



2 Cor. 5:18

# Open Face

No. 30

FEBRUARY 2003

## Metamorphosis

David Clayton



One hundred years ago when Ellen White prophesied of the coming of a great apostasy within Seventh-day Adventism, she declared that one of the hallmarks of this apostasy would be that “books of a new order would be written.” And “a new system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced.” (SM1-204) “The fundamental principles which had sustained the work for the past fifty years (the first fifty years of Adventism) would be accounted as error.” This remarkable prophecy has been so strikingly fulfilled in the adopting of the Trinity by the SDA church that it can only be willful blindness which prevents Seventh-day Adventists from recognizing it.

Over the past decade strenuous efforts have been made by the SDA church to promote the idea that God is a Trinity, and correspondingly to downgrade the founders and pioneers of Adventism, promoting the idea that they were relatively ignorant and naïve in matters of theology and consequently embraced and promoted false ideas about God. The latest fulfillment of Ellen White’s prophecy has been by way of the publication of three new books promoting the Trinity.

### BOOKS OF A NEW ORDER

The first of these books is entitled, *Understanding the Trinity*, and was written by a retired Australian SDA minister named Max Hatton. Hatton was at first a Jehovah’s Witness, but later, mostly because of the doctrine of the Trinity, he rejected the teachings of the Witnesses. Eventually he became a Seventh-day Adventist. His book was published in the year 2001.

The second book is the *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*. This book has been published as volume 12 of the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary series and contains a significant section dealing with the issue of the Godhead. This book, of course, may be regarded as defining the official position of the SDA church and was published in the year 2001 by the Review and Herald Publishing Association.

The third book is entitled, *The Trinity*, and is co-authored by Woodrow Whidden, Jerry Moon and John Reeve, all notable Seventh-day Adventist theologians. It is a fairly large book of 288 pages and is entirely dedicated to the subject of the Trinity. This is the latest book of the three and was published in the year 2002 by the Review and Herald Publishing Association.

It is significant, that one of the purposes of these books had been to attempt to turn back the growing tide of Anti-Trinitarianism within Adventism. In the introduction of the latest book, “*The Trinity*,” it states,

“...The greater surprise in my life and ministry has not been so much in deal-

ing with zealous Jehovah’s Witnesses on the Trinity – rather, it is now having to meet essentially the same anti-Trinitarian arguments coming from fellow Seventh-day Adventists. And they are raising this issue with an intensity not too far removed from the zeal of the Watchtower representatives.

“...new challenges to the doctrine of the Trinity have arisen both from inside and outside of Adventism. Various reports and observations suggest that my own personal experience with this issue fairly reflects the current situation.

“...Not only are there increasing reports of pockets of anti-Trinitarian revival in various regions across North America, but via the Internet its influence has spread around the world. As this grassroots Arian or anti-Trinitarian movement gains ground, local churches increasingly find themselves drawn into debate over the issues.” - *The Trinity*, by Woodrow Whidden, Jerry Moon, John Reeve, p.7-9

In the same book it suggests that there has been confusion within the ranks of Adventism on the subject of the Trinity and suggests that this is due to the fact that there has been little discussion of the subject.

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Open Face  
Manchester, Jamaica W.I.

February 2003

*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.

*Open Face* is published at least once quarterly, and is sent free of cost to all who desire to receive it.

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## CONFUSION

There can be no denial of the fact the Seventh-day Adventists, having rejected their heritage have become quite confused on the subject of God, as the following quote from the *Collegiate Quarterly* will demonstrate. *The Collegiate Quarterly* is the study guide used by SDA young people in Adventist Colleges and Universities.

"Recently, I was having a biblical discussion with a group of Adventist and non-Adventist friends, during which the following question was raised. It caused me to reflect, "What do Adventists believe about the trinity?" Immediately, a Sunday worshiper said the word **trinity** cannot be found in the Bible. All the Adventists conceded. One answered that there is one God, one being with three personalities, meaning that God the Father has a kind of split personality.

"Another Adventist answered that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are all equal in power and in thought. A third Adventist said that when we get to heaven we will see God the Father and Jesus Christ, but the Holy Spirit will not be in evidence because there would no longer be a

need for Him. A fourth said that all three Gods exist, but God the Father is most powerful, Jesus less powerful, and the Holy Spirit the least powerful. Finally, a fifth Adventist said that the Father is God, but Jesus Christ is not God.

"Understandably, my non-Adventist friends were confused. "How could five people from the same church have such different opinions about God?" they asked. A Jewish friend remarked, "that means every time Adventists pray, some are praying to one God and some are praying to many Gods." "Your church sounds like confusion," a Muslim interjected.

"This incident troubled me for the entire week. I had always believed in the Trinity as stated in The Twenty-Seven Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists, so it never occurred to me that some Adventists believed otherwise.

"The following Sabbath, I went to church and asked various people their belief about the Trinity. Amazingly, I received radically different opinions. It seems clear that we do not know what we believe.

"If Adventists cannot agree on one of our fundamental beliefs, how can we then go "into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature?" "Go ye into all the world" is a divine commission. To carry out that commission successfully, we must have unity of purpose and a common message. This requires a thorough knowledge of what we believe and a sound understanding of God's word. God's church must know what it believes and what it stands for." - *Collegiate Quarterly*, January - March 1999, p.113 ("The Three Gods")

For many decades the average Adventist has had to struggle with the fact that, while the church claimed to believe in the Trinity, both the Bible and the writings of Ellen White presented glaring contradictions to the concept of a Trinity. Unlike the members of most other churches, Seventh-day Adventists by and large pay more attention to serious Bible Study and as a result are more aware of the plain Bible teaching that God is a single in-

dividual, who has a Son, begotten in His express image. An attempt to harmonize these Bible teachings with the Trinitarian declarations of the church has resulted in a confused state of things in Adventism where there are widely differing ideas about God, with most Seventh-day Adventists not quite sure of exactly what to believe. Many take refuge behind the statement that God is an "inexplicable mystery."

## THE TRUTH IS IMPORTANT

No thinking person can deny that the doctrine of God is most important. Noted SDA Theologian Raoul Dederen has stated,

"...If the doctrine of the Trinity is true, then those who deny it do not worship the God of the Scriptures. If it is false, the Trinitarians, by paying divine honor to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, are equally guilty of idolatry." - *Doctrine of The Trinity*, Raoul Dederen, p.1

Similar sentiments have been echoed by the writers of the *Handbook of SDA Theology* and *The Trinity*.

"... The doctrine of the Trinity (is), at the very center of the doctrine of God in particular and of Christian theology in general..." - *Handbook of SDA Theology*, p.120

"We are convinced that the doctrine of the Trinity is not just a minor quibble over some peripheral doctrine or dubious moral issue. The truth contained in this profound doctrine forms the essential basis for the very heart of what is unique to Christianity. Out of our insights to the Trinity emerges our very understanding of the greatest of all biblical notions - God is love." - *The Trinity*, by Woodrow Whidden, Jerry Moon, John Reeve, p.279

These books represent an attempt by the SDA church to come to grips with the confusion in its ranks and to take a definitive position which may be accepted as the official stand of Adventism on the subject of God.

With the publication of these books we probably should consider all previous positions taken by the SDA church as null and void. This is quite interest-

ing. As recently as 1996 the following statement appeared in the *Adventist Review*:

“A plan of salvation was encompassed in the covenant made by the Three Persons of the Godhead, who possessed the attributes of Deity equally. In order to eradicate sin and rebellion from the universe and to restore harmony and peace, one of the divine Beings accepted, and entered into, the role of the Father, another the role of the Son. The remaining divine Being, the Holy Spirit, was also to participate in effecting the plan of salvation. All of this took place before sin and rebellion transpired in heaven.

“By accepting the roles that the plan entailed, the divine Beings lost none of the powers of Deity. With regard to their eternal existence and other attributes, they were one and equal. But with regard to the plan of salvation, there was, in a sense, a submission on the part of the Son to the Father.”— Gordon Jensen: *Adventist Review*, October 31, 1996, p.12 (Week of Prayer readings)

After reading this, one could be excused for believing that the SDA church taught tritheism, the belief in three individual Gods. Four years later, however, Max Hatton makes a statement in his book condemning the statement made by Gordon Jensen in the *Review*, and inadvertently accusing his church of teaching paganism.

“Tri-theism results from an overemphasis on the three ness. It results really in there being three completely separate persons or Gods. This is really Polytheism (which really is Paganism).” - *Understanding The Trinity* - Max Hatton, p.135

The attempt to settle the confusion in the ranks of Adventism is commendable, but the trend taken in these books is disappointing and in a way frightening.

An examination of the teachings of these books reveal that Adventism is attempting to come up with a concept of God which will allow it to maintain the word “Trinity,” while escaping the accusation of having embraced Roman

Catholicism. In this way it aims to maintain its status among its evangelical friends as a proper “Christian” church, while satisfying its members that it is not walking in the steps of Catholicism.

### **ORTHODOX TRINITARIANISM**

In order for us to properly appreciate the position being presently taken by Adventism, it is necessary for us to first understand the teachings of the Orthodox (the Catholic) Trinity. The concept of God which is embraced and taught by the vast majority of Christian denominations. The classical definition of this Trinity is the Athanasian creed which reads in part, as follows:

#### **“Whoever wishes to be saved**

*Before all things It is necessary that he hold the catholic faith, which faith, if anyone does not keep it whole and unharmed, without doubt he will perish everlastingly.*

*Now the catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, neither confusing the Persons not dividing the divine Being.*

*For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit, but the Godhead of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is all one, their glory equal, their majesty co-eternal.*

*Such as the Father is, such is the Son and such is the Holy Spirit: the Father uncreated, the Son uncreated and the Holy Spirit uncreated, the Father infinite, the Son infinite and the Holy Spirit infinite, the Father eternal, the Son eternal and the Holy Spirit eternal; and yet they are not three Eternals but one Eternal, just as they are not three Uncreateds, not three Infinities, but one Uncreated and one Infinite.*

*In the same way the Father is almighty, the Son almighty and the Holy Spirit almighty, and yet they are not three Almightyes but one Almighty.*

*Thus, the Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God, and yet there are not three Gods but one God.*

*Thus, the Father is the Lord, the Son is the Lord and the Holy Spirit is the*

*Lord, and yet not three Lords but one Lord.*

*Because just as we are compelled by Christian truth to confess each Person singly to be both God and Lord, so we are forbidden by the catholic religion to say, There are three Gods, or three Lords.*

*The Father is from none, not made nor created nor begotten; the Son is from the Father alone, not made nor created, but begotten; the Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son, not made nor created nor begotten, but proceeding.*

*So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits.*

*And in this Trinity there is no before or after, no greater or less, but all three Persons are co-eternal with each other and co-equal.*

*So that in all things, as has already been said, the Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity, is to be worshipped.*

*He therefore who wishes to be saved let him think thus of the Trinity.”*

Max Hatton, the retired Australian Minister is in agreement with this Athanasian creed and comments that “This formula has served Christians well for over two millennia.” He adds, however, that “the assertion that the Son is begotten would hardly be included if the statement was made today.” This is an interesting comment. Incidentally however, it is a false comment. The institution which first formulated the Athanasian creed, the Roman Catholic Church, still believes in a Son who is “Eternally Begotten” as the following comment from Pope John Paul II demonstrates:

“At today’s general audience held in St. Peter’s Square, the Pope spoke on “Jesus’ Relationship With His Father, Revelation of the Trinitarian Mystery.”

John Paul II said that the “essential union” between Jesus and the Father not only concerns the activity of the Son “but also that which qualifies his being.”

“The Father is he who in the life of

the Trinity is the absolute principle, he who has no beginning and from whom divine life emanates." As the Lateran Council states: "It is the Father who generates, the Son who is begotten, and the Holy Spirit who proceeds" from both of them. - *Vatican Information Service*, March 10, 1999

Let us bear in mind that when the Roman Catholic Church speaks of Christ being begotten, they mean something very different from what the term normally means. They believe He is "eternally begotten," Whatever this means. At the same time, they teach that the Father was not before Him, nor is the Father greater than He is. So we should not make the mistake of believing that because they use the term "begotten," the Roman Catholic Church really believes that Jesus is the Son of God in the true sense of the word.

The following quotations taken from a Trinitarian web-site give us a fairly good idea of what the doctrine of the Trinity teaches and sets the stage for a better understanding of what Seventh-day Adventism is now advocating.

"There is one only and true God, but in the unity of the Godhead there are three coeternal and coequal Persons, the same in substance but distinct in subsistence.

"The doctrine of the trinity states that there is one God who is one in essence or substance, but three in personality. This does not mean three independent Gods existing as one, but three Persons who are co-equal, co-eternal, inseparable, interdependent, and eternally united in one absolute Divine essence and Being.

"The three Persons are the same in substance, i.e., in essence or in their essential nature, but distinct in subsistence which describes God's mode or quality of existence in three Persons. By mode of existence we do not mean one God acting in three different ways, but one Divine Being existing in three distinct Persons within one Divine Substance or Essence. Again, this is not exactly three individuals as we think of three personal individuals, but one Divine Being who acts and thinks as one

within a three-fold personality. This is incomprehensible to our finite and limited minds, but it is the teaching of the Scripture. "In the Being of God there are not three individuals, but only three personal self distinctions within the one Divine Essence."

". . . .When we say that God is a Unity we mean that, though God is in himself a threefold center of life, his life is not split into three. He is one in essence, in personality and in will." - *The Trinity (Triunity) of God*, by J. Hampton Keathley III ([www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org))

### **A 190 DEGREE TURN**

From a position where the earlier Seventh-day Adventists utterly rejected this doctrine of the Trinity as "pagan" and "Catholic", the SDA denomination has gone through a process of evolution where it finally, in essence, promotes this most Roman Catholic of Roman Catholic doctrines with very little variation from the Roman Catholic concept. You may judge for yourself whether this statement is true by reading the following quotes from Adventism's latest books on the Trinity.

"...When we think of the three persons of the Trinity we are likely to think of them as we would three human persons. That is three persons of the **same sort of substance (essence)**. But because there is only One God, the three persons must be of the **same substance (essence)**. Three human persons would be **exclusive** - independent of one another. The three persons of the Trinity, however, must be **inclusive** and not independent of one another. Because there is but one true God, by nature we have to conclude that He is plural as to persons but single as to **substance**." - *Understanding The Trinity* - Max Hatton, p. 19-20

"...At times "oneness" can involve the meaning of unity (i.e., John 10:30; 17:21,23). However, if the "oneness" expressed in these texts is conceived only as a gathering of independent "onenesses" that come together in order to form a unity, the specific singleness characteristic of the one Godhead to which they testify is dissolved into a

plurality of gods....In other words, since the God of the Bible is one and not many, all the various revelations about Him presented throughout the Bible refer to the same, one divine reality and not to a plurality of divine beings." - *Handbook of SDA Theology* - p.121

Adventists are still relatively new to the Trinitarian world and use their terms carelessly in a way that longstanding Trinitarians don't. For example Whidden, Moon and Reeve sometimes use the words "person" and "being" interchangeably. Something a knowledgeable Trinitarian would not do.

"Person" as applied to God indicates a being with personality, intellect, and will. Unlike the multiple gods of polytheism, the three persons of the biblical Godhead are profoundly united in purpose, mind, and character, so that despite Their individuality, they are never divided, never in conflict, and thus constitute not three gods, but one God." - *The Trinity*, by Woodrow Whidden, Jerry Moon, John Reeve, p.192

Because of this imprecise use of terms, it is at times a little uncertain as to exactly what Whidden, Moon and Reeve are promoting. Do they believe in one Being or substance made up of three "persons" or "hypostases", or, do they believe in three individual Beings who are one in the sense that they are identical in every respect and in full harmony and agreement on all things? Do they believe in Trinitarianism, or do they believe in Tritheism? The following quotes from their book illustrate the basis for this uncertainty. Whether deliberately or carelessly, they are not very precise in defining their concept of God as the following quotes illustrate.

"The Trinity doctrine teaches that the Godhead consists of three divine **Persons** - the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They are not three Gods, but three divine Persons who are one in nature (same essence or substance), character and purpose. Each has eternally pre-existed - that is, there has never been a time in eternity past when they

did not coexist, and there will never be a time when They will cease to exist.

"While the three divine Persons are one, They have taken different roles or positions in the Godhead's work of creation, redemption, and the loving administration of the universe. The Father has assumed overall leadership, the Son has subordinated Himself to the leadership of the Father, and the Spirit is voluntarily subordinate to both the Father and the Son." - *The Trinity*, by Woodrow Whidden, Jerry Moon, John Reeve, p.243

Here it says that there are not three Gods, but three persons who are of the same (not similar) substance, made up of three persons. Earlier, however, in the same book the following statement appears:

"...as Jesus formally begins His public ministry of redemption, all three members of the Heavenly Trio are present. The newly baptized Jesus stands on the banks of the Jordan, the Spirit descends on Him like a dove, and the Father audibly speaks words of divine approval and identity from heaven. This scene powerfully portrays the oneness of purpose held by the Godhead. Furthermore, it clearly evidences the distinctness of **each divine being**. Matthew does not present the Spirit and the Son as simply different manifestations or personifications of the Father, but as distinct personalities in concert with the Father. Yet They give every appearance of oneness in purpose and character as They focus on the redemptive mission of the Son." - *The Trinity*, by Woodrow Whidden, Jerry Moon, John Reeve, p.32, 33

"It clearly evidences the distinctness of **each divine being**" here we are told that there are three divine beings!! These beings are one in "purpose and character."

Which is it? Is it one being or are there three beings? As we can see, there is good reason for the confusion which exists within Adventism on the subject of the Godhead. The same confusion results when seeking answers from the *Handbook of SDA Theology*. On page 121 of this book we read:

....At times "oneness" can involve the meaning of unity (i.e., John 10:30; 17:21,23). However, if the "oneness" expressed in these texts is conceived only as a gathering of independent "onenesses" that come together in order to form a unity, the specific singleness characteristic of the one Godhead to which they testify is dissolved into a plurality of gods....In other words, since the God of the Bible is one and not many, all the various revelations about Him presented throughout the Bible refer to the same, one divine reality and **not to a plurality of divine beings**. - *Handbook of SDA Theology* - p.121

"Here we see a clear teaching that God does not consist of three separate beings. He is not made up of three "independent onenesses." This would result in a "plurality of gods." "All the various revelations.... refer....not to a plurality of divine beings." It is stated clearly. God is one "reality, not several "**beings**." A few pages later, however, we find a statement contradicting this one.

....The reality of divine forsakenness is possible only when the one God is understood in His biblical, trinitarian structure, which involves Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as divine, personal, conscious **beings**, mutually interacting among themselves and with the created universe. - *Handbook of SDA Theology* - p.127

It is clear that the SDA Church is going through a metamorphosis with respect to its teaching about God. What is also clear is that each step brings it closer and closer into harmony with Rome and her daughters. We can only sympathize with the poor church members who have committed themselves wholeheartedly to following the "church," wherever and however it leads. It seems that they are destined to become even more confused, with no sign of a reprieve on the horizon.

We will say more about these new books in future publications.

## FROM MY VANTAGE POINT

By W. A. Sutherland

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God". 1 Timothy 3: 1-4

These verses speak directly to my experience. My occupation as a public school teacher has afforded me a "sneak preview" into the future and if I should join with the popular belief that "children are our future" and if it is fair to judge what the future will be from my present experience with the average young person, then brace yourselves, because the future looks extremely dim.

Many of my colleagues have expressed the conviction, that their duty is to teach, and that teaching the academic subjects is the only way in which they will be involved with the programmes of their respective schools. What is it that has compelled them to adopt such an attitude? The experiences of teachers in many places today in attempting to correct or discipline students has been so frightening that a significant number of my colleagues have decided that the best way to deal with the situation is to avoid any situation with students which could be confrontational.

On one occasion, one teacher seeking to encourage some students to return to their classes, just after their lunch break, poured water on the area where they were seated and was in turn doused with water by one of the students. Another teacher, attempting to enforce a school rule, took a knife from a student, but shortly afterwards had to seek refuge when the student armed himself with a pair of scissors and came looking for the teacher.

These are some of the milder experiences which some teachers are facing and these are not unique to this institution. Friends of mine from many other

*Continued on page 11*



## A Note concerning the following article

From time to time we receive requests to publish articles with which we may not agree 100 %. It is not our general policy to promote what we believe to be error. However we are willing at times to publish some articles with which we may not agree, under the following conditions:

1. The article will be immediately followed by an article of our own which will point out and comment on the errors which we perceive to be in the article.
2. The article must not exceed 1000 words. We reserve the right to re-

ject or edit any articles which exceed the stated limit.

3. There is no guarantee that any particular article will be published.
4. The name of the author must accompany the article and will also be published.
5. There will be no guarantee that follow-up articles by the same author will be published.

This may not seem like a very favorable policy to those who may disagree with us. However, it is the only basis on which we will agree to publish ar-

ticles which may contradict what we believe to be the truth.

The following letter was written by P.D. Clayton, a very close relative of mine. He has appealed to my interest in “vindicating truth” as the basis for a request that the letter be published. We do not agree with much of what he has written and our reply follows immediately after his letter.

We have numbered the paragraphs of his letter for easy reference and in our response will make reference to these paragraphs by number.

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## A DIM VIEW OF ADVENTISM

*by P.D. Clayton*

- 1 Your lead article, “The Certainty of Adventism,” published in the October issue of “Open Face,” must have been targeted to a captive audience or you could not have advanced so many assumptions as facts in trying to validate the SDA doctrine of an investigative judgment begun in 1844.
- 2 It is my hope that your Christian interest in vindicating truth will permit your publishing the following comments.
- 3 It would be wrong to suggest that only those who deny the possibility of Christian perfection reject the SDA formula for its accomplishment. It is clear from the Hebrew religious calendar which you cited that an end-time union of God with His Church was pre-figured in the Day of Atonement on each tenth day of the seventh month. But it must be remembered that many dramatic events ensued between Pentecost and the feast of trumpets and which were not foreshadowed on the Jewish religious chart. The dynamic apostolic movement that

electrified the world with the gospel of the risen Christ, and the liberating surge of the Reformation wave across the enslavement of Rome both rose at God’s command and played their respective parts in shaping the Church for the work of final atonement. Daniel 7, Daniel 8 and Revelation 12 speak more precisely about those times and it is unsafe to ignore God’s hand in the uprise of these lighthouses or the lessons to be learned from their downfall.

- 4 Seventh-day Adventism – with some justification I think–lays claims to divine origins. And a careful study of the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 strongly suggests that a strong reformatory movement would focus on the year 1844. The fact is, however, that though independent Bible interpreters like Irving in England drew attention to the noteworthiness of that year, William Miller and a large North American discipleship put a theory on its significance eventually resulting in the Great Disappoint-

ment of October 22, 1844.

- 5 Survivors of this disaster – subsequently named Seventh-day Adventists – chose to accept Miller’s module for their revised sanctuary version fabricating around it the doctrine of the Investigative Judgment. Unlike you, I think that the movement thus departed from, rather than establishing its mission of cleansing (restoring, rededicating) the sanctuary which had been cast down by the diabolical little horn of Daniel 8.
- 6 My humble view is that this departure with its strong emphasis on man’s works (his records) being arraigned was partly what God tried to rebuke through the witness of Waggoner and Jones in 1888.
- 7 I find it somewhat disappointing that you should imply that the mention of earthly sanctuary furniture in John’s glimpses of heavenly activity proves their duplicate presence there, and thus, the sanctuary which houses them. It was after John had obeyed the summons to

“come up hither,” to be shown things that would be hereafter that he saw the four living creatures with animal heads; were they representative or real? John saw a lamb take the book from the Being on the throne; he saw a lamb on Mount Zion with 144,000, but we are left to infer whom the lamb represented in each case. Regarding the symbolic significance of these seemingly heavenly duplicates the prophet himself gave a clear guideline when he wrote in Revelation 4:5, “and out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thundering and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God.”

- 8 In the same way that the seven golden candlesticks of the earthly sanctuary had a dissimilar spiritual reality in heaven, so must the ark of the testimony, then altar, the censer and incense, even the temple itself – with which John was quite familiar – represent eternal establishments and issues which the earthly sanctuary could only faintly foreshadow.
- 9 I have heard it strongly urged that heaven is a real place, real there meaning tangible, as we understand it; but let me ask this; how real is the hell in which the demonic hosts dwell, and where is it located? How real are the chains with which rebellious angels are bound in darkness? (2 Peter 2:4). We need to exercise care in making pragmatic assertions about spiritual things seeing that inspiration speaks of abstract virtues this way;
- 10 *“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.” (1 Cor. 13:13)*
- 11 The Investigative Judgment message as proclaimed by the SDA pioneers depended on the veracity of the cleansing of a heavenly sanctuary closely modeled after the

ancient Hebrew sanctuary and its ritual.

- 12 But even if this modeling had the clear backing of Scripture, the brethren launched the doctrine on some real inaccuracies. The pioneers taught that when someone sinned in the ancient Hebrew community, that person took a sin offering (usually a lamb) to the door of the tabernacle and confessed sin on its head after which the animal was killed and its blood taken into the Holy Place where it was sprinkled at the foot of the veil separating the two apartments of the sanctuary. The symbolism of this, according to the brethren, was that sin was transferred from the individual to the animal and through its blood to the sanctuary. At that point the sinner was relieved, but his sin remained where it was deposited, in the first apartment. It was his accumulated sin which was ceremonially purged on the day of atonement.
- 13 Well, according to the Scriptures there was only one case in which blood from the sin offering of the individual sinner was taken into the sanctuary; that was where the offender was a priest. In the cases of the “common people,” and the “rulers” or tribal elders who constituted the bulk of the congregation of Israel, all the blood from their sacrifices was poured out at the foot of the brazen altar or altar of burnt offering, and forgiveness was obtained on the instant – see Leviticus 4:3-35. It will be observed that blood was also sprinkled in the holy place following the appropriate sacrifice for corporate sins of the community.
- 14 I have elsewhere advanced my opinion of why blood was sprinkled in the sanctuary on behalf of the erring priest or the congregation as a whole. I will not abuse your indulgence by going into that now. Suffice it to say that if the symbolic sacrificial blood did

in fact carry sin, the bulk of Israel’s transgressions did not contaminate the sanctuary at all.

- 15 The beliefs of the pioneers were however even more erroneously tilted when they implied sin’s pollution in the blood of the animal sacrificed. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23) so that when in symbol the animal vicariously died for the sinner, it incurred no further stigma. On the contrary, its innocent uncontaminated blood (representative of its life flow) became an instrument of cleansing and atonement – see Lev. 17:11. IT should never be forgotten that all animal sacrifices foreshadowed Jesus the supreme and ultimate sacrifice of heaven and that although He was made sin for us, iniquity could not touch, much less contaminate His inviolate character or tarnish His spotless blood. The blood, whether poured out fully at the foot of the brazen altar (representing Calvary) of part sprinkled before the veil, atoned for sin and obtained for man the mercy of God. So obviously since there was no sin accumulated, there could have been no spiritual spring cleaning on the day of atonement.
- 16 Why then this supremely important and solemn day? You have suggested that by floodlighting the Day of Atonement (Judgment hour) pioneer SDAs called attention to the ideal of character perfection to be attained by the remnant church. I suggest that it unwittingly did the very opposite. By choosing the earthly sanctuary it adopted a temporary (“imposed until the time of reformation.” – Heb. 9:10) institution supported by an imperfect structure (animal sacrifices, human functionaries, localized shrines) “which could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience. (Heb. 9:9)
- 17 But the imperfection went deeper

- than that. Merely spiritualizing the sacrifice, the leadership and the scope of sanctuary worship would not redress a system which was a teaching aid to illustrate the coming salvation in Jesus (our school-master <pedagogue> to bring us to Christ – Gal. 3:24), and not a ritual blueprint of God’s way in the heavens.
- 18 Read how Paul emphasizes this in his letter to the Hebrew Christians.
- 19 *“If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? (12) For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.”* (Heb 7:11-12)
- 20 The brazen altar on which the sin offering was killed clearly represented Calvary. The Holy Place – also called the “tabernacle of the congregation” – represented the daily atonement made for mans inherent sinfulness, through the merits of Calvary’s sacrifice (accepted by faith). But the “holiest” represented a spiritual attainment of perfection unavailable under the Levitical priesthood. Paul wrote in Hebrews 9:1-7,8:
- 21 But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: (Heb 9:7-8) (Please read the NIV for greater clarity)
- 22 It seems clear that with the passing of the first covenant there ended also the earthly sanctuary, its Levitical priesthood and its ritual laws (see Heb. 9:1-7), and in its place was inaugurated the new covenant (Heb. 8:10-13) with a new priesthood (Hebrews 8:1,2,6) able to take us into the perfection of character which the Melchizedec King-priest alone can accomplish.
- 23 You might want to wonder like me, David, whether the atonement made first for the holiest on the Day of Atonement could not also represent the at-one-ment made in the heavens when Satanic forces were cast out on the death of our Lord. The atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation and for Calvary’s completed work is still continuing till Jesus shall purge the remnant from affinity to sin, God’s ultimate purpose and supreme mystery. (Eph. 1:9,10)
- 24 It does seem significant that Satan who began with disruption in heaven (the Sanctum Sanctorum) is finally saddled with the onus of guilt after the final atonement is made.
- 25 Closing points to ponder could include:
- The fact that only the living were completely cleansed on the Day of Atonement, although the sin offering was sufficient for those who went before.
  - The fact that the high priest was completely responsible for the soul cleansing of that portentous day. The soul affliction of the King James version is called self-denial in the NIV and seems to speak of surrender in its most unprecedented form.
26. Keep listening to the voice of God, however unworthy His chosen messenger may seem.

## ADVENTISM PROVIDES ANSWERS

### *(A response to the previous article)*

It is a pity that the so-called “assumptions” made in defense of an investigative judgment begun in 1844 were not specifically mentioned (1). Upon reviewing the article in question I find no mention made of the year 1844 (the author evidently made the assumption that I was defending this date). Rather, the last section of the article shows by comparing Daniel 7 and Revelation 4-11 that both passages are speaking of the same event which is a pre-advent Investigative Judgment. One hardly needs to make assumptions when the facts speak so clearly and unmistakably. It is interesting that those who deny a pre-advent investigative

judgment are quick to condemn the interpretation taken by Adventists of Daniel 7:9, 10, but have no alternative interpretation which even begins to make a little sense. Some have suggested that it refers to the great-white-throne judgment of Revelation 20, but even the most superficial reader should realize that such an interpretation completely ignores the sequence and context of the passage.

The writer of this letter, P.D. Clayton, concedes somewhat reluctantly that Adventism has some justification for its claims to divine origins (4), and even goes so far as to admit

that Daniel 8:14 indicated the rise of a “strong reformatory movement” in 1844. He then goes on, however, to label the same Advent movement which was of “divine origins” as being the survivors of a theologically founded “disaster” which was guilty of fabricating the main doctrine around which the movement centered. He then concluded that the embryonic movement, just in the process of making a beginning, departed from its mission by “fabricating” this doctrine. We should remember that the whole force of that reformatory movement in the 1830s – 40s stemmed from the strong belief of those involved in it that they



were getting ready to meet the Lord – a belief which was based on their interpretation of Daniel 8:14. If they were so totally deluded and departed from their mission from the very inception of the movement, then I am left mystified, wondering where the “divine origins” of such a movement can be found.

We know that the famous Minneapolis General Conference held in 1888 was intended, among other things to focus the SDA movement on faith rather than works, but the further suggestion that God was indirectly rebuking the doctrine of the investigative judgment (6), is another example of wishful thinking and unfounded assumption as there is not the slightest evidence to support such a theory.

### **HOW REAL IS HEAVEN**

Mr. Clayton then goes on to suggest that because some things seen in heaven are clearly symbolic, then the sanctuary and its furnishings seen in heaven must also be symbolic. He totally ignores the fact that many of the things seen there are unquestionably real and to be taken literally such as the angels, the throne of God, etc. Or shall we spiritualize these away as symbols as well? While it is true that some things are clearly symbols, it is equally true that others are actually the way they are represented. The context and the sense of the passage must determine for us which is which.

Revelation, a book of symbols, speaks of a heavenly sanctuary and its furniture. Are these literal things, or are they symbols of something else. The letter to the Hebrews, which is not a book of symbols, but rather, a book which *explains* types and symbols, states quite plainly that there is a heavenly sanctuary, the “true” tabernacle which was pitched by the Lord and not man. The apostle Paul makes it clear that it was his understanding that Moses was given a pattern of the heavenly sanctuary as the blueprint upon which he was to base the construction of the earthly. (see Heb. 8:5) We may question whether Paul was correct in

coming to this conclusion, but no reasonable person can deny that this is the point he is attempting to make here. We can be certain that Paul also believed in a literal heavenly sanctuary.

When he was taken into heaven in vision, John saw there a temple, an altar of incense, a censer, as well as the ark of the Testament. What do these things represent? One person says, “John says he saw them, so I believe they are there.” Another person says, “John says he saw them but I don’t believe they are there.” Which of these persons has more justification for his conclusion? We are not suggesting that the sanctuary in heaven and its furniture are *exact* replicas of what existed in the Hebrew sanctuary. However, it should be obvious to the honest reader that the fact that John saw these things in heaven must mean that there is a heavenly equivalent for each item which existed on earth. The Lamb was a symbol, but a symbol of a *real* person, Jesus Christ. The seven lamps of fire are symbols, but symbols of something real—the Holy Spirit. The four living creatures probably do not really have the faces of eagle, calf, man and lion, but they represent real beings nevertheless. In the same way, the temple, the ark, the altar, the censer etc. all represent *real* things which have some practical function.

What do they represent? What are their functions? These are the questions which Adventism has answered in making heaven a real place instead of an airy-fairy theory, and its functions real events rather than philosophical fancies. As the writer of the letter stated, these things represent “eternal establishments ... which the earthly sanctuary could only faintly foreshadow.” What is interesting is the fact that those who reject the conclusions of Adventism do not usually have any explanations as to what each of these things represent—they pooh; pooh the interpretations of Adventism, but have none of their own to offer.

Our letter writer compares the realities of heaven with the “chains” which

bind rebellious angels, and the realities of faith, hope and charity (9, 10). Is he saying that heaven is just an abstract principle? A figurative place?

Faith hope and charity are not virtues which are limited to the world to come. They are realities which we experience here and now in this world and in this life. Does this mean that we do not live in a “real” tangible world? Why then does the fact that heaven is filled with faith hope and charity indicate that it is not a tangible place?

It is not accurate to say that the doctrine of the Investigative Judgment depended on the understanding of the cleansing of a heavenly sanctuary modeled after the ancient Hebrew sanctuary (11). It is true that the Adventist pioneers used the Hebrew sanctuary as their starting point in understanding and defining the doctrine because of their perception that Daniel 8:14 pointed to this event. However, one may ignore Daniel 8:14 and the Levitical sanctuary completely and still find the doctrine of the end-time Investigative Judgment taught many places in scripture. (Dan 7:9,10; Rev. 4-8; Matt. 22:8-14; Matt. 25:31-46 Etc.)

### **SIN TRANSFERRED TO HEAVEN?**

A great deal has been made of the fact that the pioneers suggested that the blood of the sacrificed animal was taken into the sanctuary, when in actual fact, the blood was in most cases poured out at the foot of the altar (13). Let us not forget though, that in those cases where blood was not taken into the sanctuary the priest had to partake of the flesh of the animal, thereby in himself fulfilling the function of the transferred blood as he went in and out of the sanctuary.

Those who object to the teachings of Adventism shrink back in horror at the suggestion that the blood, or the flesh of the slain animal (representing the flesh and blood of Christ) was a medium for transferring sin to the sanctuary as suggested by the early

Adventists (15). But let us think for a moment: did the early Adventists really believe that sin itself was transferred to heaven? What is sin? Can it exist without a medium in which to operate? Is it something like dirt, or germs? What did the early Adventists mean by stating that by means of the blood of the sacrifice sin was transferred to the sanctuary? Does not the doctrine of the investigative judgment clearly demonstrate what they meant? When they said that sins were to be blotted from the heavenly sanctuary they meant the *RECORD* of sin, not sin itself!!! This is really quite simple. It is difficult to see how one can misunderstand their meaning. They were simply saying that by means of Christ's sacrifice, by means of His flesh and blood, as we are in Him, our sinful records are transferred to heaven, there to be dealt with in the heavenly sanctuary.

*Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. (1 Tim 5:24)*

By what means does it become possible for our sins (sinful records) to be dealt with in heaven? It is by means of the blood of Christ!! He takes my name on his lips, my sinful record is dealt with in the heavenly sanctuary because I have confessed my sins in His name. This is all they meant. No more, no less.

### **REAL EVENTS**

I find it mystifying that our letter-writer should claim that the early Adventists chose the earthly sanctuary (rather than the heavenly[16]). They did no more and no less than did the writers of the books of Hebrews and Revelation. What they did was conclude that every event in the Hebrew sanctuary had a meaning, that each ritual, service, piece of furniture had an equivalent heavenly reality, much greater in scope than the earthly tabernacle. They examined each event, each implement and sought for its greater meaning, believing that in each

event God had encapsulated some vital clues to give us an understanding of heavenly realities.

Those who object to Adventism's interpretations have a much more vague view of these things. They agree of course that they all represent heavenly realities, but what heavenly realities? "Oh," they say, "the ways of salvation, the glories of redemption etc." but there is nothing you can come to grips with no concept of events of which the imagination can take hold.

A man and his wife go to a soccer match. When it is over, the man can describe every goal, every dribble, every shot that was made. He felt the tension, the drama, he understands and can relate the plays and the build up which led to each goal, the ebb and flow of the game, the tactics which eventually led to one side winning and the other losing. His wife on the other hand may say, "well, it was interesting. There was a lot of running around. I think the red side won and the blue side lost."

This illustrates the difference between Adventism and other Christian groups. Many recognize that something is going on and that the stakes are high. In some vague way they realize that something is happening in heaven. But what, they don't know. They say, "Jesus is getting ready to perfect His people." But how? How is he "getting ready?" is he sitting, standing, walking, talking? What is He doing? Adventism found an answer to these questions in the types established by God in the services of the earthly sanctuary.

The earthly priesthood could never make us perfect. It dealt only with types, figures, symbols. The new covenant priesthood, however, deals with the real things. As these *REAL* events take place, God and heaven accomplishes the work of saving and perfecting the people of God.

On the typical day of atonement, an atonement was made for the holiest place. Our writer suggests that this

took place at the time of the death of Christ (AD 31 [23]). In making this suggestion he completely ignores the chronological sequence of the day of atonement in the Hebrew calendar. He ignores the fact that the day of atonement was after the Passover, after Pentecost, after the first fruits and wave sheaf, and had a clearly designated space and timing *AFTER* these events!!! These festivals did not just speak of the events to take place in salvation history, but indisputably also indicated the timing of these events. A fact often overlooked or ignored by critics of Adventism. The fact is that the day of atonement service clearly indicated an atonement to be made for the (heavenly) most holy place during the end-time anti-typical day of atonement. An event understood and explained *ONLY* by true Adventism.

Finally, it is true that only the living were cleansed on the day of atonement in the type. The suggestion of our letter writer is that this is also true in the antitype (26a). Evidently, of course, he does not believe that the day of atonement services embraces dead Christians. A little thought, however, will show why the typical services were limited to the living, even though the antitype must include ALL Israel, both living and dead.

- a. Firstly, since the services took place every year, those who were dead would have participated at some time while they were alive.
- b. Since the services took place every year, then we must realize that the type did not, and could not embrace what had happened the previous year. In the type, the entire history of salvation was one year long. Those who died the year before did not exist (in the type). However, in reality, all Christians still exist. There are no dead in the kingdom of God (Matt. 22:32).
- c. It was unnecessary to include the dead in the type since (unlike the antitype) the type dealt with only what could be seen.

In the antitype, God's people sleep, but are not truly dead, (John 11:26) therefore they must be included among Israel and whatever work is being done for Israel. Since the service or the work takes place once for all rather than every year, then it must embrace every single Israelite whether alive or "dead" since there never was and never will be another chance for those who do not benefit from this one time atonement experience.



### FROM MY VANTAGE POINT

*Continued from page 5*

schools have shared similar experiences with me. The electronic and print media have in recent times broadcast many cases of violence in schools between students and students, between students and ancillary workers, as well as between students and teachers.

What is frightening is the frequency with which such incidences occur. The average school today at almost any level is no longer a place where you can send your children with the assurance that they will be safe. In fact teachers themselves might be excused in approaching each days work with the attitude of one whose occupation is risky and hazardous to life.

Many reason that the present condition of our Education System and the state of our world is nothing new. Many deceive themselves with the illusion that our present conditions will improve, while we live in the presence of sin. They are failing to recognize the facts. From my vantage point, I am forced to conclude that, barring the intervention of God, the future is bleak. Things are not improving, but worsening rapidly each day.

From my vantage point, there is little joy and almost no hope. As we contemplate these things, let us consider the words of Him who foresaw it all:

*And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. (Luke 21:28)*



## AT HOME AND ABROAD

### DEDICATION IN CLARENDON

December 27, 2002 was a high day for the believers in Hayes, Clarendon. This was the day on which they had the first opportunity of worshipping in their new meeting place.



To be sure the facilities are very humble. The new "chapel" consists of a rectangular tent with a sturdy metal framework and a concrete floor, set up in the front of Sister Bev Walters' home. Nevertheless, humble as it is, this new facility will be a great help to the work in Clarendon. The former meeting place was Sister Walters' verandah which was woefully inadequate as no more than ten people could squeeze when services were held. With the new tent they will now feel free to invite people out to visit their services, and there are even plans to hold evangelistic meetings.

Plans are now being made to construct a toilet on the outside of the house so that there will not be such a burden on the home itself when services are held. Please continue to hold these brethren up in your prayers and if you feel impressed to contribute to their effort in any way, please do not hesitate to do so.

### REPORT ON DUNCANS GROUP

A few months ago a group of six believers in Duncans Trelawny were led to examine the truth about God and His Son. They were convinced that it was Bible truth and embraced it wholeheartedly. We are happy to report that they are continuing to rejoice in the truth and to stand firmly in defense of this truth. Please continue to pray for them.

### A GRIEVOUS LOSS

Believers in Jamaica and especially Kingston, experienced a deep loss with the death of Sister (Dr.) Beverly Grant-Lewis early in February. Sister Bev as she was affectionately known, had been diagnosed with cancer of the liver just a few weeks ago. She tried to do what she could by way of seeking help using natural methods. The medical establishment of course could do nothing as liver cancer is regarded in such circles as being incurable. She was given six weeks to live. Prayers ascended on her behalf from all over the world, but in the end, it was our Father's will that she should sleep and we all have to accept that this was best for her. We miss her greatly and look forward with longing to the time when we will meet again in the land where there will be no more death, neither crying nor sorrow.



### JAMAICAN CAMPMEETING

The Jamaican Campmeeting for 2003 will be held from April 17 – 21. This year we will again be at the Mount Forest campsite in Manchester which overlooks the ocean and the parish of St. Elizabeth.

Breakfast and lunch will be provided for the duration of the camp, but each person will have to provide his evening meal or supper. The fees for the campsite have gone up since we were there last year and this, along with the fact that we are providing meals compelled us to set the camp fees at \$500.00 (US \$10.00) which is the lowest we could go.

Please remember to bring your own bedding and eating utensils as well as your Bible, song book and note book.

Special guest speakers this year will be Brothers Lynnford Beachy from Smyrna Gospel Ministries and Willis Smith of Third Angels Prison Ministry. Please plan to be there at all costs. It promises to be a blessed time.



## THE WOODEN BOWL.

A frail old man went to live with his son, daughter-in-law, and four-year old grandson. The old man's hands trembled, his eyesight was blurred, and his step faltered. The family ate together at the table. But the elderly grandfather's shaky hands and failing sight made eating difficult. Peas rolled off his spoon onto the floor. When he grasped the glass, milk spilled on the tablecloth.

The son and daughter-in-law became irritated with the mess. "We must do something about Grandfather," said the son. "I've had enough of his spilled milk, noisy eating, and food on the floor".

So the husband and wife set a small table in the corner. There, Grandfather

ate alone while the rest of the family enjoyed dinner. Since Grandfather had broken a dish or two, his food was served in a wooden bowl. When the family glanced in Grandfather's direction, sometime he had a tear in his eye as he sat alone. Still, the only words the couple had for him were sharp admonitions when he dropped a fork or spilled food.

The four-year-old watched it all in silence. One evening before supper, the father noticed his son playing with wood scraps on the floor. He asked the child sweetly, "What are you making?" Just as sweetly, the boy responded, "Oh, I am making a little bowl for you and Mama to eat your food in when I grow up." The four-year-old smiled

and went back to work.

The words so struck the parents so that they were speechless. Then tears started to stream down their cheeks. Though no word was spoken, both knew what must be done.

That evening the husband took Grandfather's hand and gently led him back to the family table. For the remainder of his days he ate every meal with the family. And for some reason, neither husband nor wife seemed to care any longer when a fork was dropped, milk spilled, or the tablecloth soiled.



### ***Open Face***

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