



"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

Eis ta Opisō*

"From that time many of His disciples went back [eis ta opisō] and walked no more with Him." John 6:66

This verse summarizes what the Spirit of Prophecy calls the "crisis" in Galilee.¹ Not only did these erstwhile disciples of Jesus cease to follow Him, but they went back to the things behind - eis ta opisō. They would not keep step with the advancing light which Jesus flashed upon their pathway. He desired to lead them into a living experience which He designated as eating His flesh and drinking His blood.

The day previously, Jesus had fed five thousand men with five barley loaves and two small fishes.² As this nucleus of a potentially powerful Jewish army sat eating what thoughts were theirs we can only conjecture. They did perceive that here was a leader who could in himself serve as a Quartermasters Corps, and with his other powers be the Medical Detachment, but with one supreme advantage - there would be no casualties because he could restore to life. And so they concluded - "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world."³ They would make him their King! But Jesus withdrew, and they saw Him no more till they found Him in Capernaum the next day.

Jesus plainly told them that they were seeking Him for the loaves and fishes.⁴ Then He counseled them to seek for that "meat which endureth unto life everlasting, which the Son of man shall give unto you."⁵ Soon the Jewish religious leadership got into the exchange, and reminded the laity that this was Joseph's son, so how could He be the bread of life coming down from heaven?⁶ But Jesus reiterated His claim to be the living bread which came down from heaven, and that further - "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you."⁷ Jesus was seeking to lead those listening, and especially His professed followers from the material to the spiritual; and from the Past - "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert"⁸ - to a Present living, vital experience in the things of God - "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."⁹ Not just the Word as He existed in Heaven, but the Word as revealed in the flesh as He had come down from Heaven was to be the life of men. This was to be to His disciples a living experience, not only something done for them, but something done in them - "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in Me and I in him."¹⁰

This was too much for the many who professed to be His disciples in Galilee, so they went back to the things behind - eis ta opisō.

Eighteen hundred years after this event, another experience occurred when this same Jesus lead His followers "out a little way."¹¹ He told them - "Wait here; I am going to My Father to receive the kingdom; keep your garments spotless, and in a little

*Pronounced - Eis ta Opisō

while I will return from the wedding and receive you to Myself."¹² Then He was carried into "the holiest" to begin His work of the "final atonement"¹³ This uniquely Seventh-day Adventist doctrine termed - "The Investigative Judgment" - has ever been an anathema to the Evangelical sector of Protestantism. Barnhouse called this teaching, "stale, flat, and unprofitable!" He considered it "the most colossal, psychological, face-saving phenomenon in religious history!"¹⁴

Recently it has been reported that a theologian who is known as "a renowned critic of Seventh-day Adventism" considers "the peculiar Adventist doctrines of the investigative judgment and the two apartment ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary" as obscuring "the great truth of justification by faith."¹⁵ Because of this critical attitude in religious circles, many erstwhile followers of the Advent Movement are offended and turn - εἰς τὰ ὀπίω - unto the things behind. Instead of walking with Jesus, that is doing what Jesus said to do - "Wait here", hold your position, faithfully maintain the truth - many are joining in an endeavor to rationalize away this distinctive Adventist teaching so as to make it palatable to their evangelical "cronies".¹⁶

Let us not become confused by outward appearances. Because seeming success and number of adherents follow such a compromise with our basic faith, this does not automatically spell the words - "a righteous cause." In the same vision, the servant of the Lord saw that those who never accepted the advanced truth - which would be applicable to the Evangelicals - and those who went back to the things behind did have "light and much power."¹⁷ But the source of this power is also noted - "Satan would breathe upon them an unholy influence." In other words - "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" scandalizes them. Such an experience is considered subjective, and opposed to what they call the "gospel" unmindful that the proclamation of the "everlasting gospel" involves the fact that "the hour of His judgment is come."¹⁸

Furthermore, we are warned that Satan's object in all of this fanfare and manifestation of power is "to draw back and deceive God's children."¹⁷ Let us not forget that in this deception, there is "light", or else there would be no power to deceive. But the light which God gave Luther is not the advanced light which God gave to the small company who prayed most earnestly following the disappointment. To them an understanding of the Scriptures was unfolded "in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood."¹⁹ While the true light on justification by faith is not contradictory to the call for holiness emanating from the second apartment of the Heavenly Sanctuary, nevertheless to preach it out of the context of the investigative judgment is to distort that truth under the guise of proclaiming "present truth."

It was in 1888 that God brought the subject of justification by faith into its proper focus in relationship to the work that Christ was doing in the final atonement, because His people were failing to grasp the real experience that was to be theirs as commandment keepers. Waggoner has stated the matter clearly. Read his words:

There are just two services. The service of Satan, which is of sin unto death, and the service of Christ, which is of obedience unto righteousness. A man cannot serve two masters. All believe that. Then it is impossible to serve sin and righteousness at the same time. Now we call ourselves Christians. That means - what? Followers of Christ! But in all our Christian experience we have left little loopholes along here and there

for sin. We have never dared to come to that place where we would believe that the Christian life should be a sinless life. We have not dared to believe it or preach it. But in that we cannot preach the law of God fully. Why not? Because we do not understand the power of justification by faith. Then without justification by faith it is impossible to preach the law of God to the fullest extent. Then to preach justification by faith does not distract from or lower the law of God, but is the only thing that exalts it.²⁰

It is one thing to preach the "theory of the truth". But to denounce the "power" of justification by faith as a subjective experience is to nullify the very gospel itself, which is the power of God unto salvation. Christ in Galilee was seeking to lead His erstwhile disciples from theory to a reality - "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you."⁷

The question is very simple. Are we going to hold to our Adventist position given to us by Jesus - "Wait here" - or are we going to retreat unto the things behind - εις τα οπισω? It really means that to turn to the things behind, we no longer choose to walk with Jesus, but enter the service of Satan with its "light and much power." May we in this crisis hour unfurl the banner on which are written the words:-

Ουχ εις τα οπισω -

Not unto the things behind, but rather to hold to the advanced light entrusted to the disappointed but teachable saints of 1844!

¹Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 394

²John 6:9-10

³John 6:14

⁴John 6:26

⁵John 6:27

⁶John 6:35-42

⁷John 6:51-53

⁸John 6:31

⁹John 6:63

¹⁰John 6:56

¹¹Ellen G. White, Early Writings, p. 55

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., also pp. 251,253

¹⁴D. G. Barnhouse, "Are Seventh-day Adventists Christians?" Eternity, September, 1956. For further details of this dialogue between Barnhouse and Martin and our own church leaders see M. L. Andreasen's Letters to the Churches and L. E. Froom's Movement of Destiny, pp. 476-481

¹⁵R. D. Brinsmead, "The Pre-Advent Judgment", Duranbah Digest, #24, Sept. 15, 1975, p. 1

¹⁶Ibid., See whole presentation of #24.

¹⁷Ellen G. White, Early Writings, p. 56

¹⁸Revelation 14:6-7

¹⁹Ellen G. White, Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 2, pp. 56-57

²⁰E. J. Waggoner, Studies in Romans #10, General Conference Bulletin, 1891; p. 21 in Facsimile Reproduction.

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Note - The final page of last month's thought paper was the advertisement of a special offer on the three manuscripts published by the Foundation involving vital doctrinal issues. If you wish extra sheets of this page for circulation among your friends and church members that they too, might know, write to us as to the number you can use.

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ADVANCING LIGHT

"The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Proverbs 4:18

As the Pilgrims were about to leave the home of their adoption in Holland, and sail for the New World, John Robinson, pastor at Leyden, counselled them in the following words:

I charge you, before God and His blessed angels, that you follow me no farther that you have seen me follow the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of His Holy Word. I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the reformed churches, who are come to a period in religion, and will go at present no farther than the instruments of their reformation. *Luther and Calvin were great and shining lights in their times, yet they penetrated not unto the whole counsel of God.* I beseech you, remember it - 'tis an article of your church covenant - that you be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known unto you from the written Word of God.¹

The revelation of truth is governed by the purposes and the unfolding of the plans of God which were devised from "times eternal"² It is the Eternal One who sits over and beyond the distractions which sin has brought silently working out the counsels of His own will.

The entire Bible is the history of progressive revelation. To Moses was committed truth which has cast light down through the centuries, and which with the testimony of the prophets has constituted a norm by which all truth and revelation is to be tested.³ Then Jesus came. He declared that Moses "wrote of Me."⁴ He advanced the revelation of God and truth to a point hitherto never before visualized for He was the way, the truth, and the life. But the Jews chose to make it the issue as to whether the members of the synagogue were Moses disciples or not. And if not - but rather confessed to the Advanced Light then shining - they were cast out.⁵ This leadership preferred the "things behind" What Moses taught was truth - not one jot or tittle was to pass from the law - but they would not interpret Moses in the light of the revelation revealed in Jesus. Thus they became blind leaders of the blind.

The doctrine of justification by faith was "clearly taught by Luther."⁶ It was present truth in 1517. And it is eternally true, "that faith alone without works justifies before God."⁷ We must have this experience. This we must believe and let the results be realized in our thinking.

But three hundred years after 1517, another reformer arose in the Providence of God, and though imperfectly proclaimed, declared that the time of the cleansing of the sanctuary had come. The light of the true meaning of this change in the heavenly ministry of our great High Priest broke forth clearly after the disappointment in 1844. Thus all truth and prior revelation must be interpreted and understood in the light coming from the open door of the second apartment of the Holy of Holies, and not visa versa.⁸ To keep step with this advancing light and revelation of truth is the very essence of Protestantism. Commenting on the article of the solemn covenant to which the Puritans subscribed, and to which John Robinson referred, the servant of the Lord writes:- "Here is the true spirit of reform, and the vital principle of Protestantism."⁹

¹John Robinson, "Farewell to Pilgrims", July, 1620. Quoted in Source Book for Bible Students, p. 528

²Romans 16:25 ARV

³Isaiah 8:20

⁴John 5:46

⁵John 9:28-34

⁶Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 253

⁷Martin Luther, Quoted in History of the Reformation by J. H. M. D'Aubigne, Book 2, Chapter 6 (Vol. I, p. 209)

⁸Revelation 3:7-8

⁹White, Op. cit., p. 291

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IX - 9 (Sept. 1976)

DID YOU READ?

In the Review, July 17, 1976 - less than a month after the Palmdale Accord - appeared the publication of Manuscript 1, 1892, from the pen of Ellen G. White. Keep in mind that two of the editors of the Review signed the Accord. How one can believe what was written in Manuscript 1, 1892, and accept what was drawn up at Palmdale would make one talk out of both sides of his mouth. She wrote:

The Lord now demands that every son and daughter of Adam through faith in Jesus Christ serve Him in human nature which we now have.

The nature that I now have is fallen human nature. But if Christ did not take this nature, then I have no Example to follow. How can God demand that I serve Him in a nature that Christ did not serve in? But in this same inspired paragraph we are told:

The Lord Jesus came to our world, not to reveal what a God could do, but what a man can do, through faith in God's power to help in every emergency.

Some questions come to mind. Did the Editors have second thoughts after they returned to Takoma Park? Did they not know that this manuscript existed? (See Our High Calling, p. 48) Or is this a "sop" to the laity of the church so that they will not be unduly concerned over the Munich at Palmdale? (In typing this section, I have had a difficult time with the name - Palmdale. I have repeatedly typed - Palmbrook. There is the name - Fallbrook. Any association?)

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A BICENTENIAL SERMON OUTLINE

In the July, 1976, Ministry was given a sermon outline for ministers to follow entitled - "Freedom's Holy Light" (pp. 5-6) It presented the freedom from sin that can be ours in and through Jesus Christ. In the body of the outline, based on Rom. 8:3-11, appeared this comment - "The just requirements of the law are fulfilled in us by what Jesus did in taking sinful flesh and dying for sin." (p. 6) As I noted this very fine presentation, I wondered how many signers of the Palmdale Accord preached it this way? But then, on second thought, it doesn't matter. You can now preach and believe the incarnation either way - the way of Babylon, or the historic way of Adventism - and still be retained in the synagogue.