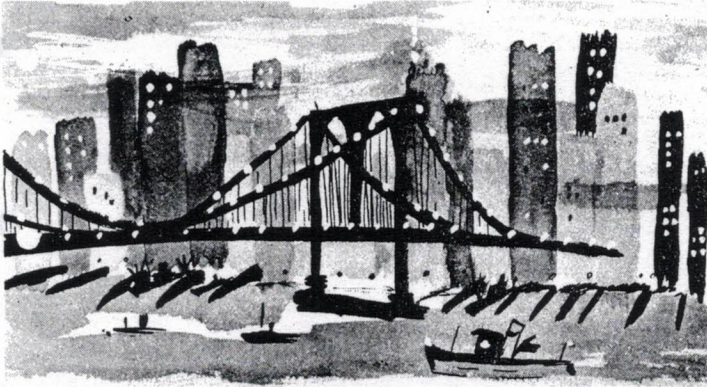


March/72.



"Watchman,
what of the night?"

The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come. Isaiah 21:11-12

THE BATTLE IS JOINED

There is still hope for Israel. There is still a "Simeon" in the "temple" at Washington who can recognize the Lord's Christ clothed in the fallen nature of man, and the import of such an incarnation as it pertains to the last generation of Adventists.¹ Appearing in *Review*² were a series of editorials on the incarnation of Christ setting forth the doctrine according to the fundamental position which the church had held prior to the publication of the book - Questions on Doctrine.

In the first article, Dr. H. E. Douglass, an associate editor of the *Review*, quoted the strong, unequivocal statements both from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy which clearly presents the completeness of Christ's identity with the fallen sons and daughters of Adam. After quoting Hebrews 2:14 - "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same" - the editor wrote:

Paul here strained at language itself as he emphasized the completeness and totality of the human nature of Jesus. A few verses later (chap. 4: 15) Paul again struggles to make clear that Jesus was not play-acting when He became man: who "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."³

Quoting from the Spirit of Prophecy, Dr. Douglass comments that -

The song above all songs that will be sung forever is that Jesus did not *take* flesh but *became* flesh, taking "our sinful nature, that He might know how to succor those that are tempted." - Medical Ministry, p. 181. He took "upon Himself man's nature in its fallen condition" yet in no way, "not in the least" did He "participate in its sin". . . Indeed, though beset by fallen, sinful nature, our Lord remained sinless.³

This is fundamental Adventism. This is the doctrine of the humanity of Christ as taught in the 1888 Message of Righteousness by Faith. This is the genuine truth

on the incarnation of our Lord.

In the second article of the series, the associate editor waxes bold and plainly states that the doctrine of the incarnation as set forth in a previous *Review* in 1965, and the teaching as enunciated in the books, Questions on Doctrine, and Movement of Destiny is the "same subtle and perverse doctrine"⁴ which forms the foundation of the Roman Catholic teaching of the Immaculate Conception. While not naming the article, or books, he quotes the teaching contained therein. Here are his words:

One of the mysteries of iniquity is the successful out-cropping of Satan's malice in traditional Christian thought. For example, in order to vitiate the victory of Jesus, many attempts have arisen to explain that Jesus did not defeat Satan in man's sinful, fallen, degenerate nature but in some other sphere with only a physical appearance like other men. This error is the foundation of the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception whereby to insure the perfect, sinless nature of Jesus He is said to have been born of a perfect, sinless mother. *But the same subtle and perverse doctrine lies under the explanations such as "Jesus took the sinless nature of the first Adam," or He "vicariously bore man's weaknesses."*⁴

The substance of the quotes - "Jesus took the sinless nature of the first Adam" - was found in an article appearing in the *Review*, July 1, 1965, which stated: "He [Christ] came to this earth as Adam before Adam fell."⁵ The second quotes of this perverse doctrine that Christ "vicariously bore man's weaknesses" is to be found in the books, Questions on Doctrine, and Movement of Destiny.⁶ We can only thank God that someone has exercised a holy boldness in the high places of our organization to call this blasphemous doctrine that has re-entered among us by its right name. Indeed these articles are epochal, and could lead to an all-out battle for truth and righteousness. In fact the battle has now been joined at the highest level as to whether we shall teach the truth that God has given to us on the incarnation, or whether we are going to continue to imbibe from the cesspool of Rome.

"The position that a man takes on the humanity of Christ has everything to do with his understanding of the unique mission of the Adventist church. A man's understanding of the delay in the advent of Christ is tied directly to his understanding of the humanity of Jesus. Confusion in one area automatically causes confusion in

the other".

The third article - "The Demonstration that Settles Everything" - is the most concise, accurate statement to appear in recent years which clearly sets forth the whole of the issue of 1888, and the message of righteousness by faith.

Both Elders A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner presented the incarnation of Christ during the last decade of the 19th Century in clear positive lines. Waggoner wrote:

The fact that Christ took upon Himself the flesh, not of a sinless being, but of sinful man, that is, the flesh which He assumed had all the weaknesses and sinful tendencies to which fallen human nature is subject, is shown by the statement that He "was made of the seed of David *according to the flesh.*"⁷

But this clear presentation was not universally accepted by all who heard. It became a stone of stumbling, a rock of offense to those who questioned the message of 1888 and the messengers. Some wrote to Sister White stating that what Elders Jones and Waggoner had been presenting could not be true. In a morning talk at Battle Creek, Michigan on January 29, 1890, she replied. Referring to the letters that she had been receiving, she said:

Letters have been coming to me, affirming that Christ could not have had the same nature as man, for if He had, He would have fallen under similar circumstances. If He did not have man's nature, He could not be our example. If He was not a partaker of our nature, He could not have been tempted as man has been. If it were not possible for Him to yield to temptation, He could not be our helper. It was a solemn reality that Christ came to fight the battles as man, in man's behalf.⁸

In a series of studies given at the 1895 General Conference Session, Elder Jones asked a question of the congregation - "Well then, in His human nature, when He came to earth, was He in any wise different from what you are in your human nature tonight?" The recording secretary added this observation - "[A few in the congregation responded, 'No'.]" To this response, Elder Jones declared:

I wish we had heard everybody in the house say, "No", with a loud voice. . . The word of God says that, and we are to say, That is so; because there is salvation in just that one thing. No it is not enough to say it that way: *the* salvation of God for human beings lies in just that one thing. . . There our salvation lies, and until we get there we are not

sure of our salvation. That is where it is. "In all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren." What for? - O, "that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted." Then don't you see that our salvation lies just there? Do you not see that it is right there where Christ comes to us? He came to us just where we are tempted, and was made like us just where we are tempted; and there is the point where we meet Him - the living Saviour against the power of temptation.⁹

Even as late as 1901, the opposition to this doctrine was sufficiently identifiable that Dr. E. J. Waggoner challenged the delegates to the General Conference Session of that year with these words:

We need to settle, every one of us, whether we are out of the church of Rome or not. There are a great many that have got the marks yet, but I am persuaded of this, that every soul who is here tonight desires to know the way of truth and righteousness. [Congregation: Amen!]

Do you not see that the idea that the flesh of Jesus was not like ours (because we know ours is sinful) necessarily involves the idea of the immaculate conception of the virgin Mary? Mind you, in Him was no sin, but the mystery of God manifest in the flesh, the marvel of the ages, the wonder of the angels, that the thing which even now they desire to understand, and which they can form no just idea of, only as they are taught it by the church, is the perfect manifestation of the life of God in its spotless purity in the midst of sinful flesh. [Congregation: Amen!] O, that is a marvel, is it not?¹⁰

Among the "many" who still retained the marks of the Papal doctrine, at the 1901 General Conference Session were the leaders of the "Holy Flesh" Movement in Indiana. It was this same Session that Sister White put the word on the Movement and caused it to collapse. But basic in the teaching of the Indiana group was the idea that Christ had the nature of Adam before Adam's fall. Elder S. N. Haskell contended with the leaders of the Movement at the Muncie Campmeeting in 1900, and then wrote Sister White a letter telling of their belief. Here are Haskell's words:

When we stated that we believed that Christ was born in fallen humanity, they represented us as believing that Christ sinned, notwithstanding the fact that we would state our position so clearly that it would seem as though no one could misunderstand us.

Their point of theology in this particular respect seems to be this: They believe that Christ took Adam's nature before he fell; so He took humanity

as it was in the garden of Eden, and thus humanity was holy, and this was the humanity which Christ had; and now they say, the particular time has come to become holy in the same sense, and then we will have "translation faith", and never die.¹¹

However the true fundamental teaching on the incarnation had sufficient acceptance that when the revised and enlarged edition of Bible Readings was published in 1915, it was incorporated into the chapter entitled, "A Sinless Life."¹² This position continued until 1949, when D. E. Rebok was asked to again revise Bible Readings. At that time, the teaching was modified, and altered - the fundamental position being considered as "erroneous" and "inaccurate."¹³ Now the battle is joined again. Which shall it be? The modified teaching drawn from the cesspool of Rome, or the truth enunciated in the 1888 presentation of Righteousness by Faith?

¹See Luke 2:25-32

²*Review*, December 23, 1971, pp. 12,13; December 30, 1971, pp. 16,17; January 6, 1972, pp. 13, 14.

³H. E. Douglass, "The Humanity of the Son of God Is Everything to Us" *Review*, December 23, 1971, p. 13

⁴H. E. Douglass, "Jesus Showed Us the Impossible", *Review*, Dec. 30, 1971, p.16.

⁵Donald G. Reynolds, "Adam and Evil", *Review*, July 1, 1965

⁶Questions on Doctrine, pp. 59-60, 62. See also Movement of Destiny, p. 197

⁷E. J. Waggoner, Christ and His Righteousness, pp. 26-27

⁸E. G. White, Selected Messages, bk. i, p. 408

⁹A. T. Jones, "The Third Angel's Message - No. 13", General Conference Bulletin, 1895, p. 233

¹⁰E. J. Waggoner, "Sermon", General Conference Bulletin, 1901, April 16, Extra #17, p. 404

¹¹S. N. Haskell, Letter to Ellen G. White dated at Battle Creek, Michigan, September 25, 1900.

¹²Bible Readings for the Home Circle, 1915 Edition, pp. 115-116.

¹³L. E. Froom, Movement of Destiny, pp. 427-428

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NOTE:- The issues that we had planned for March and April will be published for May and June. Due to the outstanding editorials appearing in the *Review* we have interjected these present thought papers on the subject of the incarnation.

Elder Wm. H. Grotheer
P. O. Box 237
Florence, Miss., 39073

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