



"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

WHAT IS UNIQUE IN ADVENTISM?

If God has called forth a people with a special message for this end-time of human history, then that people possess an uniqueness which no other people have. We believe that the Adventist Movement was raised up by God to bring the final message of mercy to this world. What, then, is the unique basis upon which the Adventist Movement rests?

Is it the Sabbath? No. The Sabbath is basic, but not unique. There are Seventh-day Baptists, Seventh-day Church of God people, Seventh-day Pentecostals; and orthodox Jews keep the Sabbath. Is it the message that Jesus is coming again? No. This is basic, but not unique. There are many voices proclaiming "the King is coming." It is true that many of these do not understand how the Christ will come, and this needs to be clearly set forth in presenting this basic doctrine.

What then is unique in Adventism? The message of the Sanctuary and how we understand its relationship to what has and is taking place in the Heavenly. It was Asaph the Seer (II Chron. 29:30) who wrote - "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?" (Ps. 77:13) Not only is the way of God to be found in the sanctuary, but the power of God emanates from the sanctuary. "The Shepherd of Israel" dwells between the cherubims, and from that place of eminence sends forth His light and His truth. (Ps. 80:1)¹ In the book of Hebrews, the work that had been carried on in the Heavenly Places is predicated by an understanding of what was done in the earthly prototype. These verses need to be re-noted:

Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. (Heb. 8:1-5)

Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience. (Heb. 9:6-9)

From these verse we need to understand certain basic truths: 1) The earthly priests served "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things." Now a shadow and an example are not the same. A "shadow" is but a faint representation of what it outlines. It lacks real substance. The "shadow" of the earthly services were the sacrifices which could never "make the comers thereunto perfect." (Heb. 10:1) It was utterly impossible for the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean to take away sins. The blood of animals is but a shadowy representation of the precious blood of Jesus Christ our Lord. But not so, an example. An example, while not the actual problem, does reveal the exact way to solve the problem. The example takes us through the steps so that when the reality is faced, we can attain its "sum".

2) And what is the example? The priests went always (daily) into the first apartment accomplishing the service of God, but into the Most Holy Place, the high priest went alone once every year. Herein is the uniqueness of Adventism. Based on the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 - "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" - we have clearly defined the work of Christ as divided between the two apartments of the heavenly sanctuary with His final work beginning in 1844.

Because of sin a mediator became a necessity. "There is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." (I Tim. 2:5) This priesthood of Jesus must be understood in its fulness. In this mediatorial work as High Priest forever after the order of Melchizedec, He is presented as a "forerunner. . . for us entered." (Heb. 6:19-20) As a forerunner, He has prepared the way, and that way is through the veil, that is to say His flesh. (Heb. 10:19-22) By the means of His incarnation, He has not only provided a perfect Sacrifice, but He has also provided a perfect Example. This He mediates for all who come unto God by Him.

Not only has Jesus Christ prepared the Way - but He will also prepare a people for He is the Forerunner for us, who of ourselves cannot attain to the Way exemplified. This is a part of the covenant that He made with the Father. We read:

Jesus refused to receive the homage of His people until He had the assurance that His sacrifice was accepted by the Father. He ascended to the heavenly courts, and from God Himself heard the assurance that His atonement for the sins of men had been ample, that through His blood all might gain eternal life. The Father ratified the covenant made with Christ, that He would receive repentant and obedient men, and would love them as He loves His Son. Christ was to complete His work, and fulfill His pledge to "make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir." All power in heaven and on earth was given to the Prince of Life, and He returned to His followers in a world of sin, that He might impart to them of His power and glory. (Desire of Ages, p. 790)

We can rest assured that even as the Way provided is "ample", so also the preparation of a people will be just as perfect as was the sacrifice which provided the Way.

A little checking of the text used in the above reference from Desire of Ages - Isaiah 13:12 - in context reveals that this commitment of Christ will be fulfilled between the time when "the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not

give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine" (Isa. 13:10); and the time when the heavens shall be shaken, "and the earth removed out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of His fierce anger." (Isa. 13:13) In other words between the time when the major signs in the sun, moon, and stars were fulfilled (1780, 1833), and the time of the final wrath of God in the seven last plagues, Jesus Christ will fulfill His promise of a completed work - a people perfected because His final atonement in the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary brings forth the latter rain. Herein is the uniqueness of Adventism.

The Message of Adventism - its unique witness - says to men and women living in this end-time of human history, that Jesus, the Lamb of God, is as man's great High Priest ministering a final atonement - "a special atonement for [spiritual] Israel" (EW. p. 251) - whereby they shall become "pillars" in the temple of God. On these shall be placed the "name of God;" the name of the city of God, which is the New Jerusalem, and Jesus' own new name. (Rev. 3:12. See also EW, p. 15) Let it be noted that they will not be "pillars" in Old Jerusalem", but will be "pillars" in a new "city" which is above, which is the mother of us all. (Gal. 4:26)² This unique witness of Adventism is the message that is coming under fire at this very present time.

Geoffrey J. Paxton in his book, The Shaking of Adventism, declares - "From Brinsmead's [present] writings it is supremely evident that the doctrine of justification by faith alone is that which casts out any notion of perfection in this life." (p. 145). This is the challenge that is being thrown at Adventism today. But it is not true, and the message of the Sanctuary proves that it is not true. Justification by faith and the perfection of character are consistent and compatible when understood in the light of the message of the sanctuary - the unique basis of Adventism. This we shall continue to explore in the next thought paper.

¹ It is interesting to observe that both of these Psalms which state these basic truths concerning the sanctuary were written by Asaph the Seer. Of his own experience, he wrote - "My feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped." It was not until he "went into the sanctuary of God" that he recovered his faith, and understood his relationship before God. It was then that he could write - "Thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none on earth that I desire beside Thee." (Psalm 73: 2, 17, 23-25) In a time when the basic truths of the sanctuary are slipping from the understanding of "God's professed people", and our steps are faltering, we need to renew our trust and faith in God's way by going again "into the sanctuary of God."

² Over this very point, we are having great difficulty. Paul uses an experience from the story of Abraham to illustrate what he means. The "Old City" represented by Hagar and Ishmael her son by works is in bondage with her "children." This is the "mother" of all those who are attempting to gain heaven by works and allegiance to human organization. By some present day spiritual guides, this earthly church is declared to be our "mother." But

Paul says that those who are children by faith have a different "mother", even the New Jerusalem which is from above. To have been born again by earthly methods - evangelistic psychology - the will of man, still produces a birth of the flesh. To be born of the Spirit - the true head of the Church - is to be born from above. Adventism was to have brought men and women into a relationship with the Holy Spirit as the Head of the Church. It was the Holy Spirit which the leadership in 1888 rejected. (Series A, #6, p. 20) It is the Holy Spirit which they continue to reject because they desire to be "first ministers" of the Church. We have never yet trusted the Holy Spirit to lead Christ's Church, because we say that unless the human can control, it will be broken into a thousand atoms. God will yet demonstrate that man's devisings will produce schisms in the earthly "body" but that Christ will mediate a people - 144,000 strong - who will speak the same language, and who will be united in one faith - even the faith once delivered to the saints.

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THE VOICE OF A PIONEER IN THE ADVENT MOVEMENT

The servant of the Lord wrote:

I have had presentations regarding the deceptions that Satan is bringing in at this time [1905 - the Alpha of apostasy]. I have been instructed that we should make prominent the testimony of some of the older workers who are now dead. Let them continue to speak through their articles as found in the early numbers of our papers." *Letter 99, 1905 (CW. 26)*

If, to counter the Alpha, Sister White was instructed that the messages of the pioneers, then dead, should speak, how much more so now in the midst of the Omega of deadly heresies. We plot below Joseph Bates' understanding of the Church "periods" of Revelation 3 as defined in his article in the first issue of the Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, November, 1850, p. 8, published in Paris, ME. (The direct quotes on the time lines are from Bates' article.)

2nd Advent

Sardis - "the nominal church or Babylon"

Philadelphia - "the only true church of God on earth"

Laodicea - "the nominal Adventist"

[A corollary to the Bates' premise would place the church of Thyatira on a time line above Sardis representing the Catholic church. This whole position would accord with the "ecumenical" activities which can be documented today involving Thyatira, Sardis, and Laodicea.]

The position of Joseph Bates regarding Laodicea is in harmony with the Greek text of Revelation 3:15-16 and the messages of the Spirit of Prophecy. Note carefully the following:

Οἶδα σου τὰ ἔργα ὅτι οὔτε ψυχρὸς εἶ οὔτε ζεστός. Ὁφείλον
I know of thee the works that neither cold thou art nor hot. O that

ψυχρὸς ἢ ζεστός. Οὕτως εἶ χλιαρὸς εἶ καὶ οὔτε ζεστός οὔτε
cold thou wast or hot. So because lukewarm thou art and neither hot nor

ψυχρὸς μέλλω σε ἐμεῖσαι ἐκ τοῦ στόματος μου.
cold, I am about thee to vomit out of the mouth of me.

These sentences are not in the subjunctive mood with the possibility of "if", but are simple declarative sentences of intent based on a specified declared condition.

Observe these excerpts from the Spirit of Prophecy: [If you wish to note them in full context, they are taken from the Review & Herald article, "The Righteousness of Christ", August 19, 1890]

I am often referred to the parable of the ten virgins, five of whom were wise, and five foolish. This parable has been and will be fulfilled to the very letter, for it has a special application to this time, and, like the third angel's message, has been fulfilled and will continue to be present truth till the close of time. . .

The enemy has men in our ranks through whom he works, that the light which God has permitted to shine upon the heart and illuminate the chambers of the mind may be darkened. There are persons who have received the precious light of the righteousness of Christ, but they do not act upon it; they are foolish virgins. . .

The name "foolish virgins" represents the character of those who have not the genuine heart-work wrought by the Spirit of God. . . They had all the light, all the knowledge, but they failed to obtain the oil of grace; they did not receive the truth in its sanctifying power. . .

The state of the Church represented by the foolish virgins, is also spoken of as the Laodicean state. The True Witness declares, "I know thy works, thou art neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. . ."

The position of Bates in regard to the Philadelphia church is also sustained in the Spirit of Prophecy. Bates justified his conclusion - "the only true church of God on earth, for they asked to be translated to the city of God" - with the texts, Revelation 3:12 & Hebrews 12:22-24. Check the context of Revelation 3:12 and now notice how the servant of the Lord uses this text in the following statement:

To the people who will be keeping the commandments of God when under the

hand of oppression, will come these words of comfort: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold I come quickly. Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out no more: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and I will write upon him my new name." (*Review & Herald, May 2, 1893*)

Describing the 144,000, it is written:

The 144,000 were all sealed and perfectly united. On their foreheads was written, God, New Jerusalem, and a glorious star containing Jesus' new name. (*Early Writings, p. 15*)

It is apropos to ask the question - In the light of the above statements, of which church will the 144,000 be members? Of this group, the Word of God declares - "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins." (Rev. 14:4) And why? Because they who confess their "mother" to be "the heavenly Jerusalem" are members of the "church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven." (See Heb. 12:22-23, one of the texts used by Bates.)

"Let us strive with all the power that God has given us to be among the hundred and forty-four thousand." (*Review & Herald, March 9, 1905*) And - this counsel was written in the same year Sister White was "instructed that we should make prominent the testimony of some of the older workers" who were then dead. It would be well if all would read and heed what Bates said about Laodicea. See the last paragraph of his article in the first Review.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS; RE: THE AUDIENCE WITH THE POPE AND THE GOLD MEDALLION

When you have read in times past that "the professed Protestant world will form a confederacy with the man of sin" (*GC Bulletin, April 13, 1891, p. 257*); and that "Protestantism" will reach "across the gulf to clasp hands with the Papacy" (*An Appeal to Ministers and Conference Committees, p. 38*), you never really believed that the Seventh-day Adventist Church through an official representative would be involved, did you? Then for a vice president of the General Conference to describe the gold medallion presented to Pope Paul VI as "a symbol of the Seventh-day Adventist Church" is also beyond credibility if it were not reported in the General Church Paper - the Review. A "symbol" is defined as "a visible sign of something invisible." (*Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary*) Thus the hierarchy have placed the Church on a golden "plater" and served it to the Pope!

As this thought paper goes to press (January 10, 1978) we have not received a reply to the letter sent to Elder Duncan Eva. We did receive, at his request, an explanation of the medallion through the General Conference Department of Communications. Hopefully all our questions can either be answered by Elder Eva or the Department of Communications in time for the March thought paper - and then we can give a complete report.