



Open Face

SOME FACTS CONCERNING THE OMEGA HERESY



Nearly one hundred years ago a book was written by the most outstanding Seventh-day Adventist physician of the time, Dr. John Harvey Kellogg. The title of this book was "The Living Temple." When Ellen White read portions of the book she became very alarmed at what she found there and declared that the book contained most dangerous falsehood. Many were surprised at the forcefulness with which she condemned the book. She referred to its teachings as *The Alpha of deadly heresies (Selected Messages bk.1, p.200)*. Even more startling, however, was her prediction that this "Alpha" heresy would be followed by a similar false doctrine of greater magnitude which would have a far more devastating effect upon Seventh-day Adventism than the Alpha did. She referred to this coming heresy as "The Omega."

Some have foolishly claimed that those of us who are trying to revive the pioneers' concept of God are guilty of introducing the "Omega." This accusation shows a lack of logical reasoning and a failure to carefully investigate. The following facts show clearly that the pioneer teaching on God could not

be the "Omega" heresy.

1. *When speaking of the Alpha crisis and the coming Omega, Ellen White several times stated that our safety would lie in refusing to be drawn away from the faith which God gave to the pioneers (statements follow in this article). Yet some say that the pioneers (including James White) were teaching the "Omega" heresy.*

2. *Ellen White said that the Omega would follow "shortly" after the Alpha. This statement would not make any sense if the Omega was the teaching of the pioneers for it would mean that the Omega would have been here before the Alpha!*

3. *Ellen White referred to the Alpha and Omega heresies as falsehoods of the most deadly kind. If the teaching of the pioneers was the Omega, then it means that for the first fifty years of its existence the SDA church to which Ellen White belonged, was teaching the most dangerous false doctrine, yet was not rebuked by Ellen White.*

The following article consists of some questions concerning this omega apostasy, with answering quotes from Ellen White and a couple of other sources which make it very clear that there is only one doctrine embraced by the SDA church today, which fulfills the specifications of the Omega heresy, and that this doctrine is the doctrine of the Trinity.

All of the Ellen White quotes were taken from statements written by her either during, or shortly following the Kellogg crisis which she referred to as the "Alpha." **We challenge all those who disagree with this article to find any other doctrine or issue which answers the questions proposed here. We urge our detractors to not merely find fault with this article, but to suggest a better alternative - to suggest something which more fittingly fits the specifications given by the prophet.**

1. WHEN WOULD THE OMEGA HERESY BE INTRODUCED INTO THE SDA CHURCH?

Answer: *In a little while, shortly after the time of the Kellogg apostasy (shortly after 1904). Let us note that the Trinity was introduced into the Church in the 1920s by Leroy Froom.*

"Living Temple contains the alpha of these theories. I knew that the omega would follow in a little while; and I trembled for our people." (Selected Messages bk.1, p. 203)

"One thing it is certain is soon to be realized, – the great apostasy, which

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Open Face is dedicated to the promotion of the truths committed to the Advent movement, as believed and taught by the early Adventist pioneers. In particular to the restoration of those truths which have been cast down to the ground and trampled underfoot by the papacy, and adopted by her daughters.

Our purpose is to motivate our readers to commit themselves wholly to the task of personal preparation for the coming of the Lord, and to the taking of the final warning message to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

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is developing and increasing and waxing stronger, and will continue to do so until the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout. . . .” (*Special Testimonies, Series B7, p. 57-8*)

2. WOULD IT BE RECEIVED?

Answer: *It would be received by those who did not heed the warning. What warning? See point no. 5.*

“In the book *Living Temple* there is presented the alpha of deadly heresies. The omega **will** follow, and **will be received** by those who are not willing to heed the warning God has given.” (*Selected Messages bk.1, p. 200*)

3. WHAT WOULD BE THE RESULT OF THE CHURCH'S ACCEPTING THE OMEGA HERESY?

Answer: *It would result in a change of our religion. Let us note that there has been only one significant change in the doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist faith between the time when the church first published a statement of beliefs and today. This change consists of the rejection of the pioneer concept of God and the acceptance of the Trinity.*

The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Sev-

enth-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist in giving up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engaging in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place, what would result! The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. **Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error.** A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. (*Selected Messages bk.1, p. 204*)

4. WHAT WAS THE MAIN ISSUE IN THE ALPHA HERESY?

Answer: *The main issue was the doctrine of God. Let us note that the only doctrine changed in the SDA church since the time of the pioneers is the doctrine relating to God.*

“I have been instructed by the heavenly messenger that some of the reasoning in the book *Living Temple* is unsound...It introduces that which is nought but speculation **in regard to the personality of God and where His presence is. . .**”

“One and another come to me, asking me to explain the positions taken in *Living Temple*. I reply, “They are unexplainable.” The sentiments expressed do not give **a true knowledge of God.** All through the book are passages of Scripture. These scriptures are brought in in such a way that error is made to appear as truth.” (*Selected Messages bk.1, p. 201*)

“The spiritualistic theories regarding **the personality of God,** followed to their logical conclusion, sweep away the whole Christian economy.” (*Selected Messages bk.1, p. 204*)

These **theories regarding God** make His word of no effect, and those who accept them are in great danger of being led finally to look upon the whole Bible as a fiction. . . .” (*Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 8, p. 291*)

5. WHAT WOULD BE THE MAIN ISSUE IN THE OMEGA HERESY?

Answer: *The doctrine of God*

“*Living Temple* contains the alpha of these theories. I knew that **the omega would follow in a little while;** and I trembled for our people. I knew that I must warn our brethren and sisters not to enter into controversy over **the presence and personality of God...**” (*Selected Messages bk.1, p. 203*)

6. WHAT WOULD BE THE SAFETY OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS DURING THIS CRISIS CONCERNING THE DOCTRINE OF GOD?

Answer: *Holding to the original doctrines; the faith which God gave to the pioneers.*

(please remember that all these statements which follow this question were made by Ellen White **in the context of the Alpha heresy**)

“. . . We must firmly refuse to be drawn away from **the platform of eternal truth, which since 1844 has stood the test.**” (*Selected Messages bk.1, p. 199-200*)

We are to hold fast the first principles of our denominated faith, and go forward from strength to increased faith. Ever we are to keep the faith that has been substantiated by the Holy Spirit of God from the earlier events of our experience until the present time...

“The past fifty years have not dimmed one jot or principle of our faith as we received the great and wonderful evidences that were made certain to us in 1844, after the passing of the time. . . **Not a word is changed or denied. That which the Holy Spirit testified to as truth after the passing of the time, in our great disappointment, is the solid foundation of truth.**” (*Special Testimonies, Series B7, p. 57-8*)

“Many of our people do not realize how **firmly the foundation of our faith has been laid.** My husband, Elder Bates, Father pierce, Elder [Hiram] Edson, and others who were keen, noble, and true, were among those who, after the

passing of the time in 1844, searched for the truth as for hidden treasure. I met with them, and we studied and prayed earnestly.... light was given that helped us to understand the scriptures in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. **A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God, was made plain to me, and I gave to others the instruction that the Lord had given me. . .**”

“What influence is it that would lead men at this stage of our history to work in an underhand, powerful way to tear down the foundation of our faith—the foundation that was laid at the beginning of our work by prayerful study of the Word and revelation? Upon this foundation we have been building for the past fifty years. (Selected Messages bk.1, p. 206-7)

7. WAS IT A SMALL MATTER THAT PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE A FALSE CONCEPT OF GOD? SOME CLAIM TODAY THAT THE GODHEAD CONTROVERSY IS OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE.

Answer: *It was a most critical issue.*

“Most of the founders of Seventh-day Adventism would not be able to join the church today if they had to subscribe to the denomination’s Fundamental Beliefs. More specifically, most would not be able to agree to belief number 2, which deals with the doctrine of the trinity.” (George Knight in *Ministry*, October 1993 p.10)

“The thought of the errors contained in this book has given me great distress, and the experience that I have passed through in connection with the matter **has nearly cost me my life.**” (Selected Messages bk.1, p. 199)

“Few can see the meaning of the present apostasy. But **the Lord has lifted the curtain, and has shown me its meaning, and the result that it will have if allowed to continue.** We must now lift our voices in warning. Will our people acknowledge God as the supreme Ruler, or will they choose the misleading arguments and views that, **when fully developed, make**

Him, in the minds of those who accept them, as nothingness? . . .”

“**It is something that cannot be treated as a small matter** that men who have had so much light, and such clear evidence as to the genuineness of the truth we hold, should become unsettled, and led to accept spiritualistic theories regarding the personality of God.” (Special Testimonies, Series B7, p. 37)\

8. WAS ELLEN WHITE REQUIRED BY GOD TO CORRECT AND REBUKE PEOPLE WHO HAD FALSE IDEAS ABOUT GOD?

Answer: *During the early years of the movement God sent her to rebuke people who had false ideas about God. If the pioneers were wrong in their ideas, why did she never rebuke them?*

“After the passing of the time in 1844, we had fanaticism of every kind to meet. Testimonies of reproof were given me to bear to some holding spiritualistic theories.

There were those who were active in disseminating **false ideas in regard to God.** Light was given me that these men were making the truth of no effect by their false teachings. I was instructed that they were misleading souls by presenting **speculative theories regarding God. . .**”

“I went to the place where they were and opened before them the nature of their work. The Lord gave me strength to lay plainly before them their danger. . .”

“**This is only one of the instances in which I was called upon to rebuke those who were presenting the doctrine of an impersonal God pervading all nature, and similar errors.**” (Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 8, p. 292-3)

9. HOW WERE THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN WHITE MISUSED DURING THE TIME OF THE ALPHA HERESY?

Answer: *Their meaning was twisted to make it seem that they were in support of Kellogg’s ideas. We may expect that the same thing would be done during the Omega.*

“In the controversy that arose among our brethren regarding the teachings of this book, those in favor of giving it a wide circulation declared: **“It contains the very sentiments that Sister White has been teaching.”** This assertion struck right to my heart. I felt heartbroken; for I knew that this representation of the matter was not true...”

“I am compelled to speak in denial of the claim that the teachings of *Living Temple* can be sustained by statements from my writings. There may be in this book expressions and sentiments that are in harmony with my writings. **And there may be in my writings many statements which, taken from their connection, and interpreted according to the mind of the writer of *Living Temple*, would seem to be in harmony with the teachings of this book.** This may give apparent support to the assertion that the sentiments in *Living Temple* are in harmony with my writings. But God forbid that this sentiment should prevail.” (Selected Messages bk.1, p. 203-4)

10. WHAT WOULD BE THE NATURE OF THE OMEGA?

Answer: *It would be “most startling.” Here are the words of the editor of the Adventist Review, William Johnson, in describing the doctrinal change which took place in Adventism when the doctrine of God was changed.*

“Adventist beliefs have changed over the years under the impact of ‘present truth.’ *Most startling* is the teaching regarding Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. Many of the pioneers, including James White, J.N. Andrews, Uriah Smith, and J.H. Waggoner, held to an Arian or semi-Arian view ... that is, the Son at some point in time before the Creation of our world was generated by the Father ... the Trinitarian understanding of God, now part of our fundamental beliefs, was not generally held by the early Adventists. Even today a few do not subscribe to it.” (William G. Johnson in the *Adventist Review*, Jan. 6, 1994 p.10)

“Be not deceived; many will depart
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LOVE'S FOCUS

*And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the **first** commandment. (Mark 12:30)*

These four things, heart, soul, mind and strength, include every aspect of the human being. There is no area of human desire, need, work, ambition, etc. which is not covered in these four facets of man's existence. When these belong to God alone; when He is loved with **all** of these, then what possibility is there of rebellion against Him? Since, through my love for Him, He possesses me **fully** in all these avenues, then my concern, my desire, my ambition, my effort will be to seek His will, His pleasure, moment by moment so that I may carry it out. I will have nothing else to live for, because the fullness of my love for Him (all my heart, soul, mind and strength) has left no cubicle wherein any other affection may find lodgment and thus draw me away from His will.

For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. (Gal 5:6)

Faith is conviction, certainty, knowledge. Though faith is certain, it needs another element to set it going; to set it to work. This element is love. Love will work, cheerfully, carefully, long and hard. Love makes the yoke easy and the burden light. Love turns each task into a pleasure, makes the performance of each requirement a joy. A man may love his wife, but his love for her is not usually the only reason for his existence. She is not the sole focus of his life, (though she forms an important part of it). He has other interests and concerns as well. But there were probably days in the past during the time of courtship when she filled his vision; when most things were done with reference to her, he could not find the task too hard, or too dreary, as long as she was with him, or the job was for her benefit. When he "walked"

"in love" it made all the difference.

The focus of the Christian's love is **GOD**. He is everything. As the gaze is fixed upon Him, the life is molded to His life. The focus is not rules and regulations. Not the drudgery of a servant, but the joyful fellowship of a lover. In this fellowship, there is no anxiety. The aim is not to finish a job, to meet a deadline, but rather, the life-long goal, focused on moment by moment is to retain the fellowship. The walk is the goal. The walk is not the means towards an end. The end or the goal, is the journey with Him. What if the car breaks down on the way to keep an appointment? What if my plans are sometimes overruled? What if the task sometimes seems difficult? The aim is fellowship with God! The **only** aim! As long as I walk in His will, He controls the circumstances. When unexpected obstacles arise, He is the Master. Let Him make my plans or change them as He chooses. That is no concern of mine. My only business is to love Him steadfastly; to be keenly sensitive to the direction of His will and to do that will, in the joyful service of love. Is not my Father with me? Can any situation break the love-link between us? As long as the answer is no, I am at peace, because my purpose in life is simply to love Him with my whole being.

God is omnipotent. So we know that when we are with Him, everything is perfect, no matter what appearances may say, we may be at peace, no matter what the circumstances may be. Frustration begins when I find that my affections are turning elsewhere. When my heart is on some goal other than fellowship with God, what then? Then every obstacle in the way of the accomplishment of my goal is a cause for anxiety and concern. Then I am left to my own resources for the achievement of my desires. My own keen awareness of my limitations and proneness to failure causes me anxiety and lack of peace.

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. (Mat 6:24)

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. (Mat 6:22)

"No man can serve two masters." This is an absolute rule of human makeup, stated by the One who designed and created humanity. Is there any man who can serve **no** master? This is equally impossible. We must, as a necessary function of life, place our affection upon something, in order that we may be motivated to continue living. All that we can do, really, is choose who shall be our master.

So we must choose God as our Master and keep our eyes **single** to that Master, by loving Him with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength.

LIVING FOR HIM BY LIVING FOR OTHERS.

And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. (Mark 12:31)

This love for my neighbor I cannot generate. My neighbor, like me, is unlovely by nature. It is natural to dislike him and to be critical and condemnatory towards him. His qualities encourage this attitude. How can I love him? This can only come by realizing that God loves **me** still, in spite of the fact that I am just as bad as the next man. The love of God, filling my vision, applied by the holy Spirit, enables me to love the unlovely, as it transforms me into His image.

On a lesser level, when God says, "love your neighbor," He gives us the command to **do** something. This, irrespec-

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TEARING DOWN THE "TESTIMONIES?"

Many persons have denied that the writings of Ellen G. White have been, and are being tampered with by those who have custody of those writings. Those who suggest that this is the case have been accused of trying to destroy faith in the "Spirit of Prophecy." However, burying our heads in the sand and pretending that a problem does not exist will not make that problem go away.

Below you will find two statements taken from two different sources of the published Ellen G. White writings. The statement on the right is taken from the 1996 devotional book, *Ye Shall Receive Power*, which was published by the *Review and Herald* publishing association. The statement on the left is the original statement from which the one on the right was taken. Please examine both statements carefully. You will notice that both statements are identical with some very significant exceptions. Please look

at the words which have been boldened in both statements. They are very revealing. The question is, who changed the words in the second statement and why? Didn't Ellen White know what she was talking about when she wrote the statement originally in 1899? Is somebody suggesting that Ellen White did not know what she was talking about? Does "He" mean the same as "It?"

Does this constitute "tampering" with the Spirit of Prophecy writings? No doubt we will be accused of destroying faith in the Spirit of Prophecy by exposing this deception?

(Our appreciation to Lonnie and Abigail Davis for locating these two statements. We assure you that there are dozens more.)

ORIGINAL STATEMENT

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, September 27, 1899

We need to pray for the impartation of the divine Spirit as the remedy for sin-sick souls. The surface truths of revelation, made plain and easy to be understood, are accepted by many as supplying all that is essential; but the Holy Spirit, working upon the mind, awakens an earnest desire for truth uncorrupted by error. He who is really desirous to know what is truth can not remain in ignorance; for precious truth rewards the diligent seeker. We need to feel the converting power of God's grace, and I urge all who have closed their heart against God's Spirit to unlock the door, and plead earnestly, Abide with me. Why should we not prostrate ourselves at the throne of divine grace, praying that God's Spirit may be poured out upon us as **it** was upon the disciples? **Its** presence will soften our hard hearts, and fill us with joy and rejoicing, transforming us into channels of blessing.

The Lord would have every one of His children rich in faith, and this faith is the fruit of the working of the Holy Spirit upon the mind. **It** dwells with each soul who will receive **it**, speaking to the impenitent in words of warning, and pointing them to Jesus, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. **It** causes light to shine into the minds of those who are seeking to co-operate with God, giving them efficiency and wisdom to do His work.

REPRINTED STATEMENT

YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER (published 1996) P.59

We need to pray for the impartation of the divine Spirit as the remedy for sin-sick souls. The surface truths of revelation, made plain and easy to be understood, are accepted by many as supplying all that is essential; but the Holy Spirit, working upon the mind, awakens an earnest desire for truth uncorrupted by error. He who is really desirous to know what is truth cannot remain in ignorance; for precious truth rewards the diligent seeker. We need to feel the converting power of God's grace, and I urge all who have closed their heart against God's Spirit to unlock the door, and plead earnestly, Abide with me. Why should we not prostrate ourselves at the throne of divine grace, praying that God's Spirit may be poured out upon us as **He** was upon the disciples? **His** presence will soften our hard hearts, and fill us with joy and rejoicing, transforming us into channels of blessing.

The Lord would have every one of His children rich in faith, and this faith is the fruit of the working of the Holy Spirit upon the mind. **He** dwells with each soul who will receive **Him**, speaking to the impenitent in words of warning, and pointing them to Jesus, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. **He** causes light to shine into the minds of those who are seeking to cooperate with God, giving them efficiency and wisdom to do His work.

Jamaican camp-meeting report

Howard Williams

The camp-meeting for the year 2000 lasted for four days from July 20-23. The camp was held in Manchester for the first time, at the Mount Forest camping grounds located at Wigton just below Rose-Hill about 30 minutes drive to the south of Mandeville.

We all met at the chapel in Albion, to be transported by our normal means of camp transportation, a truck, which left some time after mid-day Thursday. We arrived at the camp-site at about 3 p.m. and got settled in, and although the camp had sleeping facilities, most families pitched their tents. The view from the camp grounds was a breathtaking one as it gave a clear, panoramic picture of St. Elizabeth and the south coast sea shore below us. The view gets even more beautiful as the night falls and the countryside below us lights up. The camp ground is located about two miles from the road and the nearest community so we had no disturbance whatever. The place was ideal for fellowship and communion with God.

Some of those who would normally have been at camp-meeting were missing on this occasion even though we had a fairly large group of people attending. The reason for the drop in numbers is because on previous camps our date would coincide with a public holiday, so that the brethren who work could be able to attend. This camp however, had no public holiday. We had a little over fifty people at the start of this camp, with the majority being youths and children. The number gradually increased as the days went by and we had the greatest number on Sabbath as always.

Our first meeting was at 7 p.m. on Thursday evening when we were encouraged to dedicate more of ourselves to the cause of the Lord. We were all asked to write down suggestions as to how we could better fulfill the command of Christ to take the gospel to the world. Each day had five sessions,

the first being the morning devotion which started at 6:30 and the last being the evening meeting which started at 7 p.m. The speakers at the camp-meeting were, David Wilson, Naomi Morris, Neville Morris, Colin Gyles, Howard Williams and David Clayton. The focus of the camp-meeting was the personal preparation of each one for the work we have to do and to be ready to meet the Lord when he comes.

On Sabbath afternoon we had a brother from Kingston, brother Keith Coombs, who presented his views on the Holy Spirit which he says differs from the view most of us hold to. His conclusion was that the Holy Spirit is a third, separate and distinct person. He also believes that there are THREE Gods. We had a question and answer period after his presentation, and several persons did not feel that their questions had been satisfactorily answered. Brother Coombs, however informed us that he was still open and is willing to learn more on the subject.

On Sunday morning for the second session we had a marriage forum that was conducted by brother David Clayton who highlighted some problems affecting marriages today and how best we should deal with them. The discussion was well received as could be seen by the participation of the people, and we all learned one great and important principle in the Christian marriage, **“divorce is not an option.”**

The final session for the camp-meeting was the third session on Sunday, at which we had a discussion on different outreach programmes. Everyone participated by reading the suggestions they had written on Thursday evening, and we made note of all the areas which were suggested and finally we had the people all volunteering their services in the various areas.

The camp-meeting finally came to an end a little after mid-day Sunday, and we all came to a decision to do

our best in the strength of the Lord to work for the saving of souls and the spreading of the gospel, that the work might be finished and Jesus will come to take us home to that heavenly camp-meeting to be with our Father forever, where we will never part again.



OMEGA FACTS

(Cont. from p. 3)

from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. We have now before us the alpha of this danger. The omega will be of **a most startling nature.**” (*Selected Messages bk.1, p. 197*)

11. HOW SHOULD GOD'S TRUE PEOPLE RESPOND TO THE OMEGA HERESY?

Answer: They should take “decided action” to combat this Omega heresy.”

“In a vision of the night I was shown distinctly that these sentiments have been looked upon by some as the grand truths that are to be brought in and made prominent at the present time I was shown a platform braced by solid timbers—the truths of the Word of God. Some one high in responsibility in the medical work was directing this man and that man to loosen the timbers supporting this platform Then I heard a voice saying, ‘Where are the watchmen that ought to be standing on the walls of Zion? Are they asleep! **This foundation was built by the Master Worker, and will stand storm and tempest. Will they permit this man to present doctrines that deny the past experience of the people of God?** The time has come to take decided action.’” (*Selected Messages bk.1, p. 204-5*)



RECAP

1. The religion of the SDA church *has been changed* as predicted by Ellen White. From a position of believing in one Being called God who has a literal Son, the Church has embraced the doctrine of a one-in-three God - the Trinity.
2. This has been the *only* official change in doctrine of the SDA church since it was first organized in 1863.
3. Yet it has been such a significant change that we are told that the founders of the church would *not have been able to be members* of the church today.
4. It was introduced into the beliefs of the denomination *shortly after Ellen White died*. As long as Ellen White was alive, no official document of the Church ever used the term "Trinity" in describing any of our beliefs.
5. It has been received by the majority of Seventh-day Adventists.
6. Books of a new order have been written (promoting the new doctrine)
7. It concerns the issue of God - His nature, personality and identity.
8. It turns SDAs away from the foundation laid at the beginning by the

pioneers.

9. The writings of Ellen White are being used (mis-used) to support the new doctrine of the Trinity.

Now we challenge any honest person to find any doctrine in Adventism which fulfills all the specifications of the Omega, other than the doctrine of the Trinity.

*Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious,
the Ancient of Days, Almighty,
victorious, Thy great Name we praise.*

CLARIFICATION OF "RAPTURE" ARTICLE

After sending out the August edition of *Open Face* we received a couple of letters which expressed some concern about the article by brother Neville Morris entitled, *Are You Waiting for The Secret Rapture?* After receiving these letters we became aware of the fact that there were some aspects of the article which need clarification

The section of the article which was misleading is where it says, *"let us note that the word rapture is not in the Bible. The dictionary's definition for the word does not support any idea of people been caught away either secretly or publicly."* This statement makes it seem as though the author does not believe that the saints will be caught away either secretly or publicly, and that this is what he is trying to prove in the article. In actual fact, brother Morris does believe in the *public* catching away of the saints. He was simply making the point that the word "rapture" is not a biblical term.

Many people who believe in a secret rapture use Matthew 24:40,41, in an attempt to support the idea of a *secret* catching away. The verses say, *"Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left."*

Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left." Those who use these verses to defend the secret rapture say that they teach that at the time when the saints are caught away, people will be going about their business as usual, the good rubbing shoulders with the bad. In Luke 17:34 it even says that two men shall be in one bed!

This contradicts the Adventist interpretation of events at the time of Christ's return. We believe that the wicked and the righteous will be separated *before* Christ's return. Not at the actual time of His coming. The time of trouble will force the righteous to separate themselves from the wicked and to flee from human habitations. If the saints and the wicked are going to be separated by the time of trouble, how can it be that two will be grinding at the mill, one taken and the other left, and two in one bed, one taken and the other left at the time of the return of Jesus?

Brother Morris was trying, in his tract to harmonize these seeming discrepancies by suggesting that the *taking* or the separation mentioned in the above verses do not refer to the separation at the actual coming of Christ,

but to the separation at the time of trouble when the plagues or the time of trouble would catch, or take the wicked, while leaving the righteous untouched.

The actual catching away would take place some time after at the actual coming of Jesus. He was using the time of Noah as a parallel because Jesus did say, *"(Mat 24:37-39) But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. {38} For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, {39} And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.* His thought was that since it was a disaster, (the flood) which *took* the wicked in Noah's time, then the suggestion is also that those who will be *taken* at the time mentioned by Jesus, will also be the wicked who will be taken by the time of trouble.

We hope that this will clarify things for those who had problems with the article. (Editor)

THE STRANGE CASE OF BISHOP HILL

Some weeks ago I received a video tape of an interview with a bishop named David Hill. This interview was conducted by David Mould, the director of *Laymen for Religious Liberty*. Bishop Hill was a Pentecostal minister who was converted to Seventh-day Adventism under circumstances which seem to me to be little short of miraculous. As I watched this tape I was impressed with the evident sincerity and conviction of David Hill as he expressed his appreciation for, and his commitment to his new found faith.

This conversion of Bishop Hill to Adventism must be regarded as a highly significant event inasmuch as he has been instrumental in leading either directly or indirectly, nearly 8,000 members of his former faith, including several bishops to the advent faith. After listening to this interview and from subsequent discussions which I had with other people who had seen or heard of Bishop Hill, it became evident that he had been joyfully received by the SDA church and was being paraded all over Adventism as a prize trophy.

Later, I noticed that there was a glowing report on the same David Hill in the *Landmarks* magazine published by *Steps to Life*. The same report indicated that Bishop Hill was now working as a minister with *Steps to Life*.

I was therefore quite shocked when a subsequent report appeared in *Landmarks*, declaring that Bishop Hill was a fraud. David Mould also suggested that he was an "agent" in one of his newsletters. This was very puzzling to me because the interview which I had seen had convinced me that David Hill was a sincere and committed follower of Christ, whose conversion to Adventism was genuine. Shortly thereafter I received the following report from brother Wilbur Hargreaves from Alabama. Brother Hargreaves' report speaks for itself.

Email from Wilbur Hargreaves

"You will remember that I gave you a page out of *Southern Tidings* with a picture of Bishop David Hill and his wife Elizabeth, telling about his story of having been a minister in the Pentecostal Church (called the *Church of the Living God*) for 47 years, and how God led them to see the truth

about the 7th day Sabbath and they were rebaptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. His position would be comparable to a conference president; he was head bishop over the entire state of New Jersey.

"David Mould, head of the independent ministry in DeLand, FL entitled, *Laymen for Religious Liberty*, sent me a video perhaps two months ago, in which he had interviewed this couple in his studio. In one section of the video, David Mould was very deeply concerned over David Hill and the use of the tithe. David Mould said that he would not send a dime of tithe to the conference due to their misuse of it, and was exposing how this was being done to David Hill. But the bishop was speaking very warmly and lovingly of the leading brethren because of his recent relationship with them.

"Well, it turns out that Bishop Hill bought a church, erected a sign bearing the name *Seventh-day Adventist*, and was holding services, when the conference brethren came, and told him to take the sign down in 24 hrs. or they would take him to court. So he got his first taste of the love of the brethren, when they bared their fangs.

"As the course of time wore on, he went to *Steps to Life* in Topeka, Kansas. Here he was taken on as a hired minister. But Friday, I received John Grosboll's newsletter in which he exposed Bishop Hill as a fraud to all who are in his readership and supporting *Steps to Life*. Well, as we all know, there are always two sides to every story, issue, or controversy.

"It so happened that a local lay pastor, not under conference employ, but who built a church with his own money, met and invited Bishop Hill to come here and preach and tell his story, so Sabbath I went to hear him. He preached a powerful sermon on "Cease Ye From Man." ... He spoke again on Sunday afternoon at 3.00 P.M. I went again. I wanted to speak with Bishop Hill myself in person. The Lord afforded the opportunity. I asked him what his position was on the trinity doctrine. He said that he had never believed it because it was unbiblical. I then asked if this position had had anything at all to do with the termination of his relationship with Steps

to Life. He said Yes, that his second sermon there was on "Trinity Lies." He said that sermon was the cause of the ruptured relationship.

"I told him, and his wife, later in the living room, that I had written to Brother Mould shortly after viewing the video, and had said to him that if Bishop Hill were to take his stand against the trinity doctrine, he would get the same treatment from SDA officials as he had gotten from his Pentecostal brethren. His reply was that they had treated him "worse." His Pentecostal brethren had taken only what was theirs; whereas his Adventist brethren had taken what was theirs and what was his as well! I told them this was just the beginning of sorrows; but to keep smiling, keep loving, keep serving, and be faithful to the end.

"So it seems to me that the Seventh-day Adventist Church officials were happy to have surprisingly caught a Big Fish with no effort, and were happy to publicise the fact, hoping to get a little more honor and glory for themselves, but when he presents a most-testing message, they are ready to crucify him. It reminds me of the deceitfulness of our human heart,—hosanna today; crucify him tomorrow!"

Editor's note: The story is not finished yet. Additional information has been coming in on this saga of Bishop Hill. As brother Wilbur said, there are always two sides to every story. As soon as we receive more definite clarification on some aspects of this story we will update you on what is happening.

In giving His only-begotten Son to die for sinners, God has manifested to fallen man love that is without a parallel. We have full faith in the scripture that says, "God is love" (1 John 4:8); ...The love of God as manifested in Jesus, will lead us to the true conception of the character of God. {ISM 311.2}

The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. {COL 415-6}

INTERESTING NEWS FROM THE TORONTO GENERAL CONFERENCE

IS THE MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION PROMOTING SUNDAY WORSHIP?

The following article was written by Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi and was taken from his monthly newsletter "End Time Issues No. 50." You may draw your own conclusions after reading his article

A brother came to our booth during the GC session, exclaiming: "Dr. Bacchiocchi, did you know that the General Conference Ministerial Association is selling a book that promotes Sunday observance?" "It cannot be. You must be joking," I replied. "Come with me," he said. I followed him to the booth of the Ministerial Association, where he picked up a copy of the book *Confessions of a Nomad: What We Learned in Sinai's Shadow*, authored by Carolyn Shealy Self and William L. Self, and asked me to read the following two paragraphs from page 118:

"The early Christians were obsessed with the fact that they came out of a Jewish background. Yet God did something new and real for them in the Easter experience, so they would have the Sabbath, and they would gather together as the Christian sect on Sunday morning and celebrate the resurrection.

"But there is a difference between the Sabbath and Sunday. You work until the Sabbath, and then you rest. Sunday is the day that gives you strength to work the six days in front of you. The Sabbath is the end of the week; Sunday is the beginning. The Sabbath is from sundown to sundown, but Sunday is from midnight to midnight. **The Sabbath is a day of rest, but Sunday is a day of worship.** The Sabbath has a penalty to it, if you break it; Sunday has no penalty, except that you shortchange yourself."

Similar ideas are expressed on pages 31, 75, and 86 of the book, which is largely a meditation on the Ten Commandments. Overall the book does contain some insightful concepts on the Decalogue, but the authors are grossly mistaken about the

origin of Sunday and the relationship between Sabbath and Sunday.

The early Jewish Christians were not "were obsessed with the fact that they came out of a Jewish background," because they viewed themselves as believing Jews who were "zealous for the law" (Acts 21:20). They did not come together early Sunday morning to celebrate Christ's resurrection. There are ample evidences that Jewish Christians continued in the observance of the Sabbath until the fourth centuries, as attested by the Palestinian Historian Epiphanius (A. D. 350). The first reference to early Sunday morning gatherings refers to Gentile Christians and comes to us from I Apology 67 of Justin Martyr, who wrote from Rome, Italy, about A. D. 150.

...what concerns me at this juncture is the fact that the book has a 1998 copyright by the Ministerial Association of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Originally the book was published in 1983 by the *Peachtree Publishers*. Apparently the Ministerial Association received the permission to reprint it, with editorial modifications, because it says: "All copy has been reset and repaginated. Several short portions have been edited to conserve space" (p. 2).

Frankly, I wish that the Ministerial Association would have edited the portions of the books which promote Sunday observance. At least they could have put a disclaimer in the introduction saying something like this: "The Ministerial Association does not endorse the authors defense of Sunday observance, which is based on mistaken interpretations of biblical and historical data. The decision to sponsor this book rests on the belief that there are sufficient good thoughts in the book to offset the erroneous comments about Sunday observance."

Undoubtedly the Ministerial Association will let us know the reasons why they have sponsored this devotional book, in spite of its negation of the validity and value of the Sabbath. On my part I will be sure to pass on to you whatever information I receive.

FEMALE ANGELS!

Look at the figures of the two angels below and you will notice something very interesting. Both angels are female. You will see that they both possess very definite female features and figures. Most prominent are the breasts of these angels which unmistakably identify them as female.

Well, what is so unusual about that? Have we not all seen illustrations of female angels from time to time? True. However, this is probably the first time that you have ever seen sculptures of female angels commissioned by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. These female angels are a part of a large sculpture which was on display at the General Conference in Toronto, and which will finally be on permanent display at the General Conference headquarters. Miniatures of this sculpture will be available for sale to those who wish to have copies.

No doubt there is a reason why the SDA church now concludes that there are female angels. Your theory on this is probably as good as mine!



LOVE'S FOCUS

(Cont. from p. 4)

tive of our feelings. How may I walk with God? How can I be prevented from losing sight of Him in the busy schedule of each day's activities? I have tried so many; many times and failed.

The answer is, **Walk in love**. I cannot see God to focus my physical attention on Him. Amid the physical actions of a physical day, my attention may turn away. I may be often distracted. But the answer is, to focus my love for Him on **others!** Labor for others every moment for His sake. To have **no personal efforts** (nothing done for the sake of self) but to ever perform every task for another, to become a "do gooder," to make this my life's work for God's sake. This, according to Jesus is the formula in our lives which enables God to take up **per-**

manent residence with us.

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.... If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.. (John 14:21,23)

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. (John 15:12)

He says, "If you don't want me to leave you for even a moment, then live to help and bless others, every moment." In every task which I undertake each day, my careful consideration must be, "am I doing this to bless somebody, or am I doing this for myself?"

In other words, I must show a loving attitude through deeds of love to my neighbor irrespective of whether I **feel**

affection and tenderness towards him or not. This I can do, through my love for God, for God's sake.

"...love thy neighbour as thyself" Is this possible in the fullest sense? Did Jesus really mean what He said, or did He have a tendency to exaggerate? "...as thyself." What is implied here? It means going to bed at night thinking of my neighbor's problem. It means spending of my time, energy, means for his sake, in his cause, in exactly the same proportion as I do these things for myself. (NB. He is not required to love me thus, but I am required to love him thus! Jesus did not say, "your neighbour shall love you." He said, "you shall love your neighbour as yourself"). The point is, we should not concern ourselves about how others treat us. This is not our concern. Our duty, given by our Lord is to concern ourselves about how we treat others.

Open Face

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