



Open Face

Ellen White and The Godhead (Part 1)

David Clayton



The late Walter Martin, world renowned cult-watcher and author once accused Ellen White of being an anti-Trinitarian, who changed her mind later in life. Most of us reading this article would probably disagree with Mr. Martin. After all, we believe that Ellen White was God’s messenger and God does not change His mind. However, Mr. Martin’s declaration is a reflection on the seeming contradictions which appear whenever we begin to examine Ellen White’s statements on the Godhead. On the one hand, her anti-Trinitarian declarations are abundant and unmistakable during the first fifty years of her ministry, or up until around the turn of the century. On the other hand several statements have been credited to her during the last twenty years of her life which seem to be Trinitarian and supportive of the concept of a three part God.

This seeming conflict between various statements made by Ellen White is one of the major reasons for the present controversy in Seventh-Day Adventism on the subject of the Godhead. Is there a difficulty? Yes there is. Any

honest person will have to admit that there is a difficulty. However, it is possible that this difficulty can be resolved if we approach the issue in a reasonable and fair way. Just as with the study of the Bible, it is possible to arrive at a good understanding of the truth by carefully examining both sides of the issue with an open and honest mind, guided by the Holy Spirit.

Our Approach

A comprehensive discussion of the issues involved would require an entire book. We have only a few pages. Nevertheless we intend to make some points which should help to demonstrate, the reason for these seeming discrepancies in Ellen White writings.

Let me say that in attempting to demonstrate what Ellen White believed, I am not attempting to discover the truth about God. The Bible is very clear on that issue and does not leave us with any room for honest doubts. One who believes and will accept the biblical teachings will know for a certainty that there is only “one God, the Father” (1 Cor. 8:6) Who has one “begotten Son,” the Lord Jesus Christ (1 John 4:9,15) and who is present with, and lives in us by His spirit – a power and influence which is an extension of Himself. (Ps. 139:7; Matt. 10:20; 1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16, etc.)

If Ellen White had believed in, and taught the doctrine of a Trinity, she would have contradicted the Bible and in this, would have proven herself to be a false prophet. All our endeavours to prove that Ellen White never taught a Trinity are intended to demonstrate

that she was in harmony with the teachings of the Bible and thus, was a true messenger of God.

The Bible - Our Authority

“...when we separated from the churches, and went forward step by step in the light that God gave us. We then took the position that the Bible, and the Bible only, was to be our guide; and we are never to depart from this position....—Letter 105, 1903. (Counsels to Writers and Editors, p. 145)

But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines, and the basis of all reforms. ... Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain “Thus saith the Lord” in its support. (Great Controversy, p.595)

Ellen White, as a prophet, may comment on the Bible, she may illuminate the Bible and clarify Scripture, but she cannot contradict the Bible. In addition, Ellen White insisted over and over that God’s people should obtain their doctrines from the Bible Only. With respect to her writings she stated,

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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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“But don’t you quote Sister White. I don’t want you ever to quote Sister White until you get your vantage ground where you know where you are. Quote the Bible. Talk the Bible. It is full of meat, full of fatness. Carry it right out in your life, and you will know more Bible than you know now.”
(Spalding and Magan collection, p. 174)

With this in mind, we cannot justifiably use the writings of Ellen White as the basis for our beliefs concerning God. The irony is that when we do this, we show that we do not believe what Ellen White has written!

The fact is that most Trinitarian or Tritheist Seventh-day Adventists defend their position almost entirely on the basis of statements from Ellen White. If the Bible was used as the final authority for our beliefs – if we would become again a “people of the book,” – then the problems would be immediately solved and the issue would become clear. However, even in the writings of Ellen White, a fair and unbiased and comprehensive approach will reveal the truth that there is only

one God, the Father, who begat an only Son, in the days of eternity. It is a superficial, one-sided approach which causes confusion and leads to the conclusion that God is a three-fold Being or three Beings. Such a conclusion inevitably must lead to the conclusion that Ellen White either was totally confused or else taught one thing during the early part of her ministry and changed her mind later on.

What Ellen White Believed

Ellen White received her first vision when she was seventeen years old. From that moment her duties began as a messenger of the Lord. From that point in time it became her duty to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3),” to “*preach the word....in season, out of season,*” to, “*reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.*” (2 Tim. 4:2). Did she fail in this duty?

From the beginning of the SDA movement, Ellen White belonged to a church which rejected the concept of a three-part God. Her husband, as well as all the leaders of the movement to which she belonged rejected a one-in-three God. Were they wrong in their beliefs? When the SDA pioneers taught that Jesus was the begotten Son of God rather than God Himself and when they taught that the Holy Spirit was an extension of God rather than God Himself, were they teaching heresy? False doctrine? Or were they maintaining the “faith which was once delivered to the saints?”

Ellen White’s behaviour at this time is full of instruction for those who are willing to see. Let us consider the following facts.

- a. If the pioneers were wrong, then they were guilty of teaching a false concept of God. They were proclaiming falsehood concerning the most important doctrine of Christian faith – the doctrine of God.
- b. If they were teaching falsehood on such an important doctrine, then it

was the duty of Ellen White to correct them – to “reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine.” (2 Tim. 4:2)

- c. If Ellen White had failed to rebuke such a falsehood for the seventy-two years that she belonged to the Advent movement, then she would have failed miserably in her duty as a messenger of the Lord. Yet there is not a single scrap of evidence to suggest that Ellen White ever once rebuked or even corrected the Adventist pioneers for their belief concerning God.

Consider the importance of knowing the truth: Truth is the foundation of faith, and faith is the foundation of the way we live and behave. It is through the way we live and behave that we develop character, prepare for heaven and glorify God by revealing His character to the world. The most essential knowledge of all, is knowledge of God (Prov. 9:10; John 17:3; etc). on this subject it is most important that we should know the truth because, we become like what we worship. A true understanding of God’s identity, nature and character are therefore vital, if we are ever to be delivered from the effects of sin.

How then can we accept that God raised up the Advent movement, gave them a message to proclaim to the world, appointed a messenger (prophet) to guide them in the search for doctrinal purity, and yet left them in darkness and confusion on the most important doctrine of all, though there was a living prophet in their midst? This does not make sense!

The most reasonable, the obvious conclusion is that the Adventist pioneers had it right. They knew and taught the truth about God. Ellen White had no need to rebuke or to correct the pioneers because they were teaching the truth. She was in perfect harmony with them as her writings indicate.

God Or The Godhead

In discussing the subject of the nature

and identity of God, people are often confused by the use of the term, "The Godhead." Sometimes the word is used to mean the same thing as the word "God," and in some settings to mean something else. Let us see if we can understand what this word really means and how it is often used, because it is a word which is sometimes used by Ellen White, though she never once used the word "Trinity" in her writings.

The word "Godhead" is used in the Bible in three passages: (Rom. 1:20; Col. 2:9; Acts 17:29). In these three passages, the word, "godhead" is a translation of two greek words, "theotes" and "theios." Both of these words mean essentially the same thing. The Strongs Greek dictionary defines the two words in the following way:

Theotes: Divinity, godhead

Theios: Godlike, divine, godhead.

Colossians tells us,

"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col 2:9)

This is simply saying that Jesus possesses the fullness of the divine nature – He is God in terms of His quality of life or existence, His life is equal to the life of God, in the same way that my Son's life is equal to my life.

Romans 1:20 uses the word godhead in the same way. It says,

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:" (Rom 1:20)

The works of God in nature, in the things which He has created reveal clearly, His "eternal power" and His divine qualities – the qualities which make Him God. In none of these passages does the word "godhead" mean a Trinity, a trio, or even more than one person.

The passage in Acts 17 says,

(Acts 17:29) Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God,

we ought not to think that the Godhead (divinity, the divine one) is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

Here, Paul definitely uses the term "godhead" to refer to a person, that is to the person of God. But let us examine the context or the circumstances in which Paul used it. He was speaking to the philosophers of Athens, worldly – wise men who had vague and confused ideas of God. In fact they were not even sure who, or what God was. They worshipped multiple false gods and even set up an altar to an "unknown god." Paul was trying to reason with these men on their level. Speaking of God, he referred to Him as "the godhead," or "the divinity." Very much as we might, in a neutral setting refer to Jehovah as "the deity." We may use an indefinite term which still makes it clear that we are speaking of the Supreme Being.

In none of these instances does the word "godhead," suggest anything other than the quality of divinity, or, the divine Being. Certainly there is not the slightest suggestion that it refers to a three-fold Being or three Beings. Any such usage of the word is another example of a contrived meaning being forced upon a biblical word.

In light of the evident biblical meaning of the word, "godhead," we can see how this word could be legitimately used by Ellen White (or others) to refer to whatever partakes of the divine nature, or of the qualities of divinity. This would include the divine Son of God, as well as the divine Spirit of God. This should not, however, be misconstrued to say that the word, "godhead" means that God is made up of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They all are a part of the godhead (the divine nature) but God (the Supreme Being) certainly is not made up of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and the word "godhead" does not suggest this.

We may say then, "there is only one God, the Father (1 Cor. 8:6), but the divine (godhead) qualities are revealed

in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit."

The Holy Spirit As "It"

Many times Ellen White referred to the Holy Spirit as "it." "It" is a very small word and this might seem, on the surface of it be a tiny matter and not something of much significance. Let us think for a moment however. Let us be logical, reasonable and fair. Words are an expression of the way we think. They are used to express the thoughts which we have in our minds. When Ellen White referred to the Holy Spirit as "it," over and over, what concept did she have in mind? What image came to her mind when she visualized God's Spirit, which made her use the word "it" to describe that Spirit? Let us think! If she thought of the Holy Spirit as an individual person at all, then how on earth could she refer to such a divine individual as "it?" What would we think if Ellen White had ever, under any circumstances referred to God the Father, or Jesus Christ, or even an angel as, "it?" This is a tiny fact, but an extremely significant one.

Of course, one may counter with the fact that Ellen White at times also referred to the Holy Spirit as "He." This is true. Let us consider two things, however. First, the Holy Spirit is an extension of God the Father. It is God's Spirit. As such, it is perfectly in order for the Holy Spirit to be referred to as He, or as God, depending on the context of the statement. I may say, "the Spirit of God is here and He (God) is working in each heart." Or, I may say, "the Spirit of God is here and it (God's Spirit) is working in each heart." Both statements would be correct, and once we understand this, any reasonable person can see why Ellen White would sometimes refer to the Holy Spirit as "he" and other times as "it." This is the only possible explanation as to why Ellen White would have referred to the Holy Spirit as it. Nothing else makes any sense. We never, ever, refer to an individual person as "IT!" Never! Not unless we are trying to be funny or disrespectful.

The second thing to consider of course, is the fact that the Seventh-day Adventist church has in many cases, changed the word “it,” to “He”, where Ellen White wrote of the Holy Spirit. Hopefully nobody will try to deny that there have been changes made. Burying our heads in the sand will not change facts, it will only blind our eyes to the most obvious truth.

From All Eternity

Trinitarians and Tritheists insist that Jesus and the Father are the same age which means, essentially, that they are both without a beginning. Those who believe in the Catholic Trinity pay some lip service to the fact that Jesus is declared in the Scriptures to be the only begotten Son of God. They claim that Jesus is eternally begotten of the Father. This is a concept which makes Jesus an extension of the Father rather than an individual Being. While this is the Bible truth concerning the Holy Spirit, it is not the truth concerning Christ.

Tritheists, however, reject the concept that Jesus was ever begotten of the Father in any literal sense. Most of them claim that Jesus only became God’s Son when He was born in Bethlehem or when He was resurrected from the dead. They quote a couple of Scriptures to support this idea, but avoid other Scriptures which show very clearly that Jesus’ existence originated with the Father.

One such passage which they always avoid is Proverbs 8:22-30. Here is what Ellen White had to say about the passage:

“...the Son of God declares concerning Himself: ‘The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting.... When He appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.’” Proverbs 8:22-30. (PP-34)

Notice that according to Ellen White, in this passage Christ is speaking, and He is speaking about HIMSELF.

Now at least three times in the passage, Christ “declares concerning Himself” that, He had an origin. He says in verse 23, “**I was set up**”, then in verse 24, “**I was brought forth**” and again in verse 25, “**I was brought forth.**” This passage is plain and straight forward. There is no mistaking its meaning. What is interesting is that some of the most die-hard defenders of the “infallibility” of Ellen White’s writings have denied that this passage has any reference to Christ. They have taken this position in order to escape the plain teachings of the Bible.

Of course, Ellen White also stated that Christ existed from “*all eternity*” (RH, April 5, 1906) and that “*there never was a time when He was not.*” (Signs of the Times, Aug. 29, 1900) at this point, people like Walter Martin would throw their hands up in the air and say, “see, we have a clear contradiction.” How could He be “brought forth” if He existed from “all eternity?” Let us look again at the passage in Proverbs; In verse 23 it says, “I was set up from everlasting.” When was, “everlasting?” At what point in time was that? How long ago was that? The truth is that the time referred to here as “everlasting,” is beyond human comprehension. That was a time, **before** time. Does that embrace thousands, millions, billions or trillions of years, or even beyond that? The term “everlasting” speaks of a distance in time that boggles the mind. Nevertheless, Christ does say in Proverbs 8 that at that time “I was set up”, or “I was brought forth.” Jesus created time, therefore, there never was a time when He was not.

This has to be what Ellen White meant when she spoke of Christ being with the Father “from all eternity.” Again we see that in this, she is merely expressing the same teaching as the Bible, and logically, we must apply the same understanding as we apply to the biblical statement.

Finally, there are some statements

which have been made by Ellen White which do not merely speak of God, or of the Godhead, but are definitive, in that they explain and clarify her concept of relationships and functions within the Godhead. We have chosen a sampling of these statements and will comment briefly on each one.

explanatory Statements

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

“It is His purpose that the highest influence in the universe, emanating from the source of all power, shall be theirs. They are to have power to resist evil, power that neither earth, nor death, nor hell can master, power that will enable them to overcome as Christ overcame.”
(Desire of Ages, p.679)

There are two things to notice carefully in this quote. Firstly, she states that the Holy Spirit (the highest influence in the universe) “emanates” from “the source of all power.” This word “emanates” means to “issue from a source” (*Webster’s New World Dictionary*). Can any reasonable person misinterpret her meaning here? What she is saying plainly and simply is that the Holy Spirit has no independent existence from the Father. It “emanates” (Jesus said “proceedeth”- John 15:26) from Him. The place where the Holy Spirit resides, or has its abode, is in the Father!!! From Him, it emanates, proceeds, diffuses out to God’s people and indeed to all creation.

Secondly, according to this statement, the Father is the source of ALL power. This is stated in direct contrast to the Holy Spirit which emanates from this power source, rather than being that source.

Let us look at another statement which clearly emphasizes the truth that the Holy Spirit comes from the Father and is an extension of His person:

“Never before had angels listened to such a prayer as Christ offered at His baptism, and they were solicitous to be the bear-

ers of the message from the Father to His Son. But, no! **Direct from the Father issues the light of His glory.** The heavens were opened and beams of glory rested upon the Son of God and assumed the form of a dove, in appearance like burnished gold.” (That I May Know Him, p.31)

Trinitarians are fond of saying that the Trinity was present at Jesus’ baptism, but was this how Ellen White viewed it? No. She says that beams of glory came **directly from the Father.** This is where the Holy Spirit resides. In the Father because it is a part of the Father! These beams of glory took on the form of a dove. It was the Father’s power and glory which rested on Christ at His baptism, not another third Individual. This is what Ellen White believed as these quotations so plainly show.

Please notice how these same truths are reinforced and supplemented by another quote from the same book:

*All things Christ received from God, but He took to give. So in the heavenly courts, in His ministry for all created beings: **through the beloved Son, the Father's life flows out to all;** through the Son it returns, in praise and joyous service, a tide of love, to the great Source of all. And thus through Christ the circuit of beneficence is complete, representing the character of the great Giver, the law of life. (Desire of Ages, p.21)*

In the above quote, another element is brought into the picture. We see that the life of God flows out to all creation. We see that He (the Father) is the “great source of all.” We also see, however, that this life flows “through the beloved Son.” We see that Jesus is the channel through which God’s Holy Spirit flows as it touches and blesses all creation. As Jesus described it, “*Thou Father in me and I in them*” and, “*the glory which Thou gavest*

me I have given to them...”

*Jesus is seeking to impress upon them the thought that in giving **His Holy Spirit** He is giving to them **the glory which the Father has given Him,** that He and His people may be one in God..... (Signs of the Times, Oct. 3, 1892)*

From this perspective it is easy to understand what Ellen White meant when she made the following statements!

*“All who consecrate soul, body, and spirit to God, will be constantly receiving a new endowment of physical and mental power. The inexhaustible supplies of heaven are at their command. **Christ gives them the breath of His own spirit, the life of His own life.** The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in heart and mind. The grace of God enlarges and multiplies their faculties, and every perfection of the divine nature comes to their assistance in the work of saving souls.” (Desire of Ages, p.827)*

*“Cumbered with humanity Christ could not be in every place personally, therefore it was altogether for their advantage that He should leave them to go to His Father and send the Holy Spirit to be His successor on earth. **The Holy Spirit is Himself, divested of the personality of humanity and independent thereof.** He would represent Himself as present in all places by His Holy Spirit.” (Manuscript Release #1084)*

THE TRUE SONSHIP OF CHRIST

Trinitarians and Tritheists do not believe that Jesus was truly the Son of God. They believe that God gave Him this title because He was born in Bethlehem, or because God was incapable of expressing the true relationship between Himself and Jesus. What did Ellen White believe and teach about Christ’s origin? Believers in a three-

in-one God, will always quote the following passage from her writings.

*“Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from **all** eternity, God over all, blessed forevermore.” (The Review and Herald, April 5, 1906)*

But we must ask the question, when Ellen White stated that Jesus was with God from all eternity, did she mean that He was the exact same age as the Father and without a beginning as the Father? Or did she mean the same thing as was meant in Proverbs 8 where it states, “I was set up (or brought forth) from everlasting.” Remember that Ellen White stated that in this passage, Jesus was speaking of Himself. The fact is, there are other places where Ellen White speaks so clearly of Jesus’ Sonship being literal, that in order to balance and harmonize both perspectives we have to conclude that when she said He was with God from “all eternity,” like the speaker in Proverbs 8, she meant, a period before time began. Once we understand this, the following statements are easy to understand.

*“God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son,” – not a son by creation, as were the angels, nor a son by adoption, as is the forgiven sinner, but **a Son begotten** in the express image of the Father's person, and in all the brightness of his majesty and glory, one equal with God in authority, dignity, and divine perfection. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. (Signs of The Times, May 30, 1895)*

*The Eternal Father, the unchangeable one, gave his only begotten Son, tore from his bosom **Him who was made** in the express image of his person, and sent him down to earth to reveal how greatly he loved mankind. (Review and Herald, July 9, 1895)*

Notice what these two statements say: He was **“begotten** in the express image of the Father’s person...” and again, He was **“made** in the express image of His Person.” Ellen White emphasizes that Jesus was not “adopted,” He was not “created.” How then was He God’s Son? He was begotten!! He was “made” (or originated).

Since Jesus was the true Son of God, born in the express image of His Father, we can understand why Ellen White would say,

*“The Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of the Father, is truly **God in infinity, but not in personality.**”* (The Upward Look, p.367)

Jesus is God in infinity (in His nature, power etc.). In other words He is a divine Being. But He is not God “in personality.” In other words, He is not the Person called God. Only one person bears this title because He is the Supreme Being in the universe, the highest Authority, the great Originator and Source of all.

HOW MANY BEINGS IN THE GODHEAD?

Some later statements attributed to Ellen White refer to the godhead as, “the three holiest Beings,” “the heavenly trio,” “the three highest powers.” Etc. These statements are in positive contradiction of those which we have examined so far. As has already been stated we have no way of arriving at any conclusive reason for this discrepancy. We can only point to the glaring evidence of tampering, or “editing” of Ellen White’s writings, if you prefer.

However, let us again look at some of the earlier statements of Ellen White, published by herself.

“The Sovereign of the universe was not alone in His work of beneficence. He had an associate – a co-worker who could appreciate His purposes, and could share His joy in giving happiness to created beings....Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one

*with the eternal Father – one in nature, in character, in purpose – **the only being** that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God.”* (Patriarchs and Prophets, p.34)

*“Before the assembled inhabitants of heaven the King declared that **none but Christ, the Only Begotten of God, could fully enter into His purposes, and to Him it was committed to execute the mighty counsels of His will.**”* (Patriarchs and Prophets, p.36)

*“Christ the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father,--one in nature, in character, and in purpose,--**the only being** in all the universe that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God.”* (Great Controversy, p.493)

Was Ellen White being careless here, or was she being specific? Is she to be believed, or must this statement be rejected as teaching falsehood? “Christ,” she says, was “the **only being** in the **universe**” that could enter into God’s counsels and purposes. Who is referred to as “God,” here? Clearly the Father, but the question is, what about the Holy Spirit? If the Holy Spirit is a third individual who is a member of a three part God, then why can He not enter into the counsels of God? Is it because he is not a “Being?” is it because he does not live in the universe? The point is, why does Ellen White so often just ignore the Holy Spirit entirely and even deny his role and authority if he really is the third member of a three-in-one God?

Here is another example of this total ignoring of the Holy Spirit, and even denying of the Holy Spirit, if the Holy Spirit is a third divine Being.

Let the brightest example the world has yet seen be your example, rather than the greatest and most learned men of the age, who know not God, nor

Jesus Christ whom he has sent.

The Father and the Son alone are to be exalted (Youth’s Instructor, July 7, 1898)

Notice how specific Ellen White is here. She does not say, “the Father and the Son are to be exalted,” but the Father and the Son **ALONE**. Exclusively, to the neglect of all others.

She could have said, “the Godhead alone is to be exalted,” or “The Trinity alone is to be exalted,” or “The Father, Son and Holy Spirit alone are to be exalted.” All of this would have taken no extra effort to say and would have been the reasonable and easy and truthful thing to say if God was three-in-one. But no, ignoring the Holy Spirit entirely, she said, specifically, “the Father and Son **Alone** are to be exalted.”

(This article will be concluded in the next edition of Open Face)

WHY GOD WAITS

Had God abandoned the race of Adam we would have all perished without hope millennia ago. Satan and our own evil natures would have destroyed us. Why didn’t God leave us alone? Why did He insist on interfering even after we had made our choice? Because He is our Father. Because He loves us and the thought of our hopelessness caused Him much pain. Though millions may be lost, yet, how can He shut the door while there is still hope for one? Because His love for each one is as full and complete as though such a one were the only being in the universe! So, while we say, ‘O Lord, please come now and put an end to sin.’ He says, ‘There are some more of my beloved children there who may be saved yet! Please be my hand and my voice. Reach them for me. Help them to receive my life, for I cannot bear the thought that they may be lost! I will not close the door; I will not make an end while there is hope for even one soul who is yet in darkness!’

Which gospel do you believe?

Peter Barnz

“Which gospel do you believe? Salvation from GOD or salvation from sin?”

Some time ago a dear brother of mine asked this question and provided a number of texts for consideration. It was his opinion that the teaching that God destroys sinners, creates the idea that we need to be delivered from God, rather than that we need to be delivered from sin.

The texts which he provided were supposed to support the idea that it is not God who destroys sinners, but rather, that it is sin which performs this destruction. The texts are as follows:

Rom.5:12, 21; Rom.6:6, 16-18, 23; Rom.7:8-12; Rom.8:2, 10; 1Cor.15:56, 57; Heb.3:13; Heb.12:4; James 1:15; John 1:16.

After careful examination of the above mentioned texts, I have to say that I do not believe that these texts support my brother's conclusions and I would like to briefly examine a few of them to see what they really say.

It is clear to me that the idea being put forward is that sin is what will ultimately kill us. In other words it is not God who will destroy sinners, but rather it is sin itself which will do the work of destruction. Is this true?

DOES GOD HAVE THE RIGHT TO JUDGE?

Let us recognize first of all that God is sovereign, He is the creator of all things, and this includes Lucifer. As sovereign He has the right to make and enforce laws. No one would dare question that.

The Bible tells us that sin is the transgression of God's law. (1John 3:4)

The angel Lucifer wanted to have his own way, and not to be governed by his Maker's law. As a result the first SIN was committed. Here is what the Bible says about that first rebel.

He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. (John 8:44)

Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.... Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: (Ezek 28:15, 17)

Sin, as stated before is the transgression of **God's** law. Did God have a right to pass judgment on Lucifer and all the Angels that followed him in sin? Yes! Most definitely, and it was out of love that God decreed that Satan must die.

WHO DESTROYS SINNERS?

Now let us examine the texts provided by our brother:

*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world and **death by sin**; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. (Rom 5:12)*

*That as **sin hath reigned unto death**, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom 5:21)*

It is true that sin is what causes death, and this is what these texts are saying. The real reason why men or angels have to die, is sin. However, it is equally true that God is the one who is responsible, as Sovereign for executing judgment and this is also clearly taught in Scripture. We must examine both sides of a question, we must accept both truths. Sin causes death, but God is the One who is responsible for carrying out the sentence.

Lucifer was the first one to sin, the first

one who rebelled against the law of GOD. As a result he was doomed and the Bible says, his death is to be by fire.

“Therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.” (Ezekiel 28:18)

The “T” is God. God will bring forth the fire. It will not be nature that will do it, it will not be sin that will do it, it will not be Satan himself that will do it. God said **I** will do it.

As a result of Adam choosing the way of Satan, the judgment that was passed on Satan, (death), was also passed on Adam and his posterity. If Adam had not sinned, Satan and his angels would have been destroyed alone, but according to Rom 5:18, “...by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation....” Adam, by taking sides with Satan, rebelled against truth, against life and against GOD, and as a result came under the condemnation of GOD.”

Hell's fire was not prepared for humans, but for Satan and his angels. If one allows Satan to live in one's heart, then it is certain that one will burn with Satan.

Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. (Matt. 25:41)

Men will die because of what Satan did. But praise God men will also live because of what God did, by allowing His Son to die in man's stead, to die the eternal death, so that those who allow Him to live in their hearts will never die.



MORE MISUNDERSTOOD TEXTS

*Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with [him], that the **body of sin might be destroyed**, that henceforth we should not serve sin. (Rom 6:6)*

This text is also quoted in support of the idea that sin is what will ultimately destroy sinners rather than God. But which death is this text referring to? When we are crucified with Him, what is it that dies? When the old man of sin is crucified with Christ, does the renewed man continue to live? Of course, but the difference is, that man is no longer considered to be of the flesh, (which is synonymous with sin) but to be of the Spirit. (Rom. 8:8-10)

This text is not dealing with the final death of sinners by fire, but rather with the death of the sinful nature upon accepting Christ as one's savior.

Again Romans 6:6-18 is given as a reference:

*(Rom 6:16-18) Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of **sin unto death**, or of obedience unto righteousness? (17) But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. (18) Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.*

Here again, we are told basically that if we sin, we will die. If we obey sin and become its servant we will die, but do the verses indicate that sin itself will put the sinner to death? Do they indicate that sin will do the actual work of destruction? Notice that the verse also suggests that obedience (in contrast to sin) leads to righteousness (as opposed to death).

Righteousness is the gift of God. It is not something which we earn or

achieve through obedience, but as we have faith in God and reveal that faith by being obedient, **God gives us** the gift of righteousness. Isn't this what the Bible teaches? It is not obedience directly which rewards us or pays us with righteousness. God must step in and give us the gift of righteousness. In a similar way death is the reward of sin, but sin cannot pay the reward of death any more than obedience can pay the reward of righteousness. In each case, God must step in and hand out the reward merited by the choice which has been made, whether of sin (whose reward is death) or obedience (whose reward is righteousness and life).

Now if we serve Christ we will live forever, conversely if we serve Satan we will die with him in the fires of destruction. (Mal. 4:1; Rev. 20:9)

Again we see another text used:

*For the **wages of sin** is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom 6:23)*

Wages are payment for labour or service. The text says that the payment for sin is death. There is the belief that both the first death, (sleep) and the second death are the same, that both are the payment for sin. Are they?

When do sinners receive the wages of sin? Is it at the first death? If this is so, then every one who has ever died has already received the wages of sin. This would include the apostles and most of the biblical prophets.

A very dear sister in the faith, died recently, and from all indications she had communion with the Father and His dear Son. In dying, did she receive the payment for sin? I don't think anyone who has knowledge of God would say yes. So why did she die? Or, is she dead? I submit to you that she is not dead but rather sleeping, awaiting the coming of Christ.

If all the countless number of people who loved and served God and are now

sleeping in their graves, received the wages of sin, then it means that there will be no resurrection for them.

Are both the first and the second deaths the same thing? Almost every person, whether good or bad suffers the first death. The first death is only temporary and is not the wages of sin. The payment for sin is eternal death and **no one can inflict this kind of death, except God**.

In actual fact, it is the second death which is the "wages of sin." This is the true and ultimate reward for sin. The question is, who is it that causes the second death? Is it sin, or even Satan, or is it God? Firstly, let us consider what Jesus said:

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. (Matt 10:28)

Who is that One who is able to destroy both soul and body? It is God and only God.

Secondly, let us consider also that the wicked will be resurrected at the end of the millennium to face the second death, which is the final reward of sin. The question is, who brings the wicked back to life? Is it Satan or is it God? Only God is able to give life, so there is no question about this. But the real question is, why does God bring the wicked back to life when they have already been killed by the sinful circumstances of the life they lived on this earth? The answer is that they are brought back to pay "the wages of sin." They must pay the penalty for wrongdoing. They must be brought to justice, sentenced and executed for their crimes and God brings them back to life for this purpose.

GOOD NEWS

The fact that men will be destroyed along with Satan and his angels is not good news. So what then is the good news?

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COUNT THE NUMBER

By Clive Rochester

The mark of the beast has always fascinated Christians. It is generally held by most Protestant Christians that this mark is 666. Can this theory however, be supported by the Bible? A close examination of the specific texts (Rev. 13:17-18) and a few others will give some useful insights into the mystery of the number.

An important part of the Adventist message is to teach the truth about the mark of the beast. “*And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.*” (Rev. 13: 17). It is here quite evident that the mark and the number of the beast are two separate things. The Church has in fact taught that the mark of the beast is the expected national “Sunday Law” which is someday to be enforced worldwide. I will not however, here elaborate on the ‘mark’ as it is well documented in a wide range of Adventist literature. But what is not too often discussed (among Adventists) is, what exactly is the number of the beast? what does 666 really mean and how does it affect the Church?

A popular view held by most Adventists is that 666 refers to the title held by every Pope: “VICARIUS FILII DEI,” which means ‘Vicar of the Son of God’ or ‘Vicar of Christ’. Adding the numerical values of the letters in this title we get a total of 666. This is a very strong argument, considering that the Papacy has been identified as the beast of Revelation and the little horn in the book of Daniel. However, is this what the Spirit of God speaking through John, was trying to reveal to us? “*Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast,*” (Rev. 13: 18). Are we to believe that this ‘wisdom’ and ‘understanding’ is to count a few letters that add up to 666? Is that all it really is? I don’t think so. I believe what is really needed is spiritual wisdom and understanding. We need

to take a closer look at what the Bible says and how it is borne out in history. Then, and only then can we learn HOW to count the number of the beast and realize the depth of the deception perpetrated against Christianity.

The Revelator cautions us that it will take wisdom and understanding to ‘*count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man.*’ (Rev.13: 18). Is this ‘man’ the Pope? If so, it would mean that the Pope is the beast of Revelation, and we know that this is not entirely true. The ‘beast’ is actually the entire system of the PAPACY, the same religious system that is referred to as the ‘man’ of sin or the ‘son of perdition’ in 2 Thessalonians 2: 3. It is therefore clear that the number of the beast is the number of the Papacy, and that number is 666.

Reference is again made to the number in Revelation 15:2 where it says: ‘*And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harp of God.*’ But how do you gain victory over the beast? The Bible tells you, by not receiving his mark, or his name, or his number. But what are they? What do they mean? How do you know what to look for?

The book of Revelation is a book of symbols. It is also a book with a strong central theme, worship. The Bible does not tell us what 666 is symbolic of, so to gain perspective, we have to look at the name and the mark and see how they are symbolized. One thing is quite clear, the name and the mark of the beast provide a striking contrast to God. Let us take a look and see what we can find.

THE NAME :In the Bible, name is often symbolic of character. The entire Bible tells of the character of God, it is expounded in the life and death of

Jesus Christ, the Apostle John eloquently speaks of it in 1 John 4. In verse 16 we read: *And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.* ‘This is in stark contrast to the character of the Papacy as revealed in the Dark Ages. During this time a spirit of hate, intolerance and persecution permeated the Roman Church, and will forever be representative of the true character of the beast.

THE MARK: As all Adventists know, the mark of the beast is the Papal Sabbath (by acceptance of which, most of Christendom acknowledge the authority of the Papacy), which will be enforced by the national Sunday Law, in an attempt to change the Law of God. (Daniel 7:25) This law contains his Holy Sabbath, by which we acknowledge him as Creator and redeemer. (Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5: 15)

THE NUMBER: 666. How is this number in opposition to God? With what do we contrast it? From looking at the number and the mark, it can be seen that we have established two of the three important elements in regard to worship. These are 1. How you worship. 2. Why you worship. The only remaining element is 3. Who you worship. So, the number of the beast is that aspect of the Papacy that will attempt to tell us who God is. The Bible, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, is the only source that will provide us with the knowledge of who God is.

“For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.” (1 Corinthians 8: 5-6.)

The Papal view is fully enunciated in

the Nicene Creed established at the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, further strengthened by the Athanasian Creed and the Council of Constantinople held in 381 AD. These councils provided the foundation on which the Papacy is built. In 538 AD the Bishop of Rome was declared the 'Head of all Churches' and the 'Corrector of heretics' by Emperor Justinian of Rome. This was done against the background of the annihilation of the Vandals, the Heruli and the Ostrogoths. This destruction which was foretold in Daniel 7:8,24, was done for one main reason, the three nations were Arian in belief, defying the Nicene Creed and therefore declared as heretics by the Bishop of Rome. So the Nicene Creed that set forth the Doctrine of the Trinity was the foundation on which the Bishop of Rome was made Pope. This event of course marked the beginning of the Dark Ages.

The Doctrine of the Trinity as put forward by the Roman Church is that God is made up of three persons (Hypostases), God the Father, God the son and God the Holy Spirit. This is in contrast to the Bible's assertion that there is one God, the Father (1 Cor. 8:6).

It is interesting to note that in presenting their cases, no one at the various Councils relied on the Bible as a source of information. This is not strange, as the Catholic faith does not consider the Bible a sufficient rule of faith. *'The Bible does not contain all things necessary to salvation, and, consequently, cannot be sufficient rule of faith.'* (E.R. Seaman, August 15, 1854, *Review and Herald*, vol. 6, no. 1, page 4) The formulation of the Trinity Doctrine was actually derived from ideas found in Platonism, Aristotelianism and other such pagan sources.

The evidence seems quite clear, that the Papacy developed a doctrine about the nature of God from sources other than the Bible.

"Ques. Do you observe other necessary truths as taught by the Church, not clearly laid down in Scripture?"

"Ans. *The doctrine of the Trinity, a doctrine the knowledge of which is necessary to salvation, is not explicitly and evidently laid down in Scripture, in the Protestant sense of private interpretations.*" (*Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, August 22, 1854- Quoted from *Doctrinal Catechism*)

It is a doctrine which to this day stands as the 'central doctrine of the Catholic faith. Upon it are based all the doctrines of the Church.' (Handbook for today's Catholic, p. 16) A doctrine diametrically opposed to that clearly stated by the Bible.

Satan's ultimate goal has always been to be worshipped as God (Isaiah 14: 12-14) With insidious manipulation, he has contrived to deceive the world and insinuate himself into the counsels of God (Zechariah 6: 13) Let us not be among those that are deceived, let us pray that the Spirit of God will lead us into all truth (John 16:13) and once there, do not reject it, for the Scriptures state that if we do, God will reject us. (Hosea 4:6)

It was earlier stated that Revelation is a book of symbols. The Papacy also has symbols. One such symbol is the triquetra, which is used to represent the Orthodox Trinity. What makes this symbol significant is that it is also used by Satanists, Freemasons and in the occult. This takes on dark meaning when it is realized that they use it to represent 666. The triquetra or triskele, is said to be a combination of three sixes overlapping to form one figure. It is used in the occult to ward off or attract demons. This symbol when used to represent the Trinity, shows how to count the number of the beast.

Each point in the diagram is the point of a 6 and represents one person in the Trinity. If any person in the Trinity were to die or in any way removed, then it would no longer be God. It is only in their combined 'oneness' that they are said to be God. So to count the number of the beast, do not only add up Roman numerals in a title, but apply a little wisdom, add one (6) to



The Triquetra

another (6) to another (6) and the sum total is not 18, but rather 666. When you do this, you will then understand that the number of the beast is actually, the Doctrine of the Trinity.

While there are variations to the Orthodox Trinity of the Papacy, such as that taught by Adventists and the Pentecostals, be not deceived. The underlying principle remains the same; they all reject the Scripture, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. Let us hold fast to the faith of Jesus and make sure that in the end, we are standing on the side of God.

Evangelistic Meetings

Recently Restoration Ministries concluded two weeks of evangelistic meetings in the Sunbury area of Clarendon. Most of the brethren from the Manchester fellowship joined in wholeheartedly in this effort and though it rained most nights and the area is very cold, there was a fair turnout for most nights of the meeting.

The speakers were brothers David Clayton and Neville Morris, and the focus of the messages was chiefly, the truth about God, and the impending Sunday law crisis. Presently, meetings are continuing one night of each week and the turn out has been good, with approximately 20 persons turning out to the meetings each week.

On Sunday, May 18, we begin a new series of meetings in Clarendon, at the meeting place of the Hayes group. Brother Howard William will be the main speaker for these meetings. Please pray for the blessings of our Father to rest on these meetings.



Campmeeting Report

It was an evening of anxiety and enthusiasm as the vehicles made their way on a wet evening over muddy terrain to the Mount Forest camp grounds for Restoration Ministries' annual four-day camp meeting scheduled for April 17- 21, 2003. Upon arrival everyone got busy setting up their tents and, and settling into the dormitories.

At approximately 7:30 p.m. our first meeting was conducted by Brother David Clayton who basically gave a

warm welcome and made a few remarks about conduct and behavior during the camp meeting.

The theme of the camp meeting was, ***"The truth shall set you free."*** Each message during this campmeeting was a challenge to experience this reality in one way or another.

We had six sessions each day beginning with devotion in the early morning, and two other sessions before lunch, then two after lunch and an

evening session. These sessions included a health lecture by Brother Marlon Cole, and nature walks for the children with Sister June Pringle. There were also special sessions for the youth. A special highlight of the campmeeting was the beautiful musical items. Even the congregation singing was at times heavenly. The songs presented by the youth group especially blessed us.

Speakers at the camp meeting included, Brother David Clayton, brother Neville Morris, brother Howard Williams,



Many young people were present



Brother Emil goes mango hunting



Brother Lynnford emphasizes a point



Mornings were hard on some



Attentive Faces

Which Gospel

Continued from page 8

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

That is good news, therefore our response to that love is to love Him in return, and stop sinning, stop serving Satan. The only way we can do this is by asking and allowing the Father and His dear Son to be in our lives every day.

Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. (1 John 3:6)

My prayer for all who read this is, may you truly have and maintain a fellowship with God and His dear Son Christ Jesus. (1 John 1:3)

Open Face

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Campmeeting Report

Continued from page 11

brother Emil Maghiar (visiting from California), and our guest speaker brother Lynnford Beachy from Smyrna Gospel Ministries. The morning devotionals were divided between Sister Zemrie McGlashan, Sister Lorraine Sutherland and brothers Leford Russell and Peter Barnz.

The highlight of camp meeting was the report on the Indian trip recently taken by brothers Howard Williams and Lynnford Beachy which gave us a glimpse of the great need that still exists in the world for a revelation of the love of God. We all felt a little more acutely our responsibility to cooperate with God in getting the message out to people everywhere.

Our camp meeting this year was blessed with the presence of some brethren from overseas. These were

brother and sister Emil and Elena Maghiar, Sister Darlene Everett from Ohio and brother Lynnford Beachy from West Virginia.

We had a fair sized attendance for most of the meetings, but as always we had a full house on the Sabbath.

We had a blessed time for the four days which seemed to come to an end too quickly. However, the counsels and admonitions remain with us and it is our hope and prayer that these may be translated into practical Christian living.

