

Old Paths

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

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

Vol. 17, No.1

Straight and Narrow

January 2008



In summer there is no noticeable difference between evergreens and other trees; but when the blasts of winter come, the evergreens remain unchanged, while other trees are stripped of their foliage. So the falsehearted professor may not now be distinguished from the real Christian, but the time is just upon us when the difference will be apparent (The Great Controversy, p. 602).

Thought Cloning

By Allen Stump

“But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased (Daniel 12:4).” While the main application of this prophecy has to do with the increase of Biblical knowledge, it is a clear fact that scientific knowledge, in general, has increased with great rapidity in this last generation. One area that has taken on formerly unbelievable heights is the science of the human DNA code. Today, the human genome has been mapped and the technology has been developed to clone sheep, dogs, mice, and other animals. Only current ethical restraints have prevented an extension of this science to humans. A genetic clone is an exact duplicate of an original, one that, in theory, would think like the original given the same background exposure.

But long before the science of physical cloning was even imagined, thought (or mental) cloning had begun. Satan desired to persuade the angels to follow him by changing their thinking to be like his. Since sin, men and angels have both been swayed to become clones in their minds of Lucifer. Men carry this principle into the societies where they live and govern. Anyone who has studied the rise and fall of nations knows that, at heart, the march of societies is really the rise and fall of ideology. The Communist leaders during the Cold War tried to project their thoughts upon the people they ruled. The Soviet newspaper was named Pravda which means “truth”; however, it was often far from the truth. Socialists have also tried to project their thoughts upon the people they have ruled over, and in the United States propaganda is to be found.

Yet, above all, the one place that cloning of thought should never be found is within the church. Now, it is true that God’s people are to be in harmony and unity. We are all to:

Speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment (1 Corinthians 1:10).

Have the same spirit of faith (2 Corinthians 4:13).

Come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man (Ephesians 4:13).

Yet, we are never to surrender to another our individuality or our ability to think. Ellen White has counseled us:

Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom this power is developed are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. **It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men’s thought** (*Education*, p. 17).

Over fifty years ago, key leaders of the Adventist people surrendered a great portion of their individuality to the evangelicals, and we have been, at best, only partial thinkers since then.

The apostasy that we have been in as a people has dwarfed our minds and has the church steadily retreating toward Egypt. The once precious truth has been sold for an evangelical mess of pottage. Error, thus being accepted as the norm, has caused our people to lose precious ground. It is Bible truth that sanctifies. Jesus said, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth (John 17:17).” Further, we are told that “Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is always dangerous (*Tesimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 292).”

The mentality of the Adventist ministry has come to match, if not exceed, that spoken of concerning apostate ministers in *The Great Controversy*, where we read of their attempt to suppress the truth:

The clergy will put forth almost superhuman efforts to shut away the light lest it should shine upon their flocks. By every means at their command they will endeavor to suppress the discussion of these vital questions (*The Great Controversy*, p. 607).

I ask you honestly, though, will any be blameless in the day of judgment with the excuse that someone else taught them a lie or tried to repress the truth? God has given men and women the ability to think and to reason, but, alas, this takes work and many are too lazy to think for themselves and to work hard at digging the truth from God’s Word. Too many allow others to think for them and, by so doing, they become virtual clones, in mind, of their leaders.

As we continue to build upon the theme of the doctrine of revelation in this issue, we wish to help provide our readers with truth that can be used as the basis for the themes we will begin addressing next month: The doctrine of God, the doctrine of sin, and how sin relates to the nature of man. While we believe that the remnant of God’s people will be in unity in the last days, we would never wish to produce clones of what we have said or taught. As Ellen White says, true education will teach others how to think for themselves. That is our great purpose and goal—to equip the brothers and sisters theologically in such a manner that they can be filled with God’s Word, rightly divided, in such a way that they may stand strong and tall against any of the Goliaths of Babylon. ✍

Also in this issue:

Satan’s Attack on Revelation	p. 3
Prayer Requests	p. 9
The Pen of Inspiration	p. 9
“Be Ye Therefore Perfect”	p. 11
Sacrifice-Atonement	p. 12
Divine Promises	p. 14
Satan’s attack on God’s Law	p. 15
Letters	p. 21
Youth’s Corner	p. 23

SATAN'S ATTACK ON REVELATION

By Allen Stump

In a statement given at the recent Annual Council, Elder Jan Paulsen, General Conference President, made reference to the then future 50th Anniversary Conference to be held concerning the book *Questions on Doctrine (QOD)*. It was fifty years ago, in 1957, that *Questions on Doctrine* was first published and this book has become perhaps the most discussed book in Seventh-day Adventist theology during the last fifty years. Paulsen stated he did not believe the conference was a good idea and that it should not take place. Concerning the nature of Christ which was one of the theological issues raised in *QOD*, Paulsen said:

The uniqueness of Jesus Christ (Wholly God and wholly man—no one else matches that of the ‘only-begotten’ One) leads us to that. I just cannot imagine a post-modern person in Europe, a business man in Asia or Latin America, any more than a farmer in Africa will care one iota whether Christ had the nature of man before the fall or after. The realities of the world in which we live have other concerns and other priorities which occupy us (*Adventist News Network*).

It is possible that the last sentence quoted from Paulsen is true, but it should not be so. For many people, the things going on in this world and the priorities of this world have a higher concern for us than understanding Jesus Christ. This is a sad, but true, commentary for most of the world, but I ask you, should it be a commentary concerning the people of God? Never! They should have a desire to understand God and Jesus Christ and this understanding should have a higher priority than any thing else in this world! It is true that the ploughman in Africa and the businessman in China or Latin America may not care, but, beloved, as God’s people, we should and must care.

Perhaps the most fundamental belief in Christianity and, in fact, in any religion is the doctrine of revelation because this doctrine will determine, to a great degree, how we see everything else. As Christians, we might think the doctrine of God and knowing God is our most important belief, and, of course, ultimately this is our goal, but *how* do we know God? How is God revealed to us? This is where the doctrine of revelation comes into play. For instance, the Muslims believe that there is one god, Allah, and his prophet is Mohammed, and they believe this based upon a supposed revelation given to Mohammed. He wrote this revelation down into a book that is called the *Qur’an* (Koran).

As Christian people, however, we have a different book of revelation, and we call it the Bible. The word Bible comes from the Greek word *biblos* (βίβλος) which simply means book. The Bible is the book, not just any book, but *the* book, and your understanding of revelation determines where you go theologically and it molds your thinking.

Every Christian needs to become a “theologian.” We need to understand that, in basic form, becoming a theologian is

not just for a few select people. We may have the idea that we are the little peons in the pew and the theologians are the great giants at the seminary and that we can only know a little and they can know much more. In the book *The Great Controversy*, however, we are told that in the last work “the laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions (*The Great Controversy*, p. 606).” Many ministers who have been to literary institutions are actually disqualified from teaching the Word of God because, instead of learning about God, they study the theories of men. They learn the ideas and philosophies of men, they study the psychology of men, but they do not study the pure Word of God to understand what it means.

Now, let us notice how the doctrine of revelation fits into the concept of systematic theology. The concept called systematic theology is simply the discipline of the study of God (theology) that “seeks to organize the various Christian doctrines in a logical way, so that the discussion of one topic leads naturally to the consideration of the next (Richard Rice, *Reign of God*, p. 10).” Now I ask you, is it wrong to organize our doctrines into a set order and harmony? No. The Bible says “God is not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33),” but he is a God of order. We have been told, “Order is the law of heaven, and it should be the law of God’s people on the earth (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 26).” In fact, “Order is heaven’s first law (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 201).”

Systematic theology not only arranges in an orderly manner the different Bible doctrines, it also demonstrates how the different doctrines of our Christian faith relate to each other. The Bible doctrines are not disjointed and separated ideas. The teachings of the Bible interconnect. We may be simple lay people, but these concepts of systematic theology are not too hard for us to grasp.

Everything we believe has an influence on everything else we believe [For instance, if you believe that the soul is naturally immortal and that some people are not going to go to heaven, then you have to have an alternate place for the soul to go—an eternally burning hell, purgatory, limbo, or some other place. You can see how one doctrine can affect another doctrine very easily.] What people think about God, for example, will affect their view of the end of history, and vice versa. The different Christian doctrines are not like building blocks, having exactly the same size and shape, capable of any sort of arrangement. They are more like the pieces of a puzzle (*Reign of God*, pp. 10, 11).

This analogy is not complete, for the pieces of a puzzle have only one way of coming together perfectly and no Christian has yet come up with a perfect and exact pattern for the way everything is to fit, but, beloved, we are getting closer all the

time. The Bible says, “But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day (Proverbs 4:18).” We need to understand the Bible far better than we do. We need to understand it is God’s Word and understand that Satan has God’s Word under attack.

Because everything builds upon God’s revelation, we can see that this is the logical place for Satan to begin his attack and a strategic point of warfare for him in his fight against God and the saints. Beloved, “there is nothing that Satan desires more than to destroy confidence in God and in his Word (*The Great Controversy*, p. 526).”

To reiterate, Elder Paulsen said: “I just cannot imagine a post-modern person in Europe, a business man in Asia or Latin America, any more than a farmer in Africa will care one iota whether Christ had the nature of man before the fall or after.” Based on his concern about the truth, perhaps Paulsen does not have an iota of care either. Let us now consider the following statement from Ellen White that is opposite from what the leader of the Seventh-day Adventist Church infers:

The position that it is of no consequence what men believe is one of Satan’s most successful deceptions. He knows that the truth, received in the love of it, sanctifies the soul of the receiver; therefore he is constantly seeking to substitute false theories, fables, another gospel (*The Great Controversy*, p. 520).

Does Ellen White mean there can be another gospel? Is there not only one gospel? Sometimes Christians have a desire, for the sake of trying not to push people away, to be just as pleasant as they can in the way they present the gospel.

“Thou art the man.” 2 Samuel 12:7. Words as unmistakably plain as these spoken by Nathan to David are seldom heard in the pulpits of today, seldom seen in the public press. If they were not so rare, we should see more of the power of God revealed among men. The Lord’s messengers should not complain that their efforts are without fruit until they repent of their own love of approbation and their desire to please men, which leads them to suppress truth.

Those ministers who are men pleasers, who cry, Peace, peace, when God has not spoken peace, might well humble their hearts before God, asking pardon for their insincerity and their lack of moral courage. It is not from love for their neighbor that they smooth down the message entrusted to them, but because they are self-indulgent and ease-loving. True love seeks first the honor of God and the salvation of souls. Those who have this love will not evade the truth to save themselves from the unpleasant results of plain speaking. When souls are in peril, God’s ministers will not consider self, but will speak the word given them to speak, refusing to excuse or palliate evil (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 141).

Of course, the gospel should be presented in all of its loveliness and with the great attractiveness that it has. In fact,

Jesus said he would draw all men unto him: “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me (John 12:32).” Jesus is speaking here not only of being physically put upon the cross but also about what that picture of the cross does. It shows the great love and the depths and compassion of God and Christ, and it has a drawing power. We need to present this, but, may I remind you, this same Jesus Christ had very stern words about those who would abuse his gospel.

Few, if any, have ever loved Christ more than Paul. He wrote some very stern words about false gospels. In his letter to the Galatians, Paul starts with a greeting and then says:

I marvel [I am astonished!] that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ (Galatians 1:6, 7).

In verse 6, he uses the expression “another gospel,” and then in verse 7 he says “which is not another.” The words “another” in these verses are not from the same Greek word. In verse 6, the word is *heteros* (ἕτερος) which means another of a different kind, whereas in verse 7 the Greek word for another is *allos* (ἄλλος) which means another of the same kind. Paul is using what we would today call an oxymoron because there is truly only one gospel and another (*heteros*) gospel is really a **false gospel**. Paul said he marveled that they were so soon removed from the true gospel and that some would trouble them and pervert the gospel of Christ. “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed [anathema] (v. 8).” Now, I did not say that and the truth of the matter is Paul was not the author of that either. It was said by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

We need to realize that God does not play games when it comes down to the issues of the gospel. He is deadly serious because he knows the consequences are eternally serious; and, if we are preaching a false gospel, then we are accursed and deserve rebuke. When we apologize for our positions and for our doctrines we are in a sad position. If I apologize to you for what I am preaching, I am either apologizing for preaching the truth and that is wrong, or I am apologizing for preaching error and I should not be preaching error. Jesus told Nicodemus: “We speak that we do know (John 3:11).” Sometimes ministers can come across very authoritative, as if they know what they are talking about. Well, we had better know what we are talking about and if we do not, then we have no right to be in the pulpit. We have issues that amount to eternal life and Paul says if we are preaching any other gospel, let us be accursed. “As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed [or *anathema*] (Galatians 1:9).”

John Calvin said, “A dog barks when his master is attacked. I would be a coward if I saw that God’s truth is attacked and yet remain silent without giving the sound.” In

Isaiah 56:10, God compares his watchmen who are sleeping, not doing their job, to dumb dogs which “cannot bark.”

Which will we be? Watchmen on the walls of Zion or dumb dogs? We have critical issues in front of us, and we need to understand the systematic theology of the Bible. We need to understand what these issues are, why they are important to us, and how they interrelate to each other because nothing theologically in the Bible happens in a vacuum, isolated. Everything connects and interrelates to everything else.

WHY SATAN HATES GOD'S WORD

Let us now begin to discuss the doctrine of revelation and why Satan desires to destroy God's Word. The Bible teaches that workers of iniquity love darkness rather than light (John 3:19), but what does Psalm 119:130 declare? “The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.” You just cannot shoo darkness away. You cannot get rid of darkness except by one thing. It is very simple—you emit light. In a dark room, you turn the light on and the darkness is gone. God's Word gives us light, and Jesus is the embodiment of that Word. He is even called the Word of God (John 1:1). In John 8:12, Jesus proclaims himself to be “the light of the world.” That Word is the light of this world, but he has given us his words primarily through the Bible.

[John] Wycliffe was one of the greatest of the Reformers. In breadth of intellect, in clearness of thought, in firmness to maintain the truth, and in boldness to defend it, he was equaled by few who came after him. Purity of life, unwearied diligence in study and in labor, incorruptible integrity, and Christlike love and faithfulness in his ministry, characterized the first of the Reformers. And this notwithstanding the intellectual darkness and moral corruption of the age from which he emerged.

The character of Wycliffe is a testimony to the educating, transforming power of the Holy Scriptures. It was the Bible that made him what he was. The effort to grasp the great truths of revelation imparts freshness and vigor to all the faculties. It expands the mind, sharpens the perceptions, and ripens the judgment. The study of the Bible will ennoble every thought, feeling, and aspiration as no other study can. It gives stability of purpose, patience, courage, and fortitude; it refines the character and sanctifies the soul. An earnest, reverent study of the Scriptures, bringing the mind of the student in direct contact with the infinite mind, would give to the world men of stronger and more active intellect, as well as of nobler principle, than has ever resulted from the ablest training that human philosophy affords (*The Great Controversy*, p. 4).

Human philosophy can never accomplish this. The Bible brings light and Satan hates it because it extinguishes his darkness. Paul, writing to Timothy, said: “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (2 Timothy 3:15).” The Bible is able to teach to us the

plain will of God, showing the pathway to his city, the New Jerusalem. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Timothy 3:16, 17).” We need to be studying. We do not want to be surface readers. There are a lot of people who are surface readers who read a lot! One may “read” and “study” a great deal; however, that of itself will not make us deep students. Some who read extensively are just surface readers. We need to clearly understand God's Word and not look at things superficially or come to conclusions that do not have a basis in biblical fact.

THE BIBLE PRESENTS A TRUE PICTURE OF GOD'S CHARACTER

The Bible presents the true picture of what God is like. In Micah 7:18, 19, we read:

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:18, 19).

The deepest body of water upon the earth is the Pacific Ocean. The Mariana Trench in the Pacific Ocean, at over seven miles, is the deepest body of water upon the earth. God knew this before anyone else knew how deep the sea was, and Micah uses this great depth to describe what God's forgiveness is like.

In a recent televised Republican presidential candidate debate, some major issues on immigration were raised. Different candidates were criticizing each other's position, and so forth, and one candidate was being criticized for his record of providing schooling for the children of illegal immigrants at the time he was a state governor. In his response, he said that they were all part of God's children. You see, God loves all the children of this world. In Matthew 5:45, Jesus states: “That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” He wants to bring everyone into his kingdom, even those who are unjust now. He still provides blessings to show them his love and to try to woo them back to him, but Satan does the exact opposite. Satan tries to misrepresent the character of God. Not only does he try to misrepresent the character of God, he also tries to misrepresent the nature of sin.

It is Satan's constant effort to misrepresent the character of God, the nature of sin, and the real issues at stake in the great controversy. His sophistry lessens the obligation of the divine law and gives men license to sin. At the same time he causes them to cherish false conceptions of God so that they regard Him with fear and hate rather than with love. The cruelty inherent in his own character is attributed

to the Creator; it is embodied in systems of religion and expressed in modes of worship. Thus the minds of men are blinded, and Satan secures them as his agents to war against God (*The Great Controversy*, p. 569).

I remember very vividly a discussion I had with my father several years ago. I was still living at home and while we were working on a truck in the garage, he and I were discussing God. He said, "If God will burn me in hell forever and ever, like he is going to burn Adolf Hitler, then I don't want anything to do with him. That is cruel and it's not fair." I tried to explain to him that the God of the Bible is not like that. Maybe other people envision him that way, but he is not that way. I endeavored to explain to him that God is just and fair and longs to pardon the sinner. My father had a very difficult time understanding this because when he was a young boy he did not go to church very often, but he did attend some revival meetings that were held at a little church about a mile away from where he lived. At these meetings, the preachers talked about fire and brimstone and sinners burning in hell forever. The sinners in this hell were screaming and writhing, with worms coming out of their eyes. These pictures were painted extremely vividly to him as a young boy and he never, ever forgot them. This became his view of what God was like, but this is actually the view of what *Satan* (Apollyon) is like, one who wants to destroy and hurt, and he portrays this to be the character of God. God's Word clearly tells us the truth about God, but Satan tries to distort the Word of God to us and he does this in different ways. Satan hates the Word of God because it reveals what God and His only begotten Son are like.

Jesus said in John 5:39: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." Jesus said they testify of him, and all through the Old Testament and especially in the New Testament we find the Scriptures teach us about Jesus Christ. After his resurrection, Jesus walked on the road to Emmaus with a few of the disciples and taught them "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself (Luke 24:27)." We know the New Testament is a revelation of Jesus, but also in the Old Testament there are many things that were prophesied and taught of Jesus. Therefore, to keep us in ignorance of God and of his own deceitful character, Satan tries to either keep the Bible from us or to misrepresent it. He does not want us to understand the Bible or to have the Bible and appreciate it because he knows it will expose him.

He that committeth sin is of the devil [Lucifer]; for the devil sinneth from the beginning (1 John 3:8).

Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44).

FALSE TRANSLATIONS

One way that Satan tries to deceive us is to deny the Bible and to try to make people think the Bible is not God's book and that it is not real. At another recent presidential debate,

questions were presented by citizens through You Tube uploaded video, and a man, displaying a Bible, asked the candidates, "Do you believe every word of this book?" Some said they did and some said they did not. They all said they believed the Bible in part, but there were portions that one could not fully accept as it is stated, especially the parts that deal with creation, as most of the candidates openly acknowledge that they believe in evolution instead of creation.

There is another way Satan uses to deny the Bible, and that is through a misrepresentation of God and his Word. In 2 Corinthians 11, Paul speaks about false apostles: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ (v.13)." Now, the apostles of Satan are deceitful workers and they cannot truly be transformed into angels of light, but they take the appearance of it. "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works (vs. 14, 15)." Satan is going to impersonate Christ before Jesus returns, *but misrepresentation will come before impersonation occurs*, and Satan comes to misrepresent and distort our view of Jesus so that he can more easily deceive us.

One way he misrepresents God's Word is through bad manuscripts and poor translations of the Scriptures, as well as through misrepresentations of them. The New Testament was written in the Greek language. We do not have any of the original Greek manuscripts (autographs) today. The actual gospel that John wrote is not in existence today, and I think there is a reason for this. I believe that God intentionally did not allow it to be preserved for a couple of reasons. Firstly, it would become an idol to people. Secondly, if there was only one copy and, this is an important point, that one copy was tampered with or the validity of it was questioned, then what would there to fall back upon as being the truth? These problems are eliminated when you start with the original autograph and then have many copies made of it. We have in our office a photocopy machine and the copies made on it look just like the original, but when the autograph manuscripts were copied, they had to be copied by hand, and, of course, this method has a margin for error and even outright fraud. Scribes could make changes, if they wished, so how can we then know that the copies we have today are truthful? Good question, let's see.

There are two main streams of claimed revelation for the New Testament. The first set of texts is known as the *Textus Receptus* or the Received Text. The *Textus Receptus* was the Greek New Testament used by the Reformers. The different copies (literally thousands of manuscripts and portions thereof) compared quite closely one to another and the *Textus Receptus* was so well accepted that it became known as the Received Text. It was also called the Majority Text because it was based on the vast majority of texts still in existence.

The second set of texts is composed of two manuscripts: The *Vaticanus* and the *Sinaiticus*. Regarding the *Vaticanus* manuscript, *Easton's Bible Dictionary* states: "VATICANUS, CODEX is said to be the oldest extant vellum manuscript. It and the Codex Sinaiticus are the two oldest uncial manuscripts. They were probably written in the fourth century. The Vaticanus was placed in the Vatican Library at Rome by Pope Nicolas V in 1448, its previous history being unknown (Article entitled "Vaticanus Codex," reference no. 26766 in *Easton's Bible Dictionary*, softcopy of Online Bible)."

It is claimed that the *Vaticanus* manuscript was written in the fourth century, but it has no known history until 1448 when it appeared in the Vatican Library at Rome! The *Sinaiticus* manuscript has a similar history, being found by Dr. Tischendorf in the convent of St. Catherine in 1859. Its previous history also remains unknown.

The New Testament portion of the King James Version and the New King James Version have been translated from the *Textus Receptus* (*TR*). Almost all modern translations such as the NIV, NASB, and RSV have been translated from texts based on the *Vaticanus* and *Sinaiticus* manuscripts. The Westcott-Hort Greek text is based on these manuscripts, as is the *Novum Testamentum Graece* or the Nestle Text.

Now, please think about this for a moment. If you were going to produce a fraudulent manuscript, would it be easier to alter two basic manuscripts that showed up "out of the blue" from somewhere or alter hundreds of manuscripts that were located in hundreds of diverse places all across Asia and Europe? Which would be easier to do? It would be easier to alter just a couple, would it not? The Reformers, people like Luther, Wycliffe, and Tyndale, understood this and they used the Received Text, not the texts that had dubious origins. They translated the Bible into their languages from the Received Text. In fact, Martin Luther's translation of the New Testament is so good that it is still the predominately used New Testament in Germany today, and, as a historical footnote, the New Testament in the King James Bible is based primarily upon the work of William Tyndale.

There is evidence, actually, that the *Textus Receptus* is older than the *Vaticanus*. According to Benjamin Wilkinson in his book, *Truth Triumphant* (p. 45), he claims the *Textus Receptus* to date back to approximately AD 300, which makes it even older than the *Vaticanus*.

The *Textus Receptus* was the Bible of early Eastern Christianity, as well as the Bible of the Syrian Church, the Waldensian Church of northern Italy, the Gallic Church in southern France, and the Celtic Church in Scotland and Ireland. Some of the reasons the Reformers accepted the *Textus Receptus* as the basis of their translations are: 1) The numerous copies were in agreement, 2) The *Textus Receptus* agreed with the earliest versions of the Bible—the Peshitta (AD 150) and the Old Latin Vulgate (AD 157), 3) The *Textus Receptus* agreed with the vast majority of the more than 86,000 citations from Scripture by the early church fathers,

and 4) The *Textus Receptus* was not mutilated with deletions, additions, and amendments as the minority texts were.

We need to understand that some of the new translations take great liberty with the text and cannot be trusted. It is especially hard to trust a text that is based upon manuscripts that were produced by the Catholic Church and remain in the care of the Vatican. Some key texts are John 1:18, John 3:16, and Revelation 22:14. A change of one word or even one letter may be the only difference between the *Textus Receptus* and the *Sinaiticus* or the *Vaticanus*, but it is enough to give a slightly different, or even a radically different, meaning. For instance, John 1:18 in the King James Version reads: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him," but the *Vaticanus* reads, in place of the "only begotten son," the "only begotten God." Instead of using the Greek word for "Son," it uses the Greek word for "God." Is there a begotten God?

In further defense of the King James English version, I would like to now consider an additional thought. Some people like newer translations such as the NIV, NABS, or even the New King James (whose New Testament is translated from the *TR*) because they do not have any of the words, "thee," "thou," "thine," or "ye." But let us consider this then for a moment. "Ye" is the plural form of you in old English and "thou" is the singular form, and this use of the older English pronouns is one of the reasons I like the King James Bible. The "thee's" and the "thou's" clarify a difference between singular and plural that you do not see in today's modern vernacular. I can say "you" and that word can be either singular or plural, depending on the context. Notice John 3:7 in the NIV: "You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'" Who is Jesus speaking to here? Nicodemus, and so it appears he is saying to Nicodemus that he must be born again, but that is not all Jesus is saying. Unlike the English where there can be confusion between the singular and plural pronouns, there are different singular and plural versions of these pronouns in each Greek case. The plural of John 3:7 does not carry over into the modern translations, but it does in the King James Version because the word is "ye." Jesus is saying not only to Nicodemus but to *all* Jews (the whole nation) "ye must be born again." Jesus is not only speaking to Nicodemus but to every one of us. We all must be born again.

Satan hates the Bible because it sets forth the final victory of God's saints. Let us look at Revelation 15. "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God (v. 2)." Here is a group of people who have obtained the victory. That means they did not give in to any amount of pressure to renounce their God or their faith, that they would rather die than sin against God. The issue is really over whether you will sin or not. If you accept the mark of the beast, you agree to sin. Those on the sea of glass have obtained the victory. There are people today

who say it is just not reasonable to consider that we can have total victory over sin this side of the coming of Christ, but the Bible says these people have gained the victory over the beast, his mark, his image, and the number of his name. Do you think they received that victory when they first stood upon the sea of glass? No! They *had gotten* the victory over the *beast*. Actually, in the Greek, it is in the present tense, they *have* the victory, but they did not first obtain the victory when they were on the sea of glass. They first received the victory when they were in conflict with the powers of darkness upon this earth.

None of the sin and its ruin that Satan has brought upon the earth will be any more, and Satan knows that his end is coming. He knows it is just about all over. In Revelation 21, we read:

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away (vs. 3, 4).

The last main point I would like to make in this segment on the doctrine of revelation concerns the Spirit of Prophecy. The Bible says “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1:21).” Holy men and women of old were given the gift of prophecy and spoke. In Revelation 12:17 we read: “And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” The remnant people that Satan is especially angry with *have the testimony of Jesus*, but what is the testimony of Jesus? Here is something that is so beautiful about the Bible. It does not leave us to guess the answer or to use human logic or wisdom to find an answer. When the Bible presents me with something I need to know about, I do not need to look to a commentary to find the answer because the Bible is self-contained. Let us see what the Bible says about the testimony of Jesus, as we turn to Revelation 19:10 and see another link in the chain of truth: “And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for *the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*.” This is like an equation. You have the testimony of Jesus equal to the spirit of prophecy. In case that is not clear enough, let us go to one more text, but first let us look at the middle part of this verse: “I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren.” The context is that John fell at his feet to worship the angel and he told John not to worship him but to worship God. Now let us look at Revelation 22:8, 9:

And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets.

Who are John’s brethren? The ones who have the spirit of prophecy, the ones who are the prophets. The biblical definition of having the spirit of prophecy is being a prophet or prophetess. Satan is wroth with God’s last day people who have this gift of prophecy and we have been told by one who was blessed with this gift: “The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God (*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 48).” Satan does this because, as it says in Proverbs 29:18, “where there is no vision, the people perish.”

For centuries, Satan was able to keep the Bible from the masses. If you lived in Europe during what is known as the Dark Ages, it was a dark time because people did not have the Bible. The few copies available at that time were handwritten and many of those were chained to the wall in a monastery. Only certain people could access the Bible. Then Johannes Gutenberg came along, and the printing press with the concept of moveable type was invented. The first thing printed was the Bible! Wycliffe and others started to translate the Bible and it began to go out to the common people. Satan could not stop the Bible and today there are billions of copies of the Bible. I am thankful for that, but today Satan, just like in the Dark Ages, has realized that he is more dangerous working inside the church than persecuting from outside the church. Satan “joins the church.” He infiltrates it and destroys it from within. He has tried to infiltrate God’s Word through bad manuscripts, through bad translations, and through bad interpretations as well. Just as people who have good Bibles take them and give bad interpretations or misunderstandings from them or fail to accept all of it, Satan does the same thing with the Spirit of Prophecy. He will try to make you believe that there are problems with it or that there are things that have been misunderstood or misinterpreted.


The Bible says that all scripture is given by inspiration of God. (The Greek word for “inspiration” *theopneustos* (θεόπνευστος) literally means “god-breathed.”) All scripture is given by inspiration of God, but all which claims to be scripture is not scripture. Some people claim that the apocrypha is part of the Bible or that there are “lost” books of the Bible such as the gospel of Thomas or the gospel of Judas. These are not inspired scriptures. When the Bible says that all scripture is given by inspiration of God, we are talking about genuine scripture and this is true about the writings of any prophet whether they have been tampered with or not. The things that the prophets wrote under inspiration are genuine, are real, and are trustworthy.

In Psalm 119:33, 34 we read: “Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.” One learns to do the will of God by doing it. We do not need to wait until every objection has been cleared out of our way. Sometimes people have questions and doubts about certain portions of the Bible. “All who look for hooks to hang their doubts upon will find them (*The Great Controversy*, p. 527).” However, when God lays out in his

The Pen of Inspiration

By Allen Stump


Word a directive or something very clear and when the duty before us is very plain, our job is to obey at once and not to question or cavil about it or to try and make sure we can fully understand the reason why. We do first and then we understand why later. It is like you are driving down the road through a dense fog and you know you are coming to a river. You cannot at first see the bridge spanning the river because of the fog. So you stop your car and do not drive forward onto the bridge because you cannot see it. You know the bridge is supposed to be there, but you do not drive forward because you cannot see it. It is not until you drive right up to the bridge that you will see it, and you cannot cross it until you get there. Sometimes faith is like that. In our experience we cannot see where the next step is really going to take us, but God says to take that step. If we take that step, when we get there, we will see what is ahead. That is the way we need to be with God.

Satan hates God's Word and is warring against it with false arguments from both an infidel and a "Christian" perspective, but the Bible gives us evidence that it is the self-fulfilling Word of God. In Hebrews 4:12, we read: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The word "quick" means living. The Word of God is alive. It is not dead and stagnant. It is powerful and has energy. The Bible will cut and split us asunder even to the marrow of our bones and we need to be praying that we will allow God's Word to do that, to come into our lives and make us the kind of people that God wants us to be. May his Word pierce our souls and may we never allow Satan to keep that Word from its appointed work. 

Prayer Requests:

Please pray for a sister in Romania who has skin cancer and who is also battling an infection.

Also be in prayer for the upcoming Florida camp meeting to be held February 20-24 at the River Forest Campground, located in the southeast corner of the Ocala National Forest on the scenic St. Johns River. All are invited to attend.

We ask for your prayers for guidance as we direct our efforts at finishing the video on Ellen G. White and the Godhead. We had desired to have this finished by the end of this month but due to a computer crash we have lost much valuable time this month on the project. While the main system of the computer was lost, we were blessed that no data was lost. Please also pray that we are able to finish the video on the Pioneers soon. 

The Bible is the Word of God given to mankind and it "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works (2 Timothy 3:16, 17)." But the question arises, how did God communicate his Word to mankind?

Peter gives us two complementary verses that can be used as we begin our search.

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1:21).

Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify (1 Peter 1:11).

In these verses, Peter states that it was by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, moving upon the human instrument that the truth was revealed. This parallel is also seen in the book of Revelation where the speaker at the beginning of each message to the seven churches is identified as Jesus. We see this in Revelation 2:1, where it says: "These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." This verse makes reference back to Revelation 1:13, 16 which are unmistakably speaking of Jesus. The other six churches are greeted in a similar manner, yet at the end of the message to the church of Ephesus, as well as in the messages to the other churches, we find the admonition: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches (Revelation 2:7)." Each begins with a message from Christ and is finished with a warning to hear what the "spirit" says.

The beginning of the book of Revelation reveals the detailed channel that God works through:

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John (Revelation 1:1).

God gives his revelations to Jesus (the Spirit of Christ/the Holy Spirit), who then gives this revelation to his angel, who then shares it with the prophet, who then gives it to the people. The word prophet means a specific spokesperson for

God. The prophets would write out and speak the messages that came from the throne of God.

There are two main schools of thought that attempt to describe the manner in which the prophets receive this inspiration from God—thought and verbal inspiration. Verbal inspiration is the concept that the Bible was basically dictated to man by God. This is a common view among evangelicals. Thought inspiration declares that God inspired the thoughts of the prophets and allowed the prophets to choose the words and expressions that express the will of God.

Historically, Seventh-day Adventists have believed in thought inspiration rather than verbal inspiration. This is partly explained because of the manner that most of Ellen White's writings have been received and understood. If God dictated the words to Ellen White, then she would certainly have never needed literary helpers. Ellen White stated her understanding concerning the mode of inspiration as follows:

The Bible is written by inspired men, but it is not God's mode of thought and expression. It is that of humanity. God, as a writer, is not represented. Men will often say such an expression is not like God. But God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. The writers of the Bible were God's penmen, not His pen. Look at the different writers.

It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts. But the words receive the impress of the individual mind. The divine mind is diffused. The divine mind and will is combined with the human mind and will; thus the utterances of the man are the word of God (*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 21).

She further wrote in the introduction to her famous book *The Great Controversy*:

The Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine and the human. Such a union existed in the nature of Christ, who was the Son of God and the Son of man. Thus it is true of the Bible, as it was of Christ, that 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us' (John 1:14).


Written in different ages by men who differed widely in rank and occupation and in mental and spiritual endowments, the books of the Bible present a wide contrast in style, as well as a diversity in the nature of the subjects unfolded. Different forms of expression are employed by different writers. Often the same truth is more strikingly presented by one than by another. As several writers present a subject under varied aspects and relations, to the superficial, careless, or prejudiced reader, there may appear to be discrepancy or contradiction; but the thoughtful, reverent student, with clearer insight, discerns the underlying harmony.

As presented through different individuals, the truth is brought out in its varied aspects. One writer is more strongly impressed with one phase of the subject; he grasps those points that harmonize with his experience or with his power of perception and appreciation; another seizes upon a different phase; and each, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, presents what is most forcibly impressed upon his own mind—a different aspect of the truth in each, but a perfect harmony through all. And the truths thus revealed unite to form a perfect whole, adapted to meet the wants of men in all the circumstances and experiences of life (*The Great Controversy*, p. vi).

The words of Jesus quoted from the Old Testament have a bearing for us as well. Quoting Deuteronomy 8:3, Jesus said: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God (Matthew 4:4)." Here we see Jesus putting emphasis upon *all* (Greek: *pas* – *πάς*) the words of God.

Clearly there are times in the Bible when the prophets are directly quoting God. For example, in Genesis 1:3 we read: "And God said, *Let there be light.*" Though the command is short and not complex, it is clearly attributed to God. The Ten Commandments are clearly declared to be a verbatim account of God's audible voice declaring his will to mankind. (See Exodus 20:1, 19; Deuteronomy 5:4.) God spoke to the prophets exact words to convey to the people: "And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death (Jeremiah 21:8)." In fact, the phrase "Thus saith the LORD" is used 413 times in the Old Testament. Jeremiah also begins a series of revelations by saying, "The *word* which came to Jeremiah from the LORD (Jeremiah 18:1)."

It also appears that there are times when the prophets write of their own experiences and use their own words, sometimes quoting other Bible writers (Micah 4:1-3 quoting Isaiah 2:1-4) and even pagan poets (Titus 1:12). Paul even went so far as to write in 1 Corinthians 7:12, "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord."

I would like to propose a concept of inspiration that accepts both of what these two systems have to offer. I believe that we should acknowledge the phrases in the Bible that are attributed as quotations of God to be verbally inspired verbatim whether the prophet heard it audibly, as Moses (Exodus 33:11), or whether the words were given in a dream or vision. The other words in the Bible are thought inspired, with God inspiring the prophet's thoughts for them to say exactly what God wished, using the prophets' words and phrases to correctly and exactly represent the intent of God so that each word carries its God-given weight and bearing. With this concept, we can confidently read and study God's Word with the assurance that we have exactly what we need. 

“Be Ye Therefore Perfect”

By Ellen White

Those who serve God should aim at perfection. Wrong habits must be overcome. Right habits must be formed. Under the discipline of the greatest Teacher the world has ever known, Christians must move onward and upward toward perfection. This is God's command, and no one should say, I can not do it. He should say instead, God requires me to be perfect, and He will give me strength to overcome all that stands in the way of perfection. He is the source of all wisdom, all power.

Individually we are to be loyal to the laws that govern God's kingdom. Christians are to be light-bearers, saying to all with whom they come in contact, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” They are to be examples of piety, representing Christ in word, in spirit, in action. Their actions are to be a copy of the actions of the Saviour. Thus they are to show the superiority of Christ's principles over the principles of the world. They are to work upon a higher plane of action than do those who are not Christians. They are to bring the ennobling influence of the Gospel into every phase of life. Their purity and usefulness are to be a source of illumination to others.

The world has set up a standard to suit the inclinations of unsanctified hearts, but this is not the standard for those who love Christ. The Redeemer has chosen them out of the world, and has left them His sinless life as a standard. He wants them to rise above all cheapness of word or action. “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.” “Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. . . . As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

These words are to be believed and practised. Christians are to be superior in wisdom, in knowledge, in skill, because they believe in God and His power. The Lord desires them to reach the highest round of the ladder, that they may glorify Him. He has a treasure-house of wisdom from which they may draw. The religion of Christ never degrades; it never makes men and women coarse and rough. God wants His children to be correct in speech and correct in habits. He desires them to possess knowledge that will give them a standing-place among men.


Overcoming, means much more than we realize. It means resisting the enemy and drawing nigh to God. It means taking up the cross and following Christ, doing cheerfully those things that are contrary to natural inclination. Christ came from heaven to show us how to live a life of self-sacrifice. In His strength we are to gain perfection. He has made it possible for us to do this, and when He comes the second time, He will ask us why we have not fulfilled His purpose for

us. Day by day, hour by hour, we are preparing for the judgment, deciding our eternal destiny. We are trading on our Lord's goods. When He comes, He will reckon with us, to see how we have improved His goods. Results proportionate to the talents entrusted will be required, and to every faithful, self-denying Christian will be given a reward proportionate to his work. Nothing that is done in sincerity is in vain. Everything is accurately weighed in the golden scales of the sanctuary.

Christianity means perfect conformity to the Christ-life. Those who possess this Christianity will show sound spiritual growth, because they are partakers of the divine nature. Heaven is full of light, and provision has been made that this light shall shine in clear rays upon those who accept Christ, and from them be reflected to those who are dead in trespasses and sins, that by the Holy Spirit's power they may be raised to newness of life. Christians must be laborers together with God, or they will fail of overcoming, and their influence will cause others to fail. No one is lost who does not also draw others down. Let those who name the name of Christ depart from all iniquity, that Christ may not be ashamed of His professed followers.

The eye of the Lord is in every place, beholding the evil and the good. He knows all our temptations, and He expects us to resist them as Christ resisted them. Jesus died for us that we might live His life of purity. Our prayer should be, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” The heart must be purified; for out of it are the issues of life. The will must yield its helm to the command of Christ. Paul describes this as putting on the new man, “which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

No compromise with sin can ever be accepted by a pure and holy God. No conversion is genuine that does not radically change the heart, the character, every line of conduct. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” Not a moment should be wasted on a patchwork religion. Our citizenship is above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. This present life is only our training-school. Here we are to be purified that at Christ's coming we may be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing,—prepared to receive the inheritance of the saints in light.

The true Christian obtains an experience that brings holiness. The light of truth irradiates his understanding. A glow of love for the Redeemer clears away the cloud that has interposed between his soul and God. The will of God, pure, elevated, and sanctified, becomes his will. His countenance reveals the light of heaven. His body is a fit temple for the Holy Spirit. Holiness adorns his character. God can commune with him; for soul and body are in harmony with the principles of heaven. (*The Signs of the Times*, July 17, 1901). 

SACRIFICE-ATONEMENT-SEMANTICS?

Onycha Holt & Allen Stump

In September 2007, a Hollywood celebrity was treated at a hospital in his area, and, because of his high profile status, uninvolved hospital personnel accessed his medical records out of curiosity. These curious people had no “need to know” anything about the celebrity’s medical treatment and were later suspended from work without pay as a disciplinary measure for their breach of confidentiality. As Seventh-day Adventists living at the end of time, however, we have a very real “need to know” about what we believe, why we believe it, and how to support our beliefs from the Bible. A time is coming, and has already arrived for some, when we shall be brought before high profile people to give a testimony of our faith. “And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles (Matthew 10:18).”

It is true that when we are brought before these kings and governors, we are to “take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak (Matthew 10:19),” but during the preparation time that we still enjoy, we need to fortify our minds with truth.

Those who endeavor to obey all the commandments of God will be opposed and derided. They can stand only in God. In order to endure the trial before them, they must understand the will of God as revealed in His word; they can honor Him only as they have a right conception of His character, government, and purposes, and act in accordance with them. None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching test: Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God’s immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 593, 594)?

It is to this end that *Old Paths* desires to lay out before you a biblical systematic theology, a theology you can study through from beginning to end, a theology that can be engrafted into your very being so that when the time comes you will be able to give an answer for your faith as “a workman that needeth not to be ashamed (2 Timothy 2:15).”

Because we recently attended the Fiftieth Anniversary Conference on *Questions on Doctrine (QOD)* and heard many of our leading theologians speak, we would like to examine the theological positions and materials presented at the conference to see how they stand with the Word of God. It may very well be that some of our leading theologians will be called in as “expert witnesses” before the very same “governors and kings” that we are called before!

So, let us begin with the opening keynote presentation of the conference, given by Dr. George R. Knight. In his concluding remarks, Dr. Knight advised the conference

attendees to test “the conclusions of theologians on the basis of the Bible” and not to focus on each other as opponents. We heartily agree with this counsel and in *Old Paths* we only wish to focus on issues and doctrine and not on people. It is not our purpose to be negative about Dr. Knight or anyone else; however, false doctrine is never taught except by people, and so it is sometimes impossible to totally separate the person from the teaching. The brethren at times must be alerted to the source of false teaching and we are reminded of this following statement from Ellen White:

“Thou art the man.” 2 Samuel 12:7. Words as unmistakably plain as these spoken by Nathan to David are seldom heard in the pulpits of today, seldom seen in the public press. If they were not so rare, we should see more of the power of God revealed among men. The Lord’s messengers should not complain that their efforts are without fruit until they repent of their own love of approbation and their desire to please men, which leads them to suppress truth.

Those ministers who are men pleasers, who cry, Peace, peace, when God has not spoken peace, might well humble their hearts before God, asking pardon for their insincerity and their lack of moral courage. It is not from love for their neighbor that they smooth down the message entrusted to them, but because they are self-indulgent and ease-loving. True love seeks first the honor of God and the salvation of souls. Those who have this love will not evade the truth to save themselves from the unpleasant results of plain speaking. When souls are in peril, God’s ministers will not consider self, but will speak the word given them to speak, refusing to excuse or palliate evil (*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 141-142).

The *QOD* Fiftieth Anniversary Conference opened with a mildly explosive statement! The very first sentence of Dr. Knight’s presentation was: “Fifty years ago what is undoubtedly *the most divisive book* in Seventh-day Adventist history was released to an eagerly awaiting audience (emphasis supplied).” We acknowledge that while this is probably true, an even more startling statement was heard later during his presentation!

Dr. George R. Knight is a well-known Seventh-day Adventist historian and educator. He is a professor emeritus of church history at Andrews University. His doctorate is in the field of education and he originally taught in the School of Education, but he gradually developed an interest in Adventist history which led to his transition to the Church History Department in the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_R._Knight). Dr. Knight has authored several books on Adventist history and he is currently involved in writing a commentary on the

Bible, but it is the history he spoke of in the opening remarks of the *QOD* Anniversary Conference that is of most importance to us.

Dr. Knight stated that M. L. Andreasen “misunderstood and misquoted [LeRoy] Froom’s words” found in an article Froom wrote for *The Ministry* magazine in February 1957 entitled “The Priestly Application of the Atoning Act.” In this article, Froom stated:

That is the tremendous scope of the sacrificial act of the cross—a complete, perfect, and final atonement for man’s sin (p. 10).

Dr. Knight explained that the dash in Froom’s sentence means that the words following the dash explain the words prior to the dash, and proper English grammar agrees with this. It seems obvious that Elder Froom was implying that “the sacrificial act of the cross” and “a complete, perfect, and final atonement for man’s sin” are to be understood as equivalent in meaning. Dr. Knight stated, however, that when Elder Andreasen replaced the dash in this sentence with the word “is,” as Knight says Andreasen repeatedly did, “he changed Froom’s meaning from a *completed sacrifice* (or sacrificial aspect of the atonement) on the cross to a *completed atonement* on the cross.” Now, I ask you, as you reread Elder Froom’s sentence above, is Froom stating that the sacrificial act of the cross is a completed *sacrifice*? No, no, no! He is saying the sacrificial act of the cross is a complete *atonement*! And not only complete, but “final!” Elder Froom was most definitely saying that the death of Christ on the cross is “a complete, perfect, and final atonement for man’s sin.”

Here is the paragraph in its entirety:

But this should be most carefully noted: Christ’s atoning death on Calvary provided redemption *potentially* for all mankind. That is, Christ died *provisionally* for every sinner in all the world, that the efficacy of His death might embrace all men in its sweep throughout all human history. That is the tremendous scope of the sacrificial act of the cross—a complete, perfect, and final atonement for man’s sin (*The Ministry*, February 1957, p. 10; emphasis in original).

Froom is referring to the death of Christ on the cross in this paragraph and states that it is a “complete, perfect, and final *atonement* (emphasis supplied).” To state that Froom is saying a “complete, perfect, and final” *sacrifice* is a falsification and is a substitution of Knight’s own word for Froom’s. This is not merely a matter of semantics with the way the words sound. The difference between sacrifice and atonement is significant. There can be sacrifice without atonement, but no atonement is possible without a sacrifice. Substituting words that are not equivalent is on a far different scale than substituting the word “is” for a grammatical dash, especially when we understand that a dash may be properly used to set off an appositive or to sum up an idea.

Froom could only have meant a completed sacrifice if he had written the sentence in this (or in a similar) way: “This is

the tremendous scope of the sacrificial act of the cross—a complete, perfect, and final sacrifice for man’s sin.”

Dear brothers and sisters, we do not bring this issue up to cause further controversy or division. We are only concerned that truth be exalted and find a “complete, perfect, and final” resting place in our hearts and minds. This is what is at issue here. We cannot allow ourselves to be swayed by fine words, seeming logic, or pleasant personalities. We must only be moved by the Spirit of Truth.

Even though Froom continued in his *Ministry* article to define the atonement as twofold, “as a single, comprehensive act, then a continuing process or work of application (*Ibid.*)” (leaving out the cleansing part of Christ’s high-priestly ministry altogether), he, nevertheless, stated that the death of Christ upon the cross was a “final atonement for man’s sin”—a teaching very pleasing to evangelical palates.

Near the end of his presentation, Dr. Knight gave the history of his own personal journey in faith. In his study, he discovered, for example, “that both sides in the human nature of Christ struggle in the 1950s and 1960s had been incorrect; that Christ was not just like Adam either after the fall or before it; that He was a unique Being that had a sinful nature in the sense of His physical infirmities but not in His propensities.” We also heard similar thoughts echoed by other presenters during the conference, but we are reminded that Christ “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15).” Jesus had to have understood and experienced what it means to be tempted, as we are, from within, yet Christ did not sin; otherwise, how could he “in all points” have been tempted like as we are?

Overcoming, means much more than we realize. It means resisting the enemy and drawing nigh to God. It means taking up the cross and following Christ, doing cheerfully those things that are *contrary to natural inclination*. Christ came from heaven to show us how to live a life of self-sacrifice. In His strength we are to gain perfection (*The Signs of the Times*, July 17, 1901; emphasis supplied).

Dr. Knight also stated: “Beyond that, I began to see that the biblical (see, e.g., Matt. 5:43-48; 19:16-22) and Ellen White (see, e.g., *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 67-69) conception of perfection centered on mature Christian love rather than absolute sinlessness and that character perfection meant developing a character like that God who is defined as love (1 John 4:8).” Without a doubt, the instruction to be “perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48) is in the context of loving our enemies and we cannot be perfect without doing so. A godlike character will be one of love, but we should not forget the counsel of Jesus to the woman caught in adultery: “Go, and sin no more (John 8.11),” and the words of Paul: “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. 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 6:14-16)?" Ellen White makes this pointed comment: "Those who accept Satan's reasoning are terribly deceived. They accept a position which has no true foundation. God is unchangeable. He is satisfied with nothing short of perfect obedience. Perfection is the only title which will gain admittance to heaven. The law is the only standard of character (*The Review & Herald*, June 4, 1901)." A beautiful article by Ellen White on perfection has been included in this issue of *Old Paths* (on page 11) to help us gain a clearer understanding on this issue, and we include her opening paragraph here:

Those who serve God should aim at perfection. Wrong habits must be overcome. Right habits must be formed. Under the discipline of the greatest Teacher the world has ever known, Christians must move onward and upward toward perfection. This is God's command, and no one should say, I can not do it. He should say instead, God requires me to be perfect, and He will give me strength to overcome all that stands in the way of perfection. He is the source of all wisdom, all power (*The Signs of the Times*, July 17, 1901).

Right habits, wrong habits, and discipline have all been connected by Ellen White with perfection. Interesting. Later in the article she stated: "This present life is only our training-school. Here we are to be purified that at Christ's coming we may be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing,—prepared to receive the inheritance of the saints in light." We are to be without spot or wrinkle at Christ's coming and we are to be purified here, not made that way after he comes! While we will be growing in the Christian graces throughout all eternity, by God's grace the redeemed will live above sin before Jesus comes. God says he has thousands that love him and keep his commandments (Exodus 20:6). May it be the prayer of each one of us to be found in this precious group of "thousands," and let us determine together to study deeper, for we have a very real "need to know" what truth is! ✍

Divine Promises

Dr. William Van Grit

(This article was taken from a prayer meeting talk given at the Smyrna Chapel this last October Editor)

Tonight I would like to speak about and explore some of the most extraordinary promises found in Scripture. While man's promises are ephemeral and are like ropes of sand, God's promises always stand. They are as firm as a rock.

It is difficult to make a complete list of all the Lord's promises. There must be thousands of them, too many to mention tonight. Therefore, I will attempt to list and analyze a few of those that impressed me the most.

The first promise is found in Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou

shalt bruise his heel." This has usually been interpreted in the following way by Bible commentators: God spoke here to the serpent, i.e., the devil, and the Lord prophesied here that there would be hostility and war between the wicked and the people of God. While Satan's followers would bruise his heel, i.e., would kill Jesus who would rise again on the third day, it also predicts the crushing of Satan's head. In other words, Satan would eventually die. Evidently, bruising or crushing someone's head is more deadly than crushing someone's heel. This verse has always been understood by Christians as a prophecy of the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, the woman's seed. (See also Revelation 12:1-5 and Galatians 3:16, 19.) It was indeed Jesus who came "to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8)." (See also Hebrews 2:14.) It becomes clear that we have here a prophecy of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, a battle that began in heaven and continued here on earth where Christ defeated the devil. The great promise here is Jesus' victory over evil and the evil one. We see how divine mercy found a way to redeem the fallen human race by the voluntary sacrifice of the Son of God. (See also 1 Peter 1:20, Ephesians 3:11, and Revelation 13:8.) It is the wonderful promise that someday the happiness of Eden will be restored.

The Old Testament is full of the Lord's promises, especially in the Psalms such as Psalm 23 and in Isaiah and Jeremiah, but let us go to a few promises in the New Testament. A well-known promise is found in 1 Corinthians 2:9, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." This quotation is found in Isaiah 64:4. This is truly an excellent promise. Two senses are referred to here, sight and hearing, plus the mind or intellect. We all have seen beautiful scenes of nature and art. We all have heard the most delightful music that thrilled our ears and emotions. It is God who has prepared things to see and hear, things more beautiful than the human being can imagine. This verse means more than that. It also means that the wonderful realities of God's kingdom of grace and glory cannot be completely understood by the senses alone or by the human brain. Paul is saying here that man is unable to fully perceive or appreciate the blessings of the gospel. When we fully surrender to Christ and receive the sweet assurance of God's forgiveness, do we really receive the joyful peace that comes into our heart? After the Lord has forgiven our sins, we can be at peace with him. Do we really comprehend what God has prepared for his people who love him? This makes me also think of the promise in Romans 8:28, a verse well-known to Christians, "We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose." (RSV) Look at what the Lord has provided for us: Forgiveness of our sins (justification), sanctification, joy and peace that God's grace imparts to the believer, man's ultimate deliverance from this wicked and perishing world, and finally eternal life in the New Jerusalem.

When I read the word "prepared" in this verse in 1 Corinthians 2:9, I thought of John 14:1-3: "Let not your

Continued on page 20, col. 2

SATAN'S ATTACK ON THE CHARACTER OF GOD'S LAW

There is a song that says, "Count your blessings, name them one by one; count your many blessings see what God has done." Many things can be found on a thankfulness list, but one thing that will not make many people's list is the law of God. I am thankful, however, for God's holy law because it is a transcript of his character. It shows us what God is like. God's holy Ten Commandment law helps us to know what he wants us to become and how we can best live to please him, as well as making our lives the best they can possibly be.

It is usually true that ministers preach upon the subjects and themes they have been studying and from their experiences. As a rule, ministers generally do not say, "Well, I am going to preach on music today," or "I will preach on the Sabbath." This can happen, I am sure, but in my life and in my ministry, I have found that it is the things that I am personally studying, the things I am talking with others about, and the things I am involved with in my daily life that I preach about because these are the things that become a part of me. As a minister, I always felt it is very essential that we present that which is a part of us and which has become engrafted into us (James 1:21).

Students attend universities to gain knowledge from their professors, but ministers should not stand in the sacred pulpit simply to convey knowledge. Dr. William Van Grit was recently at Smyrna to conduct a basic Greek seminar, and he mentioned that in his classes he always liked to begin with prayer. We always began our Greek classes at Smyrna with prayer because we desired God's blessing as we tried to learn more about him through our study of the Greek language. We did not embark on this study simply to gain knowledge. Dr. Van Grit related that very few of the instructors at the school where he last taught ever began their classes with prayer. He said that, whatever the subject, the instructors seemed to be just simply conveying information, and they apparently did not feel a need to seek God in prayer. Perhaps in the religion classes prayer was offered, but if you were taking a math, history, or arts class, prayer was not considered essential. The instructors may have considered the time was needed more for the subject being covered; however, beloved, prayer is important any time we study and especially when we study God's Word. I would like to suggest that you have prayer now before considering the material in this study.

I attended the Fiftieth Anniversary Conference of the publication of *Questions on Doctrine (QOD)* at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, last October. There were several guests who presented historical and theological concerns and facts about the book *Questions on Doctrine*. One of the presenters was Dr. Richard Rice, and in reviewing some of Dr. Rice's presentation I came upon some interesting thoughts, which led to looking at his book entitled *Reign of God*. This book is an introduction to Christian theology from a Seventh-day Adventist perspective. It is a textbook that is used at some of our colleges to teach an introduction to

theology. Here are a few sentences from the chapter entitled "The Reign of God in Human Hearts." See if you can agree with Dr. Rice as he discusses goals:

A goal is always something you aim at or move toward, but in some cases it refers to an ideal objective... Suppose, for example, that you are sailing off the coast of southern California. If it's a clear night, you may steer the boat toward a particular star. You make it your goal. You don't expect to reach the star, naturally, but aiming for it keeps you on the right course (*Reign of God*, p. 280).

Maybe this sounds good and you can agree with Dr. Rice. Sometimes words can make the ideas we read sound good, and if one uses the right logic and the right words, one can impress people. We need to be sure, however, that these goals and ideas meet the standard of the Bible. Rice says there are things we can aim at in our Christian life that we can never really expect to reach even though the objectives are good to have as goals. In this particular case, Rice is referring *specifically to biblical perfection*.

Here is what Rice says: "Only perfection in the sense of Christian maturity is a realistic goal for us in this life. Sinlessness may be an ideal worth keeping in mind, but we can hardly expect to attain it until we are glorified when Christ returns (*Ibid.*, p. 281)." Now, please think about what Dr. Rice is saying. He is stating that it is a nice idea to think about overcoming sin but do not expect it to happen until Jesus comes. According to this theology, when Jesus comes he is going to have to change our nature; he is going to change something in us miraculously so that we will never sin again. Beloved, this thinking is straight from the devil and hell. The Bible says a time is coming when probation will close, the censor will be cast down, and Jesus will say: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still (Revelation 22:11)." Jesus will not say this as an arbitrary decree but rather because the character of each person on the earth has been formed and fixed for eternity. If, when Jesus comes, we have not allowed Christ to live in our hearts, if we have not seen the love of God in such a deep and beautiful way that we have come to forever abhor sin for all of eternity, we will be lost; and remember that 1 John 3:4 says that "sin is the transgression of the law."

Many of the various doctrines we see floating around are actually attacks against the law of God.

From the very beginning of the great controversy in heaven it has been Satan's purpose to overthrow the law of God. It was to accomplish this that he entered upon his rebellion against the Creator, and though he was cast out of heaven he has continued the same warfare upon the earth. To deceive men, and thus lead them to transgress God's law, is the object which he has steadfastly pursued.

Whether this be accomplished by casting aside the law altogether, or by rejecting one of its precepts, the result will be ultimately the same (*The Great Controversy*, p. 582).

Varied are the ways Satan has worked in this earth's history, and it has always been with the ultimate goal to overthrow the law of God. Knowing that he cannot remove the tables from the sacred ark, he tries to remove them from our heart. Remember that our hearts are the true location of God's law in the new covenant experience (Jeremiah 31:33). In Martin Luther's time, for instance, the Catholic Church taught salvation by works, by penance, and by the sale of indulgences, to which they still ascribe. Luther saw this as a tremendous evil, and in trying to correct the church's teaching, he took the pendulum from one end of the extreme to the other end toward an antinomian position. In his commentary on Galatians, Luther even associated God's holy law with the devil and hell.

SATAN'S HATRED OF GOD'S LAW

I want to make this very clear—Satan hates God's law! That is point number one! Don't ever forget it. In Ezekiel chapter 28, Lucifer is referred to by the symbol of the king of Tyrus and notice what it says about Lucifer's origin: "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee (Ezekiel 28:15)." Satan was perfect. The Hebrew word for perfect here is *tamiym*, which means "without blemish" or "without any fault." *Tamiym* is also used in Exodus 12:5 where it says "Your lamb shall be without blemish." The Bible says that Lucifer was created without blemish. He was created perfect, but somewhere in his mind he began to think that he was like the perfection of the one who created him. Lucifer thought that he was inherently without blemish and could do no wrong.

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot (1 Peter 1:18, 19)." The phrase "without blemish" is from a Greek word that means "fault or blemish *momos* (μῶμος)," but it has an alpha at the beginning, which makes it have the opposite meaning, so the meaning now becomes "without fault or blemish (*amomos*)."

Ephesians 5 is another place *amomos* is used. Christ will return for a church that will "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish [*amomos*] (v. 27)."

Lucifer was created perfect, but, since his fall, he has become a demon. 1 John 3:8 declares: "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." The Bible says that the devil was a sinner from the beginning, and Ezekiel 28:16 states: "By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast *sinned*." Ellen White tells us that "our only definition of sin is that given in

the word of God; it is 'the transgression of the law;' it is the outworking of a principle at war with the great law of love which is the foundation of the divine government (*The Great Controversy*, p. 492)." These concepts are important as we consider this question: Did Satan accept the responsibility for his rebellion? No, he has never wanted to accept any responsibility. Christian character development is the process of developing characters that are like Christ, but if we are not becoming more like Christ, who are we becoming like? That's right, Satan! And Satan's character involves the refusal to accept responsibility for his own actions. Instead, Satan teaches us to define sin as the state of our being rather than our actions. Can you see the problem with such thinking? Satan would have you believe that sin is really your state of being rather than your actions, thus contradicting God, who said that he created Lucifer perfect. Satan is, in effect, saying: "You know, sin is not my problem and it is not your problem. This is the way you were made and this is the way I was made. I really was not made perfect." The whole idea of original sin goes back to Satan. It casts contempt upon the character of God by stating that our Father did not make Satan perfect. God said, however, that he did make Lucifer perfect. ***If sin is a state of being, then, I ask you, how did Lucifer become a sinner?*** By defining sin as a state of being, we would have to say Lucifer was made that way and the responsibility for his sin would have to go back to God! God forbid that we should be party to such blasphemous accusations against our God!

Systematic theology is a systematic building approach to the study of God. You start with foundational principles and then build. For instance, a basic outline of a systematic theology might look like this: Start with the revelation of God (how God communicates with us through inspiration) and the Bible as the basis of that inspiration, and from there, study from the Bible what God is like. Then study the concept of sin, and related to these concepts are what man is like, what salvation is, and all other great themes of truth. All these doctrines build upon one another. You cannot fully understand the issue of salvation without understanding humanity, its need, what sin is, and the God who makes provision for salvation, and all of this, of course, is based upon what we understand about the revelation of God in the Bible. All these things systematically interlock and work together. For instance, when we talk about the nature of man, we have to consider whether he is inherently mortal or immortal. We are mortal beings, but does this fact affect our theology on other biblical issues? Of course, it does. It has a lot to do with other areas of doctrine; in fact, you cannot find any one doctrine that stands alone and isolated from everything else. Everything interconnects in the Bible. One of the beauties of true Seventh-day Adventism is a careful, beautiful, and perfect harmony between all the doctrines. For example, someone once told me that while in the Methodist Church this person had a hard time understanding how someone goes to heaven when they die (if they were good) but would then

needed to be resurrected when Jesus returns the second time in order to take them to heaven! The pieces of the puzzle just did not seem to fit together.

When we start with a wrong premise or use the Bible to come up with a wrong position and then try to put it together with other biblical positions that may be correct, we find that the pieces do not interlock. Bible truth is like a puzzle—one piece may fit into one place but will not fit into another. Some of the pieces may seem to fit but the rest do not. God's system of theology in the Bible all perfectly interconnects. The importance of this is difficult to overemphasize.

So let us again ask the important question—If sin is a state of being, how then did Lucifer become a sinner? The Bible says Satan wanted to become like God. In Isaiah 14 we read:

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High (Isaiah 14:12-14).

Lucifer wanted God's position and the great contention that Lucifer made was that God's law was not just and holy. So, there was war in heaven. There were two diametrically opposed views and positions. Peace was not possible. Amos 3:3 plainly declares: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" * There could not be harmony in heaven with Lucifer trying to uproot God and God's holy law. God and Satan could not walk together, and Lucifer knew it. Lucifer decided that the best thing to do was to try to usurp the place of God and even dethrone God, if he could. The Bible says there was war in heaven, and:

When it was announced that with all his sympathizers he must be expelled from the abodes of bliss, then the rebel leader boldly avowed his contempt for the Creator's law. He reiterated his claim that angels needed no control, but should be left to follow their own will, which would ever guide them right. He denounced the divine statutes as a restriction of their liberty and declared that it was his purpose to secure the abolition of law; that, freed from this restraint, the hosts of heaven might enter upon a more exalted, more glorious state of existence (*The Great Controversy*, p. 499).

Do you think in the last six thousand plus years that Lucifer has had a change of heart? Do you think that perhaps his heart has softened from his position and that maybe he does not have such contempt for God's law today? Oh no, it is just the opposite! He has even more contempt today for God's law than he did in heaven.

CHRIST DEFENDED THE LAW OF GOD

What was Christ's position on the law of God? Christ came to show us what God is like and did he do this? Did he teach us

* It is then with sadness that we report that after proclaiming for many years that the "new theology" such as was taught in *QOD* was not the real gospel, we find one of the leaders of the "historic" Adventist camp sharing the communion table with some of the leading proponents of the *QOD* false gospel theology.

God's perspective on life, health, salvation, and everything else? Let us turn to Isaiah 42 and notice a prophecy about Jesus: "The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable (v. 21)." According to this text, Jesus would do two things—magnify the law and make it honourable! When you look at something through a magnifying glass, does the magnifying glass change what you are looking at? The magnifying glass is not designed to change what you view but simply to make it easier to see and give you a clearer, better picture. When Christ came to this earth, he did not come to change God's law or to give us a different picture of it, but rather a better picture of it, to magnify it and to make it clearer. Christ was also going to make God's law "honourable." The Hebrew word *adar*, translated "honourable," means glorious or majestic. Jesus would not nail God's holy Ten Commandment law to the cross. No, no. He would show that it was glorious and majestic!

It is very interesting that in Christendom we have the concept of orthodoxy—the straight truth (or the right truth), and we know that there are certain cardinal doctrines in Christianity today that we have to believe to be considered orthodox. I believe Martin Luther was a man of God and used of God in his time, but Martin Luther was living in a very dark day and he did not understand all the truth. He was mistaken on some important issues. Do you know what Martin Luther thought about the book of James? He did not believe it was part of the Bible. He did not accept the book of James and discounted it because he believed it was too antithesis to the writings of Paul, which he accepted. Now, if you or I were to go to the door of the evangelicals today and knock for acceptance and then say that we did not believe in part of the Bible, do you think they would let us in? We would probably be branded as heretics and a cult and sent down the road, but somehow we accept Luther under those circumstances. Luther, as we noted before, associated God's holy law with the devil and hell. Christ came to not only suffer and die in order to accomplish the redemption of mankind but to also magnify the law and to make it honourable.

But it was not merely to accomplish the redemption of man that Christ came to the earth to suffer and to die. He came to "magnify the law" and to "make it honorable." Not alone that the inhabitants of this world might regard the law as it should be regarded; but it was to demonstrate to all the worlds of the universe that God's law is unchangeable. Could its claims have been set aside, then the Son of God need not have yielded up His life to atone for its transgression. The death of Christ proves it immutable. And the sacrifice to which infinite love impelled the Father and the Son, that sinners might be redeemed, demonstrates to all the universe—what nothing less than this plan of atonement could have sufficed to do—that justice and

mercy are the foundation of the law and government of God (*The Great Controversy*, p. 503).

Of course, no authority is better than Jesus, so let us turn to Matthew 5 to see what the Saviour said about this. In the Sermon on the Mount, he declared:

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:17-20).

The Greek word for “jot” is *iota* (ἰώτα), the smallest letter in Greek. The tittle was used by grammarians for accents and diacritical points and could be considered equivalent to the crossing of the “t”. Jesus was saying that there is not one dotting of the “i” or crossing of the “t” to be taken from the law. Jesus went on to explain this by giving some very vivid examples about anger and adultery, showing how the law of God is a searcher of the intents and heart of man.

Jesus came not only to teach us about God’s law and make it honourable, but he came to give us an example. In John 15:10 Jesus said, “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.” Jesus said he kept his Father’s commandments and that he abided in his Father’s love. What does he want us to do? The same thing. We hear the idea today that Jesus really isn’t our example but is simply our substitute. We are told that the gospel is based on substitution not imitation. The fact is that the gospel is based upon both Jesus being our substitute and our example. He must be our substitute for the death that we deserve, but he has also taught us how we are to submit to him so that he might live out his perfect life in us. In this way, his example becomes a reality in our lives as well. Jesus said, “I have given you an example.”

The example of Christ is authoritative for every son and daughter of Adam. He represented the law of God in His life, giving to men an example of what obedience to every precept will accomplish for human nature. He is our example, and every one who is endowed with reasoning faculties *is required* to follow in His footsteps; for His life is a perfect pattern to all humanity. Christ is the finished standard of the character to which every one may attain. . . . Let the human agent compare his life with the life of Christ. . . . *Let him imitate the example of Him* who lived out the law of Jehovah, who said, “I have kept my Father’s commandments.” Those who follow Christ will be

continually looking into the perfect law of liberty, and through the grace given them by Christ, will fashion the character according to the divine requirements (*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 137; emphasis supplied).

Beloved, we need to contemplate on the life of Christ and compare it with our own lives. We must imitate the example of him who lived out the law of Jehovah. Let us turn to the book of James: “But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed (James 1:25)” It is a perfect law of liberty. Satan proclaimed that he wanted liberty but liberty outside the boundaries of the law of God, but we need liberty within the confines of the law of God.

THE GREAT CONTROVERSY IN THE LAST DAYS

And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:17).

The Greek word translated “keep” in this verse is *tereo* (τηρέω) and can also be translated “to guard or to obey.” Now, when you guard something, you protect it. God will have a group of people who not only obey his law but who guard it, as well as the faith of Jesus, from the attacks of hell.

The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God. Upon this battle we are now entering—a battle between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah, between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition (*The Great Controversy*, p. 582).

At the beginning of this study I mentioned a textbook entitled *The Reign of God*, which states it is an introduction to Christian theology from a Seventh-day Adventist perspective. Well, I love Seventh-day Adventism, but I am not concerned about the Seventh-day Adventist perspective, the Baptist perspective, the Methodist perspective, or the Catholic perspective. What we all should want is the biblical perspective, and, hopefully, the Seventh-day Adventist perspective is the Bible perspective. We should be concerned about what the Word of God says about these subjects. One can use philosophy, logic, slick speaking, and charismatic presentations to make anything sound good. You have heard the saying that a good salesman can sell a refrigerator to an Eskimo. There are people who can do that. There are people, spin doctors, as they are called, who are very persuasive, but this does not mean that what they say lines up with the Word of God. In these last days, we find attacks on God’s law that are many and varied and often they are centered around the fourth commandment. We know that the great issue in the end of time is the fourth commandment, the Sabbath, and whether there is biblical evidence for honoring the Sabbath day or evidence for keeping the first day of the week.

The fourth commandment is not the only point that will be under attack. There is already a great attack upon the first commandment, and there are very few Protestants who are protesting about it! Specifically, what I mean is the concept that orthodoxy defines God as a multifaceted being that the Bible never describes (the Trinity).

How do you think God's people are going to be accepted and loved in the end times? How has it been in the past? We are probably all familiar with the story of Elijah. 1 Kings 18 describes King Ahab as he searched for Elijah. Three and a half years of drought had occurred and things were very bad. Ahab extracted an oath from the kings around him that if they knew anything about Elijah they were to tell him. Of course, none of them had any information about Elijah. The effects of the drought during this time were terrible upon Israel and then God commanded Elijah to meet Ahab. "And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, *Art thou he that troubleth Israel* (1 Kings 18:17)?" Ahab looked at the prophet of God and accused the prophet of troubling Israel. Did Elijah accept these words in meekness and humility? "And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim (1 King 18:18)." God's people will be accused of being the troublers of Israel. God's people are a type of Elijah, carrying an Elijah message (see Malachi 4:5) at the end. They will, like Elijah, be accused of being the troubler of Israel. Mark it down that this will happen in the end, and it will happen over the issue of God's law.

Donald Dayton, an independent evangelical living in Pasadena, California, spoke at the Fiftieth Anniversary Conference on *Questions on Doctrine*, and he made an interesting statement while discussing the issue of Luther's view of the law versus Wesley's understanding of holiness. As we have noted, Luther made a point that he took to the extreme in his commentary on Galatians that the law was of the devil and hell itself. The pendulum had swung so far in the direction of works that, to try to correct it, Luther went too far to the other extreme. Donald Dayton wrote this:

One has only to contemplate the virulent anti-semitism of the late Luther or to reflect on the period of the holocaust where the German culture denigrated the Old Testament and Jewish law as a 'primitive' form of religion. I cannot help but view these themes as consequences of the Lutheran view of the 'law' (whether intended or not).

Perhaps you realize that Luther actually persecuted many Jews. This is well documented and he did not have much love for the Jewish people because he felt they had killed Christ and had rejected the gospel. His views on the law led him to persecute them. The mind set in Germany, when Hitler was rising up, was that religions like Judaism, which believed in the law of God, were a "primitive" form of religion. Remember that Germany was basically a Lutheran state and followed the theology of Luther. That theology said that the

law was bad, even of the devil and hell itself; therefore, a religion that centered in the Old Testament and centered in the law was a "primitive" religion not even worthy of existence. Dayton said he could not "help but view these themes as consequences of the Lutheran view of the 'law' (whether intended or not)."

Now think about this: We are coming to the last days. There will be a group of people, a small minority, that hold onto God's law. The majority of people will look at this small group of people as having a "primitive" form of religion that is not worthy of acceptance and who are causing problems in this world.

In Isaiah we read a prophecy of what the earth will be like in the last days:

The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left (Isaiah 24:4-6).

This is a prophesy of a time of tremendous hardship on this earth at the end of time and who is really to blame? The people who have been breaking God's law, the people who have set God's law aside. Do they refuse to accept responsibility like Lucifer does? What will they do? They will say to the people who have exalted God's law, "You are the troublers of Israel. You are the people who have caused the earthquakes and the sun to scorch us," as well as all the other calamities that occur in the last days. It is going to be the same thing all over as it was in Germany with the Jewish people. Those who uphold the law of God by refusing to call it "the weak and beggarly elements" will be looked upon as having a "primitive" religion. You might think that this would never happen to us as a people, but think again.

ATTITUDE OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Let us turn to Psalm 119. "The wicked have laid a snare for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts. Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart. I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes always, even unto the end (Psalm 119:110-112)."

To the obedient child of God the commandments are a delight...

David saw the divine precepts thrown aside, and obstinacy and rebellion increasing. But he was not swept away by the prevalence of apostasy. The scorn and contempt cast upon the law did not lead him to refrain from vindicating the law. On the contrary, his reverence for the law of Jehovah increased as he saw the disregard and contempt shown for it by others (*The Review & Herald*, May 7, 1901).

As you see the law of God being disregarded and contempt shown to it, if you defend it and show reverence to the law, you

may be accused of being a legalist, of not believing the gospel, but it is at the very time that these things are happening that something else happens and it is also recorded in Psalm 119. "It is time for thee, LORD, to work: for they have made void thy law (v. 126)." Adventists have been preaching this text for a long time because we have looked at the way the churches of the world have attempted to change the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday. We have seen many other changes, and if there was ever a time for God to work, it is now because our salvation now is nearer than when we first believed.

But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority—not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain "Thus saith the Lord" in its support (*The Great Controversy*, p. 595).

We must stand upon the Bible's religion; not the theology of Luther, not reformation theology, and not evangelical theology, but the Bible! Not the opinions of learned men, not the deductions of science, nor the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils. It does not matter how many people there are that agree with these opinions, we need a plain, untwisted "thus saith the Lord" for our teachings. Let us pray the prayer found in Psalm 119:18: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

Many a portion of Scripture which learned men pronounce a mystery, or pass over as unimportant, is full of comfort and instruction to him who has been taught in the school of Christ. One reason why many theologians have no clearer understanding of God's word is, they close their eyes to truths which they do not wish to practice. As understanding of Bible truth depends not so much on the power of intellect brought to the search as on the singleness of purpose, the earnest longing after righteousness.

The Bible should never be studied without prayer. The Holy Spirit alone can cause us to feel the importance of those things easy to be understood, or prevent us from wresting truths difficult of comprehension (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 599-600).

It is easier to close our eyes and walk away from truth than to practice it. If we are just looking for intellectual knowledge, it will not help us. God is not going to reveal truth to people who really do not want to follow it. What we need is a heart that loves righteousness and hates iniquity, a heart that will do God's work. "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever (Deuteronomy 5:29)!" We need not

downplay God's holy law in these last days. The law can save nobody, but it is also true that nobody will be saved outside of its protective boundaries.

At times, Evangelicals have said to our leaders, "You know, you say you are saved by grace but that you are kept by the law." Beloved, we are only kept by Christ, but we are kept by Christ to do something. We are kept to obey his commandments and to serve him.

Paul says, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law (Romans 3:31)." Paul had been talking about how we are saved by grace and that we are justified freely by his grace, but then he says, "Do we then make void the law through faith?" He answers, "God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Christ came to die for man, but also to live a life of perfect conformity to that law to give us an example of how we, under the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, may live.

God's people in the last days will keep (will hold onto and guard) the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. May we behold God's law and see the wondrous things as we understand the great character of our God deeper and more perfectly.

Allen Stump

"Divine Promises" continued from p. 14

heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." The Greek word "ean" also means "when." In other words, Jesus could have said, "And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again." The Greek here says "poreuomai hetoimasai" which means "I am going (now) to make ready or prepare. The present tense is used here. The disciples were understandably troubled when Jesus announced his imminent departure. Jesus was trying to tell them that his absence would only be temporary. He stated that he would come back and take his followers home. What a promise! Isn't the expression "My Father's house" a beautiful representation of heaven? The word for "house" would be "oikos" or "oikia" in koine Greek. Eventually all of God's people will be allowed to join Christ there. The word "mansions" does not mean large, stately homes. The Greek word "monai" refers to "abiding places" or "places of abode" or "dwelling places." We assume that there will be plenty of room for God's people. This is a great promise, for Jesus announces here that he would return to this earth in a glorious homecoming. Jesus said "I will come again." The Greek expresses this promise in a futuristic present tense "palin erchomai," which means "I am coming again." The present tense gives emphasis to the certainty of this climactic event. Jesus added "that where I am there you may be also." It becomes clear that he wants to be with his followers who would be reunited with him forever.

"Divine Promises" continued to p. 23

Letters

I understand that Pastor Lynnford Beachy is planning to conduct a training seminar in Wyoming to train others in order to do evangelistic work. . . .I would suggest that the seminar that will be conducted by Pastor Beachy be put on a DVD so that we could learn from it without personally attending the actual seminar and/or training.

Presently I am giving a Bible study to one of my friends here in New Jersey and he has already decided to be baptized. The problem is I have no license as a pastor to solemnize baptism. Can you help me secure a pastor's license so that I could help baptizing those who have decided to be baptized? I am not a member of any Seventh-day Adventist Church in New Jersey, thus I cannot endorse the candidate for baptism to them. In the Philippines, being an elder of the church, I once baptized eight precious souls when I conducted a public Bible study in a remote place but said baptism was not recognized by the higher church authority so that they were baptized again.

I look forward for your assistance in securing me a pastoral license so that I could be able to baptize those who had decided already to be baptized. May God bless you and your loved ones more.

Reply: Brother Beachy said he is planning to put the training seminar on DVD. However, I know that being in person at such meetings is always best. If you could find others who, as a group, would like to have a training session, perhaps it could be arranged to take place in your area.

Concerning what you have said about baptism, we need a clear picture, my brother, as to who and what the "church" is and where her authority comes from. In the Bible, the "church" is always the called-out ones, according to the original Greek. In 1 Timothy 3:15 it is called the "pillar and ground of the truth." I do not personally have a license or credentials of men, but of God only and I want no other. So, I certainly could not give you or others such credentials. However, if God has called you to his work and has put his hand upon you, you need not the approval of men.

Think of the early disciples: they did not have any license from the Jewish Church. The Jewish Church did not accept or approve of their work but the disciples did not ask for the permission of the "mother church" to fulfill the great commission! I see no need either.

You mentioned that you have served as an elder. May I remind you that Philip, the deacon, baptized with the direct approval of the Holy Spirit. I believe that also elders should do this for their work more closely parallels that of a minister than even a deacon.

Thank you for the publications you recently sent to me. Enclosed is a check to help postage, etc. Sorry I do not have a computer to check things on. Perhaps I can find what I need

other ways. What I am looking for is a reference to or the very words from Ellen White that says she does not believe in the Trinity. My daughter read to me a quote from E. G. White today from a book by her that said she did, where she says three distinct persons of the Godhead—just like the church teaches now. No matter what the Bible says, if Ellen White says an angel told her or she had a vision, that's it. There were no quotes from her in any of the materials you sent. Perhaps you have no references available. Anyway, I will hope for a reference. Blessings to you all.

Reply: Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you for your letter. I appreciate your desire for more truth and the desire to help your daughter.

According to the complete published writings of Ellen White, there is no statement either directly for or against the trinity. In fact, the word trinity never appears in her writings!

If it will help, you can show your daughter what Ellen White wrote concerning the "three living persons" in her own handwriting. For this documentation, please see pages 196 and 252 of the enclosed book (*The Foundation of Our Faith*) that I am sending you. Please read also chapter 19 to see more of Sister White's statements explained. You will also find such statements on page 83 as, "Let the brightest example the world has yet seen be your example, rather than the greatest and most learned men of the age, who know not God, nor Jesus Christ whom he has sent. The Father and the Son alone are to be exalted (*The Youth's Instructor*, July 7, 1898)."

I have been listening to all your video presentations via your website, by Brother Beachy and Brother Simms which I find very encouraging. Could you please clear something up for me, as I am a bit confused? Brother Simms implies that you are Seventh-day Adventists and Brother Beachy has a report on his missionary service where he is refuting the trinity doctrine. I know that Seventh-day Adventists do accept the trinity, and yet you claim that you do not accept that doctrine. So are you Seventh-day Adventists or not? I cannot accept the trinity myself so I am looking for a church as near the truth as possible.

Also, do you hold these camp meetings every year? Can anyone attend? I live in the UK and would like to come over for one and also to visit your church, if possible. The UK is a spiritual wilderness, believe me. We need the Smyrna church here. Can anyone help us?

Reply: The Smyrna group, and most of those who worship and fellowship with us, are like the old-time Seventh-day Adventists in belief and practice. If you know the history of Seventh-day Adventists, they were not Trinitarian for the first 80 years of their existence. We believe that the trinity is a child and masterpiece of Satan and we publish a great deal of

materials against it. We have a whole video series on the importance of knowing who God and Christ really are and exposing the trinity doctrine. Our camp meetings are free public gatherings and we would be very glad if you would like to attend. Our dates for 2008 are June 10-14. Have you seen any issues of *Old Paths*? If not, I would encourage you to view them online. I know you will find material there to encourage, instruct, and help you. I realize that England is a mission field and I pray that you can become a light in your area. Please write back soon. May God bless you lots and lots.

I have been studying your website for a while. We are in agreement on a lot of things. I have recently met a couple who are studying what you are teaching. They gave me the book *The Foundation of Our Faith* by Allen Stump. This came after much prayer to God to put me in touch with his people because in the mouth of 2 or 3 witnesses should all things be established.

We live in Ontario, Canada. We will be having studies in Toronto, though we both live far from Toronto. We are looking to meet up with others who have the same faith in our area—the faith of Jesus, and the testimony of Jesus.

Your site has been putting studies up on righteousness by faith lately, at least from what I've noticed. And you are blessed to have some diligent studiers in your group. I look forward to further contact with you in an effort to bring the message to the world.

We will be working hard around here, and we would like to work with you. If you know people from our area who are accepting these old truths, then we would like to be in contact with them.

We enjoy your studies and we really like reading what Jones and Waggoner have to offer, as well as the testimonies. These are all being rejected by the General Conference organization. So we must go into Laodicea and knock on the door of the hearts individually. I look forward to further contact with your ministry. God bless you all.

Reply: I am very glad that you have come in contact with us and that you have a copy of *The Foundation of Our Faith*. I believe that you will find it very helpful. I do not know who gave you a copy, but perhaps they have a fellowship group in your area. If I knew the area of Ontario you were in, I might be able to suggest someone I know in your area. I am very thankful and glad that you have been blessed by the materials on the web site and that you do not wish to selfishly hold onto the truth you have been finding but, instead, wish to share these precious truths. I will try to give you a call soon.

How are the days passing? With every passing day we have a deeper and still deeper hunger to see our savior Come! I would like to ask a favor: For five or six years I have known a lady which is very sick with skin cancer. She went to the hospitals for treatment and while there she contacted an

infection. The medical school here has only one vaccine which is recommended, but this year also she has had many injections with very strong antibiotics, but the infection is still alive in her body! Can you please pray for her? May God bless you all!

Reply: We will pray and encourage all of our readers to pray for your friend.

I'm a regular reader of *Old Paths* and I really appreciate it, I'm just writing to tell you (although you probably know by now) that the October 2007 letter when I try to download it comes down as October 2006. (I've tried a few times for a couple of weeks now)

Reply: Thanks for bringing this to our attention, we did not realize that the link was wrong. We have corrected the link.

Thank you so much for sending me the items I requested on what the pioneers believed and the present truth articles on the Holy Spirit. I was truly shocked to learn that what I had been taught to believe about the Holy Spirit and the Sonship of Christ were false. I was baptized into the SDA Church in December of 1990 and had believed these things wholeheartedly. But true to his promise of leading us into all truth, the Lord, through a series of events—divine providences—led me to the truth through your ministry...I received the materials in mid-August and have received two *Old Paths* which I have enjoyed truly. I would also like to request the *Present Truth* newsletter, *The Foundation of Our Faith*, *God's Love on Trial*, a packet of *The Wonderful Gift of the Holy Spirit*, *Bible Studies To Do at Home*, *The Return of the Fourth Angel*, *The Spirit of Antichrist*, *A Time to Choose*, *Who Is Telling the Truth about God?*, and a packet of *The Love of God* tracts...Please pray for me and my family (my husband and three children). I'm the only one in my family trying to serve the Lord and I have many struggles. I see how the Lord is working in the lives of my family—but I want to be fully surrendered to the Lord and be an unwavering witness. Thank you again for the materials and your ministry (God's ministry).

Comment: Sister Ford personally replied to this letter. We are truly thankful for the leading of the Holy Spirit in this person's life and would like to remind our readers that they too may request such materials for personal study or for missionary work.

People are calling me regarding your coverage of the conference at Andrews—with much appreciation. I don't think you have my after-editing plus appendixes that seem to help others. So herewith they are. Courage and peace.


Comment: The above note is from one of the presenters from the Fiftieth Anniversary Conference on *Questions on Doctrine*.



This is related to a similar promise in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18. Here the apostle Paul writes, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." What a delightful promise we have in these verses! Here we find the time of the first resurrection, the one of the righteous at the time of Jesus' return. Aren't these words encouraging for each and everyone of us? They give me great courage. Especially, the words "and so we will be with the Lord forever." Paul, like so many of his fellow saints with him and after him, was anxiously looking forward to that blessed moment, namely, Christ's triumphal return, his "*parousia*" in the Greek language, when all his followers will enter the heavenly kingdom together, i.e., the living righteous together with those righteous awakened from their death sleep.

The last verse, perhaps the one with the greatest promise for me, is found in Revelation 21:4, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." What a promise for us, Christians! No more tears, no more death, no more sorrow, no more

crying, no more pain. If we were to write these verses in a more positive manner, i.e., without any negative words like "no more, neither, nor," etc., we could say there will be only eternal life, only joy, only smiles, laughter, only health, total well-being, and youth. The Greek says here literally "every tear" (*pan dakruon*) and the Greek also says here "The death shall be no longer." ("*Ho thanatos ouk estai eti.*") Please notice the definite article "*ho*" in this verse. John speaks here of "the death" (*ho thanatos*). He is speaking here of the principle of death that came as a result of sin in the Garden of Eden. Death will be no more. Sorrow will be no more either, i.e., grief that accompanies bereavement of loved ones will no longer exist. The causes of sorrow will be completely gone. No cause for weeping or crying will be found in the beautiful land of God's kingdom. Chronic and temporary pain that have caused us humans so much misery and anguish will have disappeared forever. It will truly be a paradise for which the righteous have longed since the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Finally, my prayer is that we all claim and accept these precious promises since they all come from the Lord himself. May these promises encourage us and give us a firm hope and expectation that all the things that harass and trouble us now in our lives and make our lives often difficult and miserable will be banished forever because it is the Lord who made these promises to his people. Amen. 

Youth's Corner – "Look Up"

Several years ago, while journeying from Christiania, Norway, to Goteborg, Sweden, I was favored with a sight of the most glorious sunset it was ever my privilege to behold. Language is inadequate to picture its beauty. The last beams of the setting sun, silver and gold, purple, amber, and crimson, shed their glories athwart the sky, growing brighter and brighter, rising higher and higher in the heavens, until it seemed that the gates of the city of God had been left ajar, and gleams of the inner glory were flashing through. For two hours the wondrous splendor continued to light up the cold northern sky,—a picture painted by the great Master Artist upon the shifting canvas of the heavens. Like the smile of God it seemed, above all earthly homes, above the rock-bound plains, the rugged mountains, the lonely forests, through which our journey lay.

Angels of mercy seemed whispering: "Look up! This glory is but a gleam of the light which flows from the throne of God. Live not for earth alone. Look up, and behold by faith the mansions of the heavenly home." This scene was to me as the bow of promise to Noah, enabling me to grasp the assurance of God's unfailing care, and to look forward to the haven of rest awaiting the faithful worker. Ever since that time I have felt that God granted us this token of his love for our encouragement. Never while memory lingers, can I forget that vision of beauty, and the comfort and peace it brought

As God's children, it is our privilege ever to look up, keeping the eye of faith fixed on Christ. As we constantly keep him in view, the sunshine of his presence floods the chambers of the mind. The light of Christ in the soul-temple brings peace. The soul is

stayed on God. All perplexities and anxieties are committed to Jesus. As we continue to behold him, his image becomes engraved on the heart, and is revealed in the daily life.

But if, after conversion, we allow worldliness to creep into the heart, if we cherish it as a welcome guest, there is an entire change. The view of Jesus is eclipsed. The vision of his purity, his goodness, his matchless love, is dimmed. Peace is gone. No longer is the soul committed to him in simple, perfect trust. The whole Christian life seems uncertain

My dear young friends, ever keep Christ in view. Thus only can you keep the eye single to God's glory. Jesus is your light and life and peace and assurance forever. By beholding him you are changed from glory to glory—from character to character

"If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness." "Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee

PERMIT # 35
WELCH, WV
US POSTAGE PAID
PRESRT STD


Address Service Requested

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



*“This glory is but a gleam of
the light which flows from the
throne of God.”*

be not darkness. If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.” In Him is no darkness at all.

When the soul is illumined by God’s Spirit, the whole character is elevated, the mental conceptions are enlarged, and the affections, no longer centered upon self, shine forth in good works to others, attracting them to the beauty and brightness of Christ’s glory (Mrs. E. G. White, *The Youth’s Instructor*, October 23, 1902). 

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

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