



"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

EDITORIAL VERBAGE

A recent series of articles by the Editor of the Review has attempted to explain the Palmdale Conference Accord and thus assure the laity of the Church that there were no compromises with the historic truths of Adventism in the areas of righteousness by faith and the Incarnation.¹ But he did not tell the laity the background which necessitated this conference, and without this background no one can properly evaluate the statements of doctrine agreed to by the participants including the Editor and the President of the General Conference.

This conference resulted from doctrinal agitation concerning the Incarnation and Righteousness by Faith in the Australian Division. The manuscript prepared and published by Mrs Gilliam Ford, wife of the head of the Theology Department of Avondale College, sets forth the position taken by the faculty of that department. Elder F. A. Basham in a paper presented to the Biblical Research Committee of the Australian Division established certain facts to show that the manuscript while bearing the name of Mrs Ford was clearly the thinking of Dr. Desmond Ford and his cohorts.² Further, Robert Brinsmead in a special "thought paper" which was not to be circulated among church members in which he confirmed his wholehearted agreement with the Ford position, stated that the manuscript prepared by Mrs Ford has "the endorsement of Dr. Ford and the theology department of Avondale College."³ The manuscript itself expresses "indebtedness" to each member of the faculty, and gives their names.⁴

The first paragraph of the "Introduction" of this manuscript prepared by Mrs Desmond Ford presents the issue as clearly as it can be stated. It reads:

A correct understanding of the human nature of Christ is crucial for a balanced presentation of Righteousness by Faith. Although the central emphasis of this paper is not Righteousness by Faith, the main reason for attempting it is to lay a foundation for a right understanding of that very topic. It could be put this way. What you believe about Christ's humanity will have a very strong influence on what you believe about Christ's righteousness, and both in turn will influence your view of Christian perfection.⁵

This analysis between the Incarnation, Christ's righteousness, and perfection is absolutely true, and this is why the whole of this discussion is so critical, and this is why the pronouncements found in the Palmdale Accord are so spiritually dangerous in the compromise made in regard to the Incarnation.

Mrs Ford stresses Six Propositions and gives what the Theology Department teaches on each, contrasting what they believe to be "The True and the False Gospels". We shall note two of these which were a part of the Palmdale Accord, and what the Accord had to say about them.

In Proposition #1 on the Nature of Christ, the manuscript stated - "The True Gospel" says that "Christ took on Adam's sinlessness but not his strength." The "Other Gospel" say that "Christ was exactly like us in His human nature." And what does the Palmdale Accord say about these two positions? After quoting Romans 8:3, Heb. 2:14, 17, and 2 Cor. 5:21, they agree that -----

Not all Christians view these passages alike. For example, for some they mean that Jesus did not commit sin in either word, deed, or thought; for others they mean that Jesus not only committed no sin but was without the inherited tendencies to sin common to fallen humanity.

And what was the conclusion?

Which ever of these views Christians may hold of Christ's humanity, we believe that the central concept is to recognize Jesus as the Saviour of all mankind, and that through His victorious life, lived in human flesh, He provides the link between divinity and humanity.⁷

While the Editor of the Review in his attempt to explain away the Munich at Palmdale, admits "that the Palmdale statement does not label one view as orthodox and the other as heretical" he seeks to place his emphasis of belief on the side of the question which the faculty of Avondale labels as the False Gospel. But since he signed the Accord which permits either belief, he must charitably state that "Christians who are humble and possess the spirit of the Master will be loving and charitable, not critical and harsh, toward church members and leaders who hold views different from their own."⁸ This is a false charity, unless the doctrine of the Incarnation is unimportant. The faculty of Avondale do not consider it so, and draw a line clear and distinct from their viewpoint which is contrary to the historic teaching of the Seventh-day Adventist Church relative to the doctrine of the Incarnation.⁹ Evidently the Editor of the Review has not been reading the Great Controversy of late in which the charity he manifests is labeled - Satanic Liberalism! Observe closely these words:

The position that it is of no consequence what men believe, is one of *Satan's* most successful deceptions. He knows that the truth, received in the love of it, sanctifies the soul of the receiver; therefore he is constantly seeking to substitute false theories, fables, another gospel. From the beginning, the servants of God have contended against false teachers, not merely as vicious men, but as inculcators of falsehoods that were fatal to the soul. Elijah, Jeremiah, Paul, firmly and fearlessly opposed those who were turning men from the word of God. That *liberality* which regards a correct religious faith as unimportant, found no favor with these holy defenders of the truth.¹⁰

The sixth proposition set forth by Dr Desmond Ford's wife is in regard to "Righteousness by Faith". She writes that "The True Gospel" teaches "Righteousness by Faith is justification alone." "That Other Gospel" states - "Righteousness by Faith is both justification and sanctification." It should also be understood that in the explanation of this position which the Faculty of Theology at Avondale labels as "That Other Gospel", Mrs Ford indicates that "Adventists in contrast to the New Testament have often used the expression Righteousness by Faith to include sanctification."¹¹ Thus the position of the Seventh-day Adventist Church - and this involves the messages not only of the servant of the Lord, but also those brought through Elders Jones and Waggoner - is declared to be in direct opposition to what

is termed New Testament teaching.

Now what does the Palmdale Accord say? "We agree that when the words *righteousness* and *faith* are connected (by 'of', 'by', etc.) in Scripture, reference is to the experience of justification by faith." Then the Accord notes that the concept of the righteousness of God in the Bible encompasses more than merely justification as set forth by Paul in certain of his letters. "Therefore, although we are justified by the merits of the blood of Christ and through the instrument of faith, it is also true that works of loving obedience are the evidence of saving faith. . . Thus Seventh-day Adventists have often used the phrase 'righteousness by faith' *theologically* to include both justification and sanctification."¹² It should be clear to anyone reading the Palmdale Accord with the knowledge of what the heretics of Avondale are advocating that the Church was sold out on two points: - 1) That righteousness by faith is justification alone, and 2) That the Church is teaching contrary to the New Testament in their theological use of the phrase. We agreed to the first point as advocated by Avondale theologians, and acknowledged their charge against the teaching of the Church as correct!

Now let it be clearly understood by every reader of this thought paper there was no need to agree to the proposition that when the phrase "righteousness by/of faith" is used by Paul, he is referring only to what the heretics of Avondale call justification. Read Galatians 5:4-7; Hebrews 11:7; and then note also the faith of Abraham as recorded in Hebrews 11:8-12, 17, remembering that Paul in Romans 4:16 declared him to be "the father of us all." We do not need to make accommodations for the teachings of Evangelical Protestantism, which in reality is no more than a revival of apostate Protestantism. We need to understand the message of the Second Angel of Revelation 14 in its historic setting when the pronouncement went forth - "Babylon is fallen."¹³

What attitude should we, therefore, assume in this crisis over truth? We would do well to review the lessons to be learned from the experience of the early church. So long "as persecution continued" the early Church "remained comparatively pure," but when it ceased, "converts were added who were less sincere and devoted." "When Christians consented to unite with those who were but half converted from paganism," the way was opened for Satan to use the compromisers to direct their "warfare against the most essential doctrines of Christ."¹⁴ Some of us can remember the time when it was difficult to be a Seventh-day Adventist because to keep a job, and to keep the Sabbath were in direct conflict. Converts to the Church were few compared to the number of baptisms reported today. Then came the change, and into the Church came affluence and numbers. The simple faith and Bible teachings which marked our departments of theology were not enough for those who wished to be like all the churches around about them. So we introduced men who had degrees in theology from the great universities of Europe - and the same results have followed that followed in the Early Church. Warfare has been made against the most essential features of the doctrines of Christ, that is, unless the Incarnation, and Righteousness by Faith through our Lord Jesus Christ are not essential doctrines of Christ!

The inspired commentary on what our attitude should be is given in the record of how those early Christians who wished to preserve their faith reacted to the apostasy they had to meet. Read with care and prayerfully these words:

After a long and severe conflict, the faithful few decided to dissolve all union with the apostate church if she still refused to free herself from

falsehood and idolatry. They saw that separation was an absolute necessity if they would obey the word of God. They dared not tolerate errors fatal to their own souls, and set an example which would imperil the faith of their children and children's children. To secure peace and unity they were ready to make any concession consistent with fidelity to God; but they felt that even peace would be too dearly purchased at the sacrifice of principle. If unity could be secured only by the compromise of truth and righteousness, then let there be difference and even war.¹⁵

¹Kenneth H. Wood, "F. Y. I", Review, October 21, 28, November 4, 18, 1976

²F. A. Basham, A Paper Presented to the Biblical Research Committee of the Australian Division on the Subject of "Righteousness by Faith", Feb. 3, 1976, p. 1

³Robert D. Brinsmead, Thought Paper - "The Current Righteousness by Faith Dialogue", p. 1

⁴Gillian Ford, The Soteriological Implications of the Human Nature of Christ, p. 3

⁵Ibid., p. 2

⁶Ibid., p. 8

⁷Palmdale Accord, Review, May 27, 1976, p. 5

⁸Kenneth H. Wood, "F. Y. I.", Review, November 18, 1976, p. 13

⁹William H. Grotheer, An Interpretive History of the Doctrine of the Incarnation as Taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

¹⁰Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 520

¹¹Ford, Op. Cit., pp. 9-10

¹²Palmdale Accord, Review, May 27, 1976, p. 4

¹³Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, pp. 380-381, 383

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 44-45

¹⁵Ibid., p. 45

X-1 (Jan., 1977)

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DO YOU KNOW WHY?

Beginning with the October 28, 1976 issue of the Review, there appeared in consecutive issues a series of five articles on the "Role of Israel in Bible Prophecy." Do you know why these were prepared and published at this time? All that was told by the editorial staff is that these articles were a result of research done by the Biblical Research Institute directed by Dr. Gordon M. Hyde.¹ The full story was not revealed as to why this research became necessary at this time.

This past year, The Harvest Press published a book co-authored by Elders R. Allan Anderson, former Ministerial Secretary of the General Conference, and Jay Milton Hoffman, who established and directed the Times Square Evangelistic Center in New York City. It is entitled - All Eyes on Israel. The introduction to this book - six pages in all - was written by none other than Elder H. M. S. Richards, Sr. It is a glowing commendation of what is written in the book itself, and the reader is urged to study carefully some of thoughts expressed, even though they may be new to him. Dr. Kenneth Vine wrote the foreword.² The thesis of this book is that Israel became a state in 1948 under the Providence of God, and has yet a part to play in the purposes and plans of God according to the Covenant made with Abraham and with his descendants. Several statements are quoted from the Spirit of

Prophecy to support this contention but a close reading of these statements in context indicates that they are not saying what the authors are trying to make them say. It is true that the servant of the Lord did indicate that a work was yet to be done for the Jewish people, and that many would respond.³ But these statements do not indicate that Israel as a nation would ever be the chosen people of God again after 34 A. D.

The first three articles of the series appearing in the Review were right on key and presented the relationship between the promises of God to Abraham, and how they will be fulfilled in the new "congregation of the Lord" who came into being in the New Testament as the "ecclesia", or called out church of Christ.⁴ The fourth article introduces the well-known smear technique - "guilt by association." In other words because certain modern day interpreters of prophecy, who teach the secret rapture and other futurisitic concepts also include Israel as a State in their order of last day events, then any study of the fulfillment of prophecy that would relate to Jerusalem is also labeled, "futurism." This is very poor scholarship, and should be beneath the use of the General Conference Biblical Research Committee headed by Dr. Hyde.

The book by Dr. Anderson and Dr. Hoffman takes the position that the fulfillment of Luke 21:24 - "the times of the Gentiles" - occurred in 1967. And this is absolutely correct. The last article of the five in the Review seeks to void this conclusion. The arguments are weak, and the rules of interpretation used by the associate editor of the Review violate the principles of hermeneutics which are set forth in a book edited by Dr. Gordon Hyde himself and which was used in the 1974 North American Division Bible Conferences.⁵ Because this last article not only strikes at the book by Anderson and Hoffman, but also strikes directly at the monograph prepared by the Adventist Laymen's Foundation - The Times of the Gentiles Fulfilled - we shall discuss this fifth article in detail in the next thought paper.

¹"This Week", Review, October 28, 1976, p. 3

²Roy Allan Anderson & Jay Milton Hoffman, All Eyes on Israel, 243 pp. (The Harvest Press, Ft Worth, Texas, 1976)

³Ellen G. White, Review & Herald, June 29, 1905

⁴Walter F. Specht, "New Testament Israel", Review, November 11, 1976, p. 9

⁵A Symposium on Biblical Hermeneutics, Editor, Gordon M Hyde, p. 176

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DO THEY REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY VOTED?

The 1976 Annual Conference Action on Evangelism stated:

It could well be that we are standing under a certain indictment of Heaven for not courageously and faithfully pursuing the finishing of God's work through direct evangelism, and that because of a "business as usual" attitude the calls for revival have not been followed with desired results as God has promised. (The Ministry, Dec. 1976, p. 4)

Did the hierarchy when they voted these words consider the Divine Purpose in Vol. 8, p. 247, par 2 in Testimonies for the Church? Could these men subconsciously

know what Heaven's indictment is, and now they are going to attempt to storm the gates of Heaven for a reversal of the Divine Decree? Interestingly, this part of the action was omitted in the report to the laity of the Church through the Review. See December 2, 1976, p. 14, col 2 - deletion marks after first paragraph of "The Real Issue". Thus for the laity the "real issue" was covered up!

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THE ADVENTIST PROPERTIES & MORTGAGE TRUST (See Special Report, September, 1976, "Observation #2" for review of details.)

From very reliable sources, I have been advised that this planned Trust has been dropped like a "hot potato". I was further advised that two of the proposed Managers of this project could not be "bonded." A friend in California after reading the Special Report went to the State Capitol in Sacramento and checked "Corporations Record, a division of the Secretary of State Office." In a letter to me dated, September 29, he reported:

I checked to find what legal status this Adventist Properties & Mortgage Trust has. I was surprised there is none. Nothing of this kind is registered. If it was, it would be to some extent regulated by the corporate laws. I then went to the Justice Department where Charitable Trust Companies are registered. I talked to the Deputy Registrar and showed him that portion of the paragraph on your page 2, Special Report, "Observation #2". He said their records show no such entity. But he did want to pursue this further to find out by writing Adventist Properties why they are not registered and if they think that their church connection exempts them from registering, then to give their reasons.

The very reliable source also advised me that Elder George Vandeman of IT IS WRITTEN telecast was pushing hard for this adventure in a \$3,000,000 loan to the Seventh-day Adventist Radio-Television-Film Center by the Adventist Properties & Mortgage Trust. This latter fact may account for the irritation caused among the staff of IT IS WRITTEN when some laity after reading Special Report wrote directly asking about IT IS WRITTEN'S involvement, and the use made of their funds.

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YOUR HELP NEEDED

We wish to double our mailing list in the United States by mid-year, and then double that gain by the end of 1977. This is the tenth year of publication, and we wish to make this Decade #1 Project. Here is the suggested plan:

- 1) As you talk to concerned members of the Church show them your copies of the thought paper. If they are interested, but hesitant to send their own names to us, you send them, and we will place them on a temporary list. After three months we will write and give them an opportunity to be placed on the main list.
- 2) If however, these concerned folk write themselves, we will place them on the regular list immediately. Work toward this objective and response.
- 3) We do NOT want lists of names from Church Directories nor Conference Directories. We are interested in quality readers not just number of names.

Those in Canada, Australia, and Europe, please follow #2 of the suggested Plan.