



# "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*

## THE SHAKING OF ADVENTISM

This is the title of a book, written by Geoffrey J. Paxton, and published by Zenith Publishers, Inc., of Wilmington, Delaware. Paxton in his preface indicates that "this book had its first form in a thesis presented to the Department of Studies in Religion within the University of Queensland, Australia." (p. 7) He claims that the book "approaches Adventism from a perspective which has not been adopted before" seeking "'to get inside the skin' of the Adventist and look at his movement from that vantage point." (ibid.)

After reading this book, I was impressed with one fact. It is an ill disguised attempt to justify the theological switch that Brinsmead made after his first decade of preaching and writing; and to place Brinsmead in the forefront of the "new look" in Adventism which is presently being advocated by Dr. Desmond Ford, formerly of Avondale College, and now of Pacific Union College. The last three chapters of a seven chapter book, Paxton places Brinsmead in #1 prominence in the theological history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for the period from 1950 to the present. In the section noting "The Ford-Brinsmead Mateship" (pp. 128-135), Paxton indicates that while evidence will not support the conclusion "that Ford became a follower of Brinsmead's theology", nevertheless it can be said "that Brinsmead's rediscovery of the Reformation gospel and its articulation in Present Truth magazine gave Ford's perspective a sharpness which it hitherto lacked."

A pivotal date for Paxton is 1970. He writes:

Prior to 1970, Adventism's view of the gospel was a synthesis of Protestant and Roman Catholic elements. It was this synthesis which bound all Adventist theologians together in their articulation of the gospel. The synthesis was to be found even in those theologians who stood closer to the Reformation perspective (e.g., Heppenstall, Ford, and LaRondelle). (p. 135)

Since 1970, Brinsmead has never ceased to stress the all-sufficiency of justification and to deliver attacks on anything that would in any way downgrade this article of the Christian faith. For both Brinsmead and Ford, the centrality of justification lies at the heart of the gospel of Paul and the Reformers. (p. 137)

Then in a footnote, Paxton claims "that Heppenstall is the forerunner of the Ford-Brinsmead theology," and chides LaRondelle that "if he is consistent with himself at his best [his doctoral dissertation], must also come out on the side of Reformation theology." (p. 136)

If the above appraisal of the book is on target, then we can look for one, and possibly two things to happen. Brinsmead will again be restored to fellowship in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in good and regular standing, for how can Ford be

retained as a professor of religion in one of the church's major colleges, and Brinsmead kept out of the same Church. Secondly, Paxton will become a Seventh-day Adventist in name accepting the "new look" theology as he has defined it in his book. In other words, Paxton has written his own "Baptismal Vows" by which he will seek to become a member of the Church.<sup>1</sup>

We are indebted to this book for defining clearly what the doctrinal issues are within the Church at the present time. Paxton states - "From Brinsmead's 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) Compare this with the statement - "Those who receive the seal of the living God, and are protected in the time of trouble, must reflect the image of Jesus fully." (Early Writings, p. 71) In the area of Christology, Paxton affirms that beginning in the 1950's, "Froom thought it was time for Adventism to move forward again by an uninhibited confession of Christ's sinless human nature and finished atonement." (p. 87) In this he was joined by R. Allan Anderson and W. E. Read, whom Paxton lists as co-authors with Froom of the book, Questions on Doctrine. (p. 88) Thus there are three decisive areas that separate the "new look" in Adventism from the historic faith committed to us by God in 1844, and again renewed and emphasized in 1888 - the Incarnation, the Atonement, and the Perfection of the Saints.

Paxton in writing this book indulges in the "smear technique". Any presentation of the good news of God to fallen man that does not coincide with his definition of the Reformation theology in regard to justification by faith is called either Roman Catholic teaching, or Council of Trent theology or both.<sup>2</sup> He also seeks to smear the messages of Jones and Waggoner as of 1891 and after as possessing the nucleus of "pantheism." (p. 66)

The most serious indictment of the book concerns Paxton's scholarship and ability to be honest with his sources. In two examples which we will cite, he has either distorted his source material, or quoted it out of context. Since he claims this book had its first form in a thesis presented to the Department of Studies in Religion at the University of Queensland, if this thesis contained the same distortion of sources, then the integrity of the research produced under the guidance of the graduate schools of the University is open to serious question. Paxton's whole thesis rises or falls on the concept whether or not the Adventist considers himself "a [spiritual] son of Luther and Calvin." Paxton so contends. He writes:

The Adventist views himself as standing in the line of the Protestant Reformation. He regards himself as Protestant in the truest sense of the word. Where other Christians would not claim to stand in the line of the sixteenth-century Reformers, the Adventist is in no doubt about it. He is a son of Luther and Calvin. (p. 18)

The whole of the book which follows seeks to judge all that has been said or written by Adventist authors according to this premise. He further narrows the area of judgment to one single doctrine - justification by faith - which he defines, quoting Luther, "we are pronounced righteous and are saved solely by faith in Christ, and without works." (p. 37)

To support this criteria, he quotes from what he states to be "the prestigious testimony" of Mrs Ellen G. White. But he fails to quote the whole. We shall quote the

reference as Paxton quotes it, and then the reference in full context, the omitted parts underscored. Paxton stated -

A frequent theme in Adventist writing and speaking is that of forwarding the Reformation. Mrs White speaks of this as follows: "The Reformation did not, as many suppose, end with Luther. It is to be continued to the close of this world's history. Luther had a great work to do. ..." (p. 19)

(Note he ceased his quotes in middle of a sentence, and placed a period where no period existed.)

The full quotation reads:

The Reformation did not, as many suppose, end with Luther. It is to be continued to the close of this world's history. Luther had a great work to do in reflecting to others the light which God permitted to shine upon him; yet he did not receive all the light which was to be given to the world. From that time to this, new light has been continually shining upon the Scriptures, and new truths have been constantly unfolding. (Great Controversy, pp. 148-149)

If Paxton had been honest with truth, and had quoted this reference in full, he could not have proceeded another word forward in his book, or thesis, for this quotes in full, alone, destroys his entire basis for judgment of Adventism, and the criteria which he used.

Yes, we stand "in the line of the Protestant Reformation." We believe that "the great doctrine of justification by faith" was clearly taught by Luther, (ibid, p. 253) but we also believe with John Robinson, as stated in his Farewell to the Pilgrims sailing for the New World - "Luther and Calvin were great and shining lights in their times, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God." (Bancroft, History of the United States, Vol I, p. 205; See also, Great Controversy, p. 292)

The second misuse of the writings of Ellen G. White was in connection with the 1888 message, and his use of the Spirit of Prophecy to summarize it. We shall again quote Paxton as Paxton quotes, and then give in full the source. First Paxton:-

. . . justification by faith is. . . the third angel's message in verity.  
. . . As yet, we certainly have not seen the light that answers to this description. (p. 67)

Now as Sister White wrote it in full: -

Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, "It is the third angel's message in verity." The prophet declares, "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory." Brightness, glory, and power are to be connected with the third angel's message, and conviction will follow wherever it is preached in demonstration of the Spirit. How will any of our brethren know when this light shall come to the people of God? As yet, we certainly have not seen the light that answers to this description. (R & H, April 1, 1890)

This deceptive use of sources casts a shadow over all that is written in the book, and raises serious questions as to the motive Paxton had in writing this thesis. Other errors of a historical nature also appear in the book, for example in a footnote, Paxton affirms - "The human nature of Christ and the atonement were matters left unsettled in 1888." (p. 89) Jones's presentations during the 1890's and Waggoner's book, Christ and His Righteousness leave little doubt as to the stand taken by the Lord's messengers on the doctrine of the Incarnation. The book, Desire of Ages, copyrighted in 1898, leaves no doubt on the nature of the Incarnation. Pre-publication drafts of this book were quoted from by Jones in his presentations at the General Conference Session, 1895.

The time has come for us to take a good hard look at the truth committed to us by God in the 1844 Movement. This we shall attempt to do in the thought papers for 1978.

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<sup>1</sup>Usually reliable sources have indicated that Brinsmead is already or in the process of becoming a member of the Church again in good and regular standing. This source further indicates that Paxton "is now keeping the sabbath" and "has accepted the health message and nature of man."

<sup>2</sup>"Seventh-day Adventists claim to be the special 'remnant-heirs' of the Reformers. Notwithstanding this, in the period of 1844-1950 the fundamental theology of the Adventist gospel sometimes has more affinity with the Roman Catholic Council of Trent than with the Protestant Reformers," (Paxton, p. 77)

(Written, November 13, 1977)

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#### THE FULL NEWS RELEASE

In the December issue, we reported on another first for the Seventh-day Adventist church in 1977. This was based on a Religious News Service report released May 19, 1977, in their Foreign Service section. We have since secured the full text of this release, and reproduce it here for you with comments. Our comments will be bracketed, and in different type.

VATICAN CITY (RNS) -- Pope Paul, receiving participants of the Conference of Secretaries of World Confessional Families, urged unceasing pursuit of the goal of "full unity in Christ and in the Church" despite "all obstacles."

"It is a joy for us to receive such an important group and to welcome you to the See of Peter," said the Pope. "In you we greet representatives of a considerable portion of Christian people and through you we send our greetings of grace and peace in the Lord to your confessional families."

[The Pope here recognizes the full import and significance of a "corporate" entity.

He was saying that through the representative of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, there present, he was receiving every Seventh-day Adventist, and via that representative, he was sending greetings of grace and peace to each. Thus every member of the Church received a greeting from the Pope, scripturally, "the man of sin" - the antichrist! AND, not only that, every member of the church gave through their representative a gold plated medallion to the Pope! See next article.]

The Conference, a grouping of Anglican, Protestant, Orthodox, Old Catholic, and other Christian church bodies, which was formed in 1957, met in Rome (May 16-18) for the first time.

The Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity and the Seventh-day Adventists became regular participants in the Conference in 1968.

[In 1967 - the year that Luke 21:24 was fulfilled - the General Conference Committee approved the appointment of Dr. Earle Hilgert, then professor of New Testament at Andrews University to be our representative on the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. We are presently represented by Dr. Raoul F. Dederen of Andrews. This now reveals that the very next year, we with the Secretariat for Christian Unity from the Vatican Curia joined the World Confessional Families. For more on the significance of these events in the light of Luke 21:24, the Adventist Laymen's Foundation published a monograph - The Times of the Gentiles Fulfilled,]

"We are pleased," Pope Paul told the Conference participants, "to give expression in your presence to our common faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the one mediator with the Father, the Saviour of the world. Yes, brothers, with the Apostle Peter we proclaim that there is salvation in none else, for there is no other Name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

[Compare these utterances of the Pope with the statement of the sainted doctor of Catholic Church - Alphonsus Maria de Liguori - who wrote:

. . . all graces are dispensed by Mary, and that all who are saved are saved by the means of this Divine Mother. It is a necessary consequence that the salvation of all depends upon preaching Mary, and exciting all to confidence in her intercession." The Glories of Mary, p. 8. The imprimatur of Nicholas Cardinal Wiseman, Archbishop of Westminster is affixed. And incidentally, this is transcribed from a photocopy of the book which is in the General Conference Library, Takoma Park, Washington, D. C.

Well do we need to consider the words of Great Controversy:

The papacy is just what prophecy declared that she would be, the apostasy of the latter times. (2 Thess. 2:3-4) It is a part of her policy to assume the character which will best accomplish her purpose; but beneath the variable appearance of the chameleon, she conceals the invariable venom of the serpent. "Faith ought not to be kept with heretics, nor persons suspected of heresy," she declares. Shall this power, whose record for a thousand years is written in the blood of saints, be now acknowledged as a part of the church of Christ?

As the Protestant churches [Is the Seventh-day Adventist church exempt?] have been seeking the favor of the world, false charity has blinded their eyes. They do not see but that it is right to believe good of all evil; and as the inevitable result, they will finally believe evil of all good. Instead of standing in defense of the faith once delivered to the saints, they are now, as it were, apologizing to Rome for their uncharitable opinion of her, begging pardon for their bigotry. (pp. 571, 572.)

In the light of this warning from the servant of the Lord, how can we then bestow upon the Pope a gold plated medallion thus honoring a record stained in the blood of saints for a thousand years!]

The pontiff went on to remark that "on her part," the Catholic Church is solemnly committed by the Second Vatican Council to "an ecumenism based on increased fidelity to Christ the Lord and on conversion of hearts. At the same time she realizes that nothing is so foreign to ecumenism as a false conciliatory approach. Strengthened by the power of God's work," he urged, "Let us then, despite all obstacles, pursue the goal of full unity in Christ and in the Church. . ."

Later, in Vatican Radio interviews, two officers of the Conference of Secretaries of World Confessional Families, expressed satisfaction with the Rome meeting.

Bishop John Howe, secretary of the Anglican Consultative Council, who is president of the Conference, said it had been "a satisfactory meeting" because "we had secretaries here from the world organizations of nearly all the Churches, including the (Vatican) Secretariat for Unity." "It was a brotherly discussion," said the Anglican prelate, "and we have been able to decide how we shall work together more with the World Council of Churches in understanding the ecumenical role that all of us have."

Dr. Bert Beach, the Conference secretary, who is secretary of the Northern-Europe-West Africa Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, noted that the audience with Pope Paul marked the first time in history that the Seventh-day Adventist Church, through an official representative, had met with a Roman pontiff. Dr. Beach also said it had been "a pleasure" to be able to attend the Conference meeting in Rome, and that the meeting had provided "a good opportunity" for reflecting on "the work that has been accomplished" by the Conference since its founding. (pp. 9-10)

[A question still to be answered:- Who paid for Dr. B. B. Beach's trip to this meet- in Rome, as Italy is outside of the territory of the Northern Europe-West Africa Division? For more questions, see next article.]

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"TRUTH IS VIOLATED BY FALSEHOOD, BUT IT IS OUTRAGED  
BY SILENCE"

Henri Frederic Amiel

## A VICE PRESIDENT REPORTS TO THE CHURCH

In the August 11, 1977, Review (p. 23), Elder W. Duncan Eva, a vice president of the Church, reported on the meeting of Dr. B. B. Beach with the Pope. He wrote:

In connection with a recent consultative meeting of secretaries of World Confessional Families held in Rome, B. B. Beach, secretary of the Northern Europe-West Africa Division, one of the 15 participants and the only Adventist in the group. presented a book and a medallion to Pope Paul VI on May 18.

The book presented was Faith in Action and the "gold covered" medallion was a "symbol of the Seventh-day Adventist Church." The fact that this medallion had inscribed the words - "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" - does not alter the act that the Church through an official representative has presented a gift of gold to the antichrist! This is in reality not a "distinctive" message to the Pope for in the Catholic catechisms it is taught - "Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day." (A Catechism of Christian Doctrine, No. 2, p. 50) The distinctiveness of the Sabbath commandment is - "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Exodus 20:10.

Elder Eva concluded his report with this paragraph:

The Conference of World Confessional Families usually meets once a year. It is not an organization, but an informal, unstructured forum for consultation and the exchange of useful information.

Now you can go back to sleep again on your comfortable pew. It wasn't so bad after all, just a consultative, unstructured forum - BUT, wait, before you finally doze off in that Laodicean slumber, recall that the President of the (non-organized?) World Confessional Families in that Vatican Radio interview along with Dr Beach stated that as a result of this meeting in Rome, that they had been able to decide "how we shall work together more with the World Council of Churches in understanding the ecumenical role that all of us have."

After reading this Review article, we sent the following letter to Elder Eva dated November 20, 1977:

Dear Elder Eva;

Yesterday, while pursuing through recent past issues of the Review to get up to date, I observed a news item article on p. 23 of the August 11, issue, written by you.

I would appreciate some further information regarding the medallion struck which was given to Pope Paul. Was this a single issue of the medallion, or can other such medallions be obtained? What karat weight was the gold used in plating the medallion? Could you give me the over-all cost of the designing, casting, and production of this gift?

Also, I am interested in what committee authorized this gift, and who was

responsible for defraying this expenditure? Religious News Service quotes Dr. B. B. Beach as stating that this "audience with the Pope marked the first time in history that the Seventh-day Adventist Church, through an official representative, had met with a Roman pontiff." (May 19, 1977) Would you care to comment on the accuracy of this report?

Looking forward to your reply, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)

Wm. H. Grotheer

The secretary to Elder Eva - Mrs Monica Norman - replied acknowledging the letter and stated:

Dear Elder Grotheer:

This is just a little note to thank you for your letter of November 20 to Elder Eva regarding the news item in the Review of August 11.

Elder Eva is away from the office until the end of December and as we do not have any information apart from what the article tells you, I am sorry we will not be able to help you until Elder Eva returns.

Since this "thought paper" will be in the mails before Elder Eva will have time to reply, we shall give you what information we receive, when we do receive it. It will remain, "Unfinished Business."

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#### ANOTHER PRIEST IN AN ADVENTIST PULPIT

The Times Record (Brunswick, ME) for November 18, 1977 has a picture of members of the Brunswick Area Church Council planning for the Union Thanksgiving Service, Sunday, November 20, at 4 p. m. in the Brunswick Seventh-day Adventist Church. One member pictured is Elder Erling Odell, chaplain of the Adventist Parkview Memorial Hospital. He is vice president of the Council, and a member of the committee which plans ecumenical services for the area.

A special bulletin for this service noted Father Emile Guilmette as the one who gave the sermon. In telling of this service, the church's newsletter, The Lamplighter for November, stated:

The committee (Special Services Committee of the Brunswick Area Church Council) has invited various people of the community to participate in the event. The guest speaker is to be Rev. Fr. Emil Guilmette, pastor of St John the Baptist Church in Brunswick. In remarks to Chaplain Erling Odell at a recent church council meeting, Pastor Guilmette said he felt it a great honor to have been



invited to speak at our church, and that he would give much prayerful study to the preparation of an appropriate message. Father Guilmette recently returned from Rome where he attended an important meeting of Roman Catholic leaders. He will make reference to this meeting in his address, which should be of considerable interest to our Adventist members. (p. 3)

The church newsletter also noted the Pastor - Elder Jamile Jacobs - "expressed pleasure" in accepting the request of the Church Council for the services to be held in the Seventh-day Adventist Church at which the priest was the guest speaker.

An interesting aspect of this meeting was that it was held on Sunday - not Thursday, the traditional day - and in the Adventist Church. Well did the servant of the Lord state:

The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands, and conformed to worldly customs, will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. (5T:81)

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#### FILL-IN FOR YOUR INFORMATION

In the December issue of Watchman, What of the Night? we brought you information in regard to Billy Graham's Crusade in Hungary. The Voice of Prophecy News (November, 1977) showed a picture described as "a Hungarian National treasure" which was presented to Graham by Sandor Palotay, a Seventh-day Adventist serving as president of the Council of Free Churches in Hungary. Since that write-up we have received further information as to the Council of Free Churches in Hungary and Palotay. Under dateline, Budapest, Hungary, the Southern Tidings (September, 1977) reported that Sandor Palotay "extended the invitation to Graham while in the United States for a General Council meeting of the Baptist World Alliance." (p. 9) The Week in Religion a publication of Religious News Service noted that "Mr Graham's visit. . . was sponsored by the Council of Free Churches, an alliance of Baptist, Pentacostal, Methodist, Seventh-day Adventist, and other denominations." (Oct. 14, 1977, p. 1) Put this all together if you can, I can't!

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NOW READY - A new printing of Studies in Romans by E. J. Waggoner is available. The type has been reset, but adheres closely to the facsimile reproduction from the 1891 General Conference Bulletin in format. The cost will be \$1.25 for single copies, and \$1.00 each in orders of five or more.

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**Adventist Laymen's Foundation**

**P. O. Box 178**

**Lamar, Arkansas 72846**

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