

# 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

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## A New Creature

“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17. Through the power of Christ, men and women have broken the chains of sinful habit. They have renounced selfishness. The profane have become reverent, the drunken sober, the profligate pure. Souls that have borne the likeness of Satan have become transformed into the image of God. This change is in itself the miracle of miracles. A change wrought by the Word, it is one of the deepest mysteries of the Word. We cannot understand it; we can only believe, as declared by the Scriptures, it is “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 476)

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# The Modus Operandi of God

by Allen Stump

*(This is the first installment of a series we will publish on the sanctuary and the atonement. More will follow next month. Editor)*

I remember being so proud of my older brother, Russell, who studied Latin in his freshman year in high school. Latin sure sounded intellectual to a kid in seventh grade. Russell was magnanimous enough to teach his younger brother the first Latin he learned: *Veni, Vidi, Vici: I came, I saw, I conquered*, but today there is another more familiar Latin expression that you most likely have heard: *modus operandi*. It means the mode of operation, how one does one's business. How does the God of this universe do his business? Through what mode of operation does he work? He has told us: "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God" (Psalm 77:13)?

The sanctuary is the doctrine that Adventism is all about. There are other Sabbath-keepers, other adventists, and other health reformers, but there is no other people who understand and preach the sanctuary message like Seventh-day Adventists. May it be clearly understood, however, that the sanctuary is not just a message in which only the Adventist people were to specialize. Some people have the idea that the Baptist should teach grace, the Pentecostals teach the spirit, the Catholics teach obedience, and that Christians can and will all learn from one another. The Adventists, therefore, teach the sanctuary, but the sanctuary is not simply an Adventist doctrine, it is a biblical doctrine and one of the most important at that. Even if no other church family teaches the sanctuary, that does not lessen its truth. NO, true Seventh-day Adventists are not almost like all the other churches except for this doctrine, either. When we closely examine all the different teachings of the Bible, we find that we are not like the others but that there are, in fact, large differences.

In Adventism we have landmarks and pillars of our faith and the truth of Daniel 8:14 is the central pillar of Adventist:

The scripture which above all others had been both the foundation and the central pillar of the advent faith was the declaration: "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed. Daniel 8:14. (Ellen White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 409)

One of the landmarks under this message was the temple of God, seen by His truth-loving people in heaven, and the ark containing the law of God. (Ellen White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 30)

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. (Ellen White, *Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 235)

How do others outside of Adventism view the sanctuary message, the message that Jesus is making atonement now in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary since 1844? One famous Presbyterian minister wrote the following concerning our sanctuary teaching:

It is . . . nothing more than a human, face-saving idea! We personally do not believe that there is even a suspicion of a verse in scripture to sustain such a peculiar position, and we further believe that any effort to establish it is *stale, flat, and unprofitable*. (Donald Barnhouse, *Eternity*, September 1956; emphasis in original)

Is the sanctuary doctrine something that is simply a quirky different doctrine, a side issue that we hold onto to make us unique, or is there something vital in this teaching? God says his way is in the sanctuary (Psalm 77:13), so something vital is indeed involved! We have been told:

The subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be clearly understood by the people of God.

All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. Otherwise it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith which is essential at this time or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill. Every individual has a soul to save or to lose. Each has a case pending at the bar of God. (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 488)

The weightiness or importance of the sanctuary doctrine should not be missed. But what is the real purpose of the sanctuary which makes it so central and foundational? God commanded Moses: "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them" (Exodus 25:8). Does not God have a mansion, a condominium in heaven, or some other place better in which to live? What is the meaning of this?

Making reference to Isaiah 66:1, Stephen declared, "Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (Acts 7:48). Solomon, in his dedicatory prayer for the temple, said: "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded" (1 Kings 8:27).

God would not dwell physically with the people in a man-made temple, but there was a reason for the construction of the tabernacle and later the temple. In Isaiah we read:

For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. (Isaiah 57:15)

It is not natural for man to have a heart of humility without divine intervention. Our lives of sin have separated us from God. "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2). God wants to dwell with and in the humble heart. Paul writes, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (1 Corinthians 3:16)? Here is the real temple in which God wishes to dwell, but there is a problem. That temple is defiled by sin, and to sin God is a consuming fire.

For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God. (Deuteronomy 4:24)

For our God is a consuming fire. (Hebrews 12:29)

To be able to dwell in his people, God must, therefore, remove the sin, and the means by which he works, his *modus operandi*, is through the sanctuary.

The sanctuary is not the end of the means, but the means to the end of God dwelling in his people. For God to dwell in his people, he must have a way to free them from their sin, and that way is the sanctuary! The sanctuary has the whole message of redemption within it.

The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ's work in behalf of men. It concerns every soul living upon the earth. It opens to view the plan of redemption, bringing

us down to the very close of time, and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin. It is of the utmost importance that all should thoroughly investigate these subjects, and be able to give an answer to every one that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them. (White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 488, 489)

The sanctuary service revolved around sacrifices. The first place in the Bible we read about death is in Genesis 3, and then sacrifices are mentioned in Genesis 4, with the offerings of Cain and Abel. During the ages of the patriarchs, the father was priest of the home and he offered the sacrifices. After Israel was freed from Egyptian slavery, a sanctuary was built, and the Levitical priesthood was established. This sanctuary was a copy of the one in heaven:

And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it. (Exodus 25:8, 9)

God revealed to Moses a pattern of the sanctuary in heaven. This was obviously a scaled down and portable version, but one that would reflect the sanctuary in heaven.

For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve *unto the example and shadow of heavenly things*, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things *according to the pattern* shewed to thee in the mount. (Hebrews 8:3-5)

The earthly tabernacle was an example and shadow of the temple in heaven and patterned after it.

Some detractors of our message have denied that there is a literal sanctuary in heaven or that all of heaven is the sanctuary, but the Bible clearly vindicates our pioneers in their belief of a heavenly sanctuary.

Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. (Hebrews 8:1, 2)

But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building. (Hebrews 9:11)

The Spirit of Prophecy also clearly affirms this biblical truth.

And John says that he saw the sanctuary in heaven. That sanctuary, in which Jesus ministers in our behalf, is the great original, of which the sanctuary built by Moses was a copy. (Ellen White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 357)

Some of the scenes around the throne of God in the book of Revelation, reveal sanctuary furniture.

And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were *seven lamps of fire* burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. (Revelation 4:5)

And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. And another angel came and stood at the *altar, having a golden censer*; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. (Revelation 8:2, 3)

Commenting upon Revelation 8:2, 3, Ellen White says:

Here the prophet was permitted to behold the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven; and he saw there the “seven lamps of fire” and the “golden altar” represented by the golden candlestick and the altar of incense in the sanctuary on earth. (White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 414, 415)

Something even more important, however, was seen. The most sacred item in the sanctuary was the ark and in heaven, John beheld the ark of God.

And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail. (Revelation 11:19)

Notice the text does not say that heaven itself was opened, but that “the temple of God was opened in heaven.” This tells us that there is a temple and that it is certainly in heaven. Moreover, this temple contained the antitypical ark of the covenant. What did the ark contain? The Ten Commandment law of God!

Some have denied the sanctuary teaching or have said that since some portions of the sanctuary are not mentioned in Revelation, there must not be an antitypical corresponding item. However, does lack of evidence prove anything? No, and do not forget this. Just because, for example, the table of shewbread is not mentioned does not mean that there is not one in heaven. Evidence proves, but lack of evidence usually proves nothing.

Thus those who were studying the subject found indisputable proof of the existence of a sanctuary in heaven. Moses made the earthly sanctuary after a pattern which was shown him. Paul teaches that that pattern was the true sanctuary which is in heaven. And John testifies that he saw it in heaven. (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 415)

The Bible is clear providing enough proof to convince an honest person of the truth of the heavenly sanctuary. But a sanctuary is valueless without a priest to be a mediator. Who will be that priest? The function of a priest is to be a mediator and the Bible again has the answer to our question. Writing to Timothy, Paul declares:

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we

may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. (1 Timothy 2:1–6)

Paul begins by noting that Christians should pray for all men, especially for those in political authority over them. He says this is good and acceptable. He then declares that God wills all to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth, but what truth especially does he want all of us to come to? The knowledge that there is one God, the Father, and “one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”

Christ is that mediator. Writing in Hebrews, Paul notes that Jesus is a “a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Hebrews 7:17). Remember that Melchisedec was the king of Salem (later Jerusalem), yet he was also a priest. Likewise, Jesus is both priest and king. Paul is making reference to Psalm 110:4.

A careful reading of our text in 1 Timothy reveals another important point. Our mediator is not simply Jesus, but “the man Christ Jesus.” While Jesus was the “only begotten Son of God” (John 3:16), he was also the “son of man,” the term he used more than any other to refer to himself. For example: “But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power [margin: authority] on earth to forgive sins” (Mark 2:10). Jesus, as the son of man, had the authority to forgive sins, the very position of mediator. And of what kind of man, of what kind of flesh, did Jesus partake? The flesh of which we each partake:

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Romans 8:3, 4)

Sadly, most evangelicals exempt Jesus from taking the nature of sinful man and thus remove him from being our mediator, our priest! Notice these paragraphs from a well-known work:

The mediator between God and man cannot be God only or man only. This is taught in Gal. 3:20: “A mediator is not of one, but God is one.” A mediator supposes *two parties between whom he intervenes*; but God is only one party. Consequently, the mediator between God and man must be related to both and the equal of either.

Because to be a mediator between God and man implies a condition of dependence. When the *second person in the Trinity agrees to take the place of a mediator between the Trinity and rebellious man*, he agrees to be commissioned and sent upon a lowly errand. (A. W. Gomes, *Dogmatic Theology*, 3rd ed., pp. 674, 675; emphasis supplied)

How can a part of the trinity mediate between himself and others? By the very definition of the term *mediator*, he cannot. As a part of the professed Trinity, Jesus would not be a true in-between, but he would be mediating with himself.

You may be familiar with the fact that in the first verse of the gospel of John, Jesus is called “the Word.” The Greek word for *Word* is *logos*. Concerning the word *logos*, we read:

Greek philosophers, in attempting to understand the relationship between God and the universe, spoke of an unknown mediator between God and the universe, naming this mediator, “Logos (Λογος).” John tells them that this mediator unknown to them is our Lord, and he uses the same name “Logos (Λογος).” (*Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament*, electronic edition)


Jesus Christ is the mediator between humanity and the Father. This is why Paul testified “both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21). Why do we have repentance towards God and faith in Christ?

Amid the awful glory of Sinai, Christ declared in the hearing of all the people the ten precepts of His Father’s law. It was He who gave to Moses the law engraved upon the tables of stone. (White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 366)

It is the law of the Father that we have broken, yet the author of the law sends his son to die for us, and our faith in him justifies us and cleanses us, as if we had never sinned.

Because Jesus is both the son of man and the Son of God, he can be our perfect mediator, representing both sides perfectly. If he is the second person of a trinity, he could not truly become man, be tempted (James 1:13), and know our problems and struggles, and, therefore, he cannot be our high priest. Thank God, however, he is our priest and the best one we could ever have! As our priest he is able to save and help us in all our needs!

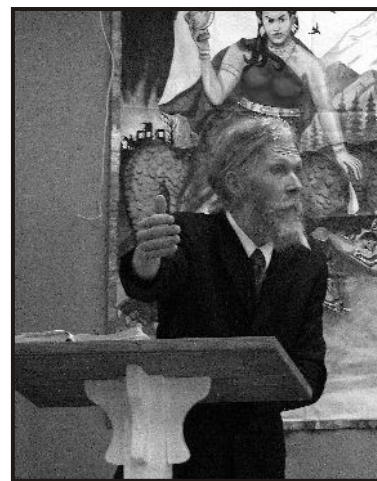
Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:14–16)

Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. (Hebrews 2:17, 18) 

# The West Virginia Camp Meeting


The 2015 camp meeting will soon be upon us, and we hope you are seriously considering attending this special time of spiritual enrichment. We are prayerfully seeking God’s direction, and we anticipate a rich blessing for all. The theme of our camp meeting will be *Preparing for the End*.

We have been blessed to have some folks commit to come and share, which we know will be a super blessing. Brother Fred Skucy from Korea will be with us again. Brother Fred really blessed us last year with his enthusiasm and with his messages of truth. Brother Andy Whitehurst and Brother Jack Barney will also be with us, as well as Brother Elvis Alberto from the island of Curaçao. Brother Michael Brown, Sister Onycha Holt, Pastor Allen Stump, and others will also be sharing on how we can be prepared for the end.



**Brother Fred Skucy  
preaching at last year’s  
camp meeting**

Interspersed among all of this will be meetings for our young people, early morning and other meetings, special music, health nuggets, good food, stories, seasons of prayer, and more! You won’t want to miss this opportunity to grow in grace and to fellowship with one another.

If you need camping accessories to make this trip possible, please contact us, and we will try to meet your needs. We want you to be here. If you cannot afford food expenses while here, let us know, and we will put on an extra pot of soup for you! We do not want you to stay away. Do all you can to be here, and we will do all we can to make your stay pleasant and blessed. Please come *prepared* “for the visitation of God’s Holy Spirit” (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 162), knowing that “at home is the place to find Jesus; then [you can] take Him with you to the meeting, and how precious will be the hours you spend there. But how can you expect to feel the presence of the Lord and see His power displayed when the individual work of preparation for that time is neglected” (*Ibid.*, p. 164). 

# Getting in Step

by Allen Stump

A marching platoon of soldiers has to be in step with its commander or confusion is the sure result. If the soldiers, however, keep in step with their commander, then they will display perfect unity in the rank and file and will faithfully follow their commander.

As Christians soldiers we have been called to march forward with the three angels' messages, and if we will march in step with the truth that Christ, our Commander, calls out in systematic cadence, then we will be in step with each other and with heaven.

God systematically gave to our pioneers truth. In 1875 Ellen White wrote:

God is leading out a people and establishing them upon the one great platform of faith, the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus. He has given His people a straight chain of Bible truth, clear and connected. This truth is of heavenly origin and has been searched for as for hidden treasure. It has been dug out through careful searching of the Scriptures and through much prayer. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 447)

Later in 1881 she confidently 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. While the great adversary will try his utmost to make of none effect the word of God, truth must go forth as a lamp that burneth. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 595)

God gave to Ellen White and to our Adventist pioneers truth so that they might walk in step with him. In 1881 when Ellen White wrote the above testimony, the Seventh-day Adventist people were one. Today we see the Adventist people fragmented, both within the corporate church and within the independents. Why? Why is there so much confusion? It is simply because we have not kept in step with our Leader. Too many have decided that God did not really lead our people into truth and that we need to march to a different step, but in doing this, they are following a different leader—the enemy of our souls. An example of this kind of mis-stepping was recently published, ironically, in the newsletter, *In His Steps (IHS)*. The March – April 2015 edition has for its lead article a study which denies the pioneer position on Jesus as the Son of God and which also attempts to teach that Melchizedek was the Holy Spirit.

The article included the following main points:

After sin, none of God's people were kings until the apostasy after the days of Gideon and in the days of Samuel.

Governors or rulers among God's people were, first, patriarchs and, later judges. Some were also prophets. Samuel was a prophet, a judge, and a priest.

Although during the ages of the patriarchs, a patriarch was both a ruler and a priest in his own home, later the office of government and the office of the priesthood were separated. One person was not allowed to be both king and priest. (John Grosboll, "Kings and Priests," *In His Steps*, March – April 2015, p. 1)

The point that the author wishes to make is that Melchizedek could not have been a human being because he was both a king and priest and only a divine being could be both and also have the name "king of righteous." Since the Spirit of Prophecy declares that "Melchizedek was not Christ" (Ellen White, *The Review and Herald*, February 18, 1890; see also *Selected Messages*, book 1, page 409) and since the author states that Melchizedek could not have been God the Father because of John 1:18, then the only conclusion left is that Melchizedek was the Holy Spirit. The author conclusively believes this conclusion is proven by a supposed statement made by Ellen White in which she is reported to have stated that Melchizedek was the Holy Spirit. If this is not enough damage to keep us from being in step with our Leader, the author, in building his case, attempts to demonstrate that Jesus is not the Son of God and openly admits that his position is contrary to "some Adventist pioneers" (Grosboll, "Kings and Priests," *In His Steps*, March – April 2015, p. 5).

Beloved, this article, while professing to be in step with Christ, is actually out of step with him in many of its teachings, and we need to dissect this article and see how we can be in step with our heavenly Leader.

This article does one thing very well—it serves as a good illustration of the difference between exegesis and eisegesis. Exegesis and eisegesis are theological terms that have simple meanings. Exegesis literally means "to lead out" (*Baker's Dictionary of Practical Theology*, p. 418). Eisegesis literally means "leading into" and has been described as a "homiletical sin" (*Ibid.*). The article "Kings and Priests" reads many assumptions into its references. In other words, the interpreter injects his own ideas into the text without giving a biblical basis.

The article begins by stating, "Never in the history of Israel was the same person allowed to be both a king and a priest" (Grosboll, "Kings and Priests," *In His Steps*, March – April, p.1). This is true, if we restrict the meaning of Israel to the descendants of Jacob and the nation that they became, but on page 2 of the article, the author states, "Among the people of God there were no human kings—God was looked up to as their king." Judges 8:23 is then quoted. This is again true, if we understand that it was based upon the time between the children of Israel coming out of Egypt and the time of the judges because, of course, there were later human kings of God's people, David being the best-known example. We can see, therefore, that, at times, there were changes in the way in which God governed and interacted with his people.

While it is true that in Israel there were no priest-kings, it is also a fact that no verse in the Bible and no statement in the Spirit of Prophecy states it could not have been otherwise before Israel was a nation. We have seen that at one time there were no kings in Israel, but later that changed. While the author of the article acknowledges this, he assumes that there never was a time when God allowed a man to be both a priest and a king.

The first mention of Melchizedek in the Bible is Genesis 14:18: “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.” He is here called a king and a priest. The only other reference to Melchizedek in the Old Testament is found in a prophecy about Jesus:

The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. (Psalm 110:4)

The order of Melchizedek was unique because the priest was also to be a king. Jesus would meet both requirements.

The article “Kings and Priests” continues to correctly make the case that there were no kings who were also priests in Israel. Then the author comes to a three-point summary that is given on the first page of this *Old Paths* article. Let us consider the points again:

After sin, none of God’s people were kings until the apostasy after the days of Gideon and in the days of Samuel. (Grosboll, “Kings and Priests,” *In His Steps*, March – April 2015, p. 1)

This is an assumption (eisegesis), not a known fact (exegetis). It would be true to say that there were no priest-kings in *Israel*, but there is still the time from the fall of man till the time of the children of Jacob which it is not addressed by the Bible.

The second summarization stated:

Governors or rulers among God’s people were, first, patriarchs and, later judges. Some were also prophets. Samuel was a prophet, a judge, and a priest. (*Ibid.*)

This statement has to be considered within the known history of God’s people. While the Jebusites, who inhabited Jerusalem (the city from which Melchizedek came), were later known as a pagan people, there is no statement which says that they always inhabited Jerusalem or that the people who lived in it during the time of Melchizedek were pagan and were, therefore, not God’s people. To state something that is unknown as a fact is to conjecture and is to practice eisegesis.

The last sentence of the third summary point states that during the patriarchal period, “One person was not allowed to be both king and priest” (*Ibid.*). The use of the expression “not allowed” makes this a strong statement. The problem with this statement is that there is no command, declaration, or evidence to support it, thus putting it into the eisegesis category.

The author continues to build his case that Melchizedek was the Holy Spirit, by correctly stating that Melchizedek’s name means “king of righteousness.” That is proper exegesis, for the name *Melchizedek* is from two Hebrew words, which mean *king* and *righteous*. While this is correct, what he says next is not correct. The author states:

If we have studied our Bibles we could know that this is a divine name and could never be justly or truthfully applied to any human being who was a descendant of Adam and Eve. (See for example Romans 3:10–18.) . . .

Thus we see that Melchizedek, by his very name, is designated in Scripture to be a divine person. (*Ibid.*, p. 4)

If we have studied our Bibles, we would know that the Hebrew name *Yehoshua* (the LORD is salvation: saviour), which we translate *Joshua*, is equivalent to the Greek name we translate *Jesus*. In other words, there were people in the Old Testament who were named *Joshua*, which in the Greek is equivalent to the name that we translate *Jesus*.

Thus we see that Melchizedek, by his very name, is designated in Scripture as a divine being *only if we practice eisegesis*. On the contrary, there is no scriptural rule on what constitutes a divine name, and, in fact, we have the example of Joshua to disprove the assumption made by the author of the *IHS* article. The tetragrammaton was assumed by the Jews to be a divine name, and the Spirit of Prophecy gives one name which it calls a “divine name, ‘*The Lord our Righteousness*.’ Jeremiah 23:6” (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 91).

Continuing in the *IHS* article, we read:

Melchizedek’s title is “king of peace.” Hebrews 7:2. This again is a divine name. The Messiah is designated as the prince of peace in Isaiah 9. If the prince of peace is a divine personage certainly the king of peace would also have to be a divine personage. (Grosboll, “Kings and Priests,” *In His Steps*, March – April 2015, p. 4)

This sounds possible, but the problem with this statement is that it is an assumption and not a known fact. Have you heard of the *general theory of evolution*? Most people believe in this theory about the formation of life, but it is still called a theory because it cannot be proven. It is based upon certain unproven assumptions. For example, one of the assumptions of general evolution is that non-living things gave rise to living material, i.e. spontaneous generation, but the Bible gives a very different picture in Genesis. Why do I, as a Christian, reject evolution? Because it cannot be proven, and it contradicts the Bible, which gives us a plain understanding of our origins. Surely we do not wish to work theologically like many so-called scientists work with biology—by using assumptions.

The next part of the *IHS* article explains Hebrews 7:3 as literal, without allowing for any symbolism. The text says:

Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like

unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually. (Hebrews 7:3)

The author of the article declares that there are “seven very emphatic statements about Melchizedek” (Grosboll, “Kings and Priests,” *In His Steps*, March – April 2015, p. 4) in this verse and that only a divine being would have no father, mother, genealogy, beginning of days, or end of life, etc. Many Bible students, however, have seen something else in this verse’s lack of genealogy, of birth record, or of a record of Melchizedek’s death:

The words “without father, without mother, without descent” speak of the fact that there is no record of his parentage. This is significant, for it indicates a different type of priesthood from the Levitical, in which a person’s genealogy was of first importance. (*Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament*)

The fact that the OT does not mention Melchizedek’s genealogy and death makes him an illustration of who Jesus was going to be: an eternally pre-existent and enduring High Priest. The author does not argue here that Melchizedek was a divine being. The account of Gen. 14 makes the figure of Melchizedek to resemble the future Son of God, just like the OT sacrifices resemble the future sacrifice of Jesus (Heb. 10:1). (*Andrews Study Bible Notes*, p. 1607)

E. J. Waggoner noted in a study entitled “The Bible Class. The Order of Melchizedek”:

Who Was Melchizedek?—This is a question often asked, and seldom answered for the reason that people for the most part indulge in speculation instead of being content with the plain, simple record in the Bible. The whole of the recorded history of Melchizedek is found in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis; and the substance of that record is given in the verses just quoted from the seventh of Hebrews. There we are told who he was, just as plainly as we are introduced to any other character of history. He was king of Salem, and priest of the Most High God. What could one ask for more definite than that? . . . It is enough to say that he was king of Salem, and priest of the Most High God. (E. J. Waggoner, *The Present Truth* (UK), July 30, 1903).

Waggoner also noted:

No Respect of Persons with God.—That which arouses the most curiosity concerning Melchizedek, and seems so impenetrable a mystery, is just that which is calculated to give the broadest assurance and the deepest consolation. “Without father, without mother, without descent [genealogy], having neither beginning of days nor end of life.” This is the type of the true priesthood-of all who shall be kings of righteousness and peace throughout eternity. God does not question concerning their race or parentage. “In every nation He that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.” If it were known of what nationality this representative of the priesthood of Christ was, then that nation would boast of itself as the people

specially favoured of heaven. But the fact that no tribe nor family is named, shows that the kings and priests of God will be composed “of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues.” Melchizedek stands as one out of every tribe and nation, indicating that whosoever will may come. (*Ibid.*)

Dr. Adam Clarke, in his biblical commentary, states: “He who could not support his pretensions [for Eligibility for the priesthood] by just genealogical evidences, was said by the Jews to be without father” (*Adam Clarke Commentary* reference on Hebrews 7:3). “This sort of phraseology was not uncommon when the genealogy of a person was unknown or obscure” (J. H. Waggoner, *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, March 20, 1856).

The author of the *IHS* article next begins to discuss the divinity of Jesus and states:

In His divinity Jesus had no father, (as we will see in a moment and which, of course, must be true if the scripture is correct). (Grosboll, “Kings and Priests,” *In His Steps*, March – April 2015, p. 5)

But the record of inspiration is that Jesus is the Son of God, and inspiration never teaches, in any place, that Jesus did not have a father, even in his divinity. If that were true, then we have to cut out portions of the Bible, like John 3:16; 8:42; Proverbs 8:22–30. The article then states:

In His divinity Christ had no beginning of days. All of this can be shown clearly by a candid study of the Greek text of the New Testament and it can also be shown from the Hebrew Old Testament. *However, to make things easy, we will quote from Ellen White. (Ibid.; all emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted)*

The real point that is trying to be made is that Jesus is not the Son of God because he could not have been a *begotten* son. Actually a candid study of the Greek New Testament shows the opposite, unless the author wishes to use a Greek text such as the VATICANUS CODEX. The Hebrew Old Testament clearly reveals that Jesus was begotten of the Father in Proverbs 8:22–24. Furthermore, Micah 5:2, which is often used to prove Christ was not begotten of the father, actually proves the opposite, for in it the prophet says that Christ has an origin. (The Hebrew word for “goings forth” is *motsaah*, and it means origin.) This origin is from the days of eternity, but under inspiration Micah declares the truth about the Son of God.

The author of the *IHS* article wants to make it easy for us, so he quotes Ellen White. Did you know that some people think that they can make other biblical subjects easy, too, by just quoting the Bible? For example, if they want to study the state of the dead, they just quote Philippians 1:23:

For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better.

Or maybe they want to make the subject of hell easy, so they will quote:



And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. (Revelation 14:11)

And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh. (Isaiah 66:24)

Does this really make it easier? I doubt it does for most people. Usually one reference does not stand alone. There are complimentary references that sometimes are needed to give a complete picture. This is certainly the case in this situation. So what statement does the author of the *IHS* article give “to make things easy”?

In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. “He that hath the Son hath life.” 1 John 5:12. The divinity of Christ is the believer’s assurance of eternal life. (Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 530)

Often things that seem simple are not as simple as they first appeared. A Rubik’s cube may seem simple enough on the store shelf, but let someone randomly turn it a few times and then see if it is so simple.

There is a rule of biblical interpretation called *first usage*. You find how a word or phrase is used the first time in the Bible and use that meaning to interpret the word or phrase thereafter, if it is logical and reasonable. Also, following the rule that “the testimonies themselves will be the key that will explain the messages given” (Ellen White, *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 42; Letter 73, 1903), we look to an article published one year prior to the publication of *The Desire of Ages*. This article appeared in *The Signs of the Times* and is entitled “Christ the Life-giver.” We find in this article a clarification of Sister White’s understanding of the concept in *The Desire of Ages*:

“In him was life; and the life was the light of men” (John 1:4). It is not physical life that is here specified, but immortality, the life which is exclusively the property of God. The Word, who was with God, and who was God, had this life. Physical life is something which each individual receives. It is not eternal or immortal; for God, the Life-giver, takes it again. Man has no control over his life. But the life of Christ was unborrowed. No one can take this life from Him. “I lay it down of myself” (John 10:18), He said. In Him was life, original, unborrowed, underived. This life is not inherent in man. He can possess it only through Christ. He cannot earn it; it is given him as a free gift if he will believe in Christ as his personal Saviour. (Ellen White, *The Signs of the Times*, April 8, 1897; see also *Selected Messages*, book 1, pages 296, 297)

The significance of this statement is tremendous! While stating that Christ’s life was “original, unborrowed, underived,” she also states that “this life is not inherent in man.” So far, there is nothing to send up a red flag. The next two sentences open up a whole new perspective: “He [man] can

possess it [life, original, unborrowed, underived] only through Christ. He [man] cannot earn it [life, original, unborrowed, underived]; it is given him as a free gift if he [man] will believe in Christ as his personal Saviour” (*Ibid.*).

According to what Sister White wrote a year before *The Desire of Ages* was published, man is offered the same quality of life that Christ had. If Christ could bestow this life as a free gift upon man, then he could have received that same life from his Father. It was the original, unborrowed, underived life of the Father that Christ possessed and is able to bestow upon man. This is what Jesus meant when he said; “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself” (John 5:26).

We sincerely hope that the author of the *IHS* article will seriously consider another statement in his article that borders on blasphemy, where he states that:

. . . generated, produced, created, begotten (all those words actually mean the same thing . . . (p. 5)

If this were true, would the author be content to accept the following verses, using his own definition?

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only *created* of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (John 1:14 adjusted)

No man hath seen God at any time; the only *created* Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. (John 1:18 adjusted)

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

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only *created* Son into the world, that we might live through him. (1 John 4:9 adjusted)

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that *created* loveth him also that is *created* of him. (1 John 5:1 adjusted)

We fully reject these adjusted verses, for Jesus is not a created creature! We also believe that if the author of the *IHS* article realized what he was saying, he would reject it, too. How easy it is to try to prove a point only to reject truth! Ellen White does, indeed, tell us in what manner Jesus is the Son of God:

. . . not a son by creation, as were the angels, nor a son by adoption, as is the forgiven sinner, but a Son begotten in the express image of the Father's person, and in all the brightness of his majesty and glory, one equal with God in authority, dignity, and divine perfection. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. (Ellen White, *The Signs of the Times*, May 30, 1895)

Later in the *IHS* article, the author asks the question, “When was it decided that Christ was to become the son of God” (Grosboll, “Kings and Priests,” *In His Steps*, March – April 2015, p. 8)? His answer is a quotation from Ellen White, and we give the quotation here. Please read it

carefully and see if you can find the answer to the author's question:

God and Christ knew from the beginning, of the apostasy of Satan and of the fall of Adam through the deceptive power of the apostate. The plan of salvation was designed to redeem the fallen race, to give them another trial. *Christ was appointed to the office of Mediator from the creation of God, set up from everlasting to be our substitute and surety.* Before the world was made, it was arranged that the divinity of Christ should be enshrouded in humanity. "A body," said Christ, "hast thou prepared me." But he did not come in human form until the fulness of time had expired. Then he came to our world, a babe in Bethlehem. (Ellen White, *The Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906)

Notice that this statement says *nothing* about when Jesus became the Son of God but rather tells us that "Christ was appointed to the office of Mediator from the creation of God, set up from everlasting to be our substitute and surety." Again, it says *nothing* about him becoming the Son of God and to read that *into* the text is to use eisegesis.

Jesus has always been the Son of God and God has always been his Father. Their relationship did not change during the counsel of peace or at any other time. Before the incarnation Jesus was the Son of God. After the fall of man we are told:

Sorrow filled heaven as it was realized that man was lost and that the world which God had created was to be filled with mortals doomed to misery, sickness, and death, and that there was no way of escape for the offender. The whole family of Adam must die. I then saw the lovely Jesus and beheld an expression of sympathy and sorrow upon His countenance. Soon I saw Him approach the exceeding bright light which enshrouded the Father. Said my accompanying angel, "He is in close converse with *His Father*." The anxiety of the angels seemed to be intense while Jesus was communing with *His Father*. Three times He was shut in by the glorious light about the Father, and the third time He came from the Father we could see His person. (Ellen White, *Early Writings*, p. 126)

The capstone of the article brings us back to his main point, that Melchizedek was the Holy Spirit. At the end of the article is a statement given that was reported by an eye witness (Elder George B. Starr), who claimed that Ellen White said:

'I will tell you who Melchisedec was. He was the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, who took the form of humanity and represented the Lord Jesus Christ to that generation.' (Quoted by Grosboll, "Kings and Priests," *In His Steps*, March – April 2015, p. 9)

The supposed background was a council meeting at Avondale School in 1893. Those reported as being present were Elders Haskell, F. L. H. Baker, G. B. Starr and their wives, Sister White, and W. A. Colcord, who was the editor of the Australian *Signs of the Times*. Elder Colcord is said to have requested the privilege of reading some articles regarding the personality of Melchizedek. After reading some, Ellen

White is supposed to have stopped Elder Colcord's reading, counseling him not to publish what he was reading because they were not, according to the account, correct. Then Ellen White was supposed to have made the above statement, but there are several things wrong with this statement.

Firstly, if Ellen White had spoken so plainly to the editor of the *Signs*, why is there no record of him publishing something stating that Melchizedek was the Holy Spirit, or why is there not something elsewhere in Ellen White's writings on the matter?

Secondly, it should be noted that this is not the first time this supposed report by Ellen White has been published. In fact it has been around for a long time, since 1924, but it was from a meeting that was held over thirty years earlier. Memory is not always reliable. In fact, Ellen White stated such things happened during her lifetime, and she wrote concerning them. After giving three examples of incorrect statements she was supposed to have made, Ellen White wrote:

The cases mentioned will serve to show how little reliance can be placed upon reports concerning what I have done or taught. . . .

But I would say to my brethren: Beware how you give credence to such reports. The Saviour bade His disciples: "Take heed therefore how ye hear." . . .

And now to all who have a desire for truth I would say: Do not give credence to unauthenticated reports as to what Sister White has done or said or written. If you desire to know what the Lord has revealed through her, read her published works. Are there any points of interest concerning which she has not written, do not eagerly catch up and report rumors as to what she has said. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 694, 696)

Thirdly, it should be noted that almost fifty years ago, Arthur White, Ellen White's grandson, wrote an article for *Ministry* magazine, debunking the Starr statement. In this article he wrote:

The careful Seventh-day Adventist will not quote as Spirit of Prophecy writings that for which he does not have a satisfactory source credit, such as an Ellen G. White book or an Ellen G. White periodical article, with the specific date of publication.

There have been a few, however, who have placed full confidence in the memory of some loyal and faithful Seventh-day Adventist worker who has related an interesting or valuable point on which Mrs. White is supposed to have given information or counsel. It is not our purpose to disparage any worker or to cast reflection upon the good name of any of the servants of the cross. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that the memory, even of godly people, may not be entirely reliable.

For many years there have come to us for verification a number of statements based purely upon memory. One of these has to do with the identity of Melchizedek. In a

committee meeting held in Australia, Mrs. White is supposed to have stated just who Melchizedek was. Such information would certainly be very helpful if we could rely upon it. In an endeavor to check the accuracy of this memory statement, our office, some years ago, reached the principal party named in the inter-view, and he denied that Mrs. White had said that which the other worker asserted she had said.

Inasmuch as the discussion concerned something this brother had written, it stands to reason that his memory of what was said would be more likely to be true. So there it stands. One godly man gives us from his memory Mrs. White's statement, identifying Melchizedek; another man present at the same interview says she did not say that. Nor did others present have any memory of having heard her say it. In all her writings, published and unpublished, there is nothing to corroborate the report, Our counsel is that such statements should not be used as representing Mrs. White's teachings. (Arthur White, *Ministry*, December 1966; accessed at the General Conference archives)

As Dr. Waggoner wrote, the Bible tells us who Melchizedek was—He was “king of Salem . . . and the priest of the most high God” (Genesis 14:18). Ellen White plainly calls him a man:

Many persons will meet all inferior demands and dues, and leave to God only the last gleanings, if there be any. If not, his cause must wait till a more convenient season. Such was not the course pursued by Abraham. Upon his return from a successful military expedition, he was met by Melchizedek, “king of Salem, and priest of the most high God.” *This holy man* blessed Abraham, in the name of the Lord, and the patriarch gave him tithes of all the spoils as a tribute of gratitude to the Ruler of nations. (Ellen White, *The Review and Herald*, May 16, 1882)

It is true that in the Bible angels are at times referred to as men, for that was their appearance. Ellen White certainly acknowledges this for angels, but when she does, we find her careful to note it as such. For example, in Acts we read:

And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, *two men* stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. (Acts 1:9–11)

But Ellen White clarifies:

While the disciples were still gazing upward, voices addressed them which sounded like richest music. They turned, and saw *two angels in the form of men*, who spoke to them . . . (White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 831)

Ellen White repeatedly writes about angels in the form of men, but she never mentions anything in her writings about the Holy Spirit ever being in the *form of men* or *the form of a man*. However, she does write:

Melchizedek, in bestowing the benediction upon Abraham, had acknowledged Jehovah as the source of his strength and the author of the victory: “Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand.” Genesis 14:19, 20. (Ellen White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 157)

If Melchizedek were the Holy Spirit, why would he need to acknowledge Jehovah as his source of strength?

Beloved, understanding the truth about God is vital. Jesus said, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3).

Like our Saviour, we are in this world to do service for God. We are here to become like God in character, and by a life of service to reveal Him to the world. In order to be co-workers with God, in order to become like Him and to reveal His character, we must know Him aright. We must know Him as He reveals Himself.

A knowledge of God is the foundation of all true education and of all true service. It is the only real safeguard against temptation. It is this alone that can make us like God in character.

This is the knowledge needed by all who are working for the uplifting of their fellow men. Transformation of character, purity of life, efficiency in service, adherence to correct principles, all depend upon a right knowledge of God. This knowledge is the essential preparation both for this life and for the life to come. (Ellen White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 409)


It is truth that sanctifies the Christian:

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. (John 17:17)

But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. (2 Thessalonians 2:13)

We need truth! Truth brings holiness, “for the righteousness of Christ, . . . is pure, unadulterated truth” (Ellen White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 65).

But just having the truth is not enough. Satan well knows the truth about God. “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble” (James 2:19). We must not only know the truth, but we must have a love for the truth because many will “perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved” (2 Thessalonians 2:10).

Beloved, do you love the truth enough to leave behind popular opinions, even those of well-loved and well-respected ministers? As Robert Wieland and Donald Short so aptly wrote, “Absolutely nothing which does not bear the test of truth will be triumphant in the Judgment.” (1888 *Re-Examined*, 1950 ed., p. 2) 

# PERFECTION IN THE SANCTUARY

by Onycha Holt

The infusion center at David Lee Cancer Center is always busy—nurses on the go, beepers going off, and patients moving in and out. They come bent over in wheelchairs, head in hand; others skinny as willow twigs, and as fragile, but glad to still be on their feet; and still others dressed and groomed as for a major social event, but unsteady as they go. Every one of them will die unless their infusions work in the search for stray cancer cells before they begin to thrive and for established cancer colonies that rush onward to conquer, unless God otherwise intervenes. New patients arrive for their first appointments with dread or with a measured optimism. Their charts are thin and can almost be held between thumb and forefinger, and anyone with a chart requiring two hands to lift is clearly running out of time.

The nurses at the center are a special breed of people—full of cheer and optimism. They represent well the refrain of Fanny Crosby's hymn, *Always Cheerful*, though admittedly some are more reserved than others. In every face-to-face encounter, however, they are cheerful and always helpful, even when their patience is being tried by a stubborn or by a forgetful patient. In fact, they look at each patient as someone to be pampered. Why? They know their patients are dying.

Michael, for example, lives alone, has no one to help him, can no longer mow his lawn, and has a hard time caring for his pet. Lois always lies curled up, with the blanket over her head. She is in chronic pain. Ahmed arrives with his nephew and sits with his chin on his chest, eyes closed. He lost his restaurant, *The Red Rose*, because of his cancer. It was a new restaurant, built to upgrade his old one, but then came the diagnosis and no one to take over. Hundreds of thousands of dollars were lost. His surgical scar is from ear to ear. A teacher comes in with a fellow teacher and spends the time worrying about her life and what is worse, cancer or heart disease. Her peers support her during the day but at night, she worries alone. Then there is the man who suddenly develops shortness of breath and another who is dizzy and loses his balance. Some are happy and plan to eat out after they leave or share pictures of their families, while others slowly retreat down the hall, with silent stoicism, into quiet oblivion. All in all, a typical day at the center.

At the Mountain Road Seventh-day Adventist Church (not its real name), members arrive with varying degrees of cheer and friendliness. There is casual John, always offering a firm handshake; petite Mallory, leading a youngster with each hand; and Grandma Moses, firm and down-to-earth as one of the rocks she has tossed from her garden. Bustling throughout are Timothy and Justin, worrying about audio and video matters, and Corrine, James, and the Mountaintop Singers, who quickly organize music for the services.

Visitors arrive and are warmly greeted, and children's Sabbath School rooms slowly fill with noise, energy, and the pitter-patter of growing feet. All in all it is a typical Sabbath morning, filled with people not unlike the people flowing through the cancer center. Some come haltingly, others with quiet dignity, and still others with head down and smile gone, and all of them, *all* of them, are dying physically and most spiritually.

The nurses at the center connect with their patients in a personal way: Sarah has just visited her brother in Washington, Erin has been using inhalers since she was three, Debbie is buying a new home, Bev loves the nursing supervisor, Lucy's nephew is buying a computer, and Lindsey likes to train nursing students. Then there is the dietician who shares her own personal food likes, the mental health counselor who listens carefully to someone who loves to talk about nothing in particular, and the friendly face at the check-in window who is dreading his fiftieth birthday in a few more days. All in all, a pleasant environment.

The caregivers at Mountain Road Seventh-day Adventist Church are also pleasant and seem genuinely concerned about each other—the pastors are friendly and the helpers cheerful—and all want to keep their church as a cohesive whole until Jesus comes. The buildings, also, are lovely and the infrastructure vast, the music is robust and wherever the eye rests, the decorations and design are tasteful and engaging. Sitting in the pew is cozy and comfortable, unless you are a young parent of restless ones or a member old enough to know the emptiness of the soul. Everyone who comes to this church is sick with the cancer of sin. Everyone is greeted by others who are just as sick. And most people leave worse than when they first arrived. Why? Rarely is a cure offered. A friendly social base is offered, though. Opportunities for outreach are offered. Varied personal programs are available, such as exercise classes, book clubs, parenting skills classes, money management classes, nature clubs, grief counseling, choir, AA and NA, marriage seminars, and singles' get-togethers, but very little is offered for the cure for sin itself. It is hinted at, with vague words of *God knows best* and *have faith*, but the soul hungering and thirsting after practical guidance in righteousness often leaves unfed, and I can imagine God asking, *Where am I to be found?*

Back at the center, the physicians remain perplexed about cancer—what causes it, how to best treat it, why some heal from it and others don't. Unlike many other diseases in which the immune system is in attack mode, cancer can often avoid, through a complicated process, an immune system response (see [http://annonc.oxfordjournals.org/content/23/suppl\\_8/viii6.full](http://annonc.oxfordjournals.org/content/23/suppl_8/viii6.full)), so no red flags go up; or if the cancer does trigger an immune response, it seems to feed on the inflammatory reaction

caused by the immune system (*Ibid.*). Either way—with or without the immune system—cancer cells multiply at alarming rates, and only when a mass of them becomes large enough for a palpable or for a visual detection can a diagnosis be made, but by then the cancer is well-established.

## CHANGES

And in God's church disease can creep in, too, such as the deadly disease of error, imperceptible at first, and can continue to grow unchecked unless faithful watchmen are on the walls to sound the warning. God has established the Seventh-day Adventist Church on everlasting principles and not one pin supporting them is to be removed:

We are God's commandment-keeping people. For *the past fifty years* [referring back to 1854] every phase of heresy has been brought to bear upon us, to becloud our minds regarding the teaching of the Word—especially concerning the ministration of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, and the message of Heaven for these last days, as given by the angels of the fourteenth chapter of Revelation. *Messages of every order and kind have been urged upon Seventh-day Adventists, to take the place of the truth* which, point by point, has been sought out by prayerful study, and testified to by the miracle-working power of the Lord. But the waymarks which have made us what we are, are to be preserved, and they will be preserved, as God has signified through His Word and the testimony of His Spirit. He calls upon us to hold firmly, with the grip of faith, to the fundamental principles that are based upon *unquestionable authority*. (Ellen White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 208; published 1904; all emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted)

In the future, deception of every kind is to arise, and we want solid ground for our feet. We want solid pillars for the building. Not one pin is to be removed from that which the Lord has established. The enemy will bring in false theories, such as the doctrine that there is no sanctuary. This is one of the points on which there will be a departing from the faith. *Where shall we find safety unless it be in the truths that the Lord has been giving for the last fifty years?* [referring back to 1855]—*Review and Herald*, May 25, 1905. (Ellen White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 53)

But as can be the case with cancer, changes came in slowly—a slight rewording of some of our fundamental principles; a document with a shift in understanding here and a book offering a different viewpoint there; sermons and college-class instructions with new emphases; and changes in some academy-level religion classes to include life skills classes (important though they be)—and by the time we recognized the magnitude of the changes, they had become well-established. Our biblical antennae did not catch the drift until the changes overwhelmed us, and by 1957 in *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine (QOD)*

and 1980 at the General Conference session in Dallas, some of these changes were formalized. Fifty-eight years later (from 1957), we are still adrift in error, and fifty-eight years later we face another General Conference session, this time in San Antonio, Texas, but there is hope:

There is hope for every one of us, but *only in one way by fastening ourselves to Christ, and exerting every energy to attain to the perfection of His character*. This goody goody religion that makes light of sin and that is forever dwelling upon the love of God to the sinner, encourages the sinner to believe that God will save him while he continues in sin and he knows it to be sin. This is the way that many are doing who profess to believe present truth. The truth is kept apart from their life, and that is the reason it has no more power to convict and convert the soul. *There must be a straining of every nerve and spirit and muscle to leave the world, its customs, its practices, and its fashions*. (Ellen White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 6, p. 12)

To the average Seventh-day Adventist, this sounds extreme. Are there not things in the world that are okay? Not all its customs, practices, and fashions are bad, are they? Even the suitable ones are fatal if they are what is most important to us and if they pull the mind from the high and lofty goal of attaining the perfection of Christ. Our greatest efforts and our deepest thoughts must be on this theme. We cannot afford to be caught up in seeking the latest of this and the coolest of that. Since most of us do not make our own clothes, for example, we are dependent on what we can purchase, but we must be selective in our choices and choose only those things we would not be ashamed to be found wearing when Jesus returns.

Instead of how to fasten “ourselves to Christ” and how to exert “every energy to attain to the perfection of His character,” one hears of a social gospel of love (important as love is), of meeting the needs of neighbors and of communities, of evangelism, etc., all of which is valuable and worthy, but if one is not instructed, for example, in the high-priestly ministry of Jesus Christ in the most holy place, which involves a forensic cleansing of our records *and* a cleansing of sin from our hearts; if one is not instructed that Christ's substitution *and* example are vital to salvation; if one is not instructed concerning the nature of Christ and the nature of sin and also is not clearly instructed in each angel's message of Revelation 14, then the back door will swing open frequently, and those who do remain will become comfortable Laodiceans.

Those who are truly longing for righteousness will seek it elsewhere and will find it, for Jesus has promised so (Matthew 5:6), but how truly sad it is that it must be found outside the doors of places like the Mountain Road Seventh-day Adventist Church. Such places cannot feed the hungry soul because the leaders of the local church, the leaders of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and the teachers of its grade schools, academies, seminaries, and universities do not take the stand of our forefathers on the

current work of Christ in the most holy place of the sanctuary, on his requirement of perfection in his people, on the post-fall nature of his incarnation, on his true relationship as a son to his Father, etc. Without these stabilizing pillars, the church is collapsing and cannot offer a life-saving haven to those who are losing the battle to cancer of the soul, even though to all appearances, the church is a pleasant place to be. But isn't that how it is with the Roman Catholic Church?

A religion of externals is attractive to the unrenewed heart. The pomp and ceremony of the Catholic worship has a seductive, bewitching power, by which many are deceived; and they come to look upon the Roman Church as *the very gate of heaven*. (Ellen White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 567)

Haven't many of us been, and perhaps are, just as devoted and loyal to our local Seventh-day Adventist Church, thinking it was, or is, the very gate of heaven? God has been very merciful to us and just as "there are real Christians in the Roman Catholic communion . . . serving God according to the best light they have" (*Ibid.*, p. 565), so it is in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. God will reveal to Adventists, as well as to Catholics, "the truth as it is in Jesus, and many will yet take their position with His people" (*Ibid.*). We and they will see "the contrast between a living heart service and a round of mere forms and ceremonies" and that "God looks with pitying tenderness upon those souls, *educated as they are in a faith that is delusive and unsatisfying*. He will cause rays of light to penetrate the dense darkness that surrounds them" (*Ibid.*).

You may not know if your faith is delusive or not, but if you feel dissatisfied with your spiritual experience or if you sense a cloud of darkness enshrouding your soul, God has promised to send you rays of light!

## RESISTING TEMPTATION

The last great chapter in earth's history is nearly written. Every living person will soon receive the seal of God or the mark of the beast. We cannot be diverted from seeking the seal of God. We must know what it is and what the mark of the beast is.<sup>1</sup> Seventh-day Adventists lovingly cling to the beauty of the Sabbath day, and so we should—it is a day of rest and gladness—and we know the great test of loyalty will be on honoring the Sabbath day. We never want to diminish in any way the sacredness of the Sabbath or to diminish its importance as the seal of God, but other issues are at play in the last days, as well. Character perfection is one.

When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own. (Ellen White, *Christ Object Lessons*, p. 69)

His character was one of perfection, and so must ours be:

Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? (Romans 6:16)

And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. (Joshua 24:15)

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. (Romans 13:14)

And from *The Acts of the Apostles*, we read:

The work of gaining salvation is one of copartnership, a joint operation. There is to be co-operation between God and the repentant sinner. This is necessary for the formation of right principles in the character. Man is to make earnest efforts to overcome that which hinders him from attaining to perfection. But he is wholly dependent upon God for success. Human effort of itself is not sufficient. Without the aid of divine power it avails nothing. God works and man works. ***Resistance of temptation must come from man***, who must draw his power from God. On the one side there is infinite wisdom, compassion, and power; on the other, weakness, sinfulness, absolute helplessness. (Ellen White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 482)

Here lies true perfection—in the resistance of temptation and in not placing ourselves in the path of temptation. It lies not in having a perfect wardrobe or a perfectly-balanced checkbook, but in having Jesus' perfect robe of righteousness and in having heavenly records perfectly justified by our Saviour, as well as it lies in choosing to perpetually resist temptation. God will give us power to resist, but we must turn to him at the first moment of temptation and continue to plead with him for help until it arrives, for arrive it will, and the temptation will lose its power. Claim the promise of 1 Corinthians 10:13:

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

And promises of aid from heaven:

Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. (Revelation 3:10)

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1. It is no longer necessary to believe the papacy is the man of sin in order to be a Seventh-day Adventist in good and regular standing. While our pioneers understood the truth of Revelation 13 and while this truth was written into the fundamental principles in 1872, there is now no such statement in Adventism.

The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe. (Proverbs 18:10)

Those who are earnestly seeking a knowledge of the truth and are striving to purify their souls through obedience, thus doing what they can to prepare for the conflict, will find, in the God of truth, a sure defense. “Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee” (verse 10), is the Saviour’s promise. *He would sooner send every angel out of heaven to protect His people than leave one soul that trusts in Him to be overcome by Satan.* (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 560)

God would also sooner send every angel to rescue us than allow us to be deceived:

We must examine well the foundation of our hope, for we shall have to give a reason for it from the Scriptures. This delusion [about communicating with the dead] will spread, and we shall have to contend with it face to face; and unless we are prepared for it, we shall be ensnared and overcome. But if we do what we can on our part to be ready for the conflict that is just before us, God will do His part, and His all-powerful arm will protect us. *He would sooner send every angel out of glory to the relief of faithful souls, to make a hedge about them, than have them deceived and led away by the lying wonders of Satan.* (Ellen White, *Early Writings*, p. 88)

#### DELUSIVE DOCTRINES

Satan knows he is overpowered and outmatched by the omnipotent power of God, so he works by using deception, subterfuge, and diversion.

*To substitute the external forms of religion for holiness of heart and life, is still as pleasing to the unrenewed nature as in the days of the apostles. For this reason, false teachers abound, and the people listen eagerly to their delusive doctrines. It is Satan’s studied effort to divert the minds of men from the one way of salvation,—faith in Christ, and obedience to the law of God.* (Ellen White, *Sketches from the Life of Paul*, p. 192)

A delusive doctrine, then, is a doctrine that diverts the mind from faith in Christ and teaches that the precepts of the law of God cannot be kept and, therefore, may be transgressed with impunity. Not many of us would knowingly fall into either of these delusions, for we profess faith in Christ and a faithfulness to the law of God, but those who do accept these delusions may be all around us:

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the

same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. (2 Peter 3:3–7)

The world is full of scoffers today—in the world of agnosticism and atheism, in Christianity, and even in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, a church where we find members who question the biblical account of creation, question a worldwide flood in view of the geologic strata, question the soon return of Jesus, and question the literalness of the sanctuary in heaven. False, dangerous explanations are given to these biblical truths. We, therefore, must be sober and vigilant, for our “adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8) and because “the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night” (2 Peter 3:10).

#### LAST GENERATION THEOLOGY AND PERFECTION

We are faced with deception of every kind:

In the future, *deception of every kind* is to arise, and we want solid ground for our feet. We want solid pillars for the building. Not one pin is to be removed from that which the Lord has established. (White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 53)

And messages of every order:

*Messages of every order and kind have been urged upon Seventh-day Adventists, to take the place of the truth which, point by point, has been sought out by prayerful study, and testified to by the miracle-working power of the Lord.* (White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 208)

And one of the *messages of every kind* concerns character perfection. Notice this bold denunciation of truth:

But despite the fact that Ellen White was crystal clear in her condemnation of “holy flesh” and its perfectionistic tendencies, the church has never really come full circle in repudiating that theology. In the short decades after 1901, *holy flesh reared its ugly head in the writings of Andreasen*, the originator of “last generation theology,” a theological concept that refuses to leave Adventism alone and finds support in the highest levels of denominational leadership. (André Reis, “Perspective: Perfectionism From the 1901 GC Session Til Now,” *Spectrum*, accessed 2015–04–10 at <http://spectrummagazine.org/article/2015/04/09/perspective-perfectionism-1901-gc-session-til-now>)

André Reis is currently pursuing a doctor of philosophy degree in New Testament at Avondale University in Australia. Hopefully he will learn the difference between perfection of character and perfection of the physical body; learn that when Andreasen spoke of perfection, it was always as a proponent of perfection of character and never as one for perfection of the flesh; learn, therefore, that “holy flesh” did *not* rear “its ugly head in the writings of Andreasen”; and learn, most importantly, that when Ellen White wrote on the

fanaticism in Indiana and the holy flesh movement there and on the perfectionism they claimed to have achieved, she denounced perfection in the *flesh* and *not* the ability to obtain perfection of *character*. The following quotations by Reis of Ellen White show his confusion of the two, and his words also reveal his misunderstanding of last generation theology:

It was in the context of the Indiana debacle of 1900 that Ellen White has the strongest statements against sinless perfection and fanaticism. The paragraphs below read by Ellen White at the 1901 GC session are unequivocal. *I have added in brackets* what she would say today were she confronted with our modern day “holy flesh movement,” i.e., last generation theology. As readers will see, there is really no change in meaning.

“The teaching given in regard to what is termed “holy flesh” [last generation theology] is an error. All may now obtain holy hearts, but it is not correct to claim in this life to have holy flesh [sinless perfection]. The apostle Paul declares, “I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing” (Romans 7:18). To those who have tried so hard to obtain by faith so-called holy flesh [sinless perfection], I would say, You cannot obtain it. Not a soul of you has holy flesh [sinless perfection] now. No human being on the earth has holy flesh [sinless perfection]. It is an impossibility” (Selected Messages (sic), Vol. 2, pg. 32). (*Ibid.*)

For clarification, let us read it without his additions:

The teaching given in regard to what is termed “holy flesh” is an error. All may now obtain holy hearts, but it is not correct to claim in this life to have holy flesh. The apostle Paul declares, “I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing” (Romans 7:18). To those who have tried so hard to obtain by faith so-called holy flesh, I would say, You cannot obtain it. Not a soul of you has holy flesh now. No human being on the earth has holy flesh. It is an impossibility. (Ellen White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 2, p. 32)

In this paragraph, Sister White makes a distinction between “holy hearts” and “holy flesh,” stating that we can have one now (holy hearts), but not both.

On another occasion Ellen White addressed perfection of the flesh being promoted in New Hampshire. Here is the explanation the editors of *Early Writings* gave, published in the appendix of the book, concerning this kind of “perfectionism”:

SOME OF THE EARLY ADVENTISTS, SHORTLY AFTER THE 1844 EXPERIENCE, LOST THEIR HOLD ON GOD AND DRIFTED INTO FANATICISM. ELLEN WHITE MET THESE EXTREMISTS WITH A “THUS SAITH THE LORD.” SHE REBUKED THOSE WHO TAUGHT A STATE OF PERFECTION IN THE FLESH AND THEREFORE COULD NOT SIN. OF SUCH MRS.

WHITE LATER WROTE: (Editors, *Early Writings*, p. 301.3)

And the editors then added this selection from *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*:

They held that those who are sanctified cannot sin. And this naturally led to the belief that the affections and desires of the sanctified ones were always right, and never in danger of leading them into sin. In harmony with these sophistries, they were practising the worst sins under the garb of sanctification, and through their deceptive, mesmeric influence were gaining a strange power over some of their associates, who did not see the evil of these apparently beautiful but seductive theories. . . .

Clearly the deceptions of these false teachers were laid open before me, and I saw the fearful account that stood against them in the book of records, and the terrible guilt that rested upon them for professing complete holiness while their daily acts were offensive in the sight of God. (Ellen White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p. 83)

Obviously Ellen White was rebuking any claim to perfection of the flesh but was not rebuking perfection of character. Reis, however, confuses the two and is wrong to state that perfection of the flesh is advocated today in last generation theology, for only perfection of character is advocated.

Although Ellen White condemned the perfectionism of the holy flesh movement in the GC Session of 1901, Adventism did not fully break off its love affair with “holy flesh.” It is alive and well in Adventism. What could have been in 1901, i.e., a full repudiation of perfectionism, never was.

No doubt of the root causes for this an unbalanced apocalypticism that constantly stretches its hand to grasp the hand of perfectionism in an insane, symbiotic relationship [sic]. . . . if we are to be respectful of Ellen White’s ideals for the church in 1901 and beyond, I’d say, let’s take a firm stand on perfectionism; let’s strongly repudiate perfectionistic ideas which place on the shoulders of this (or any other generation) the responsibility of hastening or delaying the Second Coming. Not only is sinless perfection an “impossibility” this side of heaven but Jesus was clear in his last discourse to the disciples (Acts 1:6) that human beings have no impact on the timing of the end. (Reis, “Perspective: Perfectionism From the 1901 GC Session Til Now,” *Spectrum*)

We may not know the “times or the seasons” (Acts 1:7), but that does not mean we have “no impact on the timing of the end,” as Reis states above.

The Spirit and power of the coming One will be imparted in large measure to those who are preparing to stand in the day of God, ***who are hastening the second advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ***. To these faithful ones Christ gives special communications. He talks with them as He talked with His disciples before leaving them. The



Spirit of truth will guide them into all truth. (Ellen White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol.5, p. 50)

#### ANOTHER CLAIM OF THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF CHARACTER PERFECTION

Dr. Woodrow Whidden is a Seventh-day Adventist author and an expert of systematic theology. He has written:

Essentially, there are four key pieces of evidence in her [Ellen White's] writings which raise caution signs and offer hopeful insights for the persons who advocate the strong perfection emphases. (Woodrow W. Whidden, "Questions on Doctrine [sic]: What Should Be the Enduring Theological Legacy?"; accessed at <http://sda.net.org/atissue/doctrines/qod2007conf/whidden-qod-legacy.htm> on 2015-04-08)

The "hopeful insights" he offers are an attempt to move the advocates of perfection of character away from such a stance.

The First set of evidential statements is explicit: Selected Message [sic], Book One, pp. 176 ff. Here Ellen White directly warns against teachings by persons who "will take passages in the Testimonies that speak of the close of probation, of the shaking among God's people" and "talk of a coming out from this people of a purer and holier people that will arise." Ellen White plainly rejects such emphases by saying that all such teaching "pleases the enemy." (*Ibid.*)

Let us first read these statements, made by Ellen White to Brother K, in context:

There are those who pick out from the Word of God, and also from the Testimonies, detached paragraphs or sentences that may be interpreted to suit their ideas, and they dwell upon these, and build themselves up in their own positions, when God is not leading them. Here is your danger.

You will take passages in the Testimonies that speak of the close of probation, of the shaking among God's people, and you will talk of a coming out from this people of a purer, holier people that will arise. Now all this pleases the enemy. We should not needlessly take a course that will make differences or create dissension. We should not give the impression that if our particular ideas are not followed, it is because the ministers are lacking in comprehension and in faith, and are walking in darkness. (White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 179)

Whidden's main point is that there will not be a pure and holy people at the end of time before Jesus returns. Ellen White is explained by him to be saying that it pleases the enemy to have someone speak of the close of probation and of the shaking among God's people and that a purer and holier people will come out from among God's people as a result of the shaking. First of all, in the shaking God's people do not come out of the church—they are the church—but the

tares are shaken out. God's people stay, while the sinners in Zion are shaken and sifted out.

As we stated last month, the term *church* can be understood in different ways, depending on the context. Here are three examples of the term *church* meaning its members:

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 3:15; see also Hebrews 3:6)

*From the beginning, faithful souls have constituted the church on earth.* In every age the Lord has had His watchmen, who have borne a faithful testimony to the generation in which they lived. These sentinels gave the message of warning; and when they were called to lay off their armor, others took up the work. God brought these witnesses into covenant relation with Himself, uniting the church on earth with the church in heaven. He has sent forth His angels to minister to His church, and the gates of hell have not been able to prevail against His people. (White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 11)

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. (Ellen White, *The Upward Look*, p. 315)

And here is a quotation about the careless and indifferent being shaken out:

The numbers of this company [the shaken ones] had lessened. Some had been *shaken out*, and left by the way. The careless and indifferent who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to agonize, persevere, and plead for it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness, and their numbers were immediately made up by others taking hold of the truth, and coming into the ranks. (Ellen White, *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1, p. 186; published 1858)

And one about the sinners in Zion being sifted out:

The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the *sinners in Zion* will be sifted out—the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place. (Ellen White, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 911)

The main emphasis of Ellen White in the earlier quotation from *Selected Messages* is Brother K's poor scholarship in taking a portion of Scripture here or a selection of the *Testimonies* there to build his case for a new way thinking, which resulted in differences and dissension. We do not know what Brother K was preaching at the time. We only know that

Ellen White says that he “will” take passages of the *Testimonies* concerning the close of probation and concerning the shaking and that he “will” talk of a purer and holier people coming out from God’s people. Whether these are two different things he does—he talks of this and he also talks of that—or whether one occurs as the result of the other, as Whidden says, we cannot say because she does not say, but the weight of evidence from *all* her other writings is that she would *never* endorse saying a purer and holier people *pleases* the enemy, as Whidden suggests; instead, what pleases the enemy is the difference and dissension that comes from unscrupulously using a paragraph here and a sentence there to rewrite the original intent of the author or authors.

Let us also keep in mind that this letter to Brother K was written in 1890, and in 1890 the concept of sinning until Jesus comes was nonexistent in the Adventist faith! This is one of the creeping errors that entered our ranks much later. So, Ellen White could not have been endorsing it and could not have been telling Brother K that he was wrong to speak of a purer and holier people.

Let us move on to Whidden’s second set of evidence:

The Second set involves the group of powerful statements which lay out the theme that the closer the believer comes to Jesus the clearer will be their spiritual perceptions and the more sinful they will appear in their own eyes (the best being *Acts of the Apostles*, 560 ff., *Sanctified Life*, p. 50 and *The Signs of the Times*, March 23, 1888). This powerfully perceptive concept just screams out for an understanding of *objective justification* to cover the *defects* of these earnest, but still imperfect followers of Christ! (Whidden, *Ibid.*)

The references to which Whidden refers *are* beautiful, and we urge you to read them, but we need to look at his term “objective justification” to try to understand the point he is making. Justification is “the divine act by which God declares a penitent sinner righteous. . . . Charges of wrongdoing are canceled, and the sinner, now justified, is brought into a right relationship with God. . . . It consists first in the forgiveness of sins. . . . Remorse for sin (Lk 18:13, 14) and a soul-consuming desire to be right with God (Mt 5:6) are prerequisites to justification.”<sup>2</sup> In other words, justification is the substitution of Christ’s perfect life in the place of our sinful acts or the covering of our sins by his sinless robe of righteousness, WHEN we ask forgiveness of those sins. When we repent and ask forgiveness of our sins, Christ covers our sins with what the Bible calls the robe of righteousness (Isaiah 61:10), but Christ does not cover, or justify, any sins that are not repented of; they remain unforgiven and unjustified. Whidden does not define what he means by the “defects” that he expects “objective justification to cover,” so we cannot address this other than to say that

if “defects” are unrepented sins, justification cannot be applied to them and if by “defects” he means men’s and women’s fallen natures, natures also cannot be justified.

The great work that is wrought for the sinner who is spotted and stained by evil is the work of *justification*. By Him who speaketh truth he is declared righteous. The Lord imputes unto the believer the righteousness of Christ and pronounces him righteous before the universe. *He transfers his sins to Jesus*, the sinner’s representative, substitute, and surety. Upon Christ He lays the iniquity of every soul that *believeth*. . . .

Christ made satisfaction for the guilt of the whole world, and all who will come to God in *faith*, will receive the righteousness of Christ, “who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed” (1 Peter 2:24). *Our sin has been expiated, put away, cast into the depths of the sea. Through repentance and faith we are rid of sin*, and look unto the Lord our righteousness. Jesus suffered, the just for the unjust. (White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 392)

Justification covers our records of sins with the righteousness of Christ’s life, and it occurs only through repentance and through faith in the merits of Jesus Christ. It does nothing to change our nature or our propensity to sin.

Now the third set:

The Third set includes her wonderful array of statements which clearly and positively teach that converted Christians are “reckoned,” or “accounted” as righteous and such a reckoning also includes their post-conversion character development which needs the *constant* reckoning of Christ to legally declare them to be something which in actual fact (at least in some sense of the word sinful) they are not (and here some of the best are *Selected Message*, Book One, pp. 367 and 389 ff. [the latter is a section entitled “Justified by Faith”]).

Whidden is referring to sanctification in this set. In set one, Whidden tells us Ellen White counsels us to not speak of a purer and holier people arising from the shaking; in set two, Whidden approaches justification; and here in set three, he tries to address sanctification and the need to be accounted righteous and that this accounting is necessary in our “post-conversion character development.” *Being accounted righteous* is another way of saying *justified*, and in this third set of evidence against character perfection, Whidden says we need “the *constant* reckoning of Christ to legally declare” us righteous, which is true *as long as we are sinning*, but God’s people will not sin after the close of probation. Let’s look at just one jewel of a quotation from the references he offers:

The Lord would have His people sound in the faith—not ignorant of the great salvation so abundantly provided for

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2. Siegfried H. Horn, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary*, pp. 635, 636.

them. They are not to look forward, thinking that at some future time a great work is to be done for them; for the work is now complete. The believer is not called upon to make his peace with God; he never has nor ever can do this. He is to accept Christ as his peace, for with Christ is God and peace. Christ made an end of sin, bearing its heavy curse in His own body on the tree, and He hath taken away the curse from all those who believe in Him as a personal Saviour. He makes an end of the controlling power of sin in the heart, and the life and character of the believer testify to the genuine character of the grace of Christ. To those that ask Him, Jesus imparts the Holy Spirit; for *it is necessary that every believer should be delivered from **pollution**, as well as from the **curse and condemnation** of the law.* Through the work of the *Holy Spirit*, the sanctification of the truth, the believer becomes fitted for the courts of heaven; for *Christ works within us, and His righteousness is upon us.* Without this no soul will be entitled to heaven. We would not enjoy heaven unless qualified for its holy atmosphere by the influence of the Spirit and the righteousness of Christ. (White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 394)

Two very important facts are given in this paragraph. Firstly, every believer must not only be delivered from the pollution of sin, but also from the curse and condemnation of the law. This is sanctification and justification, respectively. Secondly, the Holy Spirit is *Christ* working within us (not a third person of the godhead). Our salvation is dependent on the ability of Christ to justify us by his spotless life on earth and on his ability, through his spirit, to sanctify us. Wonder of wonders! We owe everything to Jesus, and one day we will cast our crowns at his feet in acknowledgement of this and in thankfulness for it. Nowhere in the references Whidden provides, or anywhere, does Ellen White suggest that we will continue to sin until Jesus comes and/or that we will continue to have a need for forensic justification until Jesus comes. The work Christ does *within* us is not forgiveness of our sins (justification) but a cleansing of our sinful desires (sanctification). It is true that sanctification is the work of a lifetime, a work which has always ended with the death of the saint, but this is not true for the 144,000, for they will not die, and this is one reason why it is so important to understand what Christian perfection is.

Here is the fourth set of Whidden's evidences:

The Fourth, and final exhibit includes those statements which I have called her "mitigating" or safety net statements: the key one is that Jesus is constantly making up for our "unavoidable deficiencies" (key reference here is *Selected Messages*, Book Three, pp. 195–197; see my *Ellen White on Salvation* [Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, Publishing Association, 1995], pp. 99 ff.)

The term "unavoidable deficiencies" was used only once by Ellen White and this was in a letter written in 1891 (although it has been published in three different places):

Jesus loves His children, even if they err. They belong to Jesus and we are to treat them as the purchase of the blood of Jesus Christ. Any unreasonable course pursued toward them is written in the books as against Jesus Christ. He keeps His eye upon them, and when they do their best, calling upon God for His help, be assured the service will be accepted, although imperfect. Jesus is perfect. Christ's righteousness is *imputed* unto them, and He will say, Take away the filthy garments from him, and clothe him with change of raiment. Jesus makes up for our *unavoidable deficiencies*. Where Christians are faithful to each other, true and loyal to the Captain of the Lord's host, never betraying trusts into the enemy's hands, they will be transformed into Christ's character. Jesus will abide in their hearts by faith.—Letter 17a, 1891, p. 8. (To Brother and Sister Ings, and Elder Fulton, Nov. 18, 1891.) (Ellen White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 2, p. 184)

Ellen White is speaking of justification (the righteousness that is imputed for the unavoidable deficiencies) AND of sanctification (the transformation into Christ's character)! There will be no unavoidable deficiencies when we have the character of Christ. The unavoidable deficiencies are the sins we perform when we err but for which we have asked forgiveness and over which Jesus places his robe of righteousness. If one believes he or she will continue to sin until Jesus comes, then one will continue to have "unavoidable deficiencies" until Jesus comes and will continue to have a need of constant justification, but remember there is a point when probation closes, when Jesus declares he is finished with his work in the most holy place and leaves it. Then it is that the righteous will live without a mediator in the sight of a holy God, and they could never live without a mediator if they were still sinning. God would be a consuming fire to them (Hebrews 12:28, 29).

#### CHARACTER PERFECTION IS BIBLICAL

Can you think of one text that states, or even implies, that imperfection is acceptable to God? I cannot. Can you recall any texts that state the opposite? There are many:

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. (Genesis 17:1)

Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God. (Deuteronomy 18:3)

Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day. (1 Kings 8:61)

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. (Matthew 5:48)

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. (John 17:23; see also 2 Chronicles 16:9; Job 1:1; Proverbs 2:21; Ezekiel 28:15; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Ephesians 4:13; Philippians

3:15; 2 Timothy 3:17; Hebrews 13:21; James 1:4; Revelation 3:2)

And here are two confirmations for perfection of character from the Spirit of Prophecy:

*Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. (Ellen White, Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 214)*

Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to *become perfect in Christ*. Not even by a thought could our Saviour be brought to yield to the power of temptation. Satan finds in human hearts some point where he can gain a foothold; some sinful desire is cherished, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of Himself: “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.” John 14:30. Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father’s commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his advantage. This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble.

*It is in this life that we are to separate sin from us, through faith in the atoning blood of Christ. Our precious Saviour invites us to join ourselves to Him, to unite our weakness to His strength, our ignorance to His wisdom, our unworthiness to His merits. God’s providence is the school in which we are to learn the meekness and lowliness of Jesus. The Lord is ever setting before us, not the way we would choose, which seems easier and pleasanter to us, but the true aims of life. It rests with us to co-operate with the agencies which Heaven employs in the work of conforming our characters to the divine model. None can neglect or defer this work but at the most fearful peril to their souls. (White, The Great Controversy, p. 623)*

Let us think again, for a moment, about what perfection of character is. Today, right now, we may be perfect in our spheres, just as Jesus is perfect in his. Today we, through the power of God, can resist temptation, just as Jesus resisted temptation. We are not called upon to bear the burdens that Jesus bore or to resist the deep and great temptations he resisted, but what we *are* faced with, in our own spheres, we can endure *through his power*, and that is perfection. Tomorrow we may be faced with temptations we never before have had to resist, so we cannot say we are perfect because we do not know what evil lurks in the corners of our minds, but God will reveal to us our issues, as we are able to bear them, until they are ALL removed and Jesus can say *It is finished* and don his kingly robes for his triumphant return! What a wonder! What a miracle!

May our prayer be the prayer of David:

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. (Psalm 139:23, 24)

## OVERCOMING IS POSSIBLE

We often become overwhelmed, however, with sin. Just resisting one temptation can be an agonizing affair, let alone two or three coming within seconds of each other, and when we start to look at the big picture of our lives and how we have failed over and over, instead of “looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2), we can easily become discouraged and even fearful of not ever being able to change. I am reminded of Mark Owen.

Mark had been a Navy SEAL for four years when he went on a training exercise in Red Rock Canyon. He had the best instructors and the best rock-climbing gear, but he lacked rock-climbing skills. The first few days were easy, however—nothing too high or too hard to climb. Then the SEALS paired off with one another, each two-man team with its own instructor, and the next rock wall Mark faced seemed to stretch up for miles, the top of which blocked the sun. It also had half the handholds and footholds that his previous climbs had had.

In his nervousness he placed cams in nearly every crevice he found as he climbed the wall of rock, so much so that he ran out of cams and came to a standstill on the rock face. As he hung there, unable to move, he took his eyes off the rock in front of him and looked around. He saw the road and the desert stretching to the horizon. He saw his partner still on the ground, looking like a miniature statue, and he looked up to the vast, blue sky. Fear began to creep in, and his fingers began to tire in gripping the rock. He felt he was about to slip and fall. Then he heard a sound to his left. His instructor was climbing toward him (using no ropes), clinging to the rock face like a big insect. When he came close enough, Mark could see cams dangling from his chest harness—his cams, in fact, that the instructor had collected on his way up. He could see Mark was struggling and told him, “Just stay in your three-foot world.”

Mark was two hundred feet up the rock face and could not understand what he meant by a three-foot world. “What are you talking about?”

“Focus on your three-foot world and what you can do. You keep looking around and none of that will help you right now. You’re calculating how far you’re going to fall. You look down at Jeff, but he’s not going to help you. You look down at the road and desert, but that won’t help you. Looking at the top is not going to help, either. Stay focused on your three-foot world and climb.”

Mark says that was the only way he got to the top and off the rock face:

*It was the only way I got off the rock face. Now reloaded with cams, I focused on wedging one into the nearest crevice. I slid the rope through the carabiner and started to climb again. My focus never went farther than my next hand- or foothold. (Mark Owen, No Hero, p. 63)*

When we succumb to the same temptation again and again, we can feel like there is no use trying any longer, but

that is because we are looking at the big picture, as Mark was. In the stress of the moment, if we focus on a spiritual three-foot perspective, so to speak, and on what we can control at the moment, we will succeed, *with God's power*. Our focus (in our three-foot perspective) is to be on Jesus. We cannot change anything in our past (so there is no sense fretting over sins for which we have already asked forgiveness), and we do not know the future, but we can make a choice at the moment we are tempted to plead with God for help and to keep urging our petition to the throne of grace until the answer is received.

As Paul advised, let us forget those things which are behind and press toward the prize:

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, *forgetting those things which are behind*, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, *as many as be perfect*, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. (Philippians 3:13–15)

And let us rely on Jesus as our help in time of need:

No one need say that his case is hopeless, that he cannot live the life of a Christian. Ample provision is made by the death of Christ for every soul. *Jesus is our ever-present help in time of need*. Only call upon Him in faith, and He has promised to hear and answer your petitions. (White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 215)

## THE 144,000 AND THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES

Why is character perfection so important? Is it only to bring glory to God, important as that is? No, there is a great benefit to us, also:

Had not Jacob previously repented of his sin in obtaining the birthright by fraud, God would not have heard his prayer and mercifully preserved his life. So, in the time of trouble, *if the people of God had unconfessed sins to appear before them while tortured with fear and anguish, they would be overwhelmed; and despair would cut off their faith*, and they could not have confidence to plead with God for deliverance. But while they have a deep sense of their unworthiness, they have no concealed wrongs to reveal. *Their sins have gone beforehand to judgment and have been blotted out*, and they cannot bring them to remembrance. (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 620)

Remember, any sins committed after Jesus leaves the most holy place cannot be forgiven and will remain upon the ledger of heaven because Jesus is not there to mediate for us:

Upon the crystal sea before the throne, that sea of glass as it were mingled with fire,—so resplendent is it with the glory of God,—are gathered the company that have “gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name.” With the Lamb upon Mount Zion, “having the harps of God,” they

stand, the hundred and forty and four thousand that were redeemed from among men; and there is heard, as the sound of many waters, and as the sound of a great thunder, “the voice of harpers harping with their harps.” And they sing “a new song” before the throne, a song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand. It is the song of Moses and the Lamb—a song of deliverance. None but the hundred and forty-four thousand can learn that song; for it is the song of their experience—an experience such as no other company have ever had. “These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.” These, having been translated from the earth, from among the living, are counted as “the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.” Revelation 15:2, 3; 14:1–5. “These are they which came out of great tribulation;” they have passed through the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation; they have endured the anguish of the time of Jacob’s trouble; *they have stood without an intercessor through the final outpouring of God’s judgments*. (*Ibid.*, p. 648)

The one hundred forty-four thousand stand through the final “outpouring of God’s judgments.” What are these judgments? The seven last plagues! If we have unforgiven sins at that time, when there is no intercessor in the sanctuary above to mediate for us, we will not be able to stand, and we will suffer the seven last plagues, just like the wicked do! I do not want to go through such an experience, and I am sure you do not either, SO we must now achieve the perfection God requires of us, and this is not a pretend perfection in which we think we can continue to sin in small amounts or in little ways because Jesus loves us so much that he will make up our deficiencies. How can he do that if he is no longer making atonement for us in the most holy place? You might be tempted to think, *Well, I don’t want to be part of the one hundred forty-four thousand, anyway, and I don’t want to go through the time of trouble*. You may not *want* to be living at the close of time, but you are. You may not want to go through the time of trouble, but you might. God has placed you where you are today because he has a great plan for you, and you would not want it any other way if you could see the end from the beginning and if you desire to hold the honor and glory of God supreme. So, all of us, let’s climb that rock face! It is either that or we lose our grip and fall.

While I was praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell upon me, and I seemed to be rising higher and higher, far above the dark world. I turned to look for the Advent people in the world, but could not find them, when a voice said to me, “Look again, and look a little higher.” At this I raised my eyes, and saw *a straight and narrow path*, cast up high above the world. On this path the Advent people were traveling to the city, which was at the farther end of the path. They had a bright light set up behind them at the beginning of the path, which an angel told me was the midnight cry. This light shone all along the path and gave light for their feet so that they might not stumble. If they kept

their eyes fixed on Jesus, who was just before them, leading them to the city, they were safe. *But soon some grew weary*, and said the city was a great way off, and they expected to have entered it before. Then Jesus would encourage them by raising His glorious right arm, and from His arm came a light which waved over the Advent band, and they shouted, "Alleluia!" Others rashly *denied the light* behind them *and said that it was not God that had led them* out so far. The light behind them went out, leaving their feet in perfect darkness, and *they stumbled* and lost sight of the mark and of Jesus, *and fell off* the path down into the dark and wicked world below. (White, *Early Writings*, p. 14)

The problem is not that we (the people on the path) become weary, for we are told that Jesus will encourage and strengthen us. The problem is when we deny that God has given us light and when we deny that he has been leading us. So has done our beloved church by changing and denying the pillars of truth God so graciously gave us in our formative years. Then it was she stumbled and fell, and so shall we, if we also deny God's leading and his light in our lives.

Our own course of action will determine whether we shall receive the seal of the living God, or be cut down by the destroying weapons. Already a few drops of God's wrath have fallen upon the earth; but when the seven last plagues shall be poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation, then it will be forever too late to repent, and find shelter. *No atoning blood will then wash away the stains of sin.* (Ellen White, *Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White*, p. 187)

A book has been given us to guide our feet through the perils of this dark world to heaven. It tells us how we can escape the wrath of God, and also tells of the sufferings of Christ for us, the great sacrifice that has been made that we might be saved and enjoy the presence of God forever. And if any come short at last, having heard the truth as they have in this land of light, it will be their own fault; they will be without excuse. *The word of God tells us how we may become perfect Christians and escape the seven last plagues.* But they took no interest to find this out. Other things diverted the mind, idols were cherished by them, and God's Holy Word was neglected and slighted. God has been trifled with by professed Christians, and when His Holy Word shall judge them in the last day, they will be found wanting. That word which they have neglected for foolish storybooks, tries their lives. That is the standard; their motives, words, works, and the manner in which they use their time are all compared with the written word of God; and if they come short then, their cases are decided forever. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 125)

## FINAL SCENES

At the David Lee Cancer Center, as in any other cancer treatment program, conventional or unconventional, patients

begin a long journey toward health. Not one of them asked for the disease, and not one of us has asked for our disease of sin, but we, and they, are sick, and the treatment for both is rigorous and exacting. Not everyone wants to endure. Ahmed refused part of his treatment—he was scared—and his prognosis is grave. Lois's chart is several inches thick; her prognosis is also grave. Michael thought he was cured but, after a few years, knew he was sick again; his prognosis has now become grave.

We do not have to be an Ahmed, a Lois, or a Michael. Our physician never loses a case, ever, but we must consent to his treatment protocols and not compromise them. It will take all of our efforts to reach the point where we would rather die than sin, rather want than defraud, and rather hunger than lie (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 4, page 495), but if we will follow God's plan, we will safely reach our heavenly home.

During the final scenes of the great battle with sin, God's people will live without an intercessor in the sight of a wrathful God. They will see God's unmitigated judgment on the wicked:

My attention was again directed to the earth. The *wicked had been destroyed*, and their dead bodies were lying upon its surface. The wrath of God in the seven last plagues had been visited upon the inhabitants of the earth, causing them to gnaw their tongues from pain and to curse God. The false shepherds had been the signal objects of Jehovah's wrath. Their eyes had consumed away in their holes, and their tongues in their mouths, while they stood upon their feet. After the saints had been delivered by the voice of God, the wicked multitude turned their rage upon one another. The earth seemed to be deluged with blood, and dead bodies were from one end of it to the other. (White, *Early Writings*, p. 289)

See the desolation of the earth:

*The earth looked like a desolate wilderness.* Cities and villages, shaken down by the earthquake, lay in heaps. Mountains had been moved out of their places, leaving large caverns. Ragged rocks, thrown out by the sea, or torn out of the earth itself, were scattered all over its surface. Large trees had been uprooted and were strewn over the land. (*Ibid.*, p. 290)

See the wicked die from hunger and pestilence:

The people of God will not be free from suffering; but while persecuted and distressed, while they endure privation, and suffer for want of food, they will not be left to perish. That God who cared for Elijah will not pass by one of his self-sacrificing children. He who numbers the hairs of their head will care for them, and in time of famine they shall be satisfied. While *the wicked are dying from hunger and pestilence*, angels will shield the righteous, and supply their wants. To him that "walketh righteously" is the promise, "Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them,

I the God of Israel will not forsake them.” (Isaiah 33:16; 41:17.) (White, *The Great Controversy*, 1888 ed., p. 629) See swords fall harmlessly:

The heavenly sentinels, faithful to their trust, continue their watch. Though a general decree has fixed the time when commandment-keepers may be put to death, their enemies will in some cases anticipate the decree, and, before the time specified, will endeavor to take their lives. But none can pass the mighty guardians stationed about every faithful soul. Some are assailed in their flight from the cities and villages; but the swords raised against them break and *fall as powerless as a straw*. Others are defended by angels in the form of men of war. (*Ibid.*, p. 631) And see the most awful scourges ever known to man:

These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be *the most awful scourges* that have ever been known to mortals. All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final Judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy. (*Ibid.*, p. 628)

It is not a pretty picture, but it will be a reality one day very soon, and we want to be ready. God’s people, trembling and anxious though they will have been, will be honored to see the glory of God, to see Jesus on his throne, and to hear the sweet voice of Jesus asking his Father for them to be with him. What great love!

By the people of God a voice, clear and melodious, is heard, saying, “Look up,” and, lifting their eyes to the heavens, they behold the bow of promise. The black, angry clouds that covered the firmament are parted, and like Stephen they look up steadfastly into Heaven, and *see the glory of God, and the Son of man seated upon his throne*. In his divine form they discern the marks of his humiliation; and from his lips they hear the request, presented before his Father and the holy angels, “***I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am.***” John 17:24 (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 636)

The day for which we all long has arrived.  
The great controversy is over.

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## Youth’s Story – Banishment

(Part of chapter 3 of *Escape from Siberian Exile* by John Godfrey Jacques, published by Pacific Press in 1921. Editor)

THOSE who were to go were searched again; and before this work was finished, the clanking of chains was heard, and soon the guards were putting shackles upon the exiles. Some were secured hand and foot, while others had only their hands fettered; and the men were then chained in pairs. The prisoner next me having been shackled, I was awaiting my turn, when word came from the captain of the guard, that the religious prisoners should not wear irons.

All were placed four abreast, the high doors swung open, the order was given to march, and once more we were in the open air. It seemed unspeakably exhilarating to me, although the cold wind whipped and penetrated our insufficient clothing. A torch raised before our command, gave to the scene a suggestion of the picturesque.

The preceding day, snow had fallen and afterwards melted, leaving the ground almost impassable. But the soldiers, with unsheathed swords, drove us like cattle through the mud and the darkness.

Beside me walked, panting, an aged prisoner of war. He was too weak to keep up with the others, and one of the soldiers kicked him in the side by way of inducing him to step faster. The poor man sank groaning to the ground; but the

column was not allowed to halt, and consequently those behind stumbled over him. After a while, he was again put upon his feet, and driven forward.

We observed several persons following us, and some of the evangelists recognized them as relatives. They were endeavoring to come within speaking distance, but were kept back by the soldiers’ swords. The guard hastened our pace to a run. Steam rose from our perspiring bodies. The clang of fetters mingled with the cries of the soldiers.

“Halt!” shouted the captain of the *etapé*.<sup>3</sup>

We were close beside a railway car; and we were herded into it, and thrust into a barred section. In about an hour, the train to which the car was attached moved off.

Most of the prisoners were smoking, and this made the air of the car suffocating. We traveled thus the remainder of that night, all the next day, and till late in the second evening, when we arrived at Kiev. I was then quite ill.

We were transferred from the railway car to a street car, which had been constructed expressly for prisoners, having no windows, and but one door. I was knocked down in the crowd, and I thought I should be crushed before I could get up.

The old car creaked threateningly, and appeared ready to give way beneath its load. That, I knew, would mean death to

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3. The French word *etapé* has been introduced into the Russian language, as into the English, being used to indicate the quarters where prisoners are lodged when on the way into banishment, also a party of exiles traveling under guard, and further, their transport from place to place.

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some, but I wondered if to others it might mean the possibility of escape.

When the tomb-like car stopped, and we emerged from it, we were outside the city, before a brick wall that inclosed a low, damp building where we were to spend what was left of the night. We had to stand out of doors during the long process of searching.

Having had little food during the day, we hoped for something that night; but we received nothing, as the supper hour was already past.

After being put into a cell, our little group had worship together, as had been our wont. The other occupants of the cell were some of the prisoners who had been traveling with us. At no previous time had we thought it wise to invite others to join in our services; but the mood of these men, after the day's wearisome journey, encouraged us to ask if they would like to unite with us, and they all readily assented. We recited, from memory, verses of Scripture, talked a few minutes, and prayed, even the worst of the criminals repeating with us the Lord's Prayer. All this was done very quietly, lest the watchman should interfere.

Before the light of another day had discovered our cell, a guard opened the door, and called for us to make ready to start on the march. After the inevitable searching, we were

hurried out of the building, still without food, the breakfast hour having not yet come.

At the gateway, we espied the bent form of an old man; and to each prisoner, as we passed, he gave a tiny loaf of light bread. I inquired the reason for this, and heard the following story about the aged man's benevolence: Years before, his son had been exiled to Siberia; and the father, in remembrance of him, and in sympathy for those who were condemned to a like fate, had stood at that prison gate each morning through all those years, and given a loaf of bread to every exile passing there. He had used up a large share of his property in this way. A delicacy indeed the light bread was to me.

*To be continued*

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