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SPECTRUM

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In This Issue

Volume Eleven, Number One, Published July 1980

About This Issue

As its title suggests, SPECTRUM is committed to the publication of a wide range of ideas and opinions concerning significant issues and events within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This issue reflects this commitment to a spectrum of opinion. Rather than reporting the day-to-day events of the recent General Conference session in Dallas, SPECTRUM requested several participants to discuss their own reactions to the session, detailing what they consider to be some of the significant trends reflected at the meetings. This issue opens with these viewpoints.

On occasion, SPECTRUM publishes articles which become the topics of debate, sometimes even of controversy, within the Adventist community. Because of the numerous discussions and letters concerning two articles published in Volume 10, Number 2, "Adventism in America," we have devoted a large amount of this issue to a Readers' Symposium for discussion of these and other articles published in past issues.

In this issue, we continue our report of the Pacific Press cases and are pleased to offer a theological study investigating the symbolism of the Sanctuary. Finally, we include a ten-volume Index for SPECTRUM, a project compiled by our editorial assistant, Nola-Jean Bamberry, whose help with the journal for the past two years is greatly appreciated. We believe that the Index will enable readers more easily to refer to past issues of interest.

The Editors

A New Statement of Fundamental Beliefs

by Lawrence Geraty

Other organs of communication within the Adventist community have provided excellent reporting of the 53rd General Conference session, held in Dallas, Texas, April 17-26, 1980. The Adventist Review General Conference Bulletins *(numbers 1-10) delivered prompt and extensive coverage of actions and debate at the session. Complete sets of the* Bulletins *are available from the* Adventist Review *for $3.90. The Adventist Radio Network produced seven lively half-hour reports full of features, interviews and commentary regarding each day's activities. The entire sequence of professional quality broadcasts has been recorded and is available. Send $12 to the Adventist Radio Network, G.C. Tapes, c/o KSGN, 1700 Pierce Street, Riverside, CA 92515.*

SPECTRUM is pleased to provide an in-depth account and analysis of one central activity of the session – the adoption of a new Statement of Fundamental Beliefs for Seventh-day Adventism. Three particularly qualified participant-observers also more briefly interpret actions of the General Conference in their areas of special knowledge – the policy concerning suits, the concern with the local church, and the growing participation of Third World Adventists in church administration. The editors welcome succinct comments and analysis from participants regarding still other aspects of the General Conference session.

Friday afternoon, April 25, while the platform was literally being dismantled behind the president of the General Conference presiding over the final business meeting of the 1980 session, the delegates voted to replace a 50-year-old document with a new Statement of Fundamental Beliefs. None of the 27 beliefs were new, of course, but the re-statement was. Apart from election of new General Conference and Division officers, the adoption of the statement was the most significant event of the General Conference session. An account of the statement's formulation and acceptance from the perspective of a person who was privileged to be able to participate in drafting the document, before and during the General Conference session, may be helpful.

Although Uriah Smith's "Fundamental Principles" had appeared in various denominational publications after 1872, a request came to the General Conference in 1930 from Africa, asking for further clarification of Adventist fundamental beliefs.[1] On December 29 of that year, the General Conference Committee "*voted,* that the chair [C. H. Watson, the president of the General Conference] appoint a committee of which he shall be a member, to prepare such a statement for publication in the Year Book."[2] Watson appointed M. E. Kern, associate secretary of the General Conference, E. R. Palmer, general manager of the Review and Herald Publishing Association, and F. M. Wilcox, editor of the *Review and Herald.* Wilcox was assigned the task of drafting the statement. The 22 fundamental beliefs that the committee reported were never officially discussed, ap-

Lawrence Geraty, associate professor of archaeology and the history of antiquity, Andrews University, is the curator of the Horn Archaeological Museum and director of the Archaeological Expedition in Tel Hesban, Jordan.

proved, voted, or formally adopted. According to Gottfried Oosterwal:

> Their publication in the *Yearbook* of 1931, and two years later in the *Church Manual,* was a personal accomplishment of Elder Wilcox and his group of four. Realizing that the General Conference Committee — or any other church body — would never accept the document in the form in which it was written, Elder Wilcox, with full knowledge of the group, handed the Statement directly to Edson Rogers, the General Conference statistician, who published it in the 1931 edition of the *Yearbook,* where it has appeared ever since. It was without the official approval of the General Conference Committee, therefore, and without any formal denominational adoption, that Elder Wilcox's statement became the accepted declaration of our faith.[3]

At the 1946 General Conference session, it was voted that the Statement of Fundamental Beliefs, as well as any other portion of the *Church Manual*, should be revised only at a General Conference session. The 1931 document, therefore, with minor revisions, continued to represent the fundamental statement of denominational belief.

The 1931 statement was apparently designed to articulate the basic tenets of Adventism for non-Adventists. A strong motive for revising that statement was a desire for an official response to issues increasingly debated within Adventism. In the light of recent controversies, some, particularly in the General Conference, felt the statement suffered from glaring omissions. Others, particularly Bernard Seton, an associate secretary of the General Conference, persistently reminded his colleagues that the statement also had literary inadequacies.

Finally, in late 1978, the officers of the General Conference appointed an *ad hoc* committee referred to as "X-1535 *Church Manual* Revision — 'Fundamental Beliefs,' " and less than two years later the church would have a new Statement of Fundamental Beliefs. The members of the *ad hoc* committee were all located at the General Conference headquarters in Washington, D.C., with W. Duncan Eva, a General Conference vice president, as chairman.[4]

On August 10, 1979, Duncan Eva distributed the committee's preliminary draft to the General Conference officers, division presidents and union presidents in North America. In an accompanying letter, Eva noted that formal and substantive changes in the 1931 statement had been made. Formally, the sequence of topics had been altered and paragraph headings had been inserted. Substantively, the sections on the Trinity had been expanded from two paragraphs to four, and sections had been added concerning angels, creation and the fall, the church, unity in the body of Christ, the Lord's Supper, Christian marriage, and the Christian home and education. He also said that before the new statement would be submitted to the full *Church Manual* committee, it would be presented to "certain professors at the Seminary with whom we will meet in September." After the *Church Manual* committee gave its approval, the statement would proceed to the home and overseas officers, the union presidents, the Annual Council, and finally to the General Conference session in Dallas.

Two weeks later, Andrews University President Joseph G. Smoot informed nine members of the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary faculty [5] and the university's vice president for academic affairs that Elder Eva had requested a special meeting with them approximately a month later, September 19. It would precede a much larger meeting the next day called by several General Conference officers to discuss with science and religion faculty of the university the often-revised Statements on Creation and on Revelation and Inspiration.[6]

In general, the statement prepared by the *ad hoc* committee in Washington and sent to the Seminary professors was a genuine improvement over the 1931 statement. I did have some questions: for example, Christ "was born of the Virgin Mary" (virgin with a capital "V"?); or "the book of Genesis contains the only inspired, reliable chronicle of

the creation of the world." (What's wrong with the account in Psalms? Obviously, the document's authors were more interested in the interpretation of Genesis than in the doctrine of creation.) Indeed, the document as a whole was uneven in its organization and style. It was obviously a patchwork job with mixed terminology, a lack of balance with regard to length of individual sections, differences in the way documentation was handled, and a general administrative concern with events and behavior rather than meaning (*e.g.*, the Lord's Supper "is customarily observed once each quarter of the year," "the educational system of the Church is designed for partnership with the home for the salvation of the children," "God's unchangeable law requires the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday," etc.).

A further problem was procedural. The document came with a covering letter saying that "at this stage this document is confidential and intended only for those to whom it is sent. It may not be copied or duplicated in any way." At first blush, it seemed to be a secret committee hoping to "railroad through" its statement. After that, the rank and file could decide whether or not they wanted to be Seventh-day Adventists.

Although it became apparent as we worked with the brethren from Washington, D.C., that that was not their intent and although I was pleased to be among a group of seminary teachers with whom the General Conference leaders consulted, I could not

Internationalization of the Church

by Russell Staples

Future Adventist historians will probably look back on Dallas as the turning point in the internationalization of the church. They will doubtless refer to the shift in the demographic center of gravity of the church. In 1950, the western church comprised 52 percent of the Adventist world membership; in 1970, it was 30 percent; at present it is about 24 percent; and it will be about 16.5 percent by 1990. Right now, the Third World church constitutes about 76 percent of the Adventist world membership.

The changing composition of the church's membership was reflected in those appointed to leadership at Dallas. For probably the first time in the history of Adventism, persons whose homelands are outside of North America occupy the positions of secretary (G. Ralph Thompson, from Inter-America) and treasurer (L. L. Butler from Australasia). Along with the president, they comprise the three principal officers of the General Conference. In addition, four of the Third World divisions are now led by local workers. For the first time, an African is president of a division, and an Asian is the president of the Southern Asia Division. It should be remembered that presidents of divisions are simultaneously vice presidents of the General Conference.

While the internationalization of the church was evident in some ways at Dallas, it was strangely ignored in others. The session was so occupied with the Statement of Fundamental Beliefs and certain basic changes in the *Church Manual* and *Working Policy* that virtually no attention could be given the implication of the new patterns of relationships now developing in the Adventist Church in different countries. For example, no time was devoted to exploring the significance for the future of the fact that already almost half of the missionaries now serving the church around the world are from the Third World.

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help but think of my colleagues in institutions around the world who are just as qualified, just as interested, and had just "as large a stake" in the church as I did. Why didn't the General Conference set up a representative commission to handle the revisions — one to which any interested church member could have access, and one which would be given *time* to do the job right?

But I was not in a position to make the rules, so I decided to express my concerns while working for a better document in any way I could. The first opportunity I had to express my views was at a meeting of the "committee of ten" called by Smoot September 12 to give a preliminary review of the statement. It was evident there that many of my colleagues shared my concerns. We recommended 1) that our review committee be enlarged to include those who had special expertise in the creeds of the church, 2) that the statement be completely rewritten to avoid the weaknesses exhibited by the attempt to stay with the wording and order of the 1931 statement, and 3) that the results of our effort, if acceptable to Washington, D.C., be published in the *Adventist Review* with the invitation for comment and reaction by any concerned.

Fritz Guy, professor of theology, and Kenneth Strand, professor of church history — both on the seminary faculty — were added to our review committee. Our new "committee of twelve" divided up the paragraphs of the Statement of Fundamental Beliefs for individual reworking with Thomas Blincoe, dean of the seminary, Ivan Blazen, professor of New Testament, Fritz Guy, professor of theology, William Johnsson, professor of New Testament and associate dean of the seminary, William Shea, professor of Old Testament, and Lawrence Geraty, getting the heaviest assignments. Within six days, we again came together to hammer out a consensus, paragraph by paragraph, on the document as a whole. We worked late into the night of September 18 in an attempt to be ready for the next day's meeting with the brethren from Washington, D.C.

By 4 p.m. the next day, the essential structure of the document as it now stands and most of the wording were ready. Meeting with the Andrews "committee of twelve" were Elders Duncan Eva (chairman), Richard Hammill and Willis Hackett, all vice presidents of the General Conference. The latter invited Robert Brown and Harold Coffin from the Geoscience Research Institute to sit in with us. As expected, they contributed especially to the paragraphs on Scripture, Creation and The Great Controversy (which mentions the flood).

The leaders from Washington, D.C., were faced with a dilemma. Should they insist on sticking with the document they sent (in order to save face with the original *ad hoc* committee in Washington) or should they consider the completely rewritten document prepared by the Andrews "committee of twelve"? They chose to at least "take a look" at the new document. Most of the vice presidents liked what they read. There was a lot of give and take — for the most part, in good spirit. At one point, in trying to arrive at consensus wording for creation week, Hackett gave up with the comment, "Oh, well, you can word it any way you want to here; we'll get another crack at it back in Washington!" Understandably, the Andrews group felt it had been wasting its time if that was the way the game was going to be played. Each paragraph was modified and improved as a result of group discussion.

The Andrews contingent felt the Statement of Fundamental Beliefs was "where the action was" and preferred to concentrate its time and energies there, but the General Conference representatives felt we should interrupt our work to discuss with a larger group of Andrews University faculty the Creedal Statements on Creation and Revelation/Inspiration as scheduled.

Having dutifully aired our views on these documents for the prescribed time in the larger meeting, the "committee of twelve" returned to the more positive task of articulating our fundamental beliefs. By the time the General Conference vice presidents departed, most revisions had been made.

The next week we mailed off to Washington, D.C., our completed draft with the 27 paragraphs divided into six major sections: Revelation, God, Creation and Redemption, the Community of Faith, the Christian Life

and the Last Things. Our colleagues who attended the Convocation on Righteousness by Faith in Washington, D.C., the first week in October, delivered our last revisions to complete the job — "complete" in the sense that it was the best we could do given the pressures of time and circumstances. To the extent the statement had literary form and beauty, the credit belonged to Fritz Guy whose linguistic artistry and theological acumen were evident throughout.

On October 16, 1979, the Annual Council adopted without changes and in principle the Statement of Fundamental Beliefs that had in the meantime been passed with only slight modifications by the General Conference *Church Manual* committee. It was sent out to members of the division committees immediately as well as to unions and overseas colleges. It was given to the *Adventist Review* for immediate publication in the hope that as many reactions as possible could be received from the field prior to the General Conference quinquennial session in Dallas. Unfortunately, for reasons never disclosed, it did not appear for four months, until February 21, 1980. As a result of the statement's distribution at Annual Council and publication in the *Adventist Review,* scores of letters came to Elder Eva — most appreciative and suggesting constructive changes.

Being the kind of statesman he is, Eva decided the fairest thing to do would be to collate all the suggestions and discuss each one with the Andrews "committee of twelve." He and Richard Lesher, director of the Biblical Research Institute, met with us most of the day on March 9 for that purpose. Many improvements were introduced into the statement as a result of these letters from church leaders and members around the world. The quality of many of the suggestions showed that if the statement had been published in the *Adventist Review* at an earlier date, the editing committee could have had at its disposal an even more representative sampling of opinion from the world church that may have, in turn, allowed us to produce a document representing a truer consensus. Since the General Conference leaders had to return to Washington, D.C., that day, we were left on our own to "tidy up" the document. Fritz Guy typed most of the night to have it ready to put on the plane in the morning.

By March 10, the revised version with 28 paragraphs (Lord's Supper and Baptism were divided) was in Eva's hands. He called back to say the new paragraph on the sanctuary would not be acceptable. Therefore, Blincoe, Guy and Johnsson redid it along the lines of the original September-October, 1979, version.

Eva felt he had to get *some* version out immediately to the delegates who would be coming to Dallas. So on March 11, he mailed to the delegates the document received from Andrews University the previous day (with the substitution of the September-October sanctuary paragraph) accompanied by a covering letter. It indicated that before the General Conference session the *Church Manual* committee at the General Conference office and the officers at Dallas prior to the session would review the statement before it reached the floor.

As a delegate, I received my copy of Eva's March 11 letter on March 24. Obviously, many delegates may not have received their copies of the Statement in advance of the session in Dallas, especially if they were from overseas and left home early to travel in the United States as many did.[7]

In the meantime, Fritz Guy was called to Washington, D.C., to help evaluate further correspondence on the statement that had come in from the field and to meet with the *Church Manual* committee when it considered the completed statement. On March 14, under the chairmanship of G. Ralph Thompson, the *Church Manual* committee approved the proposed Statement of Fundamental Beliefs that had been sent out to the delegates with only minor revisions.

But more letters from the field continued to flood Eva's desk. For instance, one came from Fred Veltman, chairman of Pacific Union College's Religion Department, who was writing after his faculty had spent two department meetings going through the statement and planned at least one more. His

letter of March 11 reflected the concern of many thoughtful Adventists:

> It may be that when our church was small it was possible to get an accurate representation from the world field if you mailed the recommended statement to the delegates at least six weeks before the session convenes; but it is doubtful whether these delegates have time to get their input from their local congregations prior to the session given the size of the church today and the problems of getting reactions and submitting such reactions back to headquarters in time to make any changes before the session is held. In order for delegates to function legitimately they must not only be informed by the General Conference leadership on the issues which they will be asked to vote upon, but these same delegates need to be informed by the people they represent so that they will know how to perform as delegates in such a way as to honestly represent the field from which they come.

Later, Veltman forwarded to Eva a series of recommendations for changes in the statement that had been unanimously approved by his departmental faculty. The work of the scholars at Pacific Union College was not in vain. Many of their suggestions were incorporated in the Statement voted at Dallas.

Those involved in the process of drafting the statement up to that point were under the definite impression that the version of the statement adopted by the *Church Manual* committee would go before the delegates in

The Local Church

by Louis Venden

Elder Neal Wilson's keynote address at the opening session of the General Conference called for "certain organizational changes" which must "be done now, not at some future date," and which keep in focus that "our primary objective must be to help the pastor and his associate in leadership to bring our members together in a concerned, coordinated, effective relationship, so as to develop a dynamic soul-winning thrust equal to an invasion force!" With surprising and refreshing frankness, Wilson proceeded to ask for "the elimination of our attitude of departmental protectionism" so that denomination leaders would have the "ability to deliver coordinated 'packages' that make sense to our members and pastors in the local church where the work is actually done."

The implication of Elder Wilson's comments is right. The administrative and departmental structure of the entire denomination rests like a great inverted pyramid upon the local congregation and its leadership. There are instances where the local church finds itself trying to please several insistent taskmasters with disparate goals. At the Tuesday morning business session, Elder Wilson brought a specific proposal to reduce the pyramid by merging four General Conference departments into two: Health and Temperance would combine, as would Stewardship and the Ministerial Association. The changes were voted by the delegates.

The 1980 General Conference also brought a needed balance in emphasis between church growth and pastoral nurture and care. In addition to his call for "placing unquestioned priority on evangelism and soul-winning," Elder Wilson's keynote address admitted that "our homes constitute the greatest mission field that exists today."

Louis Venden, who received his doctorate from Princeton University, is the pastor of the Loma Linda University Church.

Dallas one month later. But, perhaps on the basis of letters to Washington received even later than those mentioned above, further changes were made in Washington, D.C., without consulting the "committee of twelve" before Dallas.

At the first business session at Dallas, delegates expressed shock that the version of the statement to which they had prepared responses had been substantially changed and that, therefore, they were now suddenly unprepared to discuss so crucial a document as a Statement of Fundamental Beliefs. Those who had been involved in formulating the earlier draft felt that the new version was disastrous in form, if not content. Gone was the balance, the beauty and the sensitivity to words. Clumsy rhetoric prevailed. By the time the home and overseas officers had made additional changes during their April 14 meeting in Dallas, just prior to the opening of the General Conference session, three of the sections had been completely rewritten — one to more than twice its original length. Twenty-one other paragraphs were significantly altered, either in meaning or style. For instance, the newer version referred to the Scriptures as "infallible." The paragraph on God was titled "Godhead or Trinity." To the sensitive phrase that Christ "perfectly exemplified the righteousness and love of God," the officers added "as our example." The sentence declaring that God has revealed in Scripture "the only authentic account of His creative activity" was changed to read the "Scriptures provide the only authoritative account of origins." The adjectives "complete and perfect" were omitted as descriptions of the atonement. The Lord's Supper was called "this blessed ordinance" instead of "this experience of communion." Added were phrases saying that the writings of Ellen White are "a continuing source of truth," and elsewhere that we are "to take no part in sinful pleasures and follies." Many other significant changes had been made. By combining the paragraphs on Spiritual Gifts and the Ministries of the Church, the total number of paragraphs within the Statement was again reduced to 27.[8]

When the Statement of Fundamental Beliefs was brought to the floor for discussion in Dallas on April 21, Willis Hackett turned the chair over to Neal Wilson who assured the delegates:

> We are not suggesting changing any belief or doctrine that this church has held. We have no interest in tearing up any of the foundations of historical Adventism. This document is not designed to do that, nor to

Suing the Church

by Elvin Benton

The *Church Manual* provision that almost unqualifiedly authorized church discipline against members who sue the church or one another is now a dead letter. The 1975 General Conference session at Vienna included among the "grievous sins for which church members shall be subject to church discipline" the "instigating or continuing legal action against another church member or against the church or any of its organization or institutions, contrary to Biblical and Ellen G. White counsels."

Protests from many concerned Adventists, including attorneys, emphasized that certain civil rights were involved and that numerous legal problems could not be settled by a church procedure. The Annual Council following the Vienna General Conference, while recognizing that only at a General Conference session could the *Church Manual* itself be changed, neverthe-

Elvin Benton, an attorney, is the director of religious liberty for the Columbia Union Conference.

open the way so that it can be done. It should be clear that we are not adding anything nor are we deleting anything in terms of historical Adventist theology. We are trying to express our beliefs in a way that will be understood today.

He also made it clear that, though he hoped to vote the document in Dallas, he was in no rush. The Church was not adrift. "We *have* a clear statement of fundamental beliefs, and we will hold to it until together we decide to refine, reword, and restate it in today's language." To those who were afraid of a creed, Wilson said, "the Seventh-day Adventist Church does not have a creed as such. Nothing is set in concrete in terms of human words. The time never comes when any human document cannot be improved upon."

In terms of procedure, the newly reelected president of the General Conference asked the delegates to speak only to substantive theological content, allowing details in wording to be handled by a "competent editorial committee of scholars and theologians." Most of the business sessions the rest of the week were taken up with a paragraph-by-paragraph discussion of the proposed document. Its importance was highlighted by the fact that Neal Wilson chaired each discussion period. He provided very fair and effective leadership. No one felt rushed (till the last session), though he kept things moving right along. Delegates stood to speak at a dozen microphones scattered strategically throughout the arena. The chairman recognized each speaker in turn, as often as not, calling the speaker by name. (It took courage for a delegate whose mother tongue was not English to ask for the floor; a few requested translators. Another time it might be well to plan in advance for adequate translation to encourage foreign delegates to participate.)

Since the *Adventist Review General Conference Bulletin* (numbers 5-8) carried an edited account of the floor debate on the statement, it is not necessary to review every detail. Some interesting exchanges do not appear fully, however, and one long dispute was completely stricken from the offical General Conference minutes (by vote of the delegates). Ralph Larson, pastor of the Loma Linda Hill Church, made a 12-minute statement that decried the whole process as premature and ill-advised during this time of theological crisis and uncertainty. He ended his remarks by moving to table the entire Statement of Fundamental Beliefs. Upon questioning by the chairman, it turned out

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less voted to insert a cautionary caveat in the form of a footnote to provision seven of the manual.

The following spring, in 1976, a committee was appointed by the General Conference to prepare a different statement on litigation. After several committee and subcommittee polishing sessions, the 1978 Annual Council approved the language that was later adopted during the closing minutes of the last business session of the 1980 General Conference session in Dallas. Entitled "Safeguarding Unity of the Church — *Church Manual* addition," the provision now includes the key statement that if "the member has exhausted the possibilities of the Biblically outlined procedure for the settlement of difference," then "what he or she should do beyond that point is a matter for his or her conscience."

The 1975 Annual Council's "unofficial" footnote to that year's General Conference action in Vienna was apparently effective in averting confrontation. As far as General Conference leaders are aware, no Adventist anywhere was brought up for church discipline under provision seven during the five years of its life. Evidently, while the church believes that the General Conference in session is its highest authority, responsible administrators can sometimes exercise practical authority to temper the actions taken by that authoritative body, and the General Conference in session can reverse the actions of a previous session.

that he was not even a delegate, whereupon Neal Wilson declared him out of order.

Throughout the week, the nearly 2,000 delegates debated the entire range of doctrines and principles discussed in the Statement of Fundamental Beliefs. Important differences arose concerning the nature of revelation in Scripture — is the Bible *infallible* and *inerrant?* Is it *all-sufficient* in matters of history (as Robert Brown advocated) and science (as suggested by Russell Standish, medical director of the Bangkok Adventist Hospital)? During discussions of the paragraphs on Father, Son and Holy Spirit, it seemed, at times, as though we were going one-by-one through the entire sequence of heresies that had confronted the early church. With regard to creation, LeRoy Moore, General Conference coordinator of Native American Affairs, and Ariel Roth, of the Geoscience Research Institute, suggested striking the word "only" from the phrase "the Holy Scriptures provide the only authoritative account of origins," in order to leave room for Ellen White and nature to be distinctly authoritative sources of revelation on this point. Several advocated inserting the word "literal" before the days of creation week, although others thought it would be redundant in the context. Some delegates recommended including something on a short chronology for the earth and still others argued that the statement should make it clear that all "inanimate" things were created during the six days of creation week.

The nature of man received much comment. Is it holistic, fallen, distorted, marred? In the paragraph on the life, death and resurrection of Christ, most of the debate centered on whether His atonement (on the cross) was complete, perfect and all-sufficient, or whether the term "atonement" should include His ministry in the heavenly sanctuary as well.

Lawrence Maxwell, editor of the *Signs of the Times,* introduced quite a debate on whether or not communion should be limited to those who have been baptized. The question was debated by several people.

The paragraph on the Gift of Prophecy led to a discussion of the authority of Ellen White's writings for the church. The geographical limitations of expressions like "sunset Friday to sunset Saturday" were pointed out, as compared with the biblical principle "from evening to evening" for Sabbath observance.

Some delegates urged inclusion of specific wording in a Statement of Fundamental Beliefs proscribing card-playing, theatergoing, dancing, etc. Several speeches advocated making remembering the church's needs through wills and trusts a fundamental belief. In response, there were those, including some General Conference leaders, who advised against a statement weighed down with nonbiblical terminology.

Predictably, many asked for the privilege of speaking to the paragraph on the sanctuary teaching. Edward Zinke, assistant director of the Biblical Research Institute, Reginald Dower, retiring secretary of the Ministerial Association, William Murdoch, dean emeritus of the SDA Theological Seminary, C. H. Carey, delegate from Pacific Union, and James McKinney, physician from Greenville, Tenn., all spoke in favor of specifying the *place* (i.e., the apartment) in heaven where Christ ministers, as well as affirming a cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven. Duncan Eva explained that the paragraph was a Bible-based one and no different in this respect from the previous (1931) statement. Ted Wilson, director of Metro Ministry in New York City, affirmed the writings of Ellen White to be an authoritative commentary on Scripture.

When discussing the section on death and resurrection, delegates questioned the meaning of several terms, such as "inherently immortal," God "will grant immortality to His redeemed," "death is a state of unconsciousness," and not even death can "separate" the dead in Christ from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

The members of the editorial committee appointed by President Wilson at the General Conference session listened carefully to each comment made on the floor and then between business sessions met for many hours to hammer out a statement that was theologically accurate as well as balanced in form.

The committee combined administrators and academics: Richard Hammill (chairman); Maurice Battle (secretary), an associate secretary of the General Conference; Thomas Blincoe; Duncan Eva; Richard Lesher, the recently appointed director of the Biblical Research Institute; G. Ralph Thompson, now secretary of the General Conference; Lawrence Geraty; James Londis, pastor of the Sligo Church in Washington, D.C.; Robert Olson, secretary of the White Estate; Jan Paulsen, president of Newbold College in England; and Mario Veloso, Temperance and Youth Director of the South American Divison. At the suggestion of Willis Hackett, Robert Brown, of the Geoscience Research Institute, was added to the committee.

Because of the press of other duties, the three "sons" (Olson, Paulsen, and Thompson) could not often meet with us, but the other committee members, representing a healthy spectrum of Adventist thought, worked well together and came to a consensus each time, under the effective chairmanship of Richard Hammill. Two delegates visited the editorial committee. Halvard B. Thomsen, pastor of the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, church, submitted a written proposal to strengthen the paragraph on Spiritual Gifts and Ministries. Edward Zinke not only presented his case on a number of points but also presented extensive arguments for them.

The final results of the committee's editorial decisions were brought before the delegates on the final business day of the session, April 25. An edited account of the proceedings may be found in the *Adventist Review General Conference Bulletin* (number 9), along with the Statement of Fundamental Beliefs in its entirety as adopted that day and slightly edited.

Forum Panel Discussions

For the first time, the Association of Adventist Foums participated in a major way at a General Conference session by organizing five panel discussions held in a conference room of a hotel near the convention site. The topics discussed included: "Marxism and Detente: The Eastern European Experience," "Meeting the Challenge of Historical Research on Mrs. White," "Meeting the Challenge of Diversity and Pluralism Within the Adventist Church" and "Meeting the Challenge of Marxism and Nationalism in the Third World." The panel on Marxism in Eastern Europe included an introductory lecture by the secretary of the Polish Union Conference, who is also a professor at the Protestant Seminary within the University of Warsaw, and responses from the head of the delegation from the Soviet Union, the president of the union conference within the German Democratic Republic, and the president of the Czechoslovakian Union Conference. Two naturalized American citizens also responded: Pastor Marshuk, formerly a minister in Poland, and Dr. Erwin Sicher, formerly of Austria and now chairman of the social science department at Southwestern Adventist College.

The best-attended session featured Donald McAdams, president of Southwestern Adventist College. While the conference room seating over 100 persons overflowed, he traced the progress of Ellen White studies over the last decade. Other participants on panels included Dr. Mutuku Mutinga, a professor at the University of Nairobi and educational director of the East African Union; Dr. Samuel Young, president of the Hong Kong-Macao Mission and probably the best informed person in the world on Adventist activities within the People's Republic of China; Dr. Calvin Rock, president of Oakwood College; professors Gottfried Oosterwal and Walter Douglas, of the SDA Seminary; and several others.

Several of the subjects that had elicited extended discussion throughout the week continued to produce debate concerning the statement's final wording. Whether the Scriptures are the *only* infallible revelation of God's will remained an issue. LeRoy Moore, Roland Hegstad, editor of *Liberty* magazine, and R. G. Hunter, from the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference, spoke in favor of striking the word "only" (possibly to leave room for Jesus Christ and the writings of Ellen White to be considered infallible revelations as well). Since the 1931 statement has "only," and since such a position is Ellen White's, it seemed to me that striking the word could be misunderstood. Nevertheless, the delegates voted to delete "only."

Whether to include "first" and "second apartment" terminology in the sanctuary paragraph as suggested by Harold Metcalf, ministerial secretary of the Southern Union, received further discussion. The delegates followed Richard Hammill's urging not to include such specific language.

Robert Spangler, the newly elected secretary of the Ministerial Association, advocated strengthening the paragraph on the Gift of Prophecy by substituting "and" for "which" in the sentence that said "her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction and correction." Though the delegates voted *not* to make the change, the *Adventist Review*, in its final printed version, *made* the change.

Persistent arguments were made that the statement that God is "known through His self-revelation" was inadequate. Robert Spangler, prompted by Edward Zinke, recommended that it be replaced by "known authoritatively through Jesus Christ and the Scriptures." The first vote was not decisive, but after Richard Hammill pointed out that He reveals Himself in nature, too, the delegates voted to leave the paragraph as it was. Zinke came back to the same question again, protesting in strong terms the inadequacy of that expression of how we arrive at a knowledge of God. Though time had run out and many others were still waiting to speak, he requested another vote. When Neal Wilson responded that we had already voted, Zinke insisted that we vote again. Though the assistance of associate secretaries was necessary to determine the outcome of the vote, the delegates turned down his wording for the third time. (The *Adventist Review* does not fully record the dialogue between Wilson and Zinke).

Other topics that received brief comment in the final Friday afternoon business session included: baptism as a prerequisite for participation in communion, the wearing of jewelry, the nature of the Trinity, whether Genesis is "authoritative" or "authentic" with regard to creation, references to a worldwide flood, and whether the remnant is equivalent to the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

As I reflect on the *process* that led up to the adoption of the Statement on Fundamental Beliefs in Dallas, I'm grateful for the opportunity to be involved. I learned a great deal. I imagine the same can be said for all who were involved. The question naturally arises, then, why weren't there *more* involved in the process? There should have been a procedure initiated early enough that would have allowed for greater participation by all interested members. More time would also have allowed members to seek out and interact with the church's theologians. They understand the theological and historical nuances of words used in such statements of belief and should have a feeling for balance and form in such declarations. It was incredible to me how few trained theologians were delegates to the General Conference session, when one of the session's most important tasks was the formulation of a Statement of Fundamental Beliefs. This was not by design, of course; it's just that the denomination's political system works to disenfranchise the teacher of religion. The lay person is similarly disenfranchised; only one percent of the delegates in Dallas were lay persons. To be selected as a delegate to a General Conference session one needs to be an administrator or a pastor. I was the only delegate from the Seminary besides the dean. And what about our colleagues in departments of religion around the world? Only a handful were in Dallas as delegates.

(Can one imagine the Presbyterians adopting the Westminster Confession of Faith without their theologians present — at least as consultants? Even Vatican II had its *periti*.)

The part of the process that made me the most uncomfortable was the voting on the floor. Obviously, truth is not established by majority vote. Are fundamental beliefs? Maybe. But consensus is far more difficult to achieve in theology than it is in policy. It is more than a management problem. It takes accurate information and it takes time. I suspect that the process undertaken in Dallas was more helpful for those who participated in it than it was for the product.

As I reflect on the *contents* of the Statement of Fundamental Beliefs adopted in Dallas, however, I am reasonably satisfied with the results, especially given the circumstances. Despite its obvious flaws, especially the extended particularity of some sections, it is certainly a more adequate document than the statement that has represented Adventism for 50 years. (Even after Dallas, it will undergo stylistic editing, including careful scrutiny of the supporting biblical references.)

However, what has allowed many who continue to see inadequacies in the statement to live with the document is its preamble. Drafted and recommended by Ronald Graybill, assistant secretary of the White Estate, the wording, as adopted, reads:

> Seventh-day Adventists accept the Bible as their only creed and hold certain fundamental beliefs to be the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. These beliefs, as set forth here, constitute the church's understanding and expression of the teaching of Scripture. Revision of these statements may be expected at a General Conference session when the church is led by the Holy Spirit to a fuller understanding of Bible truth or finds better language in which to express the teachings of God's Holy Word.

Now the challenge for us is to continue to work toward a clearer understanding of Bible truth, and to persist in the search for better language in which to express the Bible's teachings. It was perhaps the greatest of all achievements in Dallas that the Adventist church in General Conference session went on record to encourage the continuing pursuit of truth.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. For details, see the *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia,* rev. ed., p. 395.

2. General Conference Minutes, December 29, 1930, p. 195.

3. "The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Mission: 1919-1979," unpublished paper.

4. The other members were B. F. Seton, associate secretary (secretary), replaced upon his retirement by M. T. Battle, also an associate secretary; C. E. Bradford, vice president for North America; N. R. Dower, secretary of the Ministerial Association; C. O. Franz, secretary of the General Conference; W. J. Hackett, vice president; Richard Hammill, vice president; G. M. Hyde, director of the Biblical Research Institute; Alf Lohne, vice president; A. L. White, secretary of the White Estate, replaced, upon his retirement, by R. W. Olson, the new secretary of the White Estate.

5. The nine faculty included: Thomas Blincoe, dean of the Seminary; Ivan Blazen, professor of New Testament; Raoul Dederen, chairman of the Theology Department; Lawrence Geraty, professor of Old Testament; Roy Graham, professor of Theology and Provost of Andrews University; William Johnsson, professor New Testament and associate dean of the Seminary; Hans LaRondelle, professor of Theology; Gottfried Oosterwal, chairman of the Department of Mission; and William Shea, professor of Old Testament. The vice president for academic affairs of the university is Richard Schwarz, a historian.

6. See the discussion in several articles in SPECTRUM, Vol. 8, No. 4 (August 1977), and drafts of the statements subsequently published in the *Adventist Review* (January 17, 1980).

7. At least the attempt was made, which is more than can be said for the secretariat of the General Conference, with regard to the agenda for the General Conference. Despite repeated requests from delegates, the secretariat sent out no advance agendas or documents of any kind. Instead, at the opening meeting of the session in Dallas, along with the other delegates, I was asked to vote on a general agenda of 31 items less than a minute after I received it.

8. These changes and many others can be read in the *Adventist Reveiw* General Conference Bulletins Nos. 5-8.

Court Verdict on Pacific Press Case

by Tom Dybdahl

On December 28, 1979, nearly seven years after Merikay Silver filed a suit against the Pacific Press Publishing Association for alleged sex discrimination. a United States district judge in San Francisco ruled that the Press was indeed guilty of discrimination and that first amendment guarantees of religious freedom did not mean the Press could violate federal equal rights laws.

The story began in May 1972, when Ms. Silver, a recently hired editorial employee at the Press, went to the manager and asked for the "same compensation and benefits as a married man doing the same work." Her request was denied. She discussed the matter further with various church leaders, to no avail. So on the last day of January 1973, she filed a suit charging the Pacific Press with violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the section of the law that prohibits discrimination in hiring and payment practices.

As her case meandered through the courts, attention focused on the employment practices of the Press, and other suits followed. The Department of Labor sued for alleged violations of the Equal Pay Act in the summer of 1973, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) followed in September 1974, with a suit alleging violations of Title VII on behalf of Ms. Silver and Lorna Tobler, another Press employee. When the two women resisted church pressures to end their involvement in these legal matters, they were summarily fired by the Press on February 21, 1975, for continuing to be "at variance with the church and unresponsive to spiritual counsel."

The EEOC case was heard first, and the Press was found guilty of discrimination. But this decision was overturned by a higher court on a technicality: namely, that the EEOC had no jurisdiction over the case at the time it sued. Undaunted, the EEOC sued again, this time based on a complaint by Mrs. Tobler, charging that the Press had denied her fringe benefits paid to male employees and retaliated against her for making charges, assisting and participating in investigations under Title VII. This eventually became the case of record.

After numerous delays, the second EEOC

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suit was set for trial on February 21, 1978. Four days before the trial, however, Ms. Silver signed a settlement on her case, and in the courtroom on the morning of the trial, Mrs. Tobler orally agreed to sign a settlement as well. Under the agreements, Ms. Silver would receive $30,000, her attorneys $30,000, and Mrs. Tobler $15,000. Further, the Press would agree not to discriminate against women — though it still maintained it was not legally subject to federal employment laws.

Several weeks passed before the Press' lawyers reduced the oral agreement to writing, and when the written agreement was sent to Mrs. Tobler and the EEOC attorneys, a misunderstanding arose about the specific terms. This could not be resolved, so the case went to trial on April 27, 1978. (The Silver settlement was not affected by these events.)

"One hopes we have learned by now that if we want the government to keep out of church affairs, the best way to do that is to keep the law."

Only two witnesses testified: Mrs. Tobler and William Muir, the Press treasurer. For his information, Judge Renfrew relied primarily on the oral arguments and briefs filed by the lawyers, as well as documents from previous suits against the Press. Final oral arguments were heard on June 20.

Two matters were in dispute. The immediate question was whether Mrs. Tobler had been discriminated against because of her sex and whether her firing was a retaliatory act. But the larger question was whether or not, under the first amendment protections of religious freedom, the government had a right to apply employment laws to a church institution.

Specifically, the Press' lawyers made three constitutional arguments based on the first amendment. 1) Since every activity carried on by the Press was an exercise of religion, under the free exercise clause the Press was exempt from all federal employment laws. 2) Since the Press was a pervasively sectarian institution, any regulation of its employment practices was a governmental intrusion into religion which violated the establishment clause. 3) Since the firing of Mrs. Tobler was strictly an intrachurch matter, no court could have any jurisdiction over it without violating both religion clauses.

The trial also resurrected a previous controversy. The legal briefs submitted earlier by the Press' lawyers (a team from the prestigious San Francisco law firm of Brobeck, Phleger and Harrison, led by Malcolm Dungan) had contained a curious bit of theology. In the briefs, the Seventh-day Adventist Church was described as being of the "hierarchical variety," with "orders of ministry" having different levels of authority and a "first minister" at the top. In his affidavit, Robert Pierson, then president of the General Conference, described himself as the first minister of the church, and Neal Wilson, then president of the North American Division, called himself the "spiritual leader" of North American Adventists.

The reason advanced for this new nomenclature was that only two forms of church organization were recognized legally: congregational and hierarchical. Since local Adventist congregations were not totally autonomous and since there was in fact a multileveled structure of authority within the church, the hierarchical description was more nearly correct. And the case had already demonstrated that there was some truth to this claim; the women had been fired by the Press after a request from the General Conference Committee, the church's highest authority.

In their court testimony, however, the two women vigorously disputed this description. Many members wondered aloud if the Adventist Church was exchanging its democratic form for a "papal" one. Responding to this unease in a subsequent *Review* article, President Pierson apologized for any misun-

derstanding and suggested he had used the first minister term because a lawyer had recommended it. Speaking to students at Loma Linda University, Wilson said that President Pierson "would be well advised not to use that term again." He also apologized for his use of the term "spiritual leader" and said: "You know I am not going to use that term again." Nevertheless, when the second EEOC case came to court, the same affidavits — with these terms intact — had been introduced.

When Judge Renfrew announced his decision last December, he ruled in favor of the EEOC on virtually every point. He agreed that *prima facie* sex discrimination was plainly established, since the Press admitted that from November 30, 1970, to July 1, 1973, Mrs. Tobler, as a married female employee, was paid a lesser rental allowance than if she had been a married male employee. As for retaliation, he said that "it is manifestly clear that Press terminated Tobler employment as retaliation for her opposition to practices she believed unlawful under Title VII." But the bulk of the Memorandum of Opinion was Renfrew's rejection of the Press' claims that it was not subject to civil employment laws in general and Title VII laws in particular.

The Judge denied the Press any broad immunity from government employment laws on two grounds. First, he stated that the constitution which guarantees religious freedom is a secular document, and the courts — not the church involved — must decide how to construe its principles. The Press, he said, "has misconceived who it is that must make the decisions regarding any conflict between government regulation and the free exercise of religion." The courts must interpret the law, not the person or institution accused of breaking it.

Second, Judge Renfrew pointed out that even workers in religiously affiliated organizations have a legal right to employment free from sexual, racial or ethnic discrimination. To allow a free exercise defense would mean all Seventh-day Adventist institutions — even those with primarily secular functions — could discriminate against their employees at will, exempt from any government regulation.

Renfrew also rejected any specific immunity to Title VII. The title, he said, contained nothing contrary to church beliefs, since the church supported "equal employment opportunity and equal compensation for men and women." In addition, he established that it was the clear intent of Congress, when passing Title VII, to apply it to religious organizations and that the only discrimination they would be permitted was in hiring only church members.

As for the Press' claim that this was an intrachurch matter over purely doctrinal issues, the judge ruled that "despite the overarching religious atmosphere" the Press ascribed to itself, secular job responsibilities were performed and that Mrs. Tobler's pay difference was not based on the nature of her duties or any contribution she made to the church, but solely on her sex. The pay difference and the retaliation could not be considered as purely a church matter, because the Press had a right to discriminate only on the basis of religion. And as long as Tobler remained a church member, she could not properly be fired.

The Press' lawyers had argued that since the church was hierarchical, the discipline administered by the Press in firing Mrs. Tobler was a valid action. Judge Renfrew had as much trouble with this argument as many church members did. He ruled that the church was not truly hierarchical, despite the lawyers' claims. He based this on testimony of witnesses from the previous trial that they had never heard the Seventh-day Adventist denomination characterized as a hierarchical one, as well as statements in the *Church Manual* and *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* that only the local church has the right to censure or disfellowship a member. "The action taken here," he said, "was not even one of the recognized forms of church discipline."

Consequently, Renfrew ordered that Mrs. Tobler be paid all back wages from June 20, 1973 — the date she was fired — until the time she had found other employment. She was also awarded six months "front pay" in lieu of reinstatement at her former job and

was allowed to keep the severance pay she had received when she was fired.

Shortly after the judgment was announced, the Press decided to appeal Judge Renfrew's decision. The lawyers felt that if they did not appeal, the constitutional arguments they had used would not be available to them in any similar suit. In addition, the EEOC had filed another suit against the Pacific Press in May 1978, and the Press lawyers believed that if they did not appeal the current case, they would be almost certain to lose the companion case.

The companion case is a class action on behalf of the women who were employed at the Press during the time it maintained the unequal pay practices that were the basis of the EEOC's suit on behalf of Mrs. Tobler. If the Press loses this suit, it could mean a total settlement as high as $650,000. Since Judge Renfrew was recently appointed a Deputy United States Attorney, the case will be heard by a different judge, probably later this summer.

So at least one more year is likely to pass before the matter comes to rest. So far, it has cost the church a great deal of money in legal fees and cast it in the role of arguing for the right to discriminate. One hopes we have learned by now that if we want the government to keep out of church affairs, the best way to do that is to keep the law.

Sanctuary Symbolism in The Book of Hebrews

by George Masters

Adventism confronts what many claim to be its most serious theological crisis since the so-called "Great Disappointment" of 1844. The history of Christianity reveals that too often these crises of theological reformulation have been plagued with issues which are not central to the task at hand; they are pseudoproblems which arise from semantic confusion, ambiguous definitions, personality clashes or ecclesiastical politics. This paper is intended to highlight such a pseudoproblem which, within the current theological turmoil, could become unnecessarily disruptive.

A passionate debate has developed as to whether the book of Hebrews supports the traditional Adventist understanding that in 1844 Christ moved from the holy to the most holy place in a heavenly sanctuary, or whether Hebrews teaches that the risen Christ entered directly into the second apartment of the heavenly sanctuary at His ascension in A.D. 31. In other words, does Hebrews support the idea that Jesus entered the heavenly "Holy of Holies" in A.D. 31 or A.D. 1844, and if Hebrews only supports A.D. 31, must Adventists change their traditional teachings about eschatology? Some feel that nothing less than the unique mission of Adventism within the history of salvation is at stake.

To realize that a pseudoproblem has been raised, we first need to understand the purpose of the book of Hebrews. What was the specific problem to which the author addressed his epistle?[1] The evidence would indicate that the book was initially addressed to a group of Jewish Christians who, because of continued persecution, were sufficiently discouraged so as to be contemplating a return to Judaism.[2] The author of Hebrews approaches this problem of threatened apostasy with his own unique two-pronged attack of appeal and argument.[3] It is the latter of these two with which we are interested.

The theological argument of Hebrews has been entitled "a theology of access." In his attempts to deter these Jewish Christians from returning to their former faith, the author asserts the superiority of Christianity over Judaism by way of an argument drawn from the Old Testament.[4] He is concerned to

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contrast Judaism and Christianity by showing that the Levitical system of worship with its earthly sanctuary was incapable of providing that necessary access to God, whereas in the high priestly ministry of Christ, man has his sin problem resolved and now enjoys complete and unimpeded access to the very throne of God. It is because of his desire to emphasize the absoluteness of the Christian's access to God that the author concentrates on Christ's activity in "the Holy of Holies" rather than in "the Holy Place."

The only factor which gave the second apartment of the earthly sanctuary its character as "the Holy of Holies" was the manifestation of God's presence, the Shekinah glory, in that place.[5] It was because God "dwelt" in that particular place, because the absolute holiness of God was manifested there, that the place was called "the Holy of Holies," the throne of God and "the mercy seat" of mankind. It is God's presence which determines its character, and it was this presence which determined the location of "the Holy of Holies" in the earthly sanctuary. If, at the Ascension, Christ went into the very presence of the Father, then it is tantamount to affirming that our Saviour went into the heavenly "Holy of Holies." A careful examination of the book of Hebrews reveals that the author repeatedly emphasizes this fact.

The Levitical priesthood consisted of imperfect mediators providing a very imperfect and "shadowy" access to God. They themselves were sinners in need of forgiveness and purification.[6] With the exception of one day of the year, their mediatorial work on behalf of the people was performed with a protective veil shielding them from the fiery presence of God, and even on that one day of the year when the high priest was permitted into the very presence of God, he stood but fleetingly, guarded by a cloud of smoke.

In contrast to all this, our author goes to great lengths to stress the superiority of the high priesthood of Christ. At the outset, the superiority of Christ is emphatic. He is a perfect mediator between God and man both by virtue of his divinity and his humanity.[7] Even his humanity is superior to that of the Levitical priests because, unlike them, he is sinless and in no need to seek forgiveness of his own sins.[8] He is the perfect mediator, because in contrast to the earthly priests, he is able to go boldly into the very presence of God, into the very throne room of the universe, the antitypical "Holy of Holies."

The earthly high priest *stood* momentarily in "the Holy of Holies" on the annual Day of Atonement, whereas the heavenly high priest enters and remains, *seated* on the very throne of God.[9] The earthly high priest offered up the blood of animal sacrifices both for himself and his people year after year, and thereby acknowledged that the earthly Day of Atonement ceremonies and sacrifices were incapable of cleansing from sin.[10] By contrast, our author proclaims that when our sinless high priest, Christ, went into the throne room of the universe and presented the blood of his own sacrifice, that one unique sacrifice adequately "made purification for sins."[11] It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the whole thrust of this argument for the superiority of access available to God in Christ the high priest is couched in Day of Atonement imagery and with the intention of visualizing for readers Christ in the heavenly "Holy of Holies."

It is because Christ is in the heavenly "Holy of Holies" that he "sat down at the right hand" of the Father. It is because he is seated upon the throne of God, the "mercy seat" of the universe, that the author affirms that we may "with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy."[12] It is because Jesus is in the very presence of the Father that he is our "hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain."[13] The imagery of the epistle's argument is undoubtedly drawn from the Day of Atonement ceremony.[14]

Furthermore, it is not coincidental that Jesus is consistently referred to as the antitype of the high priest and not merely a priest. This is because the epistle is attempting to underscore the perfect mediatorship of Christ by drawing upon the second apartment ministry on the Day of Atonement and not upon the ceremonies associated with the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary. Let us be reminded that it was the high priest and

not a common priest who made that timid brief appearance before God on the Day of Atonement, and it is with this imperfect act of mediation that our author wishes to contrast Christ's unbroken appearance face to face before God.

Other passages within the argument of this book draw a contrast between the mediation of the earthly high priest on the Day of Atonement and the exaltation of Christ at his Ascension in A.D. 31. A case in point is Hebrews 9:23-28. It explicitly refers to the "yearly" function of the high priest in cleansing the earthly tabernacle. Again, the fact that the Levitical high priests repeated this annual event, generation after generation, only served to add emphasis to the claim that the earthly system could do little but act as a reminder of the sin problem. In comparison, the unique, once-for-all-time sacrifice of Christ has provided the final solution to the problem of sin and the inevitable separation from God which sin had caused.

"The author of Hebrews does not visualize two 'geographical' locations in heaven which correspond to the two apartments of the earthly structure."

Drawing again upon the Day of Atonement imagery, Hebrews 10:19-22 continues this theme of perfect access into the heavenly "Holy of Holies" through the blood of Christ's sacrifice. As in Hebrews 6:19-20, that curtain which served to separate man from the immediate presence of God has been finally penetrated by a high priest who can adequately plead our case.

This brings us to a further feature of the author's application of the sanctuary symbolism which has frequently escaped commentators — particularly Adventist commentators. This blind spot is not entirely surprising, for it is very often of the nature of Bible students to have predetermined the meaning of a passage rather than to allow the passage to reveal itself.

The passage in question is Hebrews 9:1-8. The key to the author's intention is contained in verse 8. Having described the structure of the earthly two-apartment structure and mentioned its "daily" and "yearly" ceremonies, our author then makes an application of these symbols in a manner so different from traditional Adventist expectations that it has often escaped our attention. To make clearer the intention of the author in Hebrews 9:8, the following paraphrase is proposed:

> By this two apartment structure, with its daily and yearly rituals, the Holy Spirit was showing that access to *the heavenly sanctuary* (symbolized by the second apartment of the earthly structure with its yearly ritual) was not yet apparent while *the earthly* sanctuary (symbolized by the first apartment with its daily ritual) was still operating.

The author of Hebrews does not visualize two "geographical" locations in heaven which correspond to the two apartments of the earthly structure. To the contrary, the two apartments of this earthly building typify two different sanctuaries and their two different ministries, the one earthly and the other heavenly. The contrast between the daily, repeated ritual of the first apartment and the yearly, once-for-all ritual of the second apartment has provided our author with an ideal vehicle with which to illustrate the contrast between the imperfect access of the Levitical priesthood and the perfect access available through the high priesthood of Christ.[15]

This exegesis of Hebrews 9:8 is by no means novel to Adventism. "The sanctuary here described is the heavenly sanctuary of which the inner compartment of the earthly sanctuary is symbolic."[16] The author of this quotation candidly admits that in this instance, and in other texts in Hebrews, the epistle is concentrating upon Christ's function as mediator in the heavenly "Holy of Holies."[17] The writer of the quoted article preferred to translate these passages merely as "the sanctuary" and thereby left it to the

commentator to highlight which apartment the author had in mind. Whatever justification there may be in doing this, it surely does little to aid the ordinary reader of the Bible to grasp the thrust of the epistle's argument. As the article implies, the initial recipients of Hebrews would have had no difficulty in understanding that in these passages "the Holy of Holies" was in view. Unfortunately, chronological and cultural gaps, not to mention the peculiar theological impediments found in Adventist circles, present us with exegetical barriers difficult to surmount. We can be thankful that the translators of the New International Version refused to allow themselves to be restricted by principles of translation which conceal the intent of the biblical writer.[18]

The parallel columns (see box) are a diagrammatic way of illustrating the application of the two-apartment sanctuary symbolism in the book of Hebrews.

To acknowledge that the author of Hebrews places the exalted Christ within the "Holy of Holies" in A.D. 31 and in some way fulfilling the Day of Atonement ritual is an admission too difficult for many Adventists to make. This is understandable, for such an admission would appear to be a direct contradiction of the traditional Adventist position that Jesus entered the "Holy of Holies" in 1844. Yet, the contradiction is more apparent than real, for the issue is a pseudoproblem.

This pseudoproblem has arisen partly as a result of slavery to a too literal application of biblical symbolism. All religious symbolism is of an experiential character. The sanctuary symbolism in harmony with other biblical symbols uses language which corresponds more closely to poetry or metaphor than it does to scientific or descriptive prose. The function of the sanctuary symbolism is to focus the concentration of the believer upon God's reconciliation of man to Himself in Christ. Although the general approach to the interpretation of the sanctuary symbols by Adventists has harmonized with the New Testament experiential approach, it has frequently been unequally yoked with a literalistic application which attempts to project into heaven substantial realities corresponding to earthly substances.[19] We are left with a course in "celestial geography" rather than an evocative appeal to man's spiritual sense.

The critical point in the present discussion is whether the sanctuary in heaven has two separate spatial apartments corresponding to the two apartments of the earthly building. (The writer of the book of Hebrews goes beyond ignoring this application; he denies such a possibility. For the author, the two apartments correspond to two different sanctuaries, *not* two separate localities in some heavenly structure.) The key is to understand the significance of the curtain which separated the two apartments of the earthly sanctuary. Too often, the experiential function of the curtain as a symbol is overlooked, while the curtain itself as a material object is projected into heaven. The curtain was not given in order to divide a building into two separate rooms so that in the unraveling of the symbolism we might enjoy a lesson in supernal architecture. The curtain is intended to fulfill a soteriological purpose.

FIRST APARTMENT AND THE DAILY RITUAL	SECOND APARTMENT AND THE YEARLY RITUAL
The earthly sanctuary: Type.	The heavenly sanctuary: Antitype.
Imperfect access.	Perfect access.
Repetitive sacrifices.	Unique, once-for-all-time sacrifice.
The Levitical priesthood.	The Melchizedekian priesthood.
From Moses to the Ascension.	From the Ascension to the Second Advent.

The veil in the earthly sanctuary functioned as a consistent reminder of the problem of sin which had brought about a separation between man and God. The sinfulness of the earthly priests made it necessary for them to be shielded from the divine presence as they performed their typical-shadowy functions. The rending of the veil at the death of Jesus was an indication from God that the separation had been removed.[20]

When we turn our attention to the antitypical sanctuary in heaven, we should not forget that the contrasts are at least as significant as the comparisons. Is it conceivable that our sinless high priest must function with a protective shield between himself and the Father? That which was essential in the earthly sanctuary becomes incongruous in the heavenly.

"To insist upon two separate heavenly locations for these two phases of Christ's mediatorship is to fail to grasp the significance of the symbolism of the sanctuary. . . ."

If we are to admit that a two-apartment building does not exist in heaven and that the author of Hebrews gives the Day of Atonement ritual a fulfillment in A.D. 31, what effect does this have on the traditional Adventist position that Jesus commenced a special ministry corresponding to the Day of Atonement type in 1844? The answer is that this understanding of Hebrews neither affirms nor denies the Adventist eschatological application of the Day of Atonement ritual.

If we remind ourselves that the Adventist interpretation of the daily and yearly rituals of the earthly sanctuary centers upon soteriological functions of Christ, rather than celestial architecture, we will not feel threatened by the loss of two heavenly compartments. Both *phases* of Christ's high priestly ministry have been performed in the very presence of the antitypical mercy seat, the throne of God. To insist upon two separate heavenly locations for these two phases of Christ's mediatorship is to fail to grasp the significance of the symbolism of the sanctuary in general and the dividing curtain in particular. The issue of the two apartments in heaven is a pseudoproblem.

On the surface, a more serious problem is that of justifying the Adventist application of the Day of Atonement to post-1844 times in the face of the Hebrews assertion that Jesus performed the role of high priest on the Day of Atonement in A.D. 31. Again, this problem is a pseudoproblem which does not necessarily exclude the Adventist position. The fact that Luke-Acts applies Joel 2:28-32 to Pentecost has never caused Adventists to deny that this passage has a second later application.[21] Likewise, there is no reason why the Day of Atonement *might* not have a double application. An examination of the application by the book of Hebrews indicates that he adopts the Day of Atonement as a vehicle of truth solely because it illustrates his intention of highlighting the unimpeded access to God available to believers in Christ. I cannot believe that either the author of Hebrews or God intended us to imagine that the Day of Atonement typology has been exhausted by this application.

The real problem for Adventism in its vindication of its eschatological positions is not whether Jesus went into the heavenly "Holy of Holies" in A.D. 31, nor whether the author of Hebrews makes a typological application of the Day of Atonement to Christ's mediatorial work from that time onward. These issues will only become problems if we get caught up in a literalistic, substantial interpretation of biblical symbolism and fail to grasp its experiential dimension.

The urgent task of Adventism is to exert its energies in focusing upon the chinks in its exegetical armor and to discover an adequate biblical rationale for its eschatological positions. This does *not* mean that Adventists are required to find "the investigative judgment" and their other unique teachings explicitly referred to in Scripture in order to justify their positions. The doctrine of the Trinity is acceptable to the whole of or-

thodox Christianity despite the universal recognition that it is only implicit in Scripture. In the same way that the raw material for the development of the Trinitarian doctrine was distilled from Holy Writ, so Adventism must concentrate on consolidating its traditional positions from the implications of Scripture.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. New Testament introductions are not unanimous in their answers to this question. These differences are not sufficient to create a variance in interpretation of the Epistle's meaning.

2. Hebrews 2:1-3; 3:12-15; 6:6; 10:23-25, 29; 12:25, indicate the temptation of apostasy. The pressure of persecution is hinted at in Hebrews 10:32-39; 12:3-12; 13:13. All these passages occur in the appeal sections of the epistle. On the other hand, the possibility of a return to Judaism is implied from the substance of the theological argument of the book. (All Scriptural references to R.S.V. unless stated.)

3. McNeile, A. H. *An Introduction to the Study of The New Testament* (2nd edition rev. Williams, C. S. C., Oxford: 1953) pp. 224-229.

4. In contrasting the Old Testament Cultus with Christianity, the word "better" (*κρειττων*) occurs thirteen times: Hebrews 1:4; 6:9; 7:7, 19, 22; 8:6; 9:23; 10:34; 11:16, 35, 40; 12:24. In addition to these explicit statements, the idea of superiority runs like a thread throughout the argument of the epistle. It is because of this one should remember in dealing with the Epistle's symbolism that the contrast between type and antitype is more significant than comparison.

5. Exodus 25:8; 40:33 ff.

6. Hebrews 5:3; 7:27; 9:7.

7. Hebrews 1:1 ff.

8. Hebrews 4:15; 7:26 f.

9. Hebrews 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2. This point is emphatic so as to highlight the fact that Christ's appearance into the presence of God was not fleeting as that of the earthly high priest on the Day of Atonement.

10. Hebrews 7:11, 18 f.; 10:1-4.

11. Hebrews 1:3; 7:26 f.; 9:11-14, 26 ff.; 10:1-4, 11 f.

12. Hebrews 4:16.

13. Hebrews 6:19.

14. The constant emphasis upon the believers' "drawing near" to God through their high priest harmonizes well with the other Day of Atonement allusions in the epistle. See Hebrews 4:16; 7:19, 25; 10:1, 22; 11:6.

15. Hebrews 9:25 f.

16. Salom, A. P. "Ta Hagia in the Epistle to the Hebrews" *AUSS*. Vol. V, 1967, No. 1, p. 68.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 66-70.

18. Note the N.I.V. version of Hebrews 9:8, 12, 25; 10:19; 13:11.

19. The application of the table of shewbread to the reality of Christ "the bread of life" and the seven branched candlestick to Christ "the light of the world" or to the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit are two examples of the existential approach to symbolism. We are concerned to grasp their soteriological implications rather than discovering pieces of temple furniture in some heavenly building. And yet, by a curious twist, when we come to the dividing curtain in the earthly sanctuary, we are preoccupied with a substantial application and ignore its soteriological dimension. Rather than seeing that veil as a symbol of the separation created by sin, we project it into heaven as a literal curtain!

20. Matthew 27:50 f.

21. Acts 2:16-21.

READERS' SYMPOSIUM

Butler on Ellen White's Eschatology

The thesis of Butler's article in SPECTRUM (Vol. 10, No. 2) appears to be this: The apocalyptic eschatology as outlined in detail in *The Great Controversy* is historically conditioned to the late nineteenth century and must be reinterpreted today in the light of developments in the religious and political world since then. This reinterpretation is called for since Ellen White herself recognized the conditional nature of prophecy. If the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to remain truly "Adventist," it must preach the end of the world of our day in the light of present conditions and not those of either a past era or a remotely future one.

That certain predictive prophecies of Scripture are conditional in nature is borne out in many places. For example, Jonah's prophecy was, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4). Yet when the Ninevites repented, judgment was postponed. Sometimes the conditions are clearly stated: "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me" (Ex. 19:5). At other times, the condition may not be stated but implied: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them" (Jer. 18:9, 10).

An important statement by Ellen White on this subject was given when she was challenged as to why time had continued longer than her earlier testimonies seemed to indicate. Her reply was: "How is it with the testimonies of Christ and His disciples? Were they deceived? . . . The angels of God in their messages to men represent time as very short. . . . It should be remembered that the promises and threatenings of God are alike conditional" *(Evangelism,* p. 695).

Our problem today is not with accepting the principle of conditional nature of prophecy as much as with deciding which prophecies are to be understood as conditional. Butler has touched a sensitive issue when he, in effect, declares that even those

Jonathan Butler's article, "The World of E. G. White and the End of the World" has been widely discussed when presented on several occasions before publication and since its appearance in SPECTRUM (Vol. 10, No. 2). The editors are pleased that Harold E. Fagal, who participated in a colloquium on the article, has permitted us to publish his comments. They are followed by other responses from readers and then Butler's own comments.

events that Ellen White described as those that would precipitate the end of the world were conditioned by the turn of events in her time and are not to be viewed as unconditional prophecy today. That we have been willing to do this with regard to some of Ellen White's statements may be illustrated by our explanation of the statement found in *Spiritual Gifts* (vol. 2, p. 208): "At the conference [held in Battle Creek in 1856] a very solemn vision was given me. I saw that some of those present would be food for worms, some subject for the seven last plagues, and some would be translated to heaven at the second coming of Christ, without seeing death." With the passing of time and the demise of all of those who were present, including possible infants in the arms of attendees, we have said that "if the conditions had been met, Jesus would have come long ere this, and some of those present would have been 'food for worms,' that is, they would have died prior to the coming; others would have been 'subjects for the seven last plagues'; still others would have been 'translated to heaven at the second coming of Christ, without seeing death' " (D. F. Neufeld, *The Adventist Review,* Oct. 25, 1979, p. 17).

"Butler now asks us to reexamine our position toward the eschatological outline found in *The Great Controversy*. . . ."

Butler now asks us to reexamine our position toward the eschatological outline found in *The Great Controversy* in the light of the fact that the end of the world has not happened, and the forces of Catholicism, apostate Protestantism and spiritualism have not united in a way so as to precipitate the final crisis. Thus, he says that we are to understand this, too, as conditional prophecy.

That the eschatology of the New Testament is presented with a sense of immediacy is seen in the following passages which are but a few of those that could be cited to illustrate this:

I John 2:18: "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists: whereby we know that it is the last time."

Revelation 1:1: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants what must soon take place. . . ." And verse 3: "the time is near." (In one way or another, the thought that the various events foretold in the book of Revelation were to take place in the not distant future is specifically stated seven times by such expressions as "what must soon take place," "I am coming soon," "the time is near." The concept of the imminence of the return of Jesus is both explicit and implicit throughout the book of Revelation.)

Matthew 24:34: "this generation will not pass away till all these things take place."

Romans 13:12: "the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light."

Through the years, the church has had to explain this sense of immediacy concerning the second coming in the light of the fact that the *eschaton* has not taken place. In *Christ's Object Lessons* (p. 69), Ellen White wrote:

> It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (II Peter 3:12, margin.) Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain.

In 1954, the Review and Herald published the book *Problems in Bible Translation* for the Committee (of the General Conference) on Problems in Bible Translation. D. E. Rebok, secretary of the General Conference, wrote the foreword in which he said: "This report of the findings of that committee is sent forth, not with any idea of finality, but rather in the hope that it may help the reader better to appreciate the principles involved in the work of translation, and that it may enable him more judiciously and effectively to apply these principles in his own study of the Holy Scriptures." The book was one of the first, if

not the first, place in which we published anything about revelation as historically conditioned and the conditional nature of prophecy. Notice a few statements taken from this book:

> Generally speaking, such parts of Scripture as constitute a direct revelation from God were addressed to His people then living and adapted to their understanding and needs. . . . We need to ascertain what they, and the Holy Spirit through them, intended to be understood in the light of the influences under which they lived, worked, and wrote. . . .
>
> Predictions of weal and woe to occur prior to the close of probation are usually conditional in nature, due to the operation of man's power of choice; those following that event are contingent upon the will of God alone and are therefore unconditional in nature. Most prophetic messages were originally designed to meet the specific needs of God's people at the time they were given, but in the providence of God they have been recorded and preserved, and may be of equal or even greater value to the church today . . . (pages 103-4).

At this same time, the volumes of the *SDA Bible Commentary* were being published. In this work, many New Testament passages regarding the expected immediacy of Christ's return had to be explained in the light of the fact that it has not even yet taken place. The explanations given took into account the conditional nature of prophecy. An illustration is found in the comments on Revelation 1:1:

> Thus it seems clear that although the fact of Christ's second coming is not based on any conditions, the repeated statements of Scripture that the coming was imminent were conditional on the response of the church to the challenge of finishing the work of the gospel in their generation. The Word of God, which centuries ago declared that the day of Christ was "at hand" (Rom. 13:12), has not failed. Jesus would have come very quickly if the church had done its appointed work. The church had no right to expect her Lord when she had not complied with the conditions. (See *Evangelism,* pp. 694-697.)

Thus the statements of the angel of Revelation to John concerning the imminence of Christ's return to end the reign of sin are to be understood as an expression of divine will and purpose. God has never purposed to delay the consummation of the plan of salvation, but has ever expressed His will that the return of our Lord be not long delayed.

These statements are not to be understood in terms of the foreknowledge of God that there would be so long a delay, nor yet in the light of the historical perspective of what has actually taken place in the history of the world since that time. To be sure, God foreknew that the coming of Christ would be delayed some two thousand years, but when He sent messages to the church by the apostles He couched those messages in terms of His will and purpose with regard to that event, in order to make His people conscious of the fact that, in the divine providence, no delay was necessary. Consequently, the seven statements of the Revelation concerning the nearness of Christ's coming are to be understood in terms of God's will and purpose, as promises conditionally set forth, and not as utterances based on divine foreknowledge. In this fact, doubtless, is to be found the harmony between those passages that exhort to readiness for the soon coming of Christ and those time prophecies that reveal how far ahead lay the actual day of the Lord.

"I believe that Ellen White was speaking. . . not only of the end of *her* world. . . , but of the end of *the* world."

Whether one agrees with every point of the argument set forth here is not important. What is important is that the church found it necessary to come to some understanding of why the *parousia* had been so long delayed, and it did so by using the concept of the conditional nature of prophecy.

The compilers of the book *Evangelism* collected several Ellen White statements to which they gave the heading "The Reason for the Delay." Notice some of the reasons given:

> The long night of gloom is trying, but the morning is deferred in mercy, because if the Master should come, so many would be found unready. God's unwillingness to have His people perish, has been the reason of so long delay (1868).
>
> It was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be thus delayed. God did not design that His people, Israel, should wander forty years in the wilderness. . . . For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration, and strife among the Lord's professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years (1883).

It appears that what Butler has done in this article with regard to the eschatology of Ellen White in *The Great Controversy* is similar to what the church has done in explaining the sense of immediacy concerning the *parousia* as found in the New Testament. If we accept the position that all prophecies of the Bible dependent upon men for their fulfillment (which means those whose fulfillment is to take place before the close of probation) are conditional in nature, even when the conditions so governing them are not explicitly expressed, and only those prophecies whose fulfillment is dependent upon God's acting without the involvement of man's free choice (which means those whose fulfillment is to take place after the close of probation) are unconditional in nature, consistency would demand that the prophecies of Ellen White in *The Great Controversy* be treated in the same manner as those in the Bible. The alternative to this would be to place her writings on a different plane from those of the Bible itself.

There are forces at work within the church and without that are leading us to reexamine certain of our positions to be sure that we are expressing truth in the clearest, most precise way. And this brings me to a suggestion I would like to make with regard to the way Butler has expressed himself. I could wish that he would rethink, and perhaps reexpress, a point or two. For example, he says: "When *this* Protestant world began slipping away, Mrs. White was aghast. She saw the Victorian Protestant America declining in the face of religious and ethnic, intellectual and social changes. Mrs. White's eschatology envisioned the end of her world" (p. 10). This thought is repeated again in the final paragraph of the article: "The title of our discussion lends itself to a double entrendre: when Mrs. White heralded the end of the world she spoke of the end of *her* world. Since Ellen White provided an eschatological perspective for her own time, in her spirit it is now up to us to provide one for our time" (p. 12). If I understand these words correctly, I could wish that the author would modify them, for I believe that Ellen White was speaking in *The Great Controversy,* not only of the end of *her* world (if by that Butler means the Victorian Protestant America), but of the end of *the* world. The world did not come to an end as quickly as she envisioned it would. However, she was speaking of *the* world that one day *is* going to come to an end. That it did not end when and how she envisioned does need explanation, and that could well be done in terms of the conditional nature of prophecy. *The Great Controversy* outlines how the final consummation of all things would have taken place had the end come as expected then.

Ellen White herself wrote: "Had Adventists, after the great disappointment in 1844, held fast their faith, and followed on unitedly in the opening providence of God . . . the work would have been completed, and Christ would have come ere this to receive His people to their reward" *(Selected Messages,* book 1, p. 68). This statement was made in 1883. Hence, if the conditions had been met, Christ would have come at some time prior to 1883. How many of the predictions in *The Great Controversy* will be fulfilled in just the way they are given there only time will tell. Butler may be right when he suggests that "communism, nuclear arms,

energy shortages or ecological disorders may be among the 'beasts' and 'signs' unanticipated by Mrs. White and other early Adventists" (p. 12). And it may be increasingly difficult to see how a prophetic message for our times could avoid the mentioning of these things and how much a part the triumvirate of Catholicism, apostate Protestantism and spiritualism will actually play in closing events. Only time will tell what forces will be at work just before the *eschaton* that will play decisive roles in the last-day events.

My last point has to do with terminology. I am not sure I fully understand the reference to "the Adventist culture [providing] an example of a kind of 'realized eschatology' from which the world may benefit in our time" (p. 10). If Butler, by his use of the expression "realized eschatology," is referring to the *eschaton* in which Victorian Protestant America came to an end, I am not sure I see how this can provide "an example . . . from which the world may benefit in our time." To say, with Butler, that "the prophetess predicted that Protestant America would end with the passage of Sunday legislation, the repudiation of constitutional government, the persecution of the Saturday-keeping minority, resulting finally in the Second Coming" (p. 10) is correct. That the *eschaton* has not come is also correct. But to reinterpret what Ellen White wrote in such a way as to understand her to be predicting the end of Victorian Protestant America would be attributing to her something totally foreign to her thinking.

And let me say that the term "prophetic disconfirmation" (p. 10) caused me some concern. I cannot quite see how we could ever convince our people regarding the validity of a principle of prophetic interpretation called "prophetic disconfirmation." I would suggest that we stay with the term "the conditional nature of prophecy" that has served us well for the past quarter of a century.

In conclusion, let me commend Butler for an article that I found both stimulating and provocative. He is a lucid writer and has my admiration for what I consider to be a good piece of writing. I appreciate his submitting it for publication knowing full well that it could possibly be misunderstood. And, let me add, I am also grateful for a journal in which articles like this can be published. SPECTRUM provides Butler and others with a forum for presenting new ideas and a readership willing to react and respond so as to help advance the cause of truth for all of us.

Harold E. Fagal

To the Editors: Jonathan Butler's provocative SPECTRUM article (Vol. 10, No. 2) made the point that the reevaluation of Adventist eschatology, specifically in the area of Sabbatarianism, may be necessary due to the changed "realities" of our present world as compared with the Victorian age of the pioneers.

While serious analysis and research should continually be made to unlock, if possible, the reason for the delayed *eschaton,* caution should be exercised so as not to disregard the lessons of the past that may very well prove to be the blueprint for the future.

It is agreed that the Sabbath has never been the burning issue that it once was in the nineteenth century. Adventists living during that era were convinced that prophecy was being literally fulfilled. And Ellen White was at certain times speaking and writing about current events that were transpiring around her. But such, however, was not always the case with either Adventist theologians or Ellen White.

It must be remembered that by the 1850s, Adventist eschatology had been concretely formulated. And these early pioneers virtually ignored the formation of the National Reform movement that took place more than a decade later. (See *Review and Herald,* 1863 and 1864.) They did not even identify it as the possible procuring cause for the predicted Sunday persecution until the 1870s, when J. H. Waggoner declared that "we have underestimated rather than overestimated this organization." *(Review and Herald,* February 17, 1874; see also Uriah Smith, *Review and Herald,* January 16, 1872.)

The early Adventist exegists, in the face of all contrary evidence, predicted that because of Revelation 13, Sabbatarianism would be-

come a leading political consideration within the United States and eventually the world. They predicted that somehow this democratic republic would enforce as a capital offense a national law, upholding the false Sabbath-Sunday.

As the National Reformers were rapidly gaining strength in 1876, Uriah Smith recounted how it "was no small act of faith" to believe in the eschatological scenario painted by Revelation 13 in those early days of the movement (1850s). "No sign appeared," he said, "above or beneath, at home or abroad, no token was seen, no indication existed that such an issue would ever be made" (Uriah Smith, *United States in Light of Prophecy,* 1876, p. 156.)

It should be noted that Ellen White in her first *The Great Controversy* dated 1858 had already written out her eschatological framework long before Sabbatarianism was in vogue. Therefore, any attempt to portray the Adventists of the 1880s, including Ellen White, as simply reacting to their times with their own unique eschatological bias is historically incorrect, for Adventism had long predicted such unbelievable events.

As the Blair bill was pending before Congress (1888) and the nation was caught up with Sabbath reform, Ellen White declared that God was bringing the issue "to the front" to "become a subject of examination and discussion" so that agitation on the Sabbath could be publicly precipitated. (Ellen White, "The Approaching Crisis," *Review and Herald,* December 11, 1888.)

She further noted that this religious amendment was indeed the very thing that Seventh-day Adventists had been expecting. "We have been looking many years for a Sunday law to be enacted in our land; and now that the movement is right upon us, we ask what our people are going to do in the matter."

J. N. Loughborough also interpreted the Blair bill as concrete evidence that the past predictions were trustworthy. "But here we have in this year of grace, 1888, sprung upon us at once the very work, which I, with hundreds of other Seventh-day Adventists, have for thirty-five years been looking to see come in and fulfill this prophecy . . . the great crisis of the message and the closing up of the work are right upon us." (J. N. Loughborough, *Signs of Times,* October 5, 1888, p. 603.)

Curiously, while many Adventist leaders in the 1880s, especially Ellen White, were convinced that the vociferous Sunday movement was the specific fulfillment of the Third Angel's message, many other Adventists were not. Ellen White wrote:

> Not all of our ministers who are giving the Third Angel's message really understand what constitutes that message. The National Reform movement has been regarded by some as of so little importance that they have not thought it necessary to give much attention to it and have even felt that in so doing, they would be giving time to questions distinct from the Third Angel's message. May the Lord forgive our brethren for thus interpreting the very message for this time. (E. G. White, "The Approaching Crisis," *Review and Herald,* December 11, 1888, p. 4.)

Therefore, it would seem that the unique Adventist eschatology was predicted upon prophetic exegesis in the 1850s and not social or cultural influence during the 1880s. And second, that even in spite of the startling rise in political Sabbatarianism in the 1880s, many Adventists of that period had serious doubts as to the significance of those current events and questioned the validity of the early Adventist eschatology.

But there is yet another point which may hold a key to explain why the Adventist eschatology which seemed to come so close to its long-predicted realization failed. And that is soteriology.

The 1880s are far better known among Adventists for soteriological rather than eschatological advances. And yet it is most remarkable that as the prophecies began to reach surprising fulfillment, a fresh look at the Gospel within Adventism was initiated. And it was the literal prophetic application of the current Sunday movement to the early Adventist eschatology, championed primarily by A. T. Jones along with the clarification

of the law and the gospel by E. J. Waggoner, that brought Ellen White to her feet and to their side, in spite of formidable opposition from within Adventism.

The denomination seemed on the brink of what could have been a truly realized eschatology. But the unprecedented opportunity to more fully proclaim the true Sabbath in the context of both eschatology and soteriology dissipated as the church balked at her own predictions and failed to grasp a more defined gospel. By 1895, political Sabbatarianism was rapidly declining and that relegated Adventism back into obscurity to wait for another rendezvous with her unique destiny.

We would do well to consider Ellen White's 1896 warning to those trying to find new insights into "those prophecies which He, by His Holy Spirit, moved upon His chosen servants to explain." ("The Third Angel and the Other Angel," 1886, *Selected Messages,* p. 112.)

After she depicted Satan as working to confuse Adventists on the point of eschatology, she declared that "if we search the Scriptures to confirm the truth God has given His servants for the world, we shall be found proclaiming the First, Second and Third Angel's messages." Although Ellen White was aware that there were future events "yet to be fulfilled," she wrote that "very erroneous work has been done again and again and will continue to be done by those who seek to find new light in the prophecies, and who begin by turning away from the light God has already given." Ellen White was forever convinced that "the messages of Revelation 14 are those by which the world is to be tested." *(Selected Messages,* p. 112.)

Therefore, the reevaluation of Adventist eschatology must lie not in the allegorization of the Third Angel's message or in the disregard for the past prophetic expositions. It must rather be in the reassessment of the historical progress towards prophetic fulfillment that substantiates the validity of Adventist eschatology. It could be that the past, specifically the period of the 1880s, when correctly understood, holds the explanation for the present and the future.

Thomas A. Norris

To the Editors: In his essay, "The World of E. G. White and the End of the World" (Vol. 10, No. 2), Jonathan Butler concludes that we should provide, as twentieth century Adventists, an updated eschatological perspective to White's writings. His purpose is noble: retain the true meaning of her writings by treating them in the same way we have the writings of the biblical prophets. I have, however, a problem with his methodology.

My questions do not center around the careful comparisons he has made between the nineteenth century and the present, but rather in the use he makes of his data. I agree that it is important for us to make pertinent applications to the messages of the prophets, but Butler has made applications that are in my judgment insupportable, and if extended in the same way to the Scriptures, as he believes we have already done, would lead to a typically liberal Protestant position of interpretation.

The key argument for Butler is that there is no longer a nineteenth century Protestant America; therefore, E. G. White's eschatological views, based as they were in the setting of her own time, cannot have meaning for today except in one critical sense: that of immediacy. (It is interesting, incidentally, that many of the points that Butler makes to support the differences between our world and hers are situations that she herself said would exist!)

Butler writes this profound and accurate statement: "If a message meant to inspire urgency now actually encourages lethargy, the essential ingredient of apocalypticism has been lost." But if we are to move from E. G. White's world as *radically* as Butler suggests, retaining the "essence," which he states is urgency, then methodologically we cannot stop there. Why speak of prophetic disconfirmation vis-à-vis White by making such a careful comparison of her time to ours, and then not make precisely the same prophetic disconfirmation with the biblical prophets? It is incongruous to speak of retaining the element of urgency found in White's writings on the basis of the ingredient of apocalypticism—a phenomenon of the first century and earlier, and surely a strange crea-

ture to the twentieth century. (The element of urgency is found also in nonapocalyptic literature.)

What I am saying is that Butler himself has not made the *same* application to the Scriptures as he has to Ellen White, for apocalypticism, which is very important to him, and rightly so, is not a twentieth-century world vehicle of truth, and came into existence in a world far removed from ours. The frustrations and issues that led Jewish religionists and later Jewish Christians to speak of God's

"Many of the points that Butler makes to support the differences between our world and hers are situations that she herself said would exist!"

cataclysmic inbreaking into history to end the domination of evil world powers (apocalyptic literature) are also long gone.

Following Butler, all we could really say about those early Christian views is that the ingredient to be retained is urgency—but urgency for what? The second coming? In the clouds of heaven? Gone are the ancient worldviews of *how* it was going to happen; we do not live in a three-tiered universe in the twentieth century where God comes from up to us who are down.

Butler uses the Sabbath as one of his major examples. He argues that it is outdated for us in 1979 to speak of the Sabbath as a central issue in the great controversy, especially in connection with persecution. Since the nineteenth century Sabbath issue is gone, we must see in the Sabbath its true meaning: a symbol of human freedom and dignity. But has he overlooked the fact that the Sabbath has throughout biblical history been more than a symbol of man's value? It is true that Jesus' emphasis was on this aspect of the Sabbath, but that was because it was the aspect of the Sabbath that had been so grossly abused. The Sabbath has always been an "issue" of loyalty to God as Creator and Redeemer, and in many instances, in the time of crisis, accompanied with persecution.

If the Sabbath is to be removed from the position given to it by Ellen White in her eschatology, then why not argue that the one difference she did have with her contemporaries (which day is the Sabbath) is also no longer a critical point? Why hold onto a day that was supported in a context that no longer exists for either (1) Ellen White, or (2) a Jewish world that passed from the scene 2,000 years ago. Why not represent man's human dignity by keeping the day others are keeping in the twentieth century? Our message to the non-Adventist world would be the value of keeping Sunday in a way that teaches the value of mankind.

This line of argument is, of course, totally unacceptable to Adventists, and I'm sure is unacceptable also to Butler. I would say in conclusion that while I share the author's concern for making meaningful use of Ellen G. White's writings, I would strongly urge that this process be done with considerably more attention to the implications to any twentieth century application.

W. Larry Richards
Religion Department
Pacific Union College

Butler Replies

Both oral and written reactions to my article have generally conceded the historical point that Ellen White's description of last-day events was conditioned by nineteenth-century American culture; consequently, aspects of her eschatology now appear, in certain ways, anachronistic. What has caused continuing debate are differences concerning the nature of prophecy.

One perspective critical of my essay seems to understand prophecy as *gnosis* (or "secret knowledge"). Thomas Norris, for example, argues that Adventist exegesis on Revelation 13 emerged in the 1850s "in the face of all contrary evidence" and was not simply a reaction to the social and cultural setting of the 1880s. Here Norris suggests that Adventist prophetic exposition involved special knowledge well in advance of its times rather than contemporary comment accessible to a general public. While it is a crude misreading of my argument to say that I found Mrs.

White "simply reacting" to her times, Norris' notion of prophecy as prediction, in this case, shipwrecks on the historical evidence. Antebellum American Protestants had long agitated for state and national Sunday legislation, particularly in an effort to end postal service on Sundays but also to close bakeries, stores, taverns, theaters and offices. In the 1850s, following recent Irish-Catholic immigration, the religious press continued to harangue state and federal legislators on behalf of blue laws, rendering Adventist exegesis not at all implausible in that social

"What once was more common knowledge now appears as esoteric mystery, and acceptance of Mrs. White requires an initiation process—more cultic than Christian. . . ."

and cultural milieu. To be sure, antislavery activism superseded Sunday reform as a concern of evangelicals in this period, but Adventists reflected this emphasis as well. In her 1858 version of *The Great Controversy,* Mrs. White focused on the plight of a slave minority rather than an Adventist minority in prophesying a soon end to the American Republic. (*Early Writings,* Review and Herald, 1882, pp. 275-76.)

Contrary to the perspective of prophecy as *gnosis,* I find Ellen White's *The Great Controversy* written for a wide audience of her contemporaries. In this book, prophecy was not, for the most part, the esoteric knowledge of a small cult but the common property of evangelicals in general, and the prophetess not an obscure cultic figure but a messenger to the Christian world. Like *Patriarchs and Prophets* or *The Desire of Ages, The Great Controversy* spoke authoritatively to people precisely because so much of it was the evangelical common sense of the times. With the passage of time, however, basis for belief in the book has undergone a change. In new and different circumstances, what once was more common knowledge now appears as esoteric mystery, and acceptance of Mrs. White requires an initiation process — more cultic than Christian — that was unnecessary and untrue of Adventism a century ago. Thus, when the historian points out the literary dependence, lack of originality or common sense of the prophetess, he threatens the prophetess as gnostic, but not the prophetess herself.

The concept of prophecy as simply prediction, underlying some comments on my essay, overlooks the facts. In the 1880s, Ellen White predicted that "the National Reform movement, exercising the power of religious legislation, will, when fully developed, manifest the same intolerance and oppression that have prevailed in past ages." (*Testimonies,* Pacific Press, 1948, vol. 5, p. 712.) This prophecy on the National Reform movement turned out to be false, but at least partially because the prophetess inspired an Adventist lobby against both the Blair and Breckenridge bills. That is, Mrs. White's prophetic impact on her community led to the failed prediction of an imminent national Sunday law, just as Jonah's prophetic message succeeded so well that his specific "prophecy" failed. Such a turn of events need not undermine our belief in Mrs. White's prophetic authority. But it does shift our emphasis on the prophet's function away from that of predicting future events to that of shaping a people, which seems closer to the biblical profile of the prophet, anyway.

A familiar response to my argument has been a recitation of contemporary events like the resurgence of evangelicalism in the 1970s, a right-wing evangelical lobby in Washington politics, the election of a Southern Baptist as president, energy shortages, or the Pope's visit to America as events coinciding with Mrs. White's predictions. I, too, am disturbed by an evangelical movement in which the nineteenth-century vision to "Christianize America" has been reborn. However, these contemporary evangelicals must confront a more fundamentally pluralistic and secular culture than their kindred spirits faced a century ago. The rallying points for evangelicals have been conservative political positions on homosexuality, E.R.A., gun control and prayer in schools, rather than the Sunday issue which occupied evangelicals in the 1880s.

Alternatively, it has been suggested that a secular, economic problem like an oil crisis and a shutdown at the gas pumps could fulfill Mrs. White's prophecies. But how could such a crisis lead to the persecution — to the point of death penalties, no less — of a *religious* minority? The popular Pope John Paul II is also cited as conforming to Mrs. White's prophecies. It is true that he increasingly appears to be a dinosaur theologically, but he represents quite a different Catholicism and lives in a completely different era than that of Leo XIII, whose life and times we find characterized in *The Great Controversy*.

In these remarks, I am arguing that Adventists may acquire from Ellen White a basic apocalyptic perspective on their times but not gnostic information on just what in particular is happening or will happen. Indeed, a nineteenth-century *gnosis* may offer misinformation on the twentieth century and lead Adventists to lose the full meaning of apocalypticism in their new situation.

Both Norris and Harold Fagal seek a resolution to the problem of failed predictions and a delayed Advent in terms of "conditional prophecy." Though I only allude to conditional prophecy briefly in the study, I am entirely sympathetic with it and appreciated Fagal's careful discussion of the concept within recent Adventism. The biblical example of Isaiah should inform any understanding of conditional prophecy. The New Testament spiritualized the millennial hopes for historic Judaism in applying Isaiah's prophecies to the Christian community. Fundamentalists, on the other hand, continue to apply these prophecies to the historic Israel, positing a long hiatus without specific historical application. My argument would suggest reinterpreting Ellen White's prophecies more like the New Testament has done with Isaiah's, while many Adventists have adopted toward Mrs. White a kind of fundamentalist dispensationalism, placing us for now in a hiatus in which her prophecies do not have the specific historical application they once had or will have.

On the matter of terminology, if the more clinically neutral term "prophetic disconfirmation" allows the onus of failed prediction to fall at times on the prophet, the more theologically interpretive "conditional prophecy" casts the blame elsewhere — usually on the prophetic community. Instead of the prophet's being wrong, the people have fallen short and caused the delay. Though in certain circumstances it may be healthiest and nearest the truth to accept that prophets make mistakes, Fagal's discussion does highlight once again, in quite a biblical way, that prophets relate primarily to a contemporary people and not to future events.

Larry Richards implies that pointing out instances of prophetic disconfirmation and cultural conditioning undermines the prophetic enterprise and that rewriting any of the apocalyptic scenario denies the notion of an apocalyptic drama itself. In relation to both the Scriptures and Ellen White's writings, I reject that this sort of reductionism is an inevitable result of the theological task. Richards' methodological criticism makes about as much sense to me as saying that because the author in Exodus 20 found in Sabbath observance a symbol of Israelite redemption from Egypt while in Deuteronomy 5 the Sabbath was seen as a symbol of God's creation, Sabbath theology has been so "radically" restated as to empty sabbatarianism of any significance. I suspect that quite the contrary actually results from such theological restatements.

Though I admit that biblical apocalypticism was a child of its times, each generation of Christians has faced similar enough circumstances as to find the apocalyptic message compellingly immediate and relevant. In each generation, it has made sense to speak of a soon end to the world, to confront the struggle between good and evil, not only on an individual level but also in the institutional sphere of "principalities and powers," and to encourage a people of God in the face of terror and oppression with the promise of God's triumph.

This table of contents in the apocalyptic story remains the same, though the chapters need rewriting for each new time and place — as Joachim or Müntzer or Ellen White understood and as we must understand in order to continue in their apocalyptic tradi-

tion. Though apocalyptists have miscalculated prophetic timetables, the apocalyptic perspective on human nature, social, political and ecclesiastical institutions, evil, goodness, history and the place of Christ in history has proved powerfully accurate. Richards could not be more wrong when he suggests that apocalypticism "is not a twentieth-century world vehicle of truth."

Marxism, the illegitimate child of the Judeo-Christian tradition, illustrates the vitality of a fundamentally apocalyptic ideology throughout most of the globe. Within Christianity itself — including Seventh-day Adventist Christianity — the only growing edge has been among Third World apocalyptists. Even in North America, best-selling paperbacks from *1984* to *The Late Great Planet Earth* reflect the appeal of an apocalyptic worldview.

Actually, I think it is not the historical argument on nineteenth-century American Adventism or the call for a renewal of the apocalyptic spirit in twentieth-century Adventism that has drawn criticism of the article. It is the question of what this does to our understanding of Ellen White as a prophet that provokes concern. It is perhaps all too revealing of a major shift in Seventh-day Adventism from the nineteenth to the twentieth century that Adventists would rather give up a sense of apocalyptic urgency — by hanging on literalistically to the signs of earlier times — in order to preserve a particular understanding of Ellen White's authority.

Jonathan Butler

Scrivens on Music

To the Editors: The recent article, "Another Look at Ellen White on Music" (Vol. 10, No. 2) proves again that Mrs. White can be made to support almost anything. After reading and rereading all that I can find on what she has to say on music, I have to conclude that her writings do not support the overall conclusions of the unnamed historian.

I would like to address myself briefly to just two of the problems I feel exist in the article. I believe the most basic problem is that the author draws conclusions based on silence. Because Ellen White never applauds the music of Franck, *et al.,* she is made to condemn them. Would we want to follow this principle elsewhere? How much of Ellen White's counsel on sexual relations in marriage are strongly positive? Can we imagine a letter like this: "Dear Brother and Sister A., The Lord has shown me that you have a marvelous sex life. My counsel is to keep it up and enjoy yourselves." We rightly say that the negative tone of her counsels on sex—she uses words like "baser passions," "shameful animalism," "debasing lust"—come through because she was writing to people who had problems. Her near silence on the positive, therefore, should not be construed to condemn the proper enjoyment of a God-given gift. Couldn't the same be true of music? Surely, if the music of Franck is to be condemned, it needs to be on better grounds than the silence of Ellen White.

A second problem I find stems from the fact that the author seems to forget that all inspired counsel needs to be viewed in its cultural context. We've managed pretty well concerning the bicycle issue, but we very well may miss concerning music (as I feel this article does). When Paul and Silas sang in jail, it resulted in an earthquake and several conversions. Does this mean that we should consider first-century Jewish music the proper music for our needs? Or would it be better if we used the hymns the angels sang to some South Sea Islanders a few years ago? Surely the angels wouldn't sing anything but the best. Those hymns were, of course, simply what the people had been taught by the missionaries, and so the angels used the music of the newly Christian culture of the islands. The music of Franck would have been meaningless to Paul and Silas as well as to the

South Sea Islanders. Nor would it have had the same meaning to Ellen White's culture as "Blessed Assurance." For while the music of Franck was in existence when Ellen White wrote, it certainly was not an important part of the culture she was addressing. But to argue that anything more complex than "Blessed Assurance" is ruled out for all time by Mrs. White is to do violence to the basic principles she was enunciating. For while principles must be enduring, the applications must, of necessity, change for each time and place.

I believe the article in question would have been of more value were it to have clarified certain principles and then suggested applications for our own time and culture. I think at least four principles are clear from the material in the article: 1) Music should have an important place in worship and soul-saving. 2) Music (of any kind) must not be all-absorbing and take the place of purely spiritual pursuits such as prayer and the study of Scripture. 3) Music of a frivolous, "low" character should be avoided by Christians. 4) Music, especially that used in worship, should not be of such a character as to draw primary attention to the performer. Cannot thoughtful Christians find applications for these principles today?

Carlyle Manous, Chairman
Department of Music
Pacific Union College

To the Editors: In a recent issue of SPECTRUM, I read, with troubling interest, the article about Ellen White, "Another Look at Ellen White on Music." After careful perusal, I was left with the disquieting feeling that some things had been left unsaid. I find it difficult, for example, to relate a view of church music as presented to other ideas of Ellen White. In several of her writings, she emphasizes the idea that we are all privileged to develop our latent, God-given abilities to the limit. Given that assumption, where are musicians left when presented with the above opinion? If those of us with musical abilities keep learning and growing in our interpretation and presentation of the music literature, it is a good guess that we would not be content to keep playing gospel for long. Musically, it is no challenge. The point was made in the article that in heaven our musical background won't be helpful, for, after all, we will be given musical abilities there—it comes with the territory, so to speak.

The above stand also implies that the composers of the cultural tradition did not express their relationship to, and view of, God in a proper way. That sounds pretty judgmental to me. J. S. Bach, whose music was primarily written for the church and often inscribed to God, is a good example of the cultural tradition. Is his music not then to be played?

Another point. My mind's ear has always heard majestic strains of music when reading the biblical passages about heavenly music. I cannot see the angels utilizing their inestimable abilities to perform "gospel" music endlessly.

Ellen White makes a point that more time needs to be spent in prayer, and too much has been spent on preparing music. She also said there wasn't enough time to spend on music, that we should be seeing to other things instead. First, I'd be interested in knowing to whom the counsel was given, or whether it was meant for the church as a whole. What was the context? I'm particularly interested in this considering the excellent article on the Bible Conference, which clearly indicated what a narrow field of vision we generally use to view Ellen White's comments. I still feel a lot hasn't been said, and out of what has been said, several rigid assumptions have been formulated. Please, we need breathing room, for, after all, these counsels by Ellen White are to be prayerfully considered by individuals, to find the meaning for them personally.

The Sabbath after I finished reading the music article, I attended the Green Lake Church in Seattle, as a visitor. There, I reveled in the orchestral accompaniment to the hymns, enjoyed the hymn variations on "Sine Nominie" during the congregational singing and the postlude, all beautifully performed on the pipe organ. I felt transported heavenward. Perhaps that was wrong?

Jeanne Fleming, Ph.D.

To the Editors: Chuck and Marianne Scriven's "Another Look at Ellen White on Music" was disturbing to me because I feel it was suggesting interpretations or directing readers' thoughts toward interpretations of Ellen White's comments on music which may not be what she intended. I reject their interpretation of what Ellen White wrote on artistic beauty in the Roman Church coupled with theological error, etc., to mean that she asserts ". . . high art has no place in the worship of God, and that its presence must be taken as an evidence of inward corruption." I do not read that into Mrs. White's statement at all. I believe God is a lover of the beautiful and that He has placed within His creatures not only appreciation for beauty (which might include complexity), but also the ability and the desire to create. This is evidenced in nature as well as in the sanctuary and temple services and appropriations which He ordained. I believe Mrs. White was not condemning artistic beauty, but rather a lack of real spirituality and truth which, when covered by artistic beauty, becomes a deception. I doubt she is saying that truth and real worship, on the one hand, and high art, on the other, are mutually exclusive. I believe what she really meant was that *without* the fruits of the Spirit in the lives of the worshipers, high art is an offense to God, and that much attention to art with little time devoted to prayer, meditation, Bible study and witnessing is a sin.

It seems to me that one principle underlies Ellen White's emphasis on simplicity in sacred music. That is that we must keep whatever is done in our services on the level of understanding of the congregation. That is why, contrary to what some of our music educators have felt, I have always sensed a need for a mixture of simple music and hymns with more artistic music in our churches. While I personally might find a real elevating spiritual experience from listening to, or participating in, music which might be considered high art, still there are those who would not be thus inspired. Their needs must be ministered to also. Ellen White was an extremely sensible person. If she had been raised in this day when the media brings high musical art within easy reach of most everyone, if she had been raised (as I have) to appreciate and derive spiritual elevation from more complex music than the camp-meeting-type song, she would probably have expressed herself in such a way that what she wrote could not be interpreted to mean that only the most elementary music is of any value in the worship of God.

"These statements are one more unneeded bit of encouragement for the gospel-type singing groups who persist in bringing the 'vernacular' music of our day into the church."

The other thing that bothers me about this article is the statement: ". . . her objections continued to be based entirely on nonmusical grounds." Also, "Musicians skate on even thinner ice when they presume to attack music in a currently popular idiom set to sacred words, for Ellen White's own precedent suggests that she might approve of it, if directed toward spiritual ends." I hope all your readers take note of that little word "might" in the last sentence. These statements are one more unneeded bit of encouragement for the gospel-type singing groups who persist in bringing the "vernacular" music of *our* day into the church. Her objections were based on nonmusical grounds because the simple vernacular music of her day had no objectionable musical features such as dance rhythms, blues harmony and croony singing. It was not, to use Ellen White's words, "fit for a dance hall." But *our* vernacular music, replete with its dance rhythms, blues harmony and croony singing, is one of the most sacriligious travesties the devil has pulled off on the church. It's nothing like the vernacular music which Ellen White accepted. There is no doubt in my mind that if Ellen White were living today, it would come in for more severe condemnation than any music she ever wrote about. Operatic singing in the church was

not the only music she condemned. She also said that the theater and the dance were unchristian. Even so, we fit up sacred lyrics with the sensuous sounds, rhythms and harmonies of the theater and the dance—blues came from vaudeville which was the theater of her day, and croony singing is hardly the clear, melodious singing she recommended; the dance rhythms need no comment—and we call it sacred music when, without the words, it sounds just like any entertainment hall music and has the same sensuous effect.

I just hope and pray we can keep our thinking in the middle of the road and help others to do the same!

Martha Ford
Greenwich, New York

To the Editors: I am grateful to Chuck and Marianne Scriven for their article on Mrs. White and music. However, I am at the same time somewhat fearful that their revelations may be abused by those who would look to Ellen White as a proof text answer to every dispute (the dispute being, in this case, the unholy row between the supporters of "popular" church music and their "serious" opponents). Indeed, it is possible that the sinking of the *haute culture* crew may have merely prepared the way for the launching of an even more formidable text-ridden juggernaut.

What is most remarkable about the Scrivens' article is that it should even have had to be written (a reflection not on the Scrivens, but on certain members of their audience). For how else should Mrs. White have felt on the topic, when the likes of Charles Ives also recognized the largely false pretensions of the European-American musical tradition and the comparative honesty ("in spite of a vociferous sentimentality"—Ives) of the camp-meeting and gospel hymns? Ives, also, was impressed with the fact that American music in the "cultivated" tradition was predominantly used (especially in rural America) as a way of flaunting social status and not of expressing sincerity. That is why Ives' compositions are filled with old hymn tunes in massed, camp-meeting-style voices—and why he had a choice list of names for the local high-society musical organizations and their "pretty" tastes.

But the important thing that Charles Ives had (and that Mrs. White didn't have) was a solid musical background—and an exceptional ear to go with it. Therefore he, unlike Mrs. White, was able to recognize the greatness of many composers despite the mutilation of their music by "lilypad" musicians. Mrs. White, on the other hand, was compelled to associate the music with the musicians, and hence to denounce wholesale the "cultivated" tradition, music and all. Ives, through his musical genius, was able to separate the music from its milieu—Mrs. White was not.

Thus, it would seem to be a rather fruitless enterprise to examine Mrs. White's statements on the value of musical types. For, in fact, she was in no way qualified to be a music critic. Mired in a small-town camp-meeting tradition and with an inadequate musical training, she was in no position to serve as a public judge of musical worth.

However, this is not to imply that her opinions on music should simply be ignored. It *is* to imply that if we intend to learn from Mrs. White on the subject of music, we must find what general characteristics she saw in unacceptable (to her) musical traditions, and not what music she associated with them. If I am correct in determining these characteristics to be ostentation, encouragement of congregational passivity and intempered frivolity, I believe I can surmise what would be her opinion of the popular recording-touring Adventist artists of today, with their often easy sounds. And I am not sure she would feel the same way about the "cultural" tradition, a tradition now well divorced from the "sentimental ears" of the small-town and liturgical music committees, and now subject to a growing audience of well-educated (musically speaking), thoughtful, and definitely *not* passive, ostentatious or frivolous Adventists.

Russell Stafford

To the Editors: I write to express appreciation for your publishing the Scrivens' article

(Vol. 10, No. 2). It is enlightening. It furnishes a background against which to assess the value of Ellen G. White's comments on music of all kinds.

At the same time, it is difficult, for at least two reasons, to assess the significance of the article. First, according to the editorial footnote, the Scrivens are only redactors for an unnamed author; second, the author leaves the subject suspended in midair, failing to bring the discussion to a conclusion or choosing to leave it incomplete. There must be many readers who hope that the article is no more than the first, rather than the last, word on an important and fascinating topic.

The article abounds in points that cry aloud for responses that cannot be contained within a necessarily brief letter to the editors.

"Must we expect Mrs. White to adjudicate on every aspect of culture? Can we not admit that some areas lie outside her competence. . . ?"

We need a workshop type of gathering for discussion of the wide subject on which the article has only just touched. Here there is room, however, for one inescapable question: If, as stated, "sacred music in the vernacular was the music Ellen White found most congenial," can we expect her to provide us with any reliable yardstick for measuring music that lies outside that lowly range? Must we expect Mrs. White to adjudicate on every aspect of culture? Can we not admit that some areas lie outside her competence, and that other mature, educated Christians might be capable of providing trustworthy guidelines in fields for which her environment and aesthetic standards provided little if any basis for conclusive judgment? Willingness to allow such a less rigid approach to music would spare us from adopting untenable positions in respect of the most heavenly of the arts—music.

B. E. Seton
Etowah, North Carolina

The Scrivens Reply

To the Editors: As a general point, we wish to emphasize that the article is a historical study concerning Ellen White and music. We ourselves, in preparing for publication a manuscript originally composed by someone else, have lent our names and efforts to an attempt to describe what *is the case* about the past, not to say what *ought to be the case* today. With respect to the individual letters, we make just these few remarks.

Dr. Manous appears not to have attended carefully enough to what the article actually says. He asserts that on the basis of Ellen White's *silence* concerning music of the cultivated type (what he means, presumably, by the phrase "the music of Franck, *et al.*"), we invalidly conclude that Ellen White disapproved of it. She did, apparently, disapprove of it, but we have not drawn this inference from her silence, as readers may see by consulting pages 46, 47 and 50 of the article.

In the main, Dr. Fleming's comments do not so much take issue with our conclusions as express puzzlement concerning what they might mean. No doubt other readers share this puzzlement. As for the article itself, it was not meant to solve the problems it raises, though it would be useful, of course, to try to do that.

With respect to Mrs. Ford's letter, we may only say that her own private beliefs and conjectures do not count decisively against the interpretation put forth in the article. That interpretation, by the way, could not be used in support of the "gospel-type singing groups" now popular in our church, as readers will see by noticing page 44.

Mr. Stafford says that despite Ellen White's lack of a "solid musical background," we can still find value in her opinions by attending to the distinction between the behavior and attitudes she associates with certain types of music and the characteristics of the music itself. This is an interesting suggestion, though it presupposes a view of Ellen White's inspiration that would itself have to be defended.

Charles and Marianne Scriven

On Divorce

To the Editors: This is a brief comment on Marvin Moore's article "Divorce, Remarriage and Church Discipline" (Vol. 10, No. 2).

The premise for his discussion is stated in the first paragraph, reading "Our church has followed the lead of other conservative bodies and placed the entire responsibility on the church to determine what are the grounds for divorce and remarriage, and when they have been met." Then follows the statement "An entire chapter of the *Church Manual* outlines the policy in great detail." We would ask the question "Should our church follow the lead of other conservative bodies, or should we follow the Bible?"

It has been the observation of many that when a premise is error, that which follows cannot be relied upon to be truth. When we research into just how the *Church Manual* came to be changed on this subject, back at the 1950 General Conference, we cannot help but wonder if God had anything to do with the change. (See page 8 of our book, *God's 7th Commandment).*

The writers are in perfect agreement with the reading of the *Church Manual* on this subject prior to the General Conference of 1950. The 1942 *Church Manual* read, "That a church member who is the guilty party to the divorce forfeits the right to marry another, and—should such a person marry another he be not readmitted to church membership so long as the unscriptural relationship continues." Under this ruling, all a pastor would have to say to a couple seeking readmission to the church would be, "The Bible calls your marriage sin (Matt. 19:9, and Rom. 7:3) and the *Church Manual* forbids it, so you will have to seek salvation outside of church membership." It is the present *Church Manual* that is trying to follow guidelines that will circumvent the plain teaching of scripture—that these are adulterous marriages and result in "sin in the camp" that is delaying the work of the Holy Spirit in coming with Pentecostal power to finish the work. Hours upon hours are taken of the time of our church leaders in trying to determine where the blame lies and how to judge repentance without forsaking the sin, and in the making of guidelines to fit all cases (an impossible job that we humans are not called upon to have anything to do with). It calls for our ministers to "play God" in forgiving sin, a fact that they have been slow in considering is a fact, or they would recoil with horror at the idea. The old *Church Manual* was as workable as the 10 Commandments—specific and to the point, and did not accommodate the sinner who did not put away his sin.

We want unity in our church—but not at the expense of breaking a Commandment of God.

Roy O. Williams, D.D.S.
Marguerite S. Williams, M.D.
Grand Terrace, California

Moore Replies

To the Editors: The Doctors Williams completely misunderstood the basic premise of my article on divorce, remarriage and church discipline. It is not that Adventists have followed the lead of other denominations in this area. What they take as my basic premise is in fact only a passing comment that could have been left out with no damage whatsoever to my basic point.

My premise is that since the church allows its members the freedom to interpret Scripture for themselves in critical moral issues such as tithe paying, abortion, bearing arms and Sabbath work in non-SDA medical institutions, we ought to do the same in certain cases of divorce and remarriage. I do not mean that the church should refuse to take an official position in these matters. We have very official stands on Sabbathkeeping, tithe paying and bearing arms. But we do not necessarily discipline every member whose Scripture-enlightened conscience allows him to act contrary to the official position in certain situations.

I recognize the need for a strong policy on divorce and remarriage that provides for discipline in certain cases. This is necessary both to protect the church from scandal that would damage its reputation, and to protect the Christian home. However, I also recognize the need of Christians to live their lives

according to their personal convictions. Surely, we ought to be able to devise a policy that protects the church and the home while granting a measure of freedom to members to make moral decisions, based on their view of Scripture, and to act on them without the threat of discipline.

The Doctors Williams have developed a nationwide campaign to get the church to enforce biblical morality on divorce and remarriage as they understand it. I do not doubt their sincerity, but I believe their position is untenable. Should the church adopt their views as official policy, then I propose that it also make all decisions for its members in matters of tithe paying, abortion, bearing arms, Sabbath work in non-SDA institutions and similar important moral issues. Those members who refuse to live in harmony with official policy should be disfellowshipped in order to clear out all evil from our midst. How else can we expect to be ready for the Lord to come?

That is the logic behind the Doctors Williams' reasoning on divorce and remarriage. Since divorce and remarriage without Bible grounds is neither the only sin among us nor the worst, then to be consistent we must follow the same policy regarding all sins. Conversely, if we allow members to exercise their own judgment in other areas, then in principle there is nothing wrong with providing for a degree of personal judgment with respect to divorce and remarriage. I do not advocate that the church surrender all authority or discipline in this area, but I do see a need for a greater balance than we now have between church authority and individual conscience. That is the basic premise of my recent article in SPECTRUM.

Marvin Moore
Keene, Texas

On Creationism

To the Editors: Dr. Roth (Vol. 10, No. 3) suggests that I ignored or overlooked critical evidence on the validity of the ecological zonation theory (EZT) by not referencing the original comprehensive description. I will concede that *The New Diluvialism* recognizes the existence of my five objections. However, we obviously disagree over whether these objections have been "answered" in any satisfactory manner in the original or subsequent descriptions of the theory. The shorter, later and more readily available description of ecological zonation referenced in my paper adequately summarizes the original theory including the specific points raised by Dr. Roth.

Roth has correctly observed that I "simplified" EZT. It was not clear in my paper that the restrictions placed on EZT after the phrase "if the theory is to have any interpretive validity . . ." (p. 7) were my own restrictions, not those of previous authors. In its usual form, EZT does not provide assertions that are easily verifiable or falsifiable, as

"It is unfortunate that there is no spoken or written forum currently available where technical aspects of creationism can be discussed and refined by scrutiny. . . ."

Roth points out. It is little more than a rephrasing of the *belief* that "fossils are the result of a worldwide Flood," couched in language that indicates some familiarity with the data of geology. The two major departures of EZT from present ecology as listed by Roth are tacit admissions that the pre-Flood ecology required to fit EZT to the fossil record bears little resemblance to the modern science of ecology and that similar ecologies (based on modern analogs) are distributed throughout the geological column (see my original objections #1, 2, 4). With these two modifications, one can justifiably wonder whether the usual meanings of the words "ecological" and "zonation" correctly describe the content of the theory.

The usual formulation of EZT is an exercise in circular reasoning: fossils are zoned ecologically and the ecology is determined

by the zoning. As such, it is no better a basis for developing a Flood model in the scientific sense of explaining cause and effect than is the more "simplified" but testable version evaluated in my SPECTRUM article.

Even if one removes the ecological and zonation part of the theory from the realm of testability, the problem of antediluvian source areas remains (see my original objections #3, 5). Here it is definitely not true that "almost any directly related data one comes up with can be fitted into either model," if one uses data of appropriate generality for the problem. I would suggest that the realm of possible models is a little wider than the either/or situation proposed by Roth.

Dr. Brown's (Vol. 10, No. 3) reformation of the literal creationism statement on time is essentially *the theological basis* for my statement, but provides no explicit assertions or hypotheses that are testable in the world of scientific data and thus would not be useful within the context of my article. Dr. Brown's own work in the area of geochronology shows that at least he takes my more explicit formulation seriously enough to attempt to show that its opposite counterpart, the long ages hypothesis, is not supported by facts. This is simply a negative rather than positive use of my formulation.

Brown feels more at home in exegetical discussions than I do, and as I stated in my article, I have no particular expertise to agree or disagree with his comments on the interpretation of Genesis 1:1.

Unfortunately, references 2 and 3 cited in Brown's letter have little if any relevance to the problem discussed in my article. Brown's picturesque "graveyard hoax model" (GHM) is simply a more poetic version of my statement that "fossils themselves are rarely dated and minerals from the enclosing sedimentary strata are *rarely* suitable for age determinations." This GHM cannot be used as a general paradigm for geochronology in general as I tried to point out in my article. Such a use may explain the serious misinterpretation of data used in footnotes 2 and 3. The "ages" quoted by Brown in reference 2 have nothing to do with the more simple procedure of determining the age of formation of the actual rocks examined. The particular type of "geochronology" under discussion in reference 2 is irrelevant to the topic of my SPECTRUM article.

Modern geochronology is a highly developed and complex subject, much of which is irrelevant to the age of fossils. A failure to properly distinguish the type of work under discussion renders a mere recital of concordant or discordant dates (selection dependent on motive) irrelevant since no indication is given of the type of event supposedly dated or of particular geological factors that may suggest a given date might be good or bad. Much of the data discussed by Brown in reference 3 is of this nature. In the prime exhibit of reference 3, the supposed disagreement between the radiometric "age" and the apparent geological age of rock formation is caused by a failure to recognize and/or heed the original authors' caution that the "ages" they calculate have no relation to the *formation time* of the rocks under discussion; in fact, such an age cannot even be calculated from their data for most of these rocks.

It is unfortunate that there is no spoken or written forum currently available where technical aspects of creationism such as these can be discussed and refined by scrutiny so that a more defensible, and therefore effective, apology for the biblical view might emerge from conservative Christian circles, especially, of course, our own church.

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