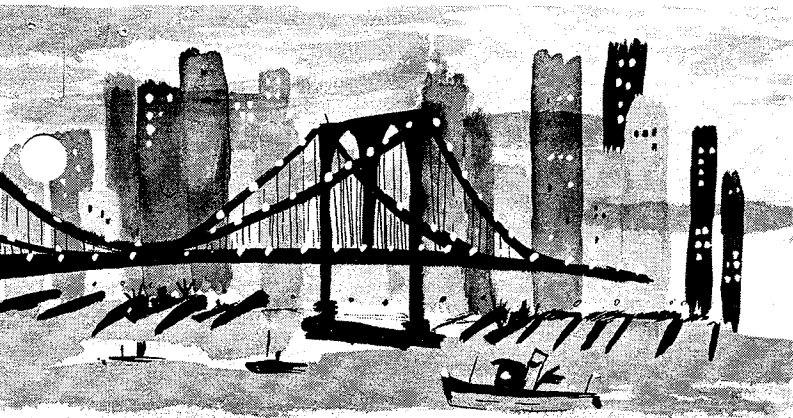


September 1975.



"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

A LETTER

Dearly Beloved In the Most Holy Faith,

Usually our monthly thought papers present a documented topic which expresses our convictions for your personal study. But this month, I wish to write a personal letter to you, that is, as personal as a mimeographed letter can be. Many of you I have never met, and so a letter such as this will be even more impersonal than if I had met you, and we had conversed and prayed together. However, I do hope and pray that as you read, you will sense through the Holy Spirit the deep burden of my own heart in regard to you as a part of the Israel of God.

From the letters that come to my desk from many of you, I am sure that there is one fact that is known to you all - a fact that we dare not overlook - we have reached a crisis in the church of God on earth. Not only have we reached a crisis, but this crisis is compounded because of the confusion which the enemy of souls has brought in to blind our understanding of the very basic issues which confront us. As one writes, or talks, he is almost compelled to define each major word, such as "church", for the terms and expressions we use have different meanings to different people. And sadly, too many do not take time to really think through in precise terms just what they do mean by the words they use. Let us, therefore, proceed from the basics that give us a common faith to the issues that perplex us today.

There can be no question that God in the unfolding of the times and seasons established in 1844 a final Movement through which and by which He intended to bring an end to the reign of sin. "The Scripture which above all others had been both the

foundation and central pillar of the Advent faith was the declaration, 'Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.'" (SP, IV, 258) This single text became the "watchword" of the faith of our spiritual fathers. This faith was not in vain, for God shall take this Movement through to the Kingdom. But now over 130 years are past, and we still are not in the Kingdom.

In 1888, God again spoke through human instruments - not men endowed in a special way with the gift of prophecy, but men who had to study and seek for truth even as those to whom they brought their message. Indeed, the servant of the Lord to whom had been entrusted the gift of prophecy, attested to the genuineness of the message Jones and Waggoner brought to the church, even as she had done in the days following the disappointment in 1844. But note, and this we must never forget - God speaks to His people through human instrumentalities in the same manner and ways that those who hear must use to verify the messages given - the study of the Word of God. I do not know what means the Holy Spirit used to prompt Elders A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner to study to obtain the message they brought to the people of God at the General Conference Session in 1888. Some statement from the pen of Sister White may have sparked their study. But one thing is certain - "God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrine and the basis of all reforms." (SP, IV, 413) Our study may be initiated because of a ray of light from Heaven through the ministry of the written word found in the Spirit of Prophecy. But when we pursue the study of the Spirit of Prophecy to the exclusion of the Holy Scriptures which are able to make us wise unto salvation, we do despise to the Spirit of God who in times past spoke by "holy men of God." In other words we find ourselves in a crisis of authority.

Now another eighty-seven years have passed, and the message that God intended to produce the ripening of the harvest of earth has still not done its work, and we are still here in this world. It seems the seriousness of this present delay has

escaped us, and we think that since God has waited this long for His "church" - the vehicle He chose through which the Movement was to triumph - He will continue to wait. This is a fatal delusion. In 1892, just a few short years after 1888, it was revealed to this people, that if there were a delay, "the character of God and His throne will be compromised." And the question we must ask ourselves - Will God permit this? The answer can only be - NO!

There is no doubt - there has been a delay, not because God wanted it that way, but because we have caused it. So the question of this hour - the supreme question upon which our eternal destiny hangs - What has God done about this, and how am I to relate to what God has done?

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." (II Peter 1:19) Further, we are told that "the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." (Amos 3:7) In the unfolding of the scroll of prophecy, every act of God is revealed, and will be revealed to us as to time and purpose. Prior to 1844, God's purposes were tied to specific time prophecies; but since that date, events alone mark the timing of the actions of Heaven. Jesus clearly indicated the purpose of these events - in the upper room to the select eleven He said - "I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it come to pass, ye might believe." (John 14:29)

Now let us come down to some real thinking in regard to the crisis which we have reached. There is foretold a movement by God in heaven, by which He takes the reins into His own hands. And the action, thus initiated has serious consequences to the Church here below. This is described for us in Ezekiel 9:1-4. God arises from the cherub whereupon He was, and orders the sealing to commence in Jerusalem. It is evident that Jesus has not yet left the Most Holy Place, and thus probation's hour has not closed for the inhabitants of earth as individuals. But some decision

has been made in regard to Jerusalem, which we are told in Ezekiel represents the church. (3T:267) Neither all the inhabitants of the city, nor the city itself, are sealed. Either this means something, or it does not. And in describing this experience, the servant of the Lord uses two different word pictures - "the true people of God" and "God's professed people". (3T:266) Either these are the same group of people with different labels, or else they are two distinct classes of people. And these terms are used in connection with comments on the prophecy of Ezekiel 9. Note the language - "This is foreceably set forth by the prophet's illustration of the last work under the figure of men each having a slaughter weapon in his hand." (Ibid.)

In recent thought papers published this year, I have set before you that in 1967, the prophecy of Jesus as found in Luke 21:24 was fulfilled. I have further projected that this date signaled the fact that God had arisen from the cherub, and had taken the reins into His own hands to finish the work, and to bring a triumph to the Movement He began in 1844. In so doing, I have pointed out that He weighed "Jerusalem" in the balances of the sanctuary, and found it wanting. The actions of the city through its hierarchy had "compromised" His character and His throne. Thus He had to act to vindicate His name. I have further stated that this very fulfillment of prophecy brings us to a reassessment of our individual relationship to the corporate body of the church, the leadership of which has caused this compromise of God's character and throne. This does not mean a reassessment of the faith which was committed to our trust in 1844, and re-affirmed in 1888.

I do not have the gift of prophecy in any special sense. I must obtain truth in the same way in which you must evaluate truth - through the study of the Word. You must know, and I must know, whether these things be truth. My soul has been purchased with the same blood as yours - the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, if these things which I have set before you are not truth, you owe it to

me to show through the Word of God wherein I have erred, even as I have presented to you by the Word of God the conclusions which I have drawn to warn you to flee from the wrath to come.

My study of these truths of prophecy was sparked by a testimony from the servant of the Lord. She wrote:

"In the twenty-first chapter of Luke Christ foretold what was to come upon Jerusalem, and with it He connected the scenes which were to take place in the history of this world just prior to the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (C to W & E, 23-24)

I found in Matthew 24, and Mark 13, the same line of prophecy was followed as was followed in Luke 21, with one exception - "the times of the Gentiles." The servant of the Lord specified Luke 21, not Matthew 24 or Mark 13, to be our special concern when interpreting events in the history of literal Jerusalem. While the things that happened to Jerusalem in A. D. 70 are typical of what will come upon the earth in its final judgment, the event noted by Luke exclusively was fulfilled in 1967. Sr. White had indicated that these events would take place just prior to coming of the Son of man. What joy filled my heart. God had now indicated without question, we had reached the last generation. Our Lord was coming, and coming soon. Then as I studied the implications of what the finishing of the times of the Gentiles might mean, I found that God was also telling us other things. These I have faithfully set before you in the thought papers thus far this year.

If this is what God is saying to us - to you and me, then you need to do some serious study, and re-evaluation, and unite your voice in giving this message to the professed people of God, for God declares this to be "the closing work for the church." (3T:266) Your involvement is essential.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "W. H. G. Gordon", written in dark ink.

AMAZING - It has been generally known through the brief note in the Review & Herald (April 17, 1975, p. 24) that the Burbank Seventh-day Adventist Church was expelled from the sisterhood of churches in the Southern California Conference. While we cannot concur in the theological deviations held by various lay-leaders of the church, we have been advised that the conference leadership did not choose to make this the issue; but rather the matter of control and authority. The actions - police and legal - on the part of the conference following the expulsion of the church are reprehensible. However, the legal briefs which have been presented on behalf of the conference to the Superior Court of the State of California for the County of Los Angeles are very revealing. In a brief dated May 16, 1975, the following is declared:

"Plaintiffs-petitioners [Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists] are the local governing body of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church, which is an extremely highly organized hierarchal church built upon an ascending series of representative bodies." p. 2 lines 7 - 10, emphasis theirs.

In reading the entire brief, it becomes very obvious why the conference leadership has declared the church to be an "extremely highly organized hierarchal church" - and underscored it themselves! They wish to make use of a Supreme Court decision which in 1871 ruled that property in "a hierarchal church is controlled by the parent church organization." (Ibid. p. 5, lines 15 - 15)

How apropos is this statement from Inspiration:

"When men who profess to serve God ignore His parental character, and depart from honor and righteousness in dealing with their fellow men, Satan exults, for he has inspired them with his attributes. They are following in the track of Romanism." Test. to Min, pp. 362-363

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Bauer Tape - In a previous note, we listed a title as "An Agency of the Proud". This should have read - "The Arrogancy of the Proud." The tape for this month - two cassettes - is entitled - "The Image of the Beast Is Here!" Send to Mrs Jeanne Colston - note change of address - P. O. Box 13997, South Lake Tahoe, Calif., 95702. Cost - \$4.50.

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Address all correspondence; questions, requests and gifts; to the Adventist Laymen's Foundation, P. O. Box 237, Florence, Miss., 39073.