



"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

INTELLECTUAL DISHONESTY

The Adventist News Service (ANS) - a Brinsmead publication under the signature of one, Jack D. Walker of Goodlettsville, Tenn., has released two more tirades against the concepts set forth in the Sabbath School Lessons for the second Quarter of 1977. The ANS-3 issue carried a "Brief Examination" by a Max Hatton, "a Seventh-day minister in the Greater Sidney Conference, Australia"; and the ANS-4 contained some correspondence between another Australian minister, Austen G. Fletcher, and the Editor of the Review, plus an open letter by a Victor P. Kluzit, also noted as "a Seventh-day Adventist minister" living at Keene, Texas.

Both the Examination by Hatton and the open letter by Kluzit revealed species of intellectual dishonesty, and as such, cast a shadow over all that they wrote. If a writer cannot be honest with his sources, his conclusions do not bear the credentials of truth.

Kluzit quoted from the Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 3, p. 259, in this manner - "His divinity was veiled beneath humanity. He hid within himself those all-powerful attributes [Omnipotence, Omniscience & Omnipresence] which belonged to him as one equal with God." He admitted, "(insertion supplied)" Now let us read this sentence in the context of the whole paragraph following the quotes of I Tim. 3:16, noting carefully the limiting and defining statements made by the servant of the Lord both prior to and following these two sentences. The context reads:

The Saviour came into the world, outwardly the son of David, not manifesting the full significance of His character. His spirit was subject to that discipline and experience through which humanity must in some measure pass. His divinity was veiled beneath humanity. He hid within Himself those all-powerful attributes which belonged to Him as one equal with God. At times His divine character flashed forth with such wonderful power that all who were capable of distinguishing spiritual things pronounced Him the Son of God.

We seek to distort the Spirit of Prophecy, because we are not willing to take the simple word of God for what it says. John declared plainly that the glory which was Jesus' when the Word was made flesh was the glory of the Divine character - "full of grace and truth." (John 1:14). John also heard Jesus pray - "O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:5) Evidently, Mr. Kluzit does not understand the difference between the "form of God" - aspects of which are, Omnipotence, Omniscience & Omnipresence - of which Christ emptied Himself (Phil 2:7 ARV), and the all-powerful character of God

manifest in truth and grace, which Christ brought with Him.

As for Pastor Hatton's out-of-context statement appearing under the caption, "Final Thought for Contemplation" one has only to read the whole article in the Review & Herald for March 15, 1887, to see the distortion. The statement which Hatton used read:

There are many, especially among those who profess holiness, who compare themselves to Christ as though they were equal with Him in perfection of character. This is blasphemy. Could they obtain a view of Christ's righteousness, they would have a sense of their own sinfulness and imperfection.

In context, this statement is referring to "the 'holiness' people of today". In other words, the Pentecostals. The very next paragraph following Hatton's quotes returns to the theme of the article, that there is no ground for men to take glory to themselves "for every good quality which they possess, they are indebted to the grace of Christ." The first four sentences of this paragraph read:

As one becomes acquainted with the history of the Redeemer, he discovers in himself serious defects; his unlikeness to Christ is so great that he sees the necessity for radical changes in his life. Still he studies with a desire to become like his great Exemplar. He catches the looks, the spirit of his beloved Master. By beholding, by "looking unto the author and finisher of our faith" he becomes changed into the same image.

And this was the objective of the Sabbath School Lessons! To what length men will go in the distortion of the inspired writings in seeking to prove truth to be falsehood is unbelievable. But this man who so distorted the Spirit of Prophecy is declared to be a minister of the Church receiving the tithe of the Australian laity.

THE FALSE CHRIST vs THE TRUE CHRIST

The controversy within the Church has now shifted to the basic truth upon which the doctrine of Righteousness by Faith either stands or falls - the doctrine of the Incarnation. This is not saying that this doctrine was not previously an issue, for it has been ever since the book - Questions on Doctrine - was published. However, it has come to the front in full exposure as a result of the release of the Sabbath School Lessons for the second Quarter, 1977.

The issue is quite simple. One section of the Church teaches that Jesus Christ in His humanity assumed the perfect, sinless human nature which was Adam's prior to the Fall. The historic position of the Church until the mid 1950's was that Christ took upon Himself the fallen nature of the sons of Adam, as all the descendants of Adam received. It is obvious that these are two different Christs. One is the false Christ, and the other the true Christ. It cannot be both! Thus every member of the Church is faced with a crucial choice - which Christ shall I choose? And on that choice, the salvation of all pivots.

Peter stated - "Neither is their salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12) Of which Christ was he speaking? It cannot be both! One is the true Christ who came down from God to not only redeem man by the sacrifice of Himself, but also to set an example for man to follow. The other is a philisophical Christ - a figment of the reasoning of the human mind -, as verily an idol as any wooden or stone image which the heathen might form for worship. The difference is real and consequential. This is not something that can be compromised as was done at Palmdale, for over the issue which is the true Christ, there can be no compromise. We stand as verily before Pilate's judgment seat as did the Jewish leaders of yesteryears, and are choosing between Christ and Barabbas.

The true Christ existed from all eternity in the "form of God" till Bethlehem. (Phil. 2:6) In that "form" He was immortal, omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent. But God is more than a "form" even as man is more than a "body". Jesus, when divested of the "form of God" could state - "I am the way, the truth, and the life. . . He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." (John 14:6,9) There is more to God than the manifestations of His infinite powers as exhibited in the "form of God." God has character. This is what makes God desirable. To have the powers of God without the character of God would be ultimate devastation - a state of affairs that the human mind cannot completely perceive. It was over this very aspect of God that the great controversy began. He with whom sin originated "desired God's power, but not His character." (DA, p. 436) For the redemption and salvation of man, for the preservation of the universe, it was not the manifestation of the power of God but the demonstration of the character of God that was to settle the controversy. Thus the true Christ divested Himself of the "form of God" and in its place He took upon Himself the "form of a slave." (Phil. 2:7 Greek)

Now Adam was not created a slave, but a son. (Luke 3:38) It was Adam, the transgressor, who became a slave. The true Christ took that form. He who was the very essence of the character of God accepted the slave form of man. It is stated thus:

In Christ were united the divine and the human - the Creator and the creature. The nature of God, whose law had been transgressed, and the nature of Adam the transgressor meet in Jesus - the son of God, and the Son of man. Ms. 141, 1901 (7BC:926)

In another place, we read - "Christ did in reality unite the offending nature of man to His own sinless nature, . . ." (R&H, July 17, 1900). Again - "He took upon Himself fallen, suffering human nature, degraded and defiled by sin." (Y.I., Dec. 20, 1900; See 4BC:1147) It is this clear differentiation between what He was, and what He took upon Himself that we need to keep straight. He was in the character of God - the very essence of truth, purity, and love - in other words, holy and sinless. He was that "holy thing". (Luke 1:35) But He took upon Himself - and herein is the difference between the true and the false Christ - the offending, suffering, fallen, slave nature of man, degraded and defiled by sin. He did not cease to be holy and righteous for the "form of a slave" did not conquer Him; He conquered it. He condemned sin in the flesh. (Rom. 8:3)

Those who erect a philisophical idol in place of the true Christ rob God of His very

victory over sin as revealed in the life and sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Instead of Jesus demonstrating God's character in humanity, they have God demonstrating His powers - omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. Again this is not the issue! If God had wished to demonstrate His omnipotent power over sin, He could have destroyed Lucifer in the very beginning of the sin question. But the character of God was demonstrated in the true Christ with the power that is attendant and inherent in character itself. We read:

To human eyes, Christ was only a man, yet He was a perfect man. In His humanity He was the impersonation of the divine character. God embodied His own attributes in His Son, - His power, His wisdom, His goodness, His purity, His truthfulness, His spirituality, and His benevolence. In Him, though human, all perfection of character, all divine excellence dwelt. (Youth's Instructor, Sept. 16, 1897)

And, "in His human nature He [Christ] maintained the purity of His divine character." (Y.I., June 2, 1898) While so doing, He also "presented to the wondering universe perfect and complete humility in His human character, and perfect obedience to all the requirements of God." (SM, bk i, p. 256) But those who bow at the shrine of the false Christ declare that God gave to Jesus a perfect human character which in reality did not need to be developed in stern hard battles with self, or in subduing the inclinations of the flesh. Paul did not so teach. He who recognized in the Jesus of the Damascus Road, the One who had taken upon Himself the "form of a slave"; One who had condemned sin in the flesh; also recognized in that One, He who "learned obedience through the things which He suffered." (Heb. 5:8) God put His character on trial, and through Jesus demonstrated that in the flesh of fallen humanity His way could be maintained and that a human being likewise in that nature could overcome the inclinations of the flesh. "The Lord Jesus came to our world, not to reveal what a God could do, but what a man could do, through faith in God's power to help in every emergency." (OHC, p. 48) In this God was vindicated - and the courts of heaven rang in the triumphant chant - "Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ." (Rev. 12:10)

Those who worship at the the shrine of the false Christ seek to immune their idol god from our common humanity. Recognizing the depravity of human nature - but failing to see in that depravity the results of two forces, inherited and cultivated tendencies to sin - they declare that Christ could not have accepted our fallen nature without Himself sinning. To preserve their idol immaculate, they teach that God was manifest in a "body" not akin to our common humanity, but a "new" humanity "created by the Holy Spirit" using the womb of Mary merely as a vehicle for its delivery into the environment of earth. The advocates of this false Christ state this clearly. ANS-3 quotes Hatton - "His humanity was created by the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary." Then he adds - "His humanity was made of the same 'stuff' as ours, but He was not made just as we are." But unless "conceived" (Luke 1:31) in the womb of Mary - though of the same "stuff" - there would exit no bond between our humanity and Christ's humanity. Jesus would not be a Son of man - thus not the true Christ! And this Hatton states - "He was not made just as we are."

Lest Hatton should state that I was quoting him out of context, let it be noted that he is seeking in context to present a Christ with a weakened physical nature, but not one who inherited in the humanity He assumed our moral degeneracy. But in context,

therefore, he compounds his problem by having the Holy Spirit create the humanity of Christ, and in so doing indicates that the result was a physically degenerate body. Is this what the Holy Spirit will do when this mortal puts on immortality? No, fallen humanity is derived from fallen humanity, be it physical degeneracy or otherwise; and this is the humanity Christ accepted from Mary.

Now the Catholic theologians recognizing that fallen humanity can produce only fallen humanity, declare Mary immaculate, thus Mary can produce a humanity free from the fallen nature according to their concepts, yet they leave the appearance of a being akin to our common ancestry. The Evangelicals while denying Mary her place in the Catholic sun, indicate that the womb of Mary was sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and from this sanctified womb came forth a human body not possessing the forces inherent in our flesh. But we - the forces of apostasy in the Church - presume to have the Holy Spirit outright create a new humanity - thus divorcing the Saviour from our humanity altogether. But the supreme tragedy of this whole thing is that the leadership of the Church at Palmdale accepted this false Christ on a par with the true Christ of historic Adventism! So what is the result? It would seem that the Editor of the Review has had second thoughts about what he affixed his signature to at Palmdale, and is seeking through editorials to state the true convictions of historic Adventism. But the President of the General Conference having affixed his imprimatur to Froom's book - Movement of Destiny - would be caught in a outright contradiction should he come out boldly and denounce the Palmdale affinity with the false Christ.

PUBLICATIONS

The Adventist Laymen's Foundation has prepared a manuscript on the Incarnation covering the teaching of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy from Genesis through the book of Revelation. It is entitled - IN THE FORM OF A SLAVE. This title is based on the statement of Paul found in Philippians 2:7 Greek.

The first instance of the teaching of the doctrine of the Incarnation as is being presently advocated by the forces of apostasy in the Church was taught by the "Holy Flesh" men of Indiana. Of this teaching, Sister White stated - "None are to pick up any points of this doctrine and call it truth. There is not a thread of truth is this whole fabric." This whole movement from 1899 - 1901 has been documented in the manuscript - THE HOLY FLESH MOVEMENT.

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