



"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

SACROSANCT

Before pursuing the subject introduced in the January thought paper - we will with the March issue - it has been thought best to do some serious thinking in regard to the present climate in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The 1974 Annual Council held on the campus of Loma Linda University has been heralded as a great spiritual experience, and has been interpreted as evidence that the God of Israel is still with His professed people. Also during the year, the emphasis of the Review & Herald editorial staff has been on Righteousness by Faith and related subjects. The need for a "quality" people has been stressed. The Week of Prayer issue departed from its usual format, and featured a series of studies with the same underlying theme. Thus to question, or even to suggest that all is not what it might appear to be, automatically places one in the category as "an accuser of the brethren."

However, there is a question suggested by the servant of the Lord to which we need to give careful study. It reads: - ARE THE PEOPLE OF GOD NOW SO FIRMLY ESTABLISHED UPON HIS WORD THAT THEY WOULD NOT YIELD TO THE EVIDENCES OF THEIR SENSES."¹ Every manifestation of what appears to be spiritual power or the sensation of a spiritual presence must be subjected to the Word of God, lest we find ourselves declaring a certain religious ecstasy, generated by one who can cloak himself as an angel of light, to be the power of God. And we must never forget that the warning of the devil coming as an angel of light was written to a church - a truly professed Christian church - which was having great spiritual manifes-

tations without repentance or the putting away of sin. And we have not been promised any insulation from such an experience unless certain conditions are met. In other words, feelings are not a criterion of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Nor is a revival or a reformation to be judged by verbalizing but by concrete actions taken which clean out of the camp of Israel the idols, and those who still cling to them.²

In suggesting such thoughts the reaction is as intolerant as the leadership of Israel in the days of Christ. Of the Jewish hierarchy it is written - "They would not tolerate the teaching that did not distinguish them as a holy people, a royal nation."³ Their attitude did not alter the facts, and neither does our attitude alter certain very vital facts. Our first work needs to be that of total and complete corporate repentance, not only for our spiritual forefather's rejection of the Holy Spirit in 1888, but also for our continued apostasy from the basic Adventist truths which we have since 1950 so brazenly flaunted to the world in some of our official publications. And we need to consider carefully that if we continue to disregard the need for a deep repentance that tells our deceived laity the full truth of our apostasy, the spiritual ecstasy which we profess to be experiencing may not be the spirit we ardently hope it to be. It is also possible that the repentance needed if it ever does come might be of the nature of Esau's⁴

It is impossible to escape the fact that what we are saying is taking place does not square with the Word of God. Our present call for revival and reformation must coincide with the examples of the past as found in Bible history.⁵ Because of this deep concern that we might know where we are, and that it might be clearly set before the leadership of the Church, the following letter was written to the President of the General Conference. The reply received to this date - January 13, 1975 - follows the copy of the letter to Eider Pierson.

November 11, 1974

Elder Robert H. Pierson, President
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
Takoma Park, Washington D. C. 20012

Dear Elder Pierson;

The latest Review (November 14, 1974) came to my desk this morning. Each reader was asked to respond to the appeal voted unanimously by the "World Leaders in Annual Council" as they spoke to the church through this action. As I read this appeal, I observed it stated "the conviction that the Advent Movement's first priority must be spiritual and theological, not organizational." It added - "The church's mission depends on correct theology."

With this I am in complete agreement. For the past seven years, through the monthly thought papers published by the Adventist Laymen's Foundation of Mississippi, I have been endeavoring to call attention to the theological deviations that have carried the official sanction of the leadership of the church. Several research manuscripts have been published which have focused on one primary area, the incarnation of our Lord.

In the fourth paragraph the suggestion is found that as a result of the 1973 Annual Council appeal "the spirit of individual and corporate repentance" followed. Of this, I am totally unaware even though I have been following closely the Review, and attended one of the Bible Conferences which were held this year.

We still have among us many copies of the book, Questions on Doctrine. It states plainly that "this volume can be viewed as truly representative of the faith and beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church." (p. 9) Yet it contains much heresy which has been pointed out on numerous occasions. While I know that it has been voted not to reprint the book, nevertheless, I have yet to read a single confession from the leadership of the church wherein they repent for foisting upon the people of God, the errors that are contained therein. To my knowledge, not a single individual involved in the writing of this book has been brought before a committee of the church on the charge of heresy, and those that are still living are being sustained by the sacred tithe. Is this corporate repentance?

Then there is the book - Movement of Destiny. In the Foreword of this book you have written - "Movement of Destiny is a must for every worker, every theological student, and every church officer - in fact, for every church member who loves this message and longs to see it triumph in the near, very near future." Yet this book contains historical inaccuracies. This has been documented in the manuscript by Elders R. J. Wieland and D. K. Short, entitled - "An Explicit Confession. . . Due the Church". Through various thought papers, I have called your attention to the theological errors which are heretical to the historical position of the church in the areas of the atonement and the incarnation. I have documented where the author with the approval of sixty scholars of the church misrepresented the writings of E. J. Waggoner. Yet to this day, I have not seen or heard where you or any of the others involved have repented, and confessed to the people of God wherein you recommended that

they read and accept theological apostasy.

Now it may very well have been that you placed your approval on the book and the work of the committee which supervised its publication through ignorance. But whether through ignorance, or by deliberate choice, how can one ask the church to endorse the concept that the top priority of the church is spiritual and theological, and that there is a need for "correct theology" when you have not repented of your approbation of incorrect theology? Does the Spirit of God testify with such a spirit?

Then we might add to this, the special edition of the Review on Righteousness by Faith. As recent as the last issue of the Review, our church members were asked to give this publication wide circulation (see page 7). Yet this special number contained various heretical concepts, along with a "white-wash" of the failure of the 1888. While the servant of the Lord specifically stated that the Holy Spirit was rejected in 1888 by the leadership (See Series A, pp. 20,21) the article by C. Mervyn Maxwell declared - "So marvelous were the fresh new emphases that some of the delegates actually resisted them as too good to be true." We also learned that we can now say - regardless what the Spirit of Prophecy states - "I am saved!" Further, according to the lead article the issue is not theological after all, just a matter of knowing the Person, and letting Him dwell in us, rather than Christ abiding in us through His Word.

You should know also that there have come to my desk letters from long time members of the church with a rich Adventist heritage concerned over the articles appearing in the Week of Prayer issue for 1974. One study followed closely the article in the special Righteousness by Faith edition and sought to encourage the expression that we could say - "I am saved." It quoted the Spirit of Prophecy counsel, and interpreted it directly opposite to its real meaning. My brother, our laity are not all blind. They see these errors of theology making their way into the church's teaching. The call to repentance, and revival, and reformation has a hollow echo to such. We need to see real confession on your part, and the others who took a leading part in the apostasy of the past decade, to come clean before God's people. Let that which was done in secret be secretly repented, but that which has been openly endorsed, let it be openly repented. Our people need to know where the leadership of the church has taken them under the guise of a call to revival and reformation.

There are some very serious questions that need to be explored. We are told - "In the balances of the sanctuary the Seventh-day Adventist church is to be weighed. She will be judged by the privileges and advantages that she has had." (8T:247) This is no conditional prophecy. This is the decreed purpose of the Eternal. Has this occurred? If so, what was the decision? God does nothing except He lets us know. (Amos 3:7) If it has not taken place, how near are we to this evaluation? Are we watching the unfolding of the scroll of Bible prophecy so that we can know what is transpiring in the Supreme Court of the Universe? I suggest that these questions need to concern us, and we need some answers.

May the Lord guide us by the truth as it is found in Jesus our Lord, which is the basis of our rich spiritual heritage.

Sincerely yours, (Signed)

November 18, 1974

Mr. William H. Grotheer
P. O. Box 237
Florence, Miss., 39073

Dear Mr. Grotheer:

Just a note to let you know that your letter of November 11 has arrived.

Elder Pierson is in the Inter-American Division and will not be returning to the office until the latter part of December.

Cordially yours,

(Signed)

(Miss) Margaret Fuller
Secretary to Elder Pierson

¹Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 625

²II Chronicles 15:8, 16

³Ellen G. White, Review & Herald, January 24, 1899

⁴Hebrews 12:16-17

⁵II Chronicles 15:1-16; II Kings 28:1-25

VIII-2 (Feb. 75)

++++++

"The Seal of God" Tract - The chapter - "The Seal of God" from Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5, pp. 207-216 - has been printed by several in various formats over the past few years. One press printed it in connection with the chapter from the same volume - "The Testimonies Slighted." This was a semi-facsimile reproduction with very expressive pictorial notations in the margins. Another publisher included the chapter in his provocative compilation under the title - Seventh-day Adventism at the Crossroads.

We chose the form we used - facsimile reproduction with marginal notations, and only the one chapter - for several reasons. We believe this chapter can stand alone giving its unique message to the Church. The very time element - "Jesus is about to leave the mercy-seat of the heavenly sanctuary" - lifts it from the context of the era in which it was written, and gives it prophetic significance. This chapter clearly differentiates between groups so that one can readily grasp in what group he is, and how God views the attitudes and actions of that particular group. That it contains a warning message for the laity of the Church, no honest heart can deny. True it does not present the hierarchy of the Church in a very favorable light, but after all God is no respecter of persons. Jesus is the faithful and true witness regarding the Laodicean state. And this chapter is from the Testimony of Jesus to the Church!

During the 4th Quater of this past year, we studied the Gift of Prophecy to the Remnant Church through the ministry of Ellen G. White. The letter which follows illustrates the wide gap between the theory the leadership wishes the laity to accept so that their authority will not be questioned, and the actual reaction to the Spirit of Prophecy when a specific section from the Writings is given to the people for study and consideration. Here is the letter:

October 28, 1974

Dear Elder Grotheer;

Thank you much for sending my studies on "The Seal of God." I have given them out at last. I purposely waited a few weeks as we have a new Pastor, Elder Haines, and Elder Bauer thought it best to wait a short time.

I gave a number of them out at our Lake Tahoe church a week ago Sabbath. The next day Elder Haines called me and reprimanded me, asking me at the time to promise not to ever do that again. I told him I wouldn't promise but I probably wouldn't. Well, he said I am advising you not to but I'm not threatening you. I could tell he almost did though. Now today more than a week later, I received another call from him. He told me that Elder Streifling told him that if I didn't make that promise that the alternative is that I am no longer welcome to attend church up here. I don't know where I will go as I am alone and though God is very good to me in supplying all my needs as they arise, I don't have money for gasoline to travel out of Streifling's jurisdiction.

Elder Bauer told me I could tell Elder Haines that I would make the promise on one condition, that being that he sit down with me and go over the paper very carefully telling me what is wrong with it. Also that I request the presence of Elder Bauer. If he refuses that but agrees to go over it with me that I should use the tape recorder. . .

Yours truly,

(Signed)

Jeanne D. Colston

P.S. Please pray for me. Maybe soon I can order more of "The Seal of God" and on rare occasions visit other S. D. A. Churches and hand them out.

+++++

NEW PRINTING - Our supply of A Warning and Its Reception has become exhausted. We have arranged, therefore, for a new printing. This new manuscript will be a facsimile reproduction of the original document - 1888 Re-Examined - by Elders R. J. Wieland and D. K. Short. The correspondence and committee reports have been omitted as irrelevant, since no evidence to this date has been produced by the General Conference committees appointed to study the manuscript which would invalidate a single basic premise of the manuscript. The cost postpaid for the new printing per copy will be \$3.50.