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April 1974.



*"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

THIS AND THAT

On various occasions during my pastoral ministry, I would preach a sermon which I called - "This and That." Certain things needed to be said which separately did not justify a full use of the sermon time at the hour of worship. This thought paper will borrow that concept and will be so structured.

"Rich and Increased with Goods"

In a recent Spectrum, an exchange of ideas and facts on church finance between two scholarly laymen, and the manager of the investments of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists was published.¹ The documented article by the laymen stated - "The General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist church has holdings ["in corporate securities" - i.e. stocks and bonds] worth some \$75 million."² "In addition to this, the Pacific Union Conference has approximately \$30 million in its own investment funds."³ Thus the church has over one tenth of a billion dollars invested in stocks and bonds. The manager of stocks and bonds for the church indicated that the monies are placed in two categories - The Investment Fund, and the Income Fund. In 1972, the Investment Fund yielded a 14%+ profit, and the Income Fund produced 6%+ in returns.⁴ The breakdown of how much of the \$75 million was invested in each Fund was not given, neither was it revealed how these returns were used. The manager noted that U. S. News and World Report (September 20, 1971) represented the Seventh-day Adventist church as a "prosperous denomination", but "still

aloof" toward corporate responsibility. Then he added - "Both of these interesting observations are not entirely inaccurate."⁵

The laymen doing the research cited certain companies in which the General Conference held securities, and the amount of that investment. From their tabulated analysis,⁶ I have drawn the following chart: [This represents but a fraction of the General Conference investments as of June 30, 1971.]

Company	Total Shares Held	Market Value of combined GC Funds in company
American Telephone & Telegraph	12,000	\$1,160,500.
General Electric	16,000	1,238,875.
General Motors	14,000	1,622,500.
IBM	7,000	2,814,000.
IT&T	13,400	237,000.
Ford	12,500	875,875.
Exxon	15,000	1,312,500.
Olin	21,000	396,375.
FMC	10,000	1,125,750.
Gen. Tel. & Electric	34,000	1,205,000.
Texaco	26,000	1,425,000.
Control Data	8,000	1,026,375.
City Investing	10,000	291,250.
Eastman Kodak	12,000	1,928,875.

In addition to the above, the General Conference has \$1,420,000 invested in Dupont.⁷

In contemplating the above statistics, my mind turned to the book of Revelation where it is written:

And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write. . . Because thou sayest, *I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.*⁸

Then a statement came to mind - "The state of the Church represented by the foolish virgins, is also spoken of as the Laodicean state."⁹ The foolish virgins had everything and more than the wise virgins had, except oil in their lamps. They had made a provision that the wise had not made - accumulated purchasing power which they thought would save them in the crisis hour. The wise reminded them of this when

requested to share their oil. They advised - "Go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves."¹⁰ "But while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage: and the door was shut." Do we think that all of these accumulated assets will purchase for us the Holy Spirit - oil in our lamps? So did Simon of Samaria who offered the apostles money for the power of the Holy Spirit. But what was Peter's response?

Thy money persih with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.¹¹

Would Peter say similar words to us today should he read of the stocks and bonds which so typify our Laodicean state?

Appearance or Reality

During the Feast of Tabernacles on one occasion, Jesus warned His hearers - "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."¹² We are being told "that a genuine revival is in the making."¹³ Would to God that this be true. But as the servant of the Lord has indicated, "many think far too favorably of the present time."¹⁴ Mere words - no matter how sincere - will never answer for the action required to meet the condition whereby a genuine revival may take place. Revival must be accompanied by repentance. Unless we are willing to confess our apostasy, our deviations from the truth, our backsliding from the standards given to the Church in the Testimonies and bring forth fruits worthy of repentance, if a revival does occur, then it would come from the same power from which we derived our errors and deviations. Such a revival could only produce a false latter rain experience. With revival there is a companion experience - reformation. This signifies a reorganization, a change of ideas and theories, habits

and practices.¹⁵ In a genuine experience the two must blend!

Unless the characters of the individual members of the church reflect the image of Jesus fully, and the character and policies of the church are "reorganized", we will be seeking the power of the Holy Spirit before the necessary requirements are met. To obtain power before character is to enter into a false latter rain experience which will give the appearance that God is indeed working in the midst of the Church. But the elect of God will not be deceived - they will judge righteous judgment.

We need to heed the Voice of the heavenly Teacher who warned:

"What stronger delusion can beguile the mind than the pretense that you are building on the right foundation, and that God accepts your works, when in reality you are working out many things according to worldly policy, and are sinning against Jehovah? O, it is a great deception, a fascinating delusion, that takes possession of minds when men who have once known the truth, mistake the form of godliness for the spirit and power thereof; when they suppose that they are rich, and increased with goods, and in need of nothing, while in reality they are in need of everthing."¹⁶

Though written in 1882, the following warning is vitally apropos now:

The knowledge of our state as God views it, seems to be hidden from us. We see, but perceive not; we hear, but do not understand; and we rest unconcerned as if the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, rested upon our sanctuary. We profess to know God, and to believe the truth; but in works deny Him. Our deeds are directly adverse to the principles of truth and righteousness, by which we profess to be governed.¹⁷

"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."

¹Spectrum, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 39-59

²Thomas Dybdahl & Jere W. Chapman, "Stewardship and Securities", Spectrum, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 39

³Ibid., p. 46

⁴Robert E. Osborn, "Investment Practices of the General Conference", Spectrum Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 54

⁵Ibid., p. 55

⁶Dybdahl & Chapman, op. cit., pp. 41-42

⁷Ibid., p. 42

⁸Revelation 3:14,17

⁹Ellen G. White, "The Righteousness of Christ", Review & Herald, August 19, 1890, p. 498.

¹⁰Matthew 25:9-10

¹¹Acts 8:20-22

¹²John 7:24

¹⁴Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5, p. 80

¹³"This Week", Review, February 28, 1974, p. 3

¹⁵Ellen G. White, Christian Service, p. 42

¹⁶Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 8, p. 249-250

¹⁷Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 84

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Suggestions and Comments

It has been suggested by a reader that those who are studying the Spirit of Prophecy make note of the counsel regarding special sections of the Scriptures which we need to study carefully at the present time. Send these references to the Foundation office, and we would compile them for inclusion in the thought paper mailing once a quarter or as the need might warrant. An example given by this reader notes - "We need to study the pouring out of the seventh vial." Ms. 175, 1899 (7BC:983) With this suggestion, we shall be most happy to cooperate, and add what we find in our reading and study.

A student in one of our Senior Colleges wrote - "Enjoyed your In the Form of a Slave. It answered many questions. Why can't THE BRETHREN see it?" In answer to this question, we need to recognize that there is a close parallel between the Seventh-day Adventist Church today, and the Jewish nation in the days of Christ. The servant of the Lord wrote:

Unless there is a reconversion, there will soon be such a lack of godliness that the Church will be represented by the barren fig tree. Great light has been given to her. She has had abundant opportunity for bearing much fruit. But selfishness has come in, and God says, "I will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

Jesus looked upon the pretentious, fruitless fig tree, and with mournful reluctance pronounced the words of doom. And under the curse of an offended God, the fig tree withered away. God help His people to make an application of this lesson while there is still time. (R&H 2/25/1902)

Do we still have time - or have these words been spoken?

Soon from the highest authority in the universe will come the word, Shorten the days, lest no flesh be saved. (R&H 2/11/1902)

Have we been weighed in the "balances of the sanctuary" and been found wanting? (8t:247) Has God arisen from the cherub "whereupon He was," (Eze. 9:3) and ordered the closing work for the church, the sealing of the remnant by the angel with the "writer's inkhorn"? (3T:266) This we need to carefully consider for immediately thereafter comes the divine order to the men with the slaughtering weapons - "Go ye after him through the city and smite, let not your eye spare." (Eze. 9:5) On this verse the inspired comment is: - "Here we see that the

church - the Lord's sanctuary - was the first to feel the stroke of the wrath of God. The ancient men, those to whom God had given great light, and who had stood as guardians of the spiritual interests of the people, had betrayed their trust. . . These dumb dogs, that would not bark, are ones who feel the just vengeance of an offended God. Men, maidens, and little children, all perish together. (5T:211)

"As we near the end of time, falsehood will be so mingled with truth, that only those who have the guidance of the Holy Spirit will be able to distinguish truth from error. We need to make every effort to keep the way of the Lord. We must in no case turn from His guidance to put our trust in man. The Lord's angels are appointed to keep strict watch over those who put their faith in the Lord, and these angels are to be our special help in every time of need. Every day we are to come to the Lord with full assurance of faith, and to look to Him for wisdom. . . . Those who are guided by the Word of the Lord will discern with certainty between falsehood and truth, between sin and righteousness." Ms. 43, 1907

Manuscripts available:

- An Interpretive History of the Doctrine of the Incarnation as Taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church \$4.00
- The Holy Flesh Movement - 1899-1901 \$3.00
- In the Form of a Slave \$3.50
3 for \$10.00
- One each of the above three manuscripts \$10.00

Other publications:

- Letters to the Churches - M. L. Andreasen \$.50
(Minimum order - two if ordered separately)
- Studies in Romans - E. J. Waggoner (1891 G. C. Studies) \$.25
(Minimum order - four if ordered separately)
- A Warning and Its Reception - Wieland and Short \$3.50

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