore, one hears an Adventist say, or reads in Adventist literature – even in the writings of Ellen G. White – that Christ is making atonement now, it should be understood that we mean simply that Christ is now *making application of the benefits of the sacrificial atonement He made on the cross*; that He is making it efficacious for us individually, according to our needs and requests (*Questions on Doctrine*, pp. 354, 355; emphasis in the original).”

Place of Prophecy in Bible Study

(1872) “That the world’s history from specified dates in the past, the rise and fall of empires, and chronological succession of events down to the setting up of God’s everlasting kingdom, are outlined in numerous great chains of prophecy; and that these prophecies are now all fulfilled except the closing scenes.”

(1980–Current) NONE


Identification of the Man of Sin

(1872) “That as the man of sin, the papacy, has thought to change times and laws (the laws of God), Dan. 7:25, and has misled almost all Christendom in regard to the fourth commandment, we find a prophecy of a reform in this respect to be wrought among believers just before the coming of Christ. Isa. 56:1, 2, 1 Pet. 1:5, Rev. 14:12, &c.”

(1980–Current) NONE

Thus the message of Adventism today, though on the surface seems like the old time message, is a very different message from a very different church. Today one has to believe in the central doctrine of the Catholic Church to be able to become a member. A person must deny the high priestly ministry of Jesus Christ. Today church members may believe what they wish about the incarnation and to the shame of our early pioneers in their graves, one does not need to believe that the papacy is any fulfillment of prophecy!

Former General Conference President Neal Wilson (father of Ted Wilson) once said: “Our doctrines cannot be changed without changing the nature of the church” (*Adventist Review*, November 8, 1979; speech given at Annual Council, Washington, D.C., October 1979). So, as doctrines change, the nature of the church changes. Ellen White gave a strict warning to God’s people:

The Lord has declared that the history of the past shall be rehearsed as we enter upon the closing work. Every truth that He has given for these last days is to be proclaimed to the world. Every pillar that He has established is to be strengthened. *We cannot now step off the foundation that God has established. We cannot now enter into any new organization; for this would mean apostasy from the truth.* (Notebook Leaflets, vol. 1, p. 51; 1905) 

Appendix 2: When Did the Reformation Begin?

By A. T. Jones

How came The Reformation?

The Reformation did not and does not consist in exposure and denunciation of the iniquities of the Roman church.

That is included in The Reformation, as an incident; because it is of the essence of Christianity to hate iniquity, as it is to love righteousness.

It was the iniquities, enormities, and desolations, wrought by the Roman church, that caused the universal desire and the pressing demand that there should be a reformation. Yet The Reformation was not wrought by magnifying or dwelling upon those things.

The Reformation springs from another principle, lives in another atmosphere, and works in another field, than that.

If exposure and denunciation of the iniquities of that church could have wrought reformation, then The

Reformation would have been in the world more than five hundred years before it was.

The quotations in the preceding chapter of the many scathing words of denunciation and exposure of the Roman church on her own part, and of the papacy as a whole, and all by men of standing in that church itself, are sufficient to show that if *that* could work reformation there was enough of it to have accomplished the most complete and perfect reformation.

Yet all that is only a little of what could just as easily be quoted. And all of it said by men who lived all their days and died in full and honored membership in that church: some of them now saints of that church.

The men whose preaching made The Reformation could have said all that they ever said, and more, in denunciation of the iniquity in the church, and the enormities of the Popes; and yet could have remained in good standing in that church, all their days: *if* they had still held that church to be the only and true church, and have held themselves in conformity with her accordingly.

All men saw the iniquities practiced. They actually *felt* them on every side. Nobles, kings, emperors, priests, bishops, cardinals, and councils, called for reformation. Even Popes confessed the sore need of it.

Princes and peoples wanted it for relief. The more observant of the clergy wanted it because of the fear that without it there would be such an universal uprising of the people in wrathful retaliation as would literally wipe out the whole order of the clergy.

But from whatever cause a reformation was desired, it was always attempted without righteousness. It was from men only, and not from God. And it was in this way from the very men who were essentially the cause of the demand for reform, and were essentially of the thing that must be reformed: that is, the church.

Inevitably all such attempts must be flat failures. How dismal was the effort—the failure—of the Council of Constance at reformation, when what was considered the best that it could do to save the church,—the burning of Huss and Jerome—was the worst thing that it could possibly do, for any cause or for any reason!

The explanation of this blank incongruity, and the key of the whole vicious circle of self-involved contradictions, is in the fact that all those men who denounced the Popes and their evil practices, and the extortions and oppressions of the clergy, held that the church of which all these evils were but the expression, was the true and only church!

Even when they were compelled to admit that the church was inextricably involved in it all, and when they were thus required to reflect even upon the church, this was always done with the reservation and apology that in spite of all this she was the true and only church.

They denounced the *men* and the activities of the *men*, even of the Popes and the papal court, but still apologized and pleaded for *the machine*.

They condemned the evil *practices*, but justified the system by which alone it was possible that those practices could not only be perpetuated, but could even exist.

The times were evil, but “the church” which made the times what they were, was “righteous!”

Church-men were bad; but “the church,” whose members and the expression of whose like those churchmen essentially were, was “good!”

Customs were pernicious; but “the church,” whose the customs essentially were, was “the abode of sanctity!”

Practices were abominable; but “the church,” which invented many and profited by all of these practices, was “holy!”

Popes were demoniac; but “the church,” of which the Popes were “the head”—the acting will, the guiding mind—was “divine!”

See the grand churches and magnificent cathedrals! Hear the “heavenly.” music of the “divine.” chants! Catch the impressive odor of the “holy” incense! Feel the awe of the

“solemn” services, as the richly-robed ecclesiastics minister at the “altar,” kneel before the “host,” and move in “holy” procession! Think of the wide extent of her “missions!” Behold her “perfect organization,” by which she executes as by one man the wonders of her will, holds empires in awe, and rules the world! Isn’t that the true and only holy church?

The church was “the ark of God,” the ship of Salvation. The pilot, the captain, and the crew, might all be pirates, and use every motion of the ship only for piratical purposes, and load her to the sinking point with piratical plunder, and keep her ever headed straight toward perdition, yet “the grand old ship” herself was all right and would come safely to the heavenly port. Therefore, “cling to the ark,” “stand by the old ship,” and you will be safe and will land at last on the heavenly shore.

Such in essence is the conception held, and that for ages had been inculcated. For instance, in the very passage quoted on page 93 from Cardinal Baronius, in which he describes the fearful conditions of that church in the ninth century, there stand the cardinal’s words as follows:

“Christ was then assuredly sleeping a profound sleep in the bottom of His vessel whilst the winds buffeted it on all sides, and covered it with the waves of the sea. And what was more unfortunate still, the disciples of the Lord slept more profoundly than He, and could not awaken Him either by their cries or clamors.”

And in the General Council of Basle, 1432, the Pope’s legate exhorted the Bohemians that—

“In the time of Noah’s flood, as many as were without the ark perished.”


So long as this delusion was systematically inculcated, blindly received, and fondly hugged, of course reformation was impossible.

But as soon as there arose men with the courage of conviction and the confidence of truth, and spoke out plainly and flatly that the Roman system is not The Church at all in any feature or in any sense, then The Reformation had begun.

That is how The Reformation came. And without that The Reformation never could have come.

(*Lessons from the Reformation*, pp. 102–106) 

“Prayer Requests” continued from page 1

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we found a great deal of opposition from the conference Seventh-day Adventist Church. Believers were told that Pastor Stump was a “white man from America” giving money to induce people to attend his meetings and to leave the Adventist Church. Some stayed away, maybe because of this, but others came and gladly heard the message. Next month we will print a more detailed report of this trip, but please pray for all the contacts from this trip that God will water the seed sown. 

Basil--The Little Giant

Basil is an annual plant belonging to the mint family and is a common herb, grown in sunny, warm climates around the world. Over forty known varieties of basil exist, including lemon basil, sweet basil, cinnamon basil, and lettuce basil; and all the varieties contain differing amounts of chemicals which give each variety its distinctive flavor and scent. For example, the strong clove scent of sweet basil is derived from eugenol, the same eugenol that is in cloves, and the citrus scent of lemon basil and lime basil occurs because of the high amount of citral which is also responsible for the lemon scent of lemon mint and lemon peel.

Basil, along with oregano, also contains large amounts of a substance called (E)-beta-caryophyllene (BCP), which shows promise in the treatment of inflammatory bowel disease and arthritis. BCP is the *only* product identified in nature that does what it does.

Basil has more to offer, though. Researchers have found that it can kill the bacteria that cause acne, that it has the potential to block or suppress some cancers, that it is useful for some eye conditions, that it speeds wound healing, that it reduces levels of uric acid (in animal studies), and that it also inhibits the formation of stress- and NSAID-induced stomach ulcers in animals.

Basil also helps the body deal with stress. When you are worried, pressured by time constraints, or are faced with seemingly impossible situations, your “adrenal gland generates stress hormones, such as cortisol and adrenaline” (Aggarwal, *Healing Spices*, p. 37). These hormones are helpful for the immediate situation, but in the long-term they weaken your body and lay the groundwork for illnesses, such as a minor common cold or, more seriously, heart disease. Research



One of the many types of basil

with stressed laboratory animals in India has revealed that “basil normalized levels of cortisol, lowered blood sugar (which spikes when you are under stress), decreased creatine kinase (an enzyme generated when the body is under severe stress, such as during a heart attack), and stopped ‘adrenal hypertrophy’” (a sign of overworked adrenal glands). In a similar study, another team of Indian researchers exposed animals to the stress of constant noise and found that those given basil had much lower cortisol levels” (*Ibid.*).

One word of caution is necessary, however. According to Dr. Aggarwal, very large amounts of basil extract have been associated in animal studies with “anti-fertility effects in

both males and females” and a “supplement should not be taken by any individual or couple intending a pregnancy, or by a woman during pregnancy” (*Ibid.*, p. 40). Basil, as well as fennel, tarragon, and other aromatic plants, contains



Basil can be grown at home.

estragole which is known to cause cancer and birth defects in rats and mice. Although human studies have not been conducted, applying the data of the animal studies to humans indicates that one hundred to one thousand times the normal anticipated exposure to basil probably produces a minimal cancer risk.

Abigail Kelble, as published in *Nutrition & Food Science*, reports that basil and other food substances, such as garlic, oregano, and bay leaf, play a role in lowering blood glucose and in increasing insulin sensitivity. Since cardiovascular disease is a risk factor accompanying diabetes, she postulates that the kitchen herbs and spices she studied may secondarily improve blood circulation, decrease platelet aggregation, and lower blood pressure. What is significant is that Ms. Kelble states that to gain the benefits of these herbs and spices on type 2 diabetes, only the average amounts commonly used are necessary, such as the amounts usually sprinkled in foods or used in recipes. Highly concentrated doses may even inhibit benefits.

Using Basil

Fresh basil is fragile and can turn black if bruised or cut with a knife, so if the recipe calls for chopped fresh basil, it is better to tear it with your hands. Also, add it in the last few minutes of cooking, for its flavor dissipates easily and long cooking is not needed. A handful of fresh basil leaves can be tossed with hot pasta before serving, or you might try layering basil leaves between slices of fresh tomato on top of a rye cracker spread with hummus. Fresh basil can be used with mint and cilantro, along with Bibb lettuce and bean sprouts, to make a Vietnamese salad, and you might find purple basil added to your salad at a gourmet restaurant, for it is milder than sweet basil.

Fresh basil can be frozen. Gather the fresh leaves in a loose bundle and place them in a clear plastic bag. Blow air in the bag and tie it tightly. Place the bag on a freezer shelf where the leaves won't be disturbed and take them out one-by-one as needed. If you want to freshen up dried basil so as to taste more like fresh basil, try this: Mix ½ teaspoon of basil with ½ teaspoon of lemon juice, ½ teaspoon water, and a pinch of ground cloves. Let it stand for a few minutes before draining.

continued on page 11, column 2

Youth's Corner – Dear Young Friends

When young I felt the need of the Saviour, and was about eleven years old when I first rejoiced in his love. Previous to that time I had conviction of sin. I can recollect when very young of feeling the necessity of having my sins forgiven and washed away, least I should be for ever miserable.

I had praying parents, who felt great anxiety for the welfare of their children. I remember of trying to appear perfectly indifferent before them, for fear they would think I was under conviction, while I bore an aching heart, and night and day was troubled, fearing death might come upon me while in sin. When thunderstorms would arise, O, what dreadful suffering I passed through in my mind. Nights I would often awake and cry, not daring to close my eyes in sleep, for the fear the judgment might come, or the lightning kill me, and I be lost forever.

Children, if any of you are without a hope in Christ, and you fear or tremble when any storm shall now arise, ask yourselves this question: If I fear now, how shall I stand in the great and dreadful day of God's wrath? None of the wicked can escape then. There will not be an hour, a moment lent you then to get prepared for that dreadful day.

You will then witness, not merely rain, lightning and thunder; but every island will flee away, and the mountains will not be found.

“And there fell upon men great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent” (Revelation 16:21). The storm of God's wrath is soon coming upon a guilty world, and can you endure the thought of coming up to such a scene without a hope in God, and feeling that his withering frown is upon you? If you want a shelter, you must seek it now, and then you will be hid when the fierce anger of the Lord shall come.

I remember of often hearing my mother pray for us; one night in particular after I had retired. I shall never forget that earnest prayer for her unconverted children. She appeared to be much distressed, as she wrestled with God for us. I never shall forget these words which kept in my mind day and night. “O! Will they wade through so many prayers, to destruction and misery?” As I looked the matter over, thoughts would rush into my mind like this: The saints and especially my parents, desire to save me from destruction, and yet I am so unthinking and cruel as to wade through their prayers, or drive off conviction that pressed upon me, and by my heedless course, plainly show that I choose death rather than life.

Dear children, if you have praying parents, prize their prayers, heed their instructions, and remember that you will have to give an account for the privileges you now enjoy. All heaven is interested in your salvation. God has given his only beloved Son to die for your transgressions, angels are watching over you, and are trying to turn your attention to God, to

seek your soul's salvation. Christians are interested for you, and labor and pray for you. Your parents, who have watched over you all your life, if they are Christians, are deeply interested for you. They bear your case to the throne and earnestly plead for God to spare you, to not cut you off in sin, and you be lost forever. Their aching hearts will find no rest until they see you followers of the meek and lowly Saviour. And will you steel your hearts to all their prayers offered for you? Will you not be interested in your own soul's salvation? Will you think it brave (as I once thought) to appear unconcerned and thoughtless, as though you disregarded a mother's tears and prayers? O, will you wade through so many prayers to destruction and misery? When all are willing to help you, will you not help yourselves?

I now have a mother's feeling of strong attachment and love for my children, and have often wished that I had my youthful days to live over again. O, how careful I would be of my parents' feelings. I would love to obey them. I would open my whole soul to my anxious parents, and not do as I once did.

If I was reading my Bible, and my parents would be coming into the room, I would hide it for shame. Children, if there is any one entitled to your confidence, it is your dear parents who have spent so many anxious hours for you in your infancy, and all your life, have watched over you, and loved you as none but a parent can love.

In 1839, that faithful servant of the Lord, Wm. Miller, visited Portland Me., and gave a course of lectures on the second coming of Christ. This had a great affect upon me. I knew that I must be lost if Christ should come, and I be found as I then was. At times I was greatly distressed as to my situation. But it was hard for me to give entirely up to the Lord. I knew that if I professed religion I must be a whole Christian, and viewed it so great a thing to be a Christian, that I feared I never should be one, if I professed religion. So I remained, suffering distress and anguish of spirit, some months.

My parents were Methodists. I generally attended meeting with them; and at a camp-meeting held in Buxton. Me., which all the family attended, I resolved to give myself unreservedly to the Lord. I commenced there to seek the Lord with all my heart, and could not be satisfied with any thing short of pure religion. My mind was in great distress some weeks. At a prayer-meeting I found relief. O, how sweet was peace of mind. Everything seemed changed.

I then felt no disposition to dress like the world, but wished to be plain in my dress, sober, and watchful, and put away all light and trifling conversation.

The minister spoke to me about being baptized. I told him that I could not be baptized then, that I wished to see if I could endure the trials a Christian would have to endure, before moving forward in such a solemn ordinance.

When twelve years old, I wished to be immersed. The minister reluctantly consented to go into the water. He chose to sprinkle the candidates. It was a very windy day. The waves ran high, and dashed upon the shore; but I felt perfectly calm. My peace was like a river; and when I arose out of the water, my strength was nearly gone, for the power of God rested upon me, and my soul was filled to overflowing with his love. Such a rich blessing I never experienced before. I felt dead to the world, and that my sins were all washed away.

The same day a sister and myself were taken into the church. I felt calm and happy, till I looked at the sister by my side, and saw gold rings on her fingers, and large gold ear-rings in her ears. Her bonnet was filled with artificial flowers, and was trimmed with costly ribbon, which was filled with bows upon her bonnet. My heart felt sad. I expected every moment that a reproof would come from the minister; but none came. He took us both into the church. My reflections were as follows: This is my sister, must I pattern after her? Must I dress like her? If it is right for her to dress so, it is right for me. I remembered what the Bible said about adorning the body (1 Tim. 2: 9, 10). For some time I was in deep trial, and finally concluded that if it was so sinful as I had thought it to be to dress like the world, those whom I looked up to as being devoted Christians, and older in experience than myself, would feel it, and would deal plainly with those who thus went contrary to God's word. But I knew that I must be plain in my dress. I believed it to be wicked to think so much of appearance, to decorate our poor mortal bodies with flowers and gold. It seemed to me that we had better be humbling ourselves in the dust; for our sins and transgressions were so great that God gave his only beloved Son to die for us.

I did not feel satisfied with what I enjoyed. I longed to be sanctified to God; but sanctification was preached in such a manner that I could not understand it, and thought that I never could attain to it, and settled down with my present enjoyment.

In 1841, Wm. Miller gave another course of Lectures in Portland. I attended them, and felt that I was not ready for Christ's coming; and when the invitation was given for those who desired prayers to come forward, I pressed through the crowd, and in taking up this cross found some relief.

I continued to plead with God for pure religion, and soon the cross of praying in a public meeting was presented before me. I was not humble enough to obey the Lord in this duty, fearing that if I attempted to pray, I could not, or my prayer would be very broken. Despair fastened upon me, and I was held in darkness three weeks. The suffering of my mind was great. O, how precious did the hope of a Christian look to me then. And how wretched the case of the sinner, without a hope in Christ.

I found no relief until I made up my mind to obey the Lord, and take up the cross before me—I attended a prayer-meeting, and, for the first time, prayed vocally. My

burdened spirit found relief at every word I spoke, until I was perfectly free and happy. Light from the Lord shone into my heart.

I was then free from pride. All that I desired to live for, was to glorify God, and him only did I wish to serve. All pride of dress was gone. The sacrifice that Christ had made to save me from sin, looked very great, and I could not dwell upon it without weeping.

Often I could not sleep, I was so thankful that God had blessed me, and given me a good hope through Jesus Christ. I felt a longing of soul for the image of Christ to be reflected in me. Since that time I have had no desire to mingle with the world.

Dear children, you can be wholly consecrated to God, and rejoice in a full and free salvation. You must first give yourselves unreservedly to him. Do not think that your state is good enough, and make no effort to get nearer to God. Unless you overcome pride of dress, pride of heart, love of self, all anger, and every evil passion, God will not own you as his, and will not receive you to himself at his appearing. You can be overcomers. Go to God daily for strength, and every day overcome. When temptations arise, do not let them get the victory over you; but you must get the victory over them; and then you will feel the sweet assurance that God loves you. Be humble, be watchful and prayerful. Look to Jesus; he is your pattern. Strive to have your lives as much like his as possible. Do not rest satisfied until you know that you love God with all your heart, and that his will is your will.

Keep his commandments holy. Do not speak your own words on the holy Sabbath, but talk of heavenly things. Talk of Jesus, his loveliness and glory, and of his undying love for you, and let your heart flow out in love and gratitude to him who died to save you. O, get ready to meet your Lord in peace. Those who are ready will soon receive an unfading crown of life, and will dwell forever in the kingdom of God, with Christ, with angels, and with those who have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. (Ellen G. White, *The Youth's Instructor*, December 1, 1852)

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From Patmos, Messages for Seven Churches



Thyatira — Oh, Where Are the Leaders?

“And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” (Revelation 2:18–29)

The Geography

Two thousand years ago on a plain eighteen miles broad, containing no proper acropolis and bordered on the north by gently rising hills, sat the city of Thyatira, laying, as it were, defenseless, with no geographical features to protect it. Here was a city from which there was no escape if attacked. Our knowledge today about this ancient city is obscure; historians and ancient writers rarely allude to it. Since we know the least about Thyatira of the seven cities of Revelation 1:11, it is interesting to note that the message of Jesus to this city is the longest of the seven.

The Message Begins

First Christ identifies himself as the Son of God, the only time in the book of Revelation that he does so. (The Greek words for Son and God are the same Greek words used in John 3:16—*huios* and *theos*.) He next describes his physical appearance as having eyes of fire and feet like fine brass (the same as John’s description in Revelation 1:14, 15). Even though we know little about Thyatira, Jesus, with eyes as a flame of fire, knows everything about it and even though Thyatira was a defenseless city sitting in the midst of a wide plain, Jesus comes to its defense with the symbolic strength of feet of fine brass. The descriptions Jesus uses of himself to the churches up to this point in Revelation have expressed his power and authority gradually. To Ephesus he describes himself as walking among the seven golden candlesticks (Revelation 2:1), to Smyrna as the first and the last and as he

who was dead but is alive (v. 8), to Pergamos as he with the sharp, two-edged sword, but to Thyatira, the smallest and most defenseless of the seven, he comes as the Son of God. What a great treasure for Thyatira! But he comes with severe words of condemnation and judgment for Jezebel, her associates, and her children and of rebuke to the symbolic angel of the church who allowed Jezebel to prosper as an influence among God’s people.

Guilds and City Life in Thyatira

Before we proceed with the message given to Thyatira, we should review some things we do know about the city. Lydia, a seller of purple, was from Thyatira (Acts 16:14), and inscriptions uncovered in the city reveal guilds of wool workers, linen workers, potters, bakers, slave dealers, tanners, dyers, leatherworkers, and bronze or coppersmiths. Outer garments, constructed loose and free, were sold ready-made, and there appears to be evidence of special trades and guilds for other classes of garments, as well. Bronzsmiths appear on coins minted in Thyatira, causing scholars to believe that bronze work had reached such a state of perfection in Thyatira that it was commemorated on coins. The clothiers erected a triple gate, colonnades, and workmen’s houses in the city, and statues honoring someone or some thing were also erected.

Thyatira was the city of guilds; it had far more than any other Asian city. It is believed by most commentators and scholars that for one to work in Thyatira one had to belong to the guild of his or her skill, and herein lay a problem for the

Christian, for guilds were religious organizations. They had at least one patron god, Apollo Tyrimnaeus. Feasts with sacrifices were regularly held in his honor in the temple, and guild members were required to attend.

We also know that Thyatira had three gymnasiums (for the instruction of young people), a colonnaded portico of one hundred columns, stoas (roofed and colonnaded walkways), shops, and shrines to Apollo Tyrimnaeus and to Artemis Boreitene. Not many archeological sites have been developed for Thyatira because the present-day city of Akhisar is built where Thyatira once stood.

Understanding the Message to Thyatira

Seventh-day Adventists have historically understood the message to Thyatira to be a description of the 1,260 years of papal supremacy known as the Dark Ages:

As applied to Christian history, the message to Thyatira is particularly appropriate to the experience of the church during the Dark Ages . . . The Dark Ages proved to be a time of surpassing difficulty for those who truly loved and served God, and the Thyatira period of church history may well be called the Age of Adversity. Because of persecution the flame of truth flickered and nearly went out. . . . The Thyatira period is characterized as the era of papal supremacy. (*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, pp. 750, 753)

Other scholars have applied the messages to the seven churches to God's people in all times:

With good reason have theologians in all ages regarded these seven churches of Asia Minor as a miniature of the whole Christian church. 'There is no condition, good, bad, or mixed, of which these epistles do not present a sample, and for which they do not give suitable and wholesome direction.' Here, as everywhere, the word of God and the history of the apostolic church evince their applicability to all times and circumstances, and their inexhaustible fullness of instruction, warning, and encouragement for all states and stages of religious life. (Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 1, p. 454)

And still others have found the meaning of this message to be based in the experiences of God's people during the time of Thyatira itself:

Such guilds combined some of the features of our modern trade unions with certain religious features. Banquets of the members of the guild often took place within a pagan temple or shrine, where an animal was offered to the gods and then eaten by the members of the guild.

This obviously put Christians in a difficult dilemma. If they did not participate in such feasts and ceremonies of the guild, they would not be able to make a living. If they did participate, they were being unfaithful to the Lord.

. . . At the same time, the church at Thyatira was guilty of tolerating a woman "who calls herself a prophet" (2:20). . . . Her teaching of what the writer witheringly calls "the deep things of Satan" (2:24) had the effect of compromising Christian commitment by taking part in pagan practices. We

should not minimize the importance of problems confronting first-century Christians, for it was economic suicide to reject the minimum requirements for guild membership. Nor should we dismiss this problem as only of academic interest, as if it does not concern us. (Bruce M. Metzger, *Breaking the Code: Understanding the Book of Revelation*, pp. 36–37)

Because it does concern us. Just as early Christians in Thyatira had to decide between livelihood or faithfulness to God, so have God's people been faced with the same decision over the ages and will especially be forced to make this decision at the end of time:

And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. (Revelation 13:16, 17)

Ellen White gives a more comprehensive understanding and combines the historical approach with an application to God's people in all ages, by saying the messages "portray the state of things existing in the churches of the religious world today," that "the names of the churches are symbolic of the Christian church in different periods," and that "the figures used are symbolic of the state of God's professed people"—the wheat among the tares (*Manuscript Releases*, vo. 1, p. 372).

Compromise is also an issue that concerns us today. On September 22, 2011, Dr. Robert M. Gates, the 22nd United States Secretary of Defense, was awarded the Liberty Medal by the National Constitution Center. President William Clinton, also president of the National Constitution Center, praised Dr. Gates, calling him a genius of bipartisan alliances. Dr. Gates has served eight presidents from both parties and has devoted decades of his life to public service, including serving as Director of Central Intelligence, Deputy National Security Advisor, and Deputy Director of Central Intelligence.

In his acceptance speech Dr. Gates stated it is "no joking matter" that we have "dysfunction in our political system," and the reason he gives for this problem is the polarizing trends in American politics and culture which have eroded the moderate center. He stated we need more compromise in order to deal with our most serious problems, but said "compromise has become a dirty word."

"At a time when our country faces deep economic and other challenges at home and a world that just keeps getting more complex and more dangerous, those who think that they alone have the right answers, those who demonize those who think differently, and those who refuse to listen and take other points of view into account—*these leaders, in my view, are a danger to the American people and to the future of our republic.*

. . . the warning given a long time ago by Benjamin Franklin—that great Pennsylvanian—still applies: 'Either we hang together or we will surely all hang separately.'" (Emphasis supplied.)

As we have said before, compromise in secular affairs occurs every day in our homes, in the workplace, and in the halls of government. Merging individual ideas and plans for the betterment of the whole is often an appropriate course of action, if it does not involve compromise in matters of faith and conscience. In these realms, one must always side with God and his truth, even if it means standing alone against such high-placed government officials as Dr. Gates, and even if it means one is considered a danger to our fellow Americans and to our country.

Jezebel's Namesake

Let us now consider the namesake of Jezebel—Queen Jezebel of the Old Testament. She was the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians (1 Kings 16:31) and was married to Ahab, king of Israel. She killed the prophets of the LORD (1 Kings 18:4) and fed the prophets of Baal from her table (1 Kings 18:19). She threatened to kill Elijah (1 Kings 19:2), contrived to have Naboth slain (1 Kings 21:11) and when Jehu came to Jezreel, painted her face, tired her hair and greeted him from a window (2 Kings 9:30). Because Jesus calls the prophetess of Revelation 2:20 Jezebel, she must have had the same traits of character.

The Three Women of Revelation

In the book of Revelation, only three women are described.

The first woman is the Jezebel of Revelation 2:20: “Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her



Ruins from Thyatira

into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death” (Revelation 2:20–23).

The second woman is Babylon: “So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in



The plain of Thyatira

purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. . . . And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth” (Revelation 17:3–6, 18). This Babylon will make “all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication” (Revelation 14:8). This is similar language to that describing Jezebel in Revelation 2. Also similar are the judgments pronounced on both of these symbolic women.

Babylon is a religious body that is outside of the pure body of Christ. We can see this from these words: “And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns” (Revelation 17:1–3). Babylon is not a secular power, for she is not part of the kings of the earth, for *the kings of the earth* ally themselves *with her*. If she were a secular power, she would be part of the kings of the earth; instead, she is a power independent of them and also independent of God’s pure church, for God’s people are commanded to come out of her. In other words, God’s people may be in Babylon, but Babylon is not in God’s people. Jezebel, on the other hand, is an evil power within God’s people. These two women, Jezebel and Babylon, are false religious powers with different functions—one teaches and seduces from within the ranks, the other pushes violently from without, seeking to control and force compliance to her blasphemous dogmas. But God will have a pure church, free from both powers.

And the third woman of Revelation represents God’s pure church:

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. (Revelation 12:1–6)

Ellen White tells us that the people of God are symbolized by the holy woman and her children who are mentioned in Revelation 12, for she states the following in the context of that chapter:

Under the symbols of a great red dragon, a leopard-like beast, and a beast with lamblike horns, the earthly governments which would especially engage in trampling upon God’s law and persecuting His people, were presented to John. The war is carried on till the close of time. The people of God, symbolized by a holy woman and her childre, were represented as greatly in the minority. In the last days only a remnant still existed. Of these John speaks as they “which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” (*The Signs of the Times*, November 1, 1899).

Jezebel is the woman we are focusing on in this article, but she is similar in many ways to the symbolic woman, Babylon, and both work to destroy God’s people, who are represented by the pure woman of Revelation 12.

Just how does Jezebel accomplish such an evil work within God’s people? Through seductive doctrinal teachings. Most people who are part of God’s church love truth and only want to grow in grace and truth, and this desire is fed by Jezebel’s approach. Perhaps she mixed truth with error. Perhaps she instructed the people how they could be part of the pagan trade guilds and still supposedly maintain allegiance to God. We don’t know; we are only told she called herself a prophetess and that she taught and seduced God’s people to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed to idols. With Babylon, growth in grace and truth will cause one to leave that religious organization, for it is the habitation of devils and a hold of every unclean bird, but if you have already left Babylon and are worshipping with God’s people, then a desire to grow in grace and truth makes you susceptible to every wind of doctrine unless you are rooted and grounded in truth. Within God’s church, the work of the enemy will take the form of a Jezebel who teaches and seduces the people, a Jezebel who speaks like a prophetess and who may appear good on the outside (verse 19 enumerates the good works of Thyatiran Christians) but inwardly is one who



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Another view of the ruins

worships Baal and who kills the prophets of God. Perhaps this is being referred to with the words “the depths of Satan” found in verse 24. Marvin R. Vincent, in *Word Studies in the New Testament*, states that to seduce “never means mere error as such, but fundamental departure from the truth” (p. 1266). This is a serious issue, one that should give us reason to reflect, for the Bible tells us Jezebel rendered no repentance and that her children will be killed. No such tragic declaration was necessary in the messages to Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamos.

The Message Ends

The rest of the message to Thyatira is fairly understandable. What is so beautiful about the church at Thyatira is that in the absence of leaders willing and able to withstand the corruption of the church, Jesus comes to the defense of his lovely flock. He does not allow them to suffer the deceptions of Jezebel without help, as the symbolic angel of the church has done. He steps in and pronounces judgment against Jezebel, her associates, and her children. In no other of the seven churches does he make such an absolute move, for always his judgments against sin in the churches, if present, are tempered by offering an opportunity to repent, but his action in Thyatira is needful, for the leader did not sound the alarm and protect his people against sin and because Jezebel refused to repent of her wicked ways when given the opportunity. In Pergamos, Jesus threatened to come and fight against the false teachers but in Thyatira, he comes.

The promises to the overcomers in Thyatira are also especially attractive. The Christian overcomers in this lone city in a broad plain—weak, vulnerable, and with no natural resources for defense—are offered power over nations, a rod of iron, and the lovely morning star—Jesus himself.

May God help us to be faithful to the messages he has so graciously shared with us.

Ornycha Holt