

DALE RATZLAFF: THE LOVE OF OUR FATHER REVEALED

LifeAssuranceMinistries.org

Proclamation!

**FOR FORMER ADVENTISTS
INQUIRING ADVENTISTS
SABBATARIANS
CONCERNED CHRISTIANS**

APRIL-JUNE 2010
VOLUME 11, ISSUE 2

Who are you? Really?

**Elemental spirits and the
curse of the law disarmed**

This is how it feels (to be free)

Does blood defile the tabernacle?

New Adventist president elected

Who is your

Scapegoat?



COLLEEN TINKER

What led us to do an issue on the scapegoat?

It began in the early 90's. As I co-led a Sabbath School class at our church, I became frustrated by my inability to harmonize Adventist theology with the biblical text. Believing I had to have Scriptural support for what I taught, I began to pray a new prayer: "Please help me to read the Bible without Adventist preconceptions. Please teach me what it really says."

I began reading through the Bible, hoping the Books of the Law and the prophets would seem less confusing than previously.

One morning as I was dutifully forging through Leviticus 16 and the laws of atonement, I suddenly saw verses 8 through 10 as if for the first time:

"Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scapegoat...But the goat on which the lot for the scapegoat fell shall be presented

alive before the Lord, to make atonement upon it, to send it into the wilderness as the scapegoat."

Electrified, I re-read the verses. The two goats were chosen by lot—they both had to meet the standards of a sin offering. Moreover, the priest had to present the scapegoat to the Lord and make atonement upon it.

I suddenly saw that Satan could not be the scapegoat. The typology did not fit. He and Jesus were not of equal "value" and spotlessness.

Furthermore, only perfect sacrifices were offered to the Lord, as the scapegoat was—and even more profound was the fact that the priest made atonement upon the scapegoat. Never does the Bible show Satan as being presented to the Lord for atonement. Jesus alone made atonement for sin.

Jesus, not Satan, is the only One who fulfills the requirements and function of the scapegoat. He is the one who bears our sin as far away from us as the east is from the west (Ps. 103:12). Jesus was crucified outside the camp, carrying the sin He bore away from the community of God's people (Heb. 13:11-13).

My mind raced; it was Ellen White, not the Bible, who taught that Satan was the scapegoat. This interpretation was too sinister to be explained away. For her to assign Satan with half of the function of the atonement cast an ominous shadow upon her claim to be God's "Messenger" for the last days.

I interrupted Richard's morning shower reverie by bursting into the room saying, "Guess what? Satan cannot be the scapegoat; it has to be Jesus!"

Needing his own proof, Richard didn't buy into my conclusion until he was able to read Leviticus 16 himself. Seeing clearly what the Bible stated, however, Richard also yielded his life-long paradigm of Satan, almost a tragic hero, bearing the sins of the saved out of the heavenly sanctuary into the lake of fire where he would be punished for them.

Since that day, Jesus has continued to reveal Himself through His word as the all-powerful Lord of lords, the almighty God the Son who is "far above all rule and authority and power and dominion...not only in this age but also in the one to come" (Eph. 1:21). He and Satan are not in a continuing struggle; they are not on an equal playing field. Satan has already been disarmed and humiliated by Jesus (Col. 2:15).

Jesus alone bears our sin, and Satan has no role in the atonement.

In this issue Chris Badenhurst explains the development and implications of the Satan-as-scapegoat doctrine. Russell Kelly shows why blood never defiled the sanctuary but only cleansed, and Martin Carey unpacks the heresies about which Paul warned the Galatians and the Colossians. Richard Peifer asks if you know your true identity, and Dale Ratzlaff reveals the love of our Father as presented in Ephesians 1. We introduce a column by Carolyn Macomber, leader of the Former Adventist Fellowship in Berrien Springs, Michigan; Chris Lee encourages us to practice our spiritual gifts in Christ's body, and I challenge us to live with integrity. We also bring a brief report of the 2010 General Conference session just completed in Atlanta, Georgia.

We pray that you, too, will see the Lord Jesus with new "eyes" and trust His completed work of dying for your sin and of carrying it away where it can never define you again. †

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Why do you object to the teaching that Satan is the scapegoat?

Answer: First, its very origin is framed in gross error. James and Ellen White and Joseph Bates accepted Hiram Edson’s cornfield vision and a paper written by Crosier and published in the *Day Star Extra* which reinterpreted the Great Disappointment of 1844. Endorsed by a vision from Ellen White, this explanation stated the following unbiblical points:

- Christ entered the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary for the first time on October 22, 1844.
- No atonement was made at the cross.
- Atonement is made by the High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary.
- The blotting out of sins does not take place at the point of repentance and conversion.
- The atonement is not complete until Christ lays the sins upon Satan, who is represented by the scapegoat in the Levitical Day of Atonement.
- The atonement is not complete until after the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary which started October 22, 1844.

Further, Leviticus clearly implies that either goat could have served as the Lord’s Goat, because the priest assigned the goats by casting lots. Jesus and Satan are not interchangeable.

To my knowledge, no other Old Testament sanctuary symbol represents Satan; why then, should Israel’s most holy service include a “shadow of Satan”?

Two goats needed

While there is some evidence that there were certain “goat” ceremonies practiced by Israel’s neighbors in Old Testament times that may have been dedicated to some desert demon, this does not mean that the Day of Atonement scapegoat represents Satan. Moreover, Jesus used the serpent, a biblical symbol of Satan, to represent His becoming sin for our justification:

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up (Jn. 3:14).

Moreover, when Paul referred to the old covenant holy days, which include the Day of Atonement services, he collectively called them a “shadow”. In context, the shadow is of Christ and not Satan (Col. 2:16, 17). In fact, Hebrews includes the Law and all the sacrifices—including the scapegoat sacrifice—as “a shadow of the good things to come” (Heb. 10:1).

Importantly, the atonement of Christ carries such a vast load of truth that one sacrifice was inadequate to picture it. Therefore, the Old Testament used many sacrifices and symbols to point forward to Christ. The key truth of the Day of Atonement sacrifices and the two goats is that Christ not only died for our sins (first goat) but also carried them away, (scapegoat) never to be seen again (Ps. 103:12; Is. 44:22; Heb. 8:12; Ps. 51:9; Jer. 50:20; Rom. 8:33; Heb. 10:17-18).

Jesus is the only sin bearer

Finally, Christ is the only “sin bearer”. Nowhere in Scripture is Satan represented as bearing the sins of the righteous.

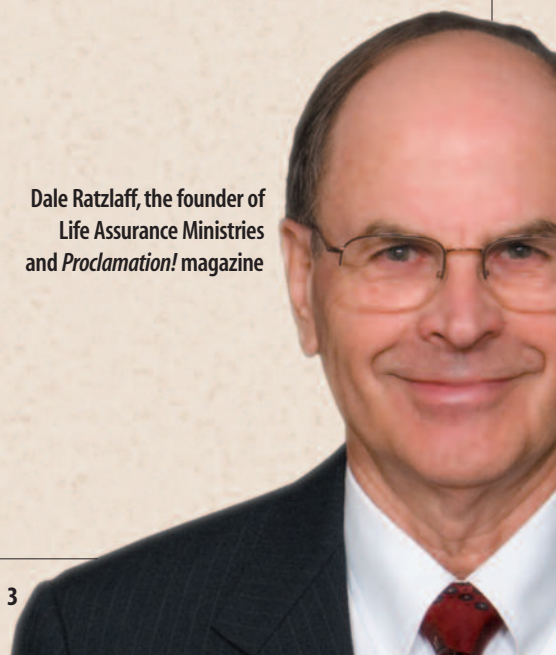
I believe the teaching that Satan is the final sin bearer of the sins of the righteous exposes the “spirit” behind the Adventist movement. If one carefully examines the six points in Crosier’s article that were the outgrowth of the “vision” of Hiram Edson and endorsed by a vision of Ellen White, it becomes evident that every one of them fly in the face of the gospel and the finished work of Christ! As Christ said so clearly, “A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit” (Mat 7:18).

If one studies the history of the Adventist church it will become evident that the SDA church has fought the simple gospel of salvation by faith in Christ alone time and time again. Some Adventist pastors appear to be teaching truth. Most of them, however, are afraid to separate themselves from the historic cultic teachings of Adventism, such as their scapegoat theology, the investigative judgment, the necessity to keep Sabbath, and writings of Ellen G. White as a “source of truth.” †



Dale and Carolyn Ratzlaff have authored five books concerning Adventism: *Sabbath in Christ*—a volume that explains new covenant Sabbath rest, *Cultic Doctrine of Seventh-day Adventism*—explores the unique doctrine of a pre-advent judgment that decides eternal destinies, *Truth About Adventist “Truth”*—a little book that’s perfect to give to Christians that need to understand Adventism, *Truth Led Me Out*—in which Dale Ratzlaff tells his own story of following Jesus, no matter the cost, and *My Cup Overflows*—Carolyn’s autobiography. Each of these books is available at www.LifeAssuranceMinistries.com or by phoning 800-355-7073.

Dale Ratzlaff, the founder of Life Assurance Ministries and *Proclamation!* magazine



DELLA GRABOW

This is how it feels to be free!

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Driving away from a visit with Adventist loved ones, I feel heavy. Searching for clarity, I remember there had been moments of love and connection that would suddenly give way to disapproval and insecurity. I was never sure what to expect. Now, off balance and desperately seeking my footing, I begin to pray and absently start the CD player. A song begins to play:

*“...this is how it feels to be free, this is what it means to know that I’m forgiven; this is how it feels to be free, to see that life can be more than I imagined; there are days when I’m reminded of the prison I was in, like a living nightmare burning from within, I can feel the voice of evil, I can hear the call of sin, but I won’t go back again you see, once I’ve tasted freedom then the walls confine no more, since mercy gave me wings to fly, like an eagle I can soar; this is how it feels to be free, this is what it means to know that I’m forgiven....”**

Within seconds the cloud lifts, and the freedom I have known for the past nine years returns.

What just happened? How did I go from despair to peace, reassurance and joy? The answer is simple but profound: Jesus and all that He is to me. But let me go back to the beginning.

How it began

I was born and raised in a multi-generational Seventh-day Adventist home. I spent most of my growing-up years in an Adventist community near the hospital, church, junior academy, retirement homes, and my father’s dental office. Here I began to learn and practice Adventism.

Ellen G. White (EGW) with her extensive writings was the system’s cornerstone. Her words taught us what we should eat, drink, and wear, and how to get to heaven. She was our commander-in-chief. I quickly learned to march in step.

I tried hard to be good; compliance was imperative to my going to heaven. Fear drove me. Before bedtime I apologized to everyone I might have wronged, terrified that my name might come up before God in the investigative judgment. Deep anxiety took root in me and gradually projected tentacles into every aspect of my life.

If salvation depended on perfect performance, I concluded, my value as a person did also. If I ironed, I wouldn’t miss a wrinkle. If I studied, I had to secure an “A”. If I skied, I pursued the most aggressive technique. Yet every time I approached success, I encountered some obstacle which left me off balance, confused, and insecure.

As a teenager I discovered the rules I had learned sometimes contradicted each other. For example, I had to look good, but I might be criticized for using cosmetics. At 13, I attended a Bible study given by Lena Katie Jones who, as a young girl, had heard Ellen White speak. In her 80’s, Lena was considered a saint within our local church. As she taught the investigative judgment, she stopped suddenly and went to each girl in the class. She lifted the hair off our foreheads and through thick glasses examined our eyelids for eye-shadow. We were utterly shamed.

Two different Della’s started to emerge. The public Della was a good, confident Adventist; the private Della was shattered inside. Alone with myself, I would drive my Ford Fiesta miles upon miles, running away from everyone and everything inside me. Sugar became my “drug”. Once I ate an entire package of chocolate fudge cookies and then swam one-and-a-half miles in the Pacific Union College pool to offset all those calories. I continued this behavior throughout college.

Seeking diversion and adventure, I went to Indonesia as a student missionary (SM) between my sophomore and junior years of college. I had no motivation to share religion; I had nothing in me to share. I had trouble adjusting to SM life, living in close proximity to three other people. The lack of privacy modulated my eating extremes, and stripped of my coping techniques, I had difficulty managing the culture shock. I lost any sense of equilibrium I’d had before. My problems escalated, and I retreated further and further inward.

Dead inside

By the time I began Physical Therapy (PT) school, I was so paralyzed by fear of not being at the top of my class that I missed the first week of cadaver dissection. I

“...this is how it feels to be free, this is what it means to know that I’m forgiven; this is how it feels to be free, to see that life can be more than I imagined; there are days when I’m reminded of the prison I was in...”

could no longer hide the private Della; my brokenness was in full view.

Nothing felt secure; I was completely lost and dead inside, and I didn’t know where to find answers. My Adventism left me unequipped, yet I believed the Seventh-day Adventist church was “the religion” of all religions. There was logically nowhere else to go within Christianity.

Soon after graduation I moved to the liberal community of Boulder, Colorado, and opened my mind to alternatives. Meeting a kind Muslim patient, I briefly considered learning Islam, but soon I settled upon learning the precepts of Buddhism. Environmentalism grabbed me; it was all about creating my perfect existence. I recycled obsessively and sought in nature a sense of freedom, and life.

About this time I became aware of God drawing me to Him—not to the EGW version of Him, but to something new. I was sharing an apartment with my best friend Julia from PT school. Her Aunt Rosalie would call her; frequently I’d answer the phone, and a friendship began to develop between us. Once Julia shared a letter from Rosalie in which she encouraged Julia to seek God unencumbered by her Adventist beginnings. That challenge suggested new possibilities. During this time another friend encouraged me to read Martin Luther’s discussion of grace. Wow! Nothing within Adventism had kindled this spark of hope, and I wondered if it were true. Nevertheless, Adventism continued to control me.

I accepted a position as a PT director in charge of management, development, and patient caseloads. Concurrently I began training for a winter triathlon and worked hard 19 hours every day. Within months I developed a mysterious flu-like illness that refused to resolve. I had to resign my directorship. I was only 28 years old and had a broken body.

Stripped of being able to secure my worth through strength and hard work, I no longer wanted to live my life.

For nine years I wandered—through five states, two continents, and multiple bad decisions—driven by fear and desperation. I fell in love with a man 20 years my senior. We were both in a post-Adventist haze but without personal knowledge of Jesus, and we bought what the culture was selling. Our relationship was turbulent, yet we agreed to marriage—a decision which only escalated the tensions.

It was within this context that my life started to change.

Discovering reality

My friend Rosalie had been a spiritual constant through my wandering. We talked often, but now something was different about her. Instead of directives, she pointed me to Jesus and prayed with me. I wanted to know the reasons behind this change.

I started reading books that examined EGW and Adventism. One book particularly struck me: D. M. Canright’s *Life of Mrs. E. G. White, Seventh-day Adventist Prophet, Her False Claims Refuted*. Canright was not only a former Adventist but was also a contemporary of EGW. His documented critique of her erroneous claims led me to the conviction that she was a false prophet. The cornerstone of the Adventist church is a woman whose writings disagree with the Bible. To see Adventism as a fraudulent religion shook my core and challenged any remnants of allegiance.

Even though my foundation was broken, I thought that if I lived in the right

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28



Della Grabow lives in Lake Arrowhead, California and loves her work as a Physical Therapist. She delights in God’s faithfulness to her in spite of continued health challenges. Della attends Former Adventist Fellowship Bible study and Trinity Church in Redlands when she is able.



Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats, one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat. Then Aaron shall offer the goat on which the lot for the LORD fell, and make it a sin offering. But the goat on which the lot for the scapegoat fell shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make atonement upon it, to send it into the wilderness as the scapegoat. *Leviticus 16:8-10*

Who is your Scapegoat?

CHRIS BANDENHORST

Introduction

In ancient Israel, the scapegoat—along with the sacrifice—is at the heart of the Day of Atonement ritual. In Adventism, the defining sanctuary doctrine is based on its interpretation of Israel's sanctuary ritual; therefore, the scapegoat is likewise at the heart of Adventist theology. The sanctuary doctrine is unique to Adventism and constitutes the foundation of its faith (*The Great Controversy*, p. 409). It is also the only original contribution Adventism has made to Christian theology. Therefore, if this doctrine is wrong, then Adventism is wrong because if the foundation is unsound, the house built on that foundation is unsound (Matt. 7:24-27).

Early Adventism

The first Adventist to write out this doctrine of the sanctuary comprehensively was the pioneer O. R. L. Crosier. It was based on a re-interpretation of Daniel 8:14 (Adventism's cardinal text) after the Great Disappointment of October 22, 1844, and appeared in the *Day Star Extra* of February 7, 1846. Mrs. White, Adventism's prophetess, endorsed it with these words: "The Lord shew (sic) me in vision, more than one year ago, that Brother Crosier had the true light, on the Sanctuary, etc; and that it was his will, that Brother C. should write out the view which he gave us in the *Day-Star, Extra*, February 7, 1846. I feel fully authorized by the Lord, to recommend that *Extra*, to every saint." (Topsam, April 21, 1847). After her endorsement, the Adventist pioneers unanimously adopted the sanctuary doctrine as a tenet of Adventist belief.

In agreement with evangelical Christianity, Crosier showed from Leviticus 16 that it was the sins of God's people that were brought out of the sanctuary and placed upon the scapegoat. Then, however, he deviated from evangelicalism by taking the position that the scapegoat represented Satan and not Christ.

Satan-as-scapegoat was an entirely new concept to evangelicals. Crosier, though, could cite Jewish thought to substantiate his position thus: the Hebrew word for scapegoat is *Azazel*. Jewish scholars have stated that this term refers to some evil power, and therefore they interpret *Azazel* to represent the devil. Based on this Jewish understanding (instead of the teaching of Scripture, especially the New Testament) Crosier interpreted the scapegoat to be Satan. Ever since, Adventists have used this Jewish interpretation to validate their belief that the scapegoat is Satan.

The unique Adventist belief that the Sabbath is the seal of God and the sign that Adventists are God's end-time remnant has always provoked much criticism from other Christian bodies. The Adventist doctrine of the scapegoat being Satan, however, has generated the strongest derision. Very early, critics began denouncing Adventists as making Satan their sin-bearer and Savior.

The pioneers responded to these criticisms from non-Adventists by asserting that the scapegoat had no part in the sanctuary service until after God's people were saved and sealed. This explanation, however, was not convincing to the evangelicals, so the criticism continued.

Uriah Smith responded by explaining the jurisprudence of both Christ and Satan suffering on account of the sins of the righteous, but he used arguments that were not sound. A. F. Ballenger, who later left the ranks of Adventism, seized upon the weakness of Smith's argument and deviated from the original position, arguing that the sins of the righteous are not placed on Satan at all; he only bears his part in causing them to sin.

Later Adventism

Because of the continued criticism by the evangelicals, later Adventist writers and teachers adopted a compromised Ballenger position. One of these was M. L. Andreasen, a prominent theologian and teacher. Although he was loyal to Adventist doctrines overall, he did come to accept Ballenger's re-interpretation that it is Satan's part in causing the righteous to sin that is placed on the scapegoat. In addition, he and his contemporaries also included the wicked in the scapegoat transaction saying that Satan bears the blame for the sins which he caused both the righteous and the wicked to commit. They, however, unanimously denied that the sins of the righteous are placed on Satan.

Thus, in original Adventism, the scapegoat (Satan) bore away the sins of the righteous while the wicked suffered for their own sins in the lake of fire. Some of the early Adventist authors who adopted this teaching developed by Crosier are Mrs. White, Smith, Johnson, Gilbert and Haskel.

The later Adventist teaching is that the scapegoat (Satan) does not bear in any way or degree the guilt and responsibility for the sins of the righteous. He only bears these for his part in the sins of all mankind, both the righteous and wicked. Some of the later Adventists who adopted this deviation from the historic teaching of EGW and the pioneers are Andreasen, Watson, Branson, Hardinge, Kern, Reed and the writers of *Questions on Doctrine* (QD).

Despite the difference between the early and later Adventist interpretations as to what is placed on the scapegoat, both groups held tenaciously to the idea that the scapegoat represents Satan and not Christ. Adventists are therefore virtually alone in this interpretation.

The Scapegoat Transaction: Leviticus 16

Concerning the scapegoat transaction, the Levitical record states:

"From the Israelite community he [Aaron] is to take two male goats for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering... Then he is to take the two goats and present them before the LORD at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. He is to cast lots for the two goats—one lot for the LORD and the other for the scapegoat. Aaron shall bring the goat whose lot falls to the LORD and sacrifice it for a sin offering. But the goat chosen by lot as the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD to be used for making atonement by sending it into the desert as a scapegoat... When Aaron has finished making atonement for the Most Holy Place, the Tent of Meeting and the altar, he shall bring forward the live goat. He is to lay both hands on the head of the live goat and confess



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over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites—all their sins—and put them on the goat's head. He shall send the goat away into the desert in the care of a man appointed for the task. The goat will carry on itself all their sins to a solitary place; and the man shall release it in the desert" (Lev. 16:5, 7-10, 20-22).

From this Scripture it is clear that:

1. The sins that are brought out of the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement are placed on the scapegoat.
2. The sins that are brought out of the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement are those of penitent Israel—the people of God.
3. Therefore, it is these sins—the sins of penitent Israel (the people of God) that are placed on the scapegoat.
4. The purpose of this transaction is "to make an atonement with him" (Lev. 16:10 KJV).

Mrs. Ellen G. White (EGW)

As regards the original Adventist concept concerning the scapegoat, EGW could hardly be more definite upon this matter. She states it as follows:

As in the final atonement the sins of the truly penitent are to be blotted from the records of heaven, no more to be remembered or come into mind, so in the type they were borne away into the wilderness, forever separated from the congregation.

Since Satan is the originator of sin, the direct instigator of all the sins that caused the death of the Son of God, justice demands that Satan shall suffer the final punishment. Christ's work for the redemption of men and the purification of the universe from sin, will be closed by the removal of sin from the heavenly sanctuary and the placing of these sins upon Satan, who will bear the final penalty (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 358).

When the ministration in the holy of holies had been completed, and the sins of Israel had been removed from the sanctuary by virtue of the blood of the sin-offering, then the scapegoat was presented alive before the Lord; and in presence of the congregation the high priest confessed over him 'all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat' (Lev. 16:21). In like manner, when the work of atonement in the heavenly sanctuary has been completed, then in the presence of God and heavenly angels, and the host of the redeemed, the sins of God's people will be placed upon Satan; he will be declared guilty of all the evil he has caused them to commit. And as the scapegoat was sent away into a land not inhabited, so Satan will be banished to a desolate earth, an uninhabited and dreary wilderness (*The Great Controversy* p. 658).

In the typical service the high priest, having made the atonement for Israel, came forth and blessed the congregation. So Christ, at the close of His work as mediator, will appear, "without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28), to bless His waiting people with eternal life. As the priest, in removing the sins from the sanctuary, confessed them upon the head of the scapegoat, so Christ will place all these sins upon Satan, the originator and instigator of sin. The scapegoat, bearing the sins of Israel, was sent away "unto a land not inhabited" (Lev. 16:22); so Satan, bearing the guilt of all the sins which he has caused God's people to commit, will be for a thousand years confined to the earth, which will then be desolate, without inhabitant, and he will at last suffer the full penalty of sin in the fires that shall destroy all the wicked (*ibid.*, pp. 485-486).

The wicked receive their recompense in the earth (Prov. 11:31). They "shall be as stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts" (Mal. 4:1). Some are destroyed as in a moment, while others suffer many days. All are punished "according to their deeds." The sins of the righteous having been transferred to Satan, he is made to suffer not only for his own rebellion, but for all the sins which he has caused God's people to commit (*ibid.*, p. 673).

If after reading the above statements some have any doubt left in their minds as to what EGW means, they should have none after reading the following statement:

Satan did not then exult as he had done. He had hoped to break up the plan of salvation; but it was laid too deep. And now by the death of Christ he knew that he himself must finally die, and his kingdom given to Jesus. He held a council with his angels. He had prevailed nothing against the Son of God, and now they must increase their efforts and with their powers and cunning turn to His followers. They must prevent all whom they could from receiving the salvation purchased for them by Jesus. By so doing Satan could still work against the government of God. Also it would be for his own interest to keep from Jesus as many as possible. For the sins of those who are redeemed by the blood of Christ will at last be rolled back upon the originator of sin, and he must bear their punishment, while those who do not accept salvation through Jesus will suffer the penalty of their own sins (*Early Writings* p. 178).

Adventism's Dilemma

Many later Adventist theologians have been embarrassed by these statements of EGW, especially the one in *Early Writings*. Some who were personally acquainted with Andraesen stated that he admitted he was at a total loss to explain the statement of EGW in *Early Writings*. So, in order to alleviate their embarrassment, he and others after him pursued Ballenger's deviation from the historic concept that Satan will bear the actual sins of the righteous.

The writers of *Questions on Doctrine* (QD) joined the ranks of those who deviated from the original teaching by setting forth the view that Satan does not bear the sins of the righteous "in any sense or degree" (QD p. 400). It says that Satan bears the responsibility "for his part in all the sins he has caused others, both righteous and wicked to commit" (QD p. 397), and attempts to show that bearing this responsibility is the meaning and significance of the scapegoat transaction.

This interpretation, however, is a blatant contradiction of what EGW and the pioneers taught. It is interesting to note that QD, which quoted liberally from EGW in most sections, did not cite one reference when it came to the scapegoat!

Moreover, the Levitical record, EGW, and the pioneers all taught that it was the sins of penitent Israel that were brought out of the sanctuary and placed upon the scapegoat. The high priest did not remove any sin of Satan's from the sanctuary. So how could Adventists say that Christ removes Satan's sin from the heavenly sanctuary and places it on his own head at the end of the Investigative Judgment? This is just so much nonsense. The scapegoat transaction has nothing to do with putting Satan's part in causing others to sin upon his head! These sins are already upon his head. Furthermore, it is also entirely erroneous to involve "both righteous and wicked" (QD p. 397, 399, 400) in the scapegoat transaction. The wicked are not included in this transaction at all; they "will suffer the penalty of their own sins" (*Early Writings*, p. 178).

Embarrassment and Compromise

When I left Adventism in 1980, this scapegoat transaction was still the most embarrassing doctrine in modern Adventist teaching. Most were at a loss to explain to evangelical Christians why, according to EGW, Satan has to suffer for the sins of the righteous when the Bible is clear that Jesus has already suffered for them on the cross (Heb. 2:9). Also, the Bible says that not only are "the wickedness and rebellion of Israelites" (Leviticus 16:21) put on the head of the scapegoat, but also that these sins are put on him "for making atonement with it" (verse 10). Why would EGW say Satan makes an atonement for the sins of the righteous in the end when Jesus has already made an atonement for them on the cross (1 Jn. 2:2)?

Modern Adventist teachers and scholars, being at a loss to explain EGW's teaching—even being terrified of this problem, have tried to escape it by flatly denying Satan ultimately bears the sins of the righteous. This denial, however, leads to a greater problem, for those who deny the teaching that the sins of the righteous are placed on Satan must deny EGW. Once EGW is denied as unreliable in one important area of Adventism's cardinal sanctuary teaching, can she be relied upon in other areas of its teaching? Who draws the line and where?

The Implications

The implications of Adventism's Satan-as-scapegoat theology are grave: Christ did not make the atonement for man's sins when He shed His blood upon the cross. He was only the Sacrifice. Referring to the Day of Atonement service in ancient Israel, EGW states: "...the sin offering pointed to Christ as a sacrifice... (*Great Controversy* p. 422, 489). Referring to Christ's death on the cross, she states: "Christ's sacrifice in behalf of man was full and complete. The condition of the atonement had been fulfilled" (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 29).

In other words, EGW taught that the sacrifice of Christ on the cross was full and complete, but it was not the atone-

This confusion... is the result of her spiritual inability to discern the fundamental difference between Adventism's original sanctuary doctrine and the doctrine of the atonement taught in the evangelical books she was secretly copying under so-called "inspiration" or "inspired plagiarism".



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ment; it was merely the condition of the atonement—an atonement that He would subsequently make in heaven after His ascension. Therefore, in Adventist theology sacrifice and atonement are not synonymous as they are in Christian theology because Adventism bases its theology on the shadow of ancient Israel's Day of Atonement where the sacrifice was slain outside the sanctuary and the atonement was made inside the sanctuary.

EGW therefore teaches that on the cross Christ was the Sacrifice providing the blood for two atonements that He would subsequently make in the heavenly sanctuary. The first, which is 'preliminary', transfers the guilt from penitent sinners to Himself in the sanctuary. The second, which is 'final', blots out the records of believers' sins and transfers their guilt from Jesus (and thus from the sanctuary) onto Satan who then pays "the full penalty of sin" (*Great Controversy* p. 485). In other words, traditional Adventism teaches that Christ does not pay the penalty for sin. Rather, the cross qualified Him to bear confessed sins in the heavenly sanctuary temporarily until they are ultimately transferred onto Satan who will finally pay their penalty in full.

Yes, EGW does also say that Christ made a full atonement on the cross in some of her books like *Desire of Ages*, which she largely copied from the evangelical author Edersheim. This confusion, which is typical of her legacy to Adventists, is the result of her spiritual inability to discern the fundamental difference between Adventism's original sanctuary doctrine and the doctrine of the atonement taught in the evangelical books she was secretly copying under so-called "inspiration" or "inspired plagiarism".

Evangelical Christianity

Evangelical Christianity also states that the scapegoat pays the penalty for the believer's sins—but Christianity rightly identifies the scapegoat as Christ, not Satan. It is Jesus, not Satan, who took our sins upon Himself on the cross, who was declared guilty in our place, who paid the penalty in full, and who bore our sins away "into the desert...to a solitary place" (Lev. 16:21, 22)—a land of no return, forever separated from the believer. "As far as the east is from the west, so far has he (God) removed our transgressions from us" (Ps. 103:12).

To be sure, Azazel, which means "goat of removal," represented something evil in the same way the brass serpent that Moses put on a pole in the wilderness represented the deadly evil of the snakes that were killing the Israelites. Yet Jesus identified Himself with that serpent (Jn. 3:14, 15) as the One who would give eternal life to all who would look to Him in

faith just like the dying Israelites were saved from death by looking up at the serpent on the pole (Num. 21:4-9).

How could two evil things like Azazel and the serpent represent the pure and sinless Son of God? Because, according to the Scriptures, “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree” (1 Pet. 2:22-24)! And because Christ “bore the sins of many” (Is. 53:12), He became “a curse for us” (Gal. 3:13); He “who had no sin was made to be sin for us” (2 Cor. 5:21). Jesus is not only the antitypical serpent on the pole who gives life to the spiritually dead, but He is also the antitypical Azazel “who takes away the sin of the world” (Jn. 1:29).

The Ultimate Question and Answer

The ultimate question we must answer is this, “Who, according to the Bible, does the scapegoat represent?” The answer must come straight from Scripture; otherwise we will be guilty of going beyond what is written in Scripture. (See 1 Cor. 4:6).

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him (Christ) the iniquity of us all (Is. 53:6).

After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by knowledge of him my righteous servant will justify many, and he (Christ) will bear their iniquities...he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he (Christ) bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors (Is. 53:11, 12).

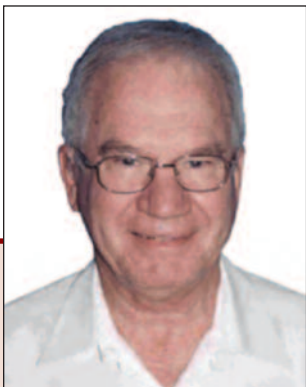
“He (Christ) committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth. When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness” (1 Pet. 2:22-24).

In Revelation 20:7-10 Satan’s doom is described, but it says nothing about the sins of the righteous being put on his head.

When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God’s people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown.

They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Nowhere does the Bible say that the sins of the righteous are ultimately transferred to Satan for the payment of their penalty. The only source of this idea is the extra-biblical writings of EGW.



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Furthermore, Leviticus 16:5 states: “From the Israelite community he (Aaron) is to take two male goats for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.” Was Satan created by God to be a sin offering for us? Hebrews 10:12 states: “But when this priest (Jesus) had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins he sat down at the right hand of God.” Jesus, not Satan, was to be the sin offering.

Leviticus 16:10 states: “But the goat chosen by lot as the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD to be used for making atonement by sending it into the desert as a scapegoat.” Was Satan created by God to make atonement for our sins? 1 John 2:2 states that “He (Jesus) is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.”

A Third Party

Jesus’ payment for our sins on the cross means that God Himself had to redeem the full penalty (debt) that He levied against man for his sins. God could not ask a third party in His kingdom to pay man’s penalty no matter how willing that party may have been to do so. In other words, even if the angel Gabriel offered to pay man’s penalty, God would not have allowed him to because such a substitution would have been immoral and unjust.

From the standpoint of divine justice, either guilty man himself pays his own debt with his own life, or God Himself, against whom man has sinned and with whom man is in debt with his life, pays on man’s behalf.

Praise God! Because of His infinite love for man, God Himself paid our debt in the person of Christ. Satan, a third party, could never be the scapegoat on whom our sins are laid for payment. No, God the Son—the Lord Jesus Christ—took upon Himself mortal humanity in His incarnation so He could give it up in death on behalf of guilty man. Thus was He called “Immanuel,” which means “God with us” (Matt. 1:23)—with us in human form. This forever disqualifies Satan—a third party—from being the scapegoat.

Finally, a concordance word check shows that nowhere in the entire Bible is a goat ever used to represent Satan as the scapegoat. The goat is always used as a sin offering or for making atonement. Satan, bearing the guilt of the redeemed according to Adventism and its prophetess, is not in any way a sin offering or a form of atonement. According to the Bible, only one Person was qualified for this role—the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior who shed His precious blood upon the cross for our sins.

It is clear that EGW and the Bible are in conflict concerning this doctrine of the scapegoat as they are in so many other areas. We cannot have both. You, the reader, must decide which of the two interpretations will be the basis of your faith. †

Does blood defile the tabernacle?

RUSSELL KELLY

In this document Russell Kelly presents classic Adventist teaching on the defilement and cleansing of the sanctuary quoted from Ellen White's writings, and he contrasts her teaching with the biblical truth about the same doctrine.

1. The Adventist doctrine of the sanctuary

"The blood representing the forfeited life of the sinner, whose guilt the victim bore, was carried by the priest into the holy place and sprinkled before the veil" (*Great Controversy* p. 418).

This statement is false. First, the blood of a sacrificial animal, like the blood of Jesus Christ, did not "represent the forfeited life of the sinner." Rather, it represented the substituted sinless life of Jesus which effected the atonement. Sinless blood paid the price for sin. The sin stopped at the doorway and did not enter the tabernacle. Second, the sinless blood of a perfect sacrifice was brought into the sanctuary as a recorded receipt of the finished atonement—the sin had been redeemed by a sinless sacrifice! It did not transfer the sin itself (Jer. 17:1).

"By this ceremony the sin was, through the blood, transferred in figure to the sanctuary" (*Great Controversy* p. 418).

This is also false. First, the sinner did transfer the guilt of sins to the living sacrifice (Is. 53:6, 12; 2 Cor. 5:21). Second, that transfer of sins to the sacrifice ended in the sacrifice's death. However, the "transfer of sin" stopped when the sacrifice died. That which went into the sanctuary through the blood was the sinless redemptive power of the perfect sacrifice—not the sins!

EGW concluded by quoting only the last half of Leviticus 10:17:

"God hath given it to you to bear the iniquity of the congregation.' Both ceremonies alike [eating and/or sprinkling

the sin offering] symbolized the transfer of the sin from the penitent to the sanctuary" (*Great Controversy* p. 418).

This is false because of what is omitted.

The entire quote of 10:17 is, "Wherefore have ye not eaten the sin offering in the holy place, seeing it is most holy, and God has given it to you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD?" In the context of the entire verse, the sin offering was "most holy." EGW took words out of context and described bearing the sin offering as bearing sin into the sanctuary to defile it.

"As anciently the sins of the people were placed by faith upon the sin offering and through its blood transferred, in figure, to the earthly sanctuary, so in the new covenant the sins of the repentant are by faith placed upon Christ and transferred, in fact, to the heavenly sanctuary" (*Great Controversy* p. 421).

This sentence teaches that Jesus Christ Himself—not the little horn nor the saints—is the One who defiles the Adventist version of the heavenly sanctuary by carrying sin into the Most Holy Place! However, nothing could be further from the truth. With this doctrine Adventists confer on Jesus' blood the dual function of both washing away sins and of carrying sins into the sanctuary and defiling it. Adventism is wrong in teaching that the daily, weekly, monthly, and seasonal sacrificial blood defiled the temple while the yearly Day of Atonement sacrificial blood cleansed it.

Jesus arose from death because he had appeared once at the end of God's age (not in 1844) and had put away sin once for all time (Heb. 9:26). Just as in the Old Testament sin stopped at the doorway to the tabernacle where the sacrificial animal died, even so in the new covenant the payment for sin ended at Calvary. It is inconceivable to think that Jesus appeared before the Father after His resurrection and handed Him "all the sins of the world" to store in the Most Holy Place until He would only very slowly begin to remove them in 1844.

2. Sanctuary defilement

Adventism teaches that the priests (and Jesus) carry the atoned sins of the penitent into the sanctuary, and sacrificial blood defiles it, thus requiring a "cleansing" of the sanctuaries both on earth and also in heaven (*Great Controversy*, p. 418, 421).

In the New Testament it is clear that sacrificial blood always refers to the sinless, perfect, most holy blood of Jesus Christ who was the "Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29). There is not the slightest hint that Jesus' blood defiled anything at any time. (See Rom. 3:24-25; 5:9.)

In the Old Testament, the blood of the sin offering and the trespass offering are always called "most holy." In Exodus 12:13 the blood allowed the death angel to pass over all sin. In Exodus 24:4-8 sacrificial blood made holy both the covenant and the people. In Exodus 29:20-21 and Leviticus 8:14-15 and 30: 9-9, sacrificial blood made the priests and their garments holy and prepared the altar for use. Sacrificial blood is never described as carrying the unclean defilement (leaven) of sin beyond the doorway where the animal died.

3. Only un-atoned sins defile the sanctuary

Leviticus 15:31: "Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile my tabernacle that is among them."

Numbers 19:20: "But the man that shall be unclean, and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from among the congregation, because he hath defiled the sanctuary of the LORD: the water of separation hath not been sprinkled upon him; he is unclean."

While Adventists teach that the sanctuaries on earth and heaven are defiled by sins which have already been confessed, atoned by a sacrifice, and pronounced forgiven, in reality un-atoned sins are the only sins committed by Old Testament believers which "defiled" the sanctuary on earth. And the heavenly sanctuary cannot be defiled in any manner. (See Lev. 15:31; 18:28; 20:3; Num. 5:2-3; 19:13, 20; 35:34; Ez. 2:62.)

Contrary to what Adventists teach, there is no Bible text which says that atoned sins defile the sanctuary. The land, the camp, and the tabernacle were all defiled either by deliberate sin or other sins which had not been atoned by sacrifice! The atoned sins were washed away by the sinless blood

of the sacrificial animal, a type of Christ. This death occurred at the "doorway" of the inner court which was reserved for the sanctified Levites and priests (Lev. 1:3; 3:2; 4:4; etc).

4. Sins of ignorance

The only kinds of sins which were brought to the sanctuary for atonement were: sins of ignorance committed either inadvertently or accidentally (Lev. 4-5; Num. 15); sins of omission where one failed to do what was right (Lev. 6); theft requiring restitution (Lev. 6); sins of obligation where one was forced into defilement such as touching a dead relative (Lev. 11); leprosy (Lev. 13-15); other minor trespasses against God's standards of holiness (Lev. 19), and jealousy over suspected marital infidelity (Num. 5). This discussion of what kinds of sins were actually brought to the sanctuary is not found in the Adventist sanctuary doctrine.

5. Willful sin

Premeditated (willful, deliberate, high-handed) sins were NOT brought to the sanctuary for atonement under the statutes and ordinances of the Law because pre-meditated sins could not be atoned by daily personal sacrifices. This fact is not found in the Adventist sanctuary doctrine, either.

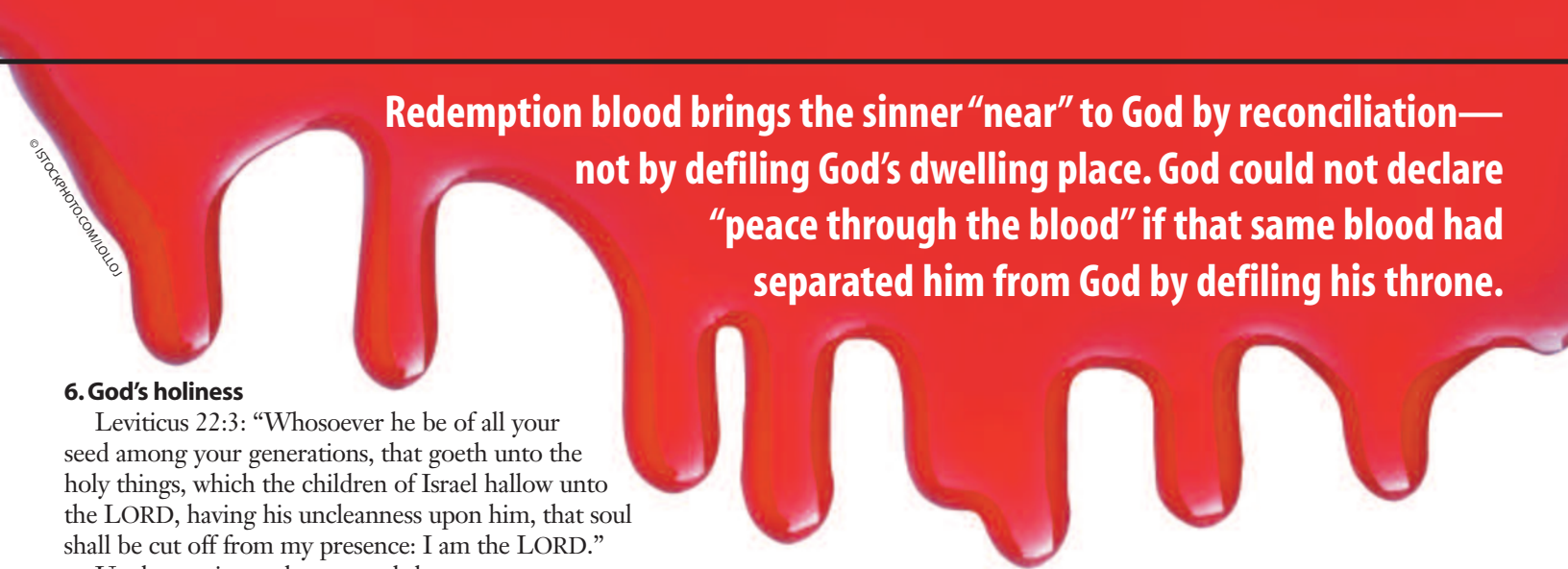
When a person committed most pre-meditated sins, there was no prescribed sacrifice to bring. That person must suffer the disciplinary consequences of his/her sin. He/she was totally at the mercy of God, the judges, the accusers and those against whom he/she had sinned (Num. 15:30-31).

When a serious presumptuous sin had been committed, death (cutting off) or equal dismemberment (literal cutting off) was often the penalty of the judges—not the priests. Death—not a sacrifice—was often the punishment. (Ex. 21:24; 22:18, 20; 30:21; 31:14; Lev. 7:21, 25-27; 10 all; 18 all; 20 all; Lev. 24:16, 20; Deut. 19:21).

The judicial punishment of presumptuous sins explains why God did not command a sacrifice when Aaron allowed the golden calves to be made (Ex. 32), when Moses struck the rock (Num. 20), when Achan was caught stealing (Josh. 7), and when David was declared guilty of murder (2 Sam. 12). The guilty persons "bore their own iniquity." (See Num. 5:31; 30:15; Ez. 18:20.)

Unlike the old covenant, however, the new covenant takes care of presumptuous and willful sins as explained in Acts 13:39.

These facts destroy the entire Adventist doctrine of sin transfer because (at least in the Old Testament) deliberate sins were never confessed over sacrificial animals and, therefore, were never brought by the priests into the sanctuary (as Adventism claims) to "defile" it. Therefore, when Adventists include confessed and forgiven presumptuous sins among those which (they say) defile the most holy place during the daily ministration of the sanctuary service, they blatantly misrepresent the nature of the sins involved in the sanctuary service. This easily places the entire Adventist doctrine of the sanctuary into even more confusion.



**Redemption blood brings the sinner “near” to God by reconciliation—
not by defiling God’s dwelling place. God could not declare
“peace through the blood” if that same blood had
separated him from God by defiling his throne.**

6. God’s holiness

Leviticus 22:3: “Whosoever he be of all your seed among your generations, that goeth unto the holy things, which the children of Israel hallow unto the LORD, having his uncleanness upon him, that soul shall be cut off from my presence: I am the LORD.”

Unclean priests who entered the sanctuary were put to death. The Adventist description of priests carrying sin-mingled sacrificial blood into the sanctuary, thus defiling it everyday, is also contrary to everything the Bible teaches about the holiness of God, His sanctuary, and His priests. (See also Ex. 12:19; 23:18; 29:44-45; 34:25; Lev. 2:11; 6:17; 10:12; 23:17).

All of the offerings, especially the sin offering, were called “most holy”, and the divine mandate for priests to be holy required them to maintain holiness in everything they did (Lev. 6:17, 25; 7:1; Num. 18:7-10).

God was very serious in keeping sin and defilement out of His sanctuary. In Leviticus 21:10-12 the officiating high priest was not allowed to be defiled even if his own father died. In Leviticus 21:21-23 a priest with any body blemish was forbidden to enter the sanctuary. In Leviticus 22:2-3 any separation from holy things would result in profaning God’s name. Sin and sinners stopped at the doorway where the sacrifice was slain, “atonement” was made, and the sinner was declared to be “accepted” (Ex. 29:42-43; Lev. 1:4), “cleansed” (Lev. 12:8; Num. 8:21) and “forgiven” (Lev. 4:20, 35; 5:10, 13; 6:7). There is no indication that those same atoned sins would ever be reintroduced to condemn the penitent. (See Ex. 33:18-23; Is. 6:3-5; 2 Chron. 26:19; Ez. 1:1-23 and Rev. 1:12-18.) Yet Adventists convert God’s most holy throne into the storage room for all confessed and atoned sins since Adam.

7. Clean-to-unclean law

Leviticus 5:2: “If a soul touch any unclean thing ... and if it be hidden from him; he also shall be unclean and guilty.”

Normal

- clean plus defiled = defiled
 - touch dead animal = defiled
-

Under the normal day-to-day circumstances of Old Testament life, the “unclean” defiled anything “clean” which it touched.

8. Unclean-to-clean sacrificial law

Numbers 18:9: “This shall be thine of the most holy things, reserved from the fire: every oblation of theirs, every

meat offering of theirs, and every sin offering of theirs, and every trespass offering of theirs, which they shall render unto me, shall be most holy for thee and for thy sons.”

It is extremely important to realize that the “clean to unclean” law was reversed when sacrificial offerings were involved. And this reversal destroys the Adventist logic about the priests carrying and transferring sin into the sanctuary! (Ex. 30:26-29; Lev. 6:17-18, 25, 27.)

Sacrificial

- defiled plus sacrifice = most holy
 - touch dead sacrificial animal = holy
-

The “sin” and “trespass” offerings became “most holy” because, being innocent and holy, they could bear the guilt of sin by destroying it through their death.

9. Blood carried in is proof of payment

When the sacrifice died as a sin offering at the entrance of the sanctuary, the payment for the confessed sin was complete, and the sin itself was exterminated. The ministering “most holy” priest collected the “most holy” blood of the “now-most holy” sin and trespass offering and either placed it on the “most holy” altar or ate portions of the “most holy” sacrifice (Ex. 29: 37; 30:26-29; Lev. 6:17-18, 25-27; 12:8; Num. 18:9).

The blood was brought inside the sanctuary not to defile it, but as a proof (receipt of payment rendered) that the redemption price had already been fully paid. The priest announced to the penitent that “an atonement for him before the LORD” had been made and that he was “forgiven” of his “trespass” (Lev. 4:20; 5:6; 6:7).

The blood was not brought into the sanctuary, as Ellen White wrote, “to make satisfaction for its claims” (*Great Controversy* p. 420), because the satisfaction had already been made and announced when the sacrificial animal’s blood was shed!

Sacrificial blood is the redemption price for sin (Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:12). Redemption blood brings the sinner “near” to God by reconciliation—not by defiling God’s dwelling place (Eph. 2:13). God could not declare “peace through the blood” if that same blood had separated him from God by defiling his throne (Col. 1:20).

10. Bearing sin

Exodus 28:43: And they [holy garments] shall be upon Aaron, and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy place; that they bear not iniquity, and die: it shall be a statute forever unto him and his seed after him.

Under normal circumstances a person, land, or even a building which was unclean or defiled was to “bear” the consequences of un-atoned sin by punishment from the judges, either by death or by destruction. This kind of “bearing iniquity” was sin and would lead to their death. (Lev. 22:14-16; Num. 18:22). Therefore, since any defiled person who entered the sanctuary was to be put to death, it is extremely illogical to teach (as Adventists do) that the most holy priests routinely transferred sin into it through most holy sacrificial blood.

Numbers 18:1: “...you shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary and you and your sons with you shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood.”

In its sacrificial and intercessory sense, “bear the iniquity” clearly means “bear the responsibility of officiating during the ritual” where sin is atoned through sacrifices. The holy priest was only allowed to touch, handle, and work with holy things and most holy things.

For the priest, “bearing sin” as part of his service meant “bearing sin away.” Since no thing (nor person), unclean or defiled, was allowed to enter the sanctuary, the sanctuary was not defiled through the normal daily ministry itself. The substitute death of the innocent sacrificial animal allowed the priest to grant forgiveness (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:15).

11. Extent of the Day of Atonement cleansing

First, many have neglected the everyday cleansing of the sanctuary. Forms of “cleanse”, or the Hebrew word *taber*, are extremely common, occurring in descriptions of the everyday sanctuary routines over 60 times in Leviticus alone.

Second, the Adventist doctrine fails to explain why the Bible says that the entire sanctuary was cleansed on the Day of Atonement and not merely the Most Holy Place. In Leviticus 16:15-20, the Most Holy Place was cleansed first, and the remainder of the sanctuary followed. Yet in the Adventist sequence Jesus (at least) ministered in the Holy Place until 1844. This would have required that the Holy Place be cleansed first long before 1844. It also incorrectly teaches that part of the sanctuary can be un-defiled and usable while another part was defiled and unusable.

12. Residual sins in God’s camp

Leviticus 16:16 reveals the purpose of the cleansing, “And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the

uncleanness of the children of Israel and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness” (KJV, NKJV). The NAS and RSV read “which abides with them.”

God does not require that the same sins be cleansed twice. The Day of Atonement was preceded by the “affliction of soul” (Lev. 23:27-34). The days leading up to it were final opportunities to recall non-presumptuous sins which had prevented full fellowship with God (1 Jn. 1:9). They were residual sins which had not been previously cleansed by sacrificial blood. The types of sins from Leviticus 1 to 15 are still valid.

The necessary cleansing was caused by the very presence of sinful humans where a holy God remained, abided, or dwelled “among them”—in their “midst.”

Unlike the heavenly sanctuary, the one on earth was surrounded by millions of sinners who regularly committed both presumptuous and ignorant sins. These sins defiled the sanctuary. In Numbers 5:3 those who had been defiled by unavoidable and un-atonable uncleanness were forced to leave the camp “that they defile not their camps, in the midst whereof I dwell.” In Leviticus 15:31 God said, “Separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile my tabernacle that is among them.” And Deuteronomy 23:44 adds “For the LORD thy God walks in the midst of thy camp.”

This end-of-the-religious-year final cleansing is not a new idea. Barnes *Notes*; the Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown *Commentary*; Keil and Delitzsch *Commentary*; Matthew Henry *Commentary*, and the New Unger’s *Bible Dictionary* all agree that the cleansing was of residual sins rather than a second cleansing of sins which had already been atoned by the daily sacrifices.

Finally, the yearly cleansing of the righteous on the Day of Atonement has no equivalent future fulfillment because a) the heavenly sanctuary is not located “in the midst” of several million sinners; b) Jesus’ death once and for all time fulfilled the Old Testament sanctuary shadows (Heb. 9:25-28; 10:1-3); c) The Old Testament sanctuary was only a figure for “the time then present” (9:9); d) the new covenant is “not according to the old covenant” (8:9), and e) a key difference in the new covenant is that God would no longer remember sins and iniquities as in the Day of Atonement (8:12). There would not even be a record of atoned sins in heavenly books! Yet Ellen G. White says that Hebrews 8:12 does not begin to have “complete fulfillment” until 1844 (*Great Controversy* 485). Moreover, we can be forgiven of willful sins in the new covenant—a provision not available in the old covenant (Acts 13:39). †

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I was nervous about the upcoming weekend. It would be the first time I had encountered a Bible study on Revelation since leaving my Adventist roots.

As we drove to the conference, the conversation in the car turned spiritual. I hesitatingly became vulnerable and shared my fears. My new friends gently asked questions about my former understanding of Revelation. We all pulled out our Bibles except, of course, the woman behind the wheel!!

I had my friends turn to Revelation 14 and expounded on the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of the three angels' messages. I shared how Adventists believe they are the remnant church of prophecy. The other women listened carefully as I spoke of the Adventist focus on Saturday as the "right" day of worship. I informed them how the phrases, "worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea, and springs of water" from Rev. 14:7, and the phrase from verse 12, "those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus," are used by Adventists to argue that Saturday is the day for worship. My friends reacted saying, "That's a stretch!"

John, the author of Revelation, defines "commandments" in 1 John 3:23-24 as, "And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as he has commanded us. Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us." John also identifies salvation in 1 John 5:11-13 as belonging to Christ and Him alone.

As we talked in the car two words, "Worship Him" (Rev. 14:7), jumped off the pages of my Bible. Those two words have plagued my mind for several months.

My obsession with those two words has taken me into a long personal study of Revelation. I have and continue to be blessed by studying this book as promised by John (Rev. 1:3).

One of the main themes of Revelation is worship. John chronicles amazing pictures of worship and praise (Rev. 4:8, 11; 5:9-10, 12-13; 7:12; 11:17-18; 15:3-4; 16:5; 19:1,3,5-6). "Holy, Holy, Holy"



**THE FIRST ANGEL'S
MESSAGE:
WORSHIP HIM**

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This is the first installment of a new column written by Carolyn Macomber, the leader of the Former Adventist Fellowship at The Chapel in St. Joseph, Michigan. For information on meeting times and place you may call The Chapel Evangelical Free Church: 269-429-1041.

is repeated throughout this Biblical book in regards to the worship of God.

With what is right and true concerning God, there is often a counterfeit. Revelation warns of this counterfeit in the chapter before 14, "And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, 'Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?'" (Rev. 13:4). The dragon is clearly identified in Revelation 12:9 as that "ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world".

"Worship Him" of Revelation 14 is illogically interpreted in Seventh-day Adventist theology as a command to worship on a particular day, because Revelation 13 clearly identifies the counterfeit worship with a "who", not a "when". You either worship Satan,—or the Lord Jesus Christ.

My never-been Adventist friends have often shared with me how they have seen Seventh-day Adventists as the "weaker" brother—Christians who worship on a different day and who eat kosher. When I share with my Christian friends that Adventists identify Sunday worship as the mark of the beast—my friends are horrified by the

implication. Placing such strong emphasis on a day verges on worshipping an image, a counterfeit, and missing the real—Jesus Christ. This is why Jesus clearly identified Himself as greater than a "day". He speaks of Himself as "Lord of the Sabbath" (Matt. 12:8; Mk. 2:28; Lk. 6:5).

If you have not received Jesus as your sole source of salvation, I encourage you to put down this magazine, kneel humbly in prayer, and repent of your pride in thinking the day you worship is more important than the "Who" you worship—or that the day you worship represents the "Who". Ask Jesus to become Lord of your life.

Jesus Christ, the one true God, who elicits praises of "Holy, Holy, Holy" and "Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever," should be the focus of our worship.

"Worship Him"! †

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Twenty years after Jesus' death and resurrection, His good news was now spreading rapidly to the Gentiles. Paul, Silas, and Timothy had travelled north and were passing through the cities in the region of Anatolia (Acts 14). As these Gentile nations heard that salvation through Christ was given to them, "they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord" (Acts 13:48). The mission group's progress came to a halt when Paul could travel no more, struck down by a "bodily illness." His entourage had to depend on the

bondage again and live under a regime that was only designed for governing slaves.

Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more? You observe days and months and seasons and years! I am afraid I may have labored over you in vain (Gal. 4:8-11).

Elemental spirits and

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kindness of the people of Galatia, who could have driven the little party away. But they took in the group and cared for Paul (Gal. 4:14). While they lingered there, Paul preached the Gospel to them. On hearing the good news, the Galatians rejoiced in Christ and Him crucified, received the Holy Spirit, and abandoned all other gods.

Galatia was named after the Gauls, a cluster of Celtic tribes who had migrated from Western Europe into Anatolia, now the nation of Turkey, about 270 BC. During their first two centuries in Anatolia, they battled fiercely with the Greeks and Romans; then after a series of defeats by Roman forces, they began to settle down as less belligerent citizens of Rome.¹ By the time Paul arrived nearly a century later, the Galatians had partially blended in with the local cultures. Their religion had become a syncretism of Gaulish, Greek, Roman, Phoenician, and Phrygian customs. Paul's new-found friends were part of this melting pot, and in the cultural ferment, the numbers of their gods had multiplied into the thousands. Athens alone had an estimated 30,000 gods, more gods than men.² These many cultures had their various gods that promised blessings, but were only able to provoke fear and servitude.

Not long after he departed from them, however, Paul was perplexed to hear that some Jewish Christians from Jerusalem were troubling the new converts by preaching righteousness through Moses' law. Paul's protective anguish over them bursts out in his letter. As though seizing them, he demands, "Oh foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you?" The Galatians had started off well receiving forgiveness of sins through Christ and the gift of the Spirit. False teachers then came in and persuaded them that to become perfect, they must become Jews through serving Moses' law. Paul asked them how they could so quickly depart from the Gospel when Christ was crucified publicly before their eyes. Now that Christ had come, they were no longer under a temporary guardian, the Law. The Galatians were choosing to return to

Serving the "No gods"

The Galatians had worshiped idols, or "no gods," as Paul calls them. Through Moses, God had warned Israel not to follow the idols that were not gods at all. "They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods; with abominations they provoked him to anger. They sacrificed to demons that were no gods..." (Deut. 32:16, 17). Paul told the Corinthians to "flee idolatry" because they had been attending idolatrous Greek feasts where images of the gods were present and homage was paid to them with food and drink. He explained to them that although idols have "no real existence" (1 Cor. 8:4), they are used by demons to enslave humans. Idol worship becomes demon worship:

What pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons (1 Cor. 10:20, 21).

The worshipping of idols and their accompanying demons is not confined to pagan temples, but is the universal human condition. Our worship springs from what we are. Before we belong to Christ, we passionately serve that realm.

You were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind" (Eph. 2:1, 2).

We follow that prince when we live in the desires of "our flesh." Jeremiah gave this gloomy report:

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? (Jer. 17:9).

Today, popular philosophies tempt us to believe that deep down, we are innately good; we are the victims of our environments and corrupt institutions. If only others would allow us, we could be good. We could find for ourselves what is right and wrong, if only others wouldn't interfere. With that

kind of talk we hide from ourselves. Corruption begins when we are infants (Ps. 51:5), for we are “by nature children of wrath.” Our internal pit of deception is so deep we cannot see to the bottom of it. Our “passions of the flesh” demand that we erect little shrines to serve them. In this way we serve the “not gods.”

Different Religions, Same Spirits

We would expect Paul to warn the Galatians against returning to their former idols. At first glance, Galatians 4:8 appears to speak only of the enslavement of paganism. Then in verse 11, Paul expresses dismay that although they are known by God, they are now observing Sinai’s laws, “days and months and seasons and years.” The Galatians were not returning to pagan practices, they were now zealous for Moses’ law. Paul was dismayed because their pursuit of righteousness through the Law would be a return to the kind of slavery they had under paganism. They were about to fall under the “weak and worthless *elementary principles* of the world.”

It seems odd of Paul to link pagan slavery with the holy Law of God given at Sinai. After all, the same God who gave circumcision and sabbaths to Israel had clearly forbidden the worship of idols. The Galatians knew this, but here they were again, in danger of idolatry and enslavement to the same powers. The Colossians were also observing Mosaic laws, while blending them with Greek religion.

Paul warned both churches about the “elementary spirits of the world:”

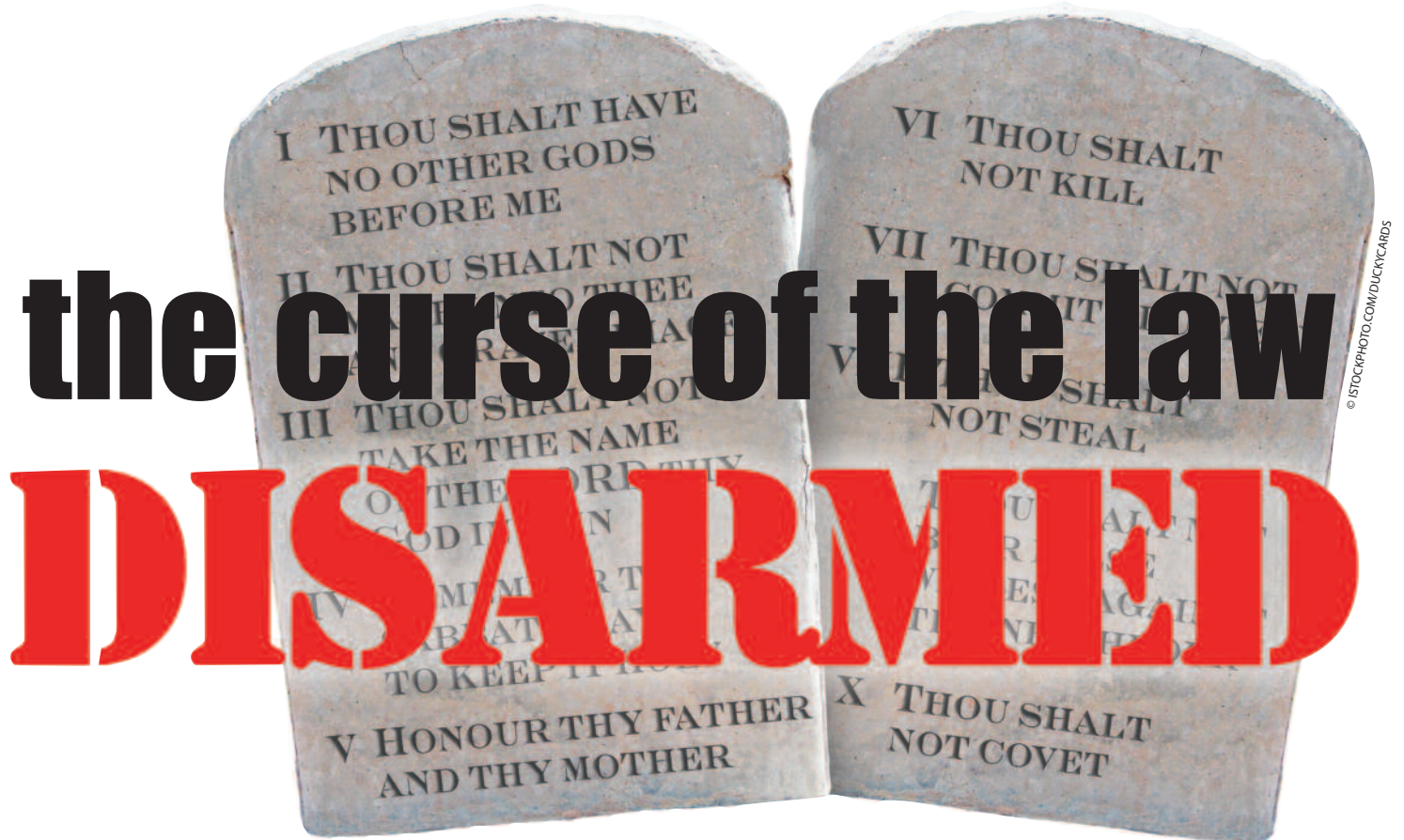
See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elementary spirits of the world, and not according to Christ (Col. 2:8).

These Gentile Christians thought they could acquire more blessings by adding their obedience to faith in Christ:

If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations—“Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” (Col. 2:20-23).

They wanted to overcome sin and become ready for Heaven, so what harm could there be in practices that felt so clean and moral, like eating better food and keeping sacred days? Paul’s rebuke might seem harsh. Unsatisfied with faith, they had wanted the blessings promised to Israel—different blessings. They already had the Holy Spirit as their seal and guarantee of Abraham’s promised inheritance (Eph. 1:13, 14). Their coveting of different blessings was not obedience, but disobedience to the truth (Gal. 5:7). Abraham’s blessings only come through the obedience of faith, not through Hebrew DNA or regulations. In trying to add to Jesus’ sacrifice through achievement, they were showing disbelief in His promises.

Paul instructed Timothy, the young pastor at Ephesus, about “doctrines of demons.” These were teachings that



required abstinence from marriage and certain foods. Paul was openly departing from the Mosaic laws regarding clean and unclean food, and declaring that “everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected... (1 Tim. 4:4).” Here again, Paul clearly associated ascetic practices with the doctrines of demons, and with a lack of faith and gratitude. In binding themselves to the Law, they were serving the elemental spirits, and in danger of being severed from Christ (Gal. 5:4).

Pagan religions and righteousness by Law might have appeared very different on the outside, but the spirits they served were the same. They had replaced the idols of stone and metal with laws about food and holy days.

Harsh Treatment of the Body

Asceticism is the practice of rigorous self-denial and abstinence to achieve higher spiritual states.³ False teachers were trying to impose asceticism on the believers. Paul called this asceticism “self-made religion,” that gave its worshippers false wisdom and false humility (Col. 2:23). Strict physical discipline and subjugation of the body were exemplified in some of the religious practices of the Anatolian cults. Prevalent at that time was the cult of Cybele, (Agdistis to the Greeks) the Great Goddess Mother who had temples in nearby Phrygia. In her temple cities her priests kept civic order, enforcing regulations over births, deaths, and property. These priests of Cybele were known as sacred slaves, who gathered for ritual ecstasies where they wielded sacred shears, castrating themselves. Thereafter, they wore women’s clothing to show off their devotion for the goddess.⁴

Paul very likely had the sacred slaves in mind when he challenged the Galatian Christians’ circumcising themselves for spirituality. He referred to the “weak and worthless” elemental spirits of the world that would rob them of their prized freedom in Christ. Emasculated men parading about in women’s clothing was an apt comparison to self-circumcised men pretending to be righteous Jews. Their self-denial seemed pious but it had rendered them weak and worthless. Abstaining from foods and practicing bodily discipline may strengthen cardiovascular health but these are useless against the desires of the flesh. In Galatians 5:12, Paul recommends some poetic justice for these recruiters for sacred slavery: “I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!”

The Stoicheia

Serving pagan gods or Moses’ Law alike can place us in bondage to the “not gods.” To understand how two very different religious systems can both enslave, let’s look at Paul’s phrase, “elementary principles (or “spirits”) of the world.” In Greek, the *stoicheia* of the world have a very colorful history. Paul used the word *stoicheia* (pronounced Stoy-khee-ah) to expose the idolatrous bondage common to religions.

Paul alludes to three meanings of *stoicheia*. First of all, it refers to the rudiments of any system. They are the simplest elements in a series, such as the alphabet.⁵ In spoken language, the irreducible elements are phonemes. The individual letters and sounds of language contain no meaning in them-

selves. Used alone they are mere fragments, and must be combined to create meaningful words. The writer of Hebrews tells the Jewish Christians, who were still keeping the “letter” of the Law, to leave the milk of *stoicheia* for the solid food of mature things. Paul contrasted the old covenant of “the letter” with the new covenant of the Spirit, “for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life” (2 Cor. 3:6).

Secondly, for the Greeks, the *stoicheia* referred to the four primary elements that make up the physical world.⁶ In the New Testament, the *stoicheia* are temporal, physical things of the senses. In 2 Peter 3, we learn that the present cosmos will end when the *stoicheia* melt with intense heat (vss. 10 and 12). The elements were powerfully manifested to Elijah after he fled from Jezebel to Sinai. There, God “was not in” those grand demonstrations of wind, earth, and fire (2 Ki. 19).

Thirdly, the *stoicheia* referred to certain higher powers who ruled as the “forces” of nature. Greco-Roman culture believed that supernatural beings ruled in the heavenly bodies. Jewish literature also imagined layers of angels as guardians over the seven heavens, through which the worthy might ascend in mystical experiences. The Jewish apocryphal books, such as Enoch and the Book of Jubilees, spoke of angelic orders. Lower angels controlled natural phenomena, while higher angels were gatekeepers who menaced those who would approach the throne of God.⁷ Pagan and Jewish ideas were combined into a system where powerful spirits in the earth and stars controlled this life and beyond.

Astrology, the belief that celestial bodies influence human affairs, was strong in all the cultures of that era. Its ancient practitioners feared the powerful beings who resided in the zodiac and controlled fate.⁸ “Disaster” (literally, unfavorable star) always threatened. Births and deaths, crops, prosperity, success in battle, were controlled by these elemental powers. Men gave homage to the powers of nature by observing the zodiac, along with days and times. Jews and Greeks thought the Christians were impious because they regarded all days alike (Rom. 14). So when Christ swept aside all such keeping of days, times, and new moons as Paul states in Colosians 2:16, he was not only establishing a radical freedom from religion, but nature itself.

Many of the Gentile Christians had sought superior lifestyles and worship through ascetic practices and by observing “days and months and seasons and years.” The motions of the sun and moon became critical elements regulating their worship. When natural cycles are an independent, “binding element” in worship, we are in danger of turning from the living God.⁹ Devotion to the created order is the essence of religion.

Elemental Spirits in Adventism

The Seventh Day is the one doctrine Adventists feel most passionate about. Throughout their history, core Adventist doctrines have been subject to question or change: Christ’s identity, the reliability of Scripture, even 1844. But to seriously question or change the Sabbath is to sever one’s self from the Adventist tree. Before Christ returns, the

Sabbath will be the decisive test of faith, so one must be ready. What begins the journey to heaven is faith in Christ, but to pass the time of trouble, one must keep holy every seventh rotation of the earth.

God's special privileges and blessings are attached to Sabbath-keeping behaviors. Adventist literature abounds with stories of those who sacrificed for the Sabbath and were rewarded with supernatural blessings. Christians with ordinary faith in Christ are not given such blessings. In fact, Christians attending church services on Sunday can bring eternal curses upon themselves. The Sabbath is the Adventist's sign, inducting him into God's kingdom, setting him apart, and at last ensuring his salvation. Ellen White called it "the separating wall between the true Israel of God and unbelievers."¹⁰ When the weekly Sabbath is made the center of worship and the ultimate test of faith, a created thing stands guarding the gates of heaven, separating us from Christ. Paul knew that when Christians bind themselves to the celestial cycles and holy days, they will become tests of faith, and diminish Christ's Lordship.

Food: Much of Ellen White's works address what goes into the stomach. She taught that eating certain foods will intensify "the flesh," and damage one's spiritual life:

When the animal part of the human agent is strengthened by meat-eating, the intellectual powers diminish proportionately. A religious life can be more successfully gained and maintained if meat is discarded, for this diet stimulates into intense activities lustful propensities, and enfeebles the moral and spiritual nature. "The flesh warreth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh."¹¹

For Mrs. White, flesh referred to the physical body as the locus of sinful passions, human or animal. But for Paul, "flesh" is not your steak dinner where "intense lustful propensities" are hiding. It is our propensity to rebel against God:

For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot (Rom. 8:7).

Unlike Mrs. White, he draws a clear distinction between our spiritual lives and food:

Food will not commend us to God. We are not worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do (1 Cor. 8:8).

Jesus separated the heart from the stomach:

Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled? (Thus he declared all foods clean) (Mar. 7:18, 19).

The Adventist health message is characterized by a fear of physical contamination, which is equated with sin. For the religious health reformer, simple rituals like the grocery store can be a spiritual drama where evil lurks on every aisle. Even home baked bread, still warm from the oven, can bring anxiety about live yeast contamination.¹² The thousands of health warnings in Ellen White impose far more than basic, good health principles that Christians should practice as stewards of their bodies. Nor are they from the pages of Scripture:

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:17).

The Adventists' concerns with Sabbath and food are one with their fears of condemnation and judgment, of stern angels recording every deed, and evil angels harassing them at every step. Christ's supreme sacrifice and the promised Spirit's power are not enough to quell these fears. There are many variations to the themes of Sabbath and food, but these are the elemental spirits of Adventist culture.

What the Law Could Not Do

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished (Matt. 5:17, 18).

When our Lord sat down on that mountain and addressed Israel, they were hearing the Law as no man had ever spoken it. Here sat the embodiment of all God's will, in life and voice. What a contrast with Sinai, when the Eternal Word hid himself in a "blazing fire and darkness" and thundered the Law down on terrified Israel! Now, somewhere on a hill in Galilee, the King sits openly in the sunlight to command His subjects. This time, instead of declaring the letter, he transforms the Law into the realm of spirit.¹³ Instead of hearing a larger list of regulations, they now heard the spirit of adoption as sons. There is now just one law—to believe in Him and love our brother (1 Jn. 3:23).

The letter of the Law, as given by Moses, governed the outward actions of man. Now, Jesus is showing that the real intent of the Law goes inward to the spirit of man. The rudiments of the Law were not destroyed, but instead became the bases, the "elements" of the new law written on the heart (Jer. 31:33). The 613 commands were transformed into righteousness on a much higher plain, to the infinite level of God's perfection. When law becomes spirit, it is no longer a set of written codes to dictate specific outward behaviors. Now that the King has come, His sons are no longer under the rudimentary laws of the letter, made for children and slaves.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus did not lower the standards to make righteousness easier,¹⁴ as a kind of Sinai-Lite. Whereas a man could boast he had never murdered or committed adultery, Jesus now exposed his ordinary thoughts and desires as murderous and lustful. Each minute of his life, a man breathes out sin against God. The real purpose of the Law was more clearly revealed, to make sin appear "exceedingly sinful."

For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death (Rom. 7:5).

The letters written in stone can only kill us (2 Cor. 3:6), but not through any fault in the Law. Since the Law has no power to change our hearts, it condemns us to death. Because of our corrupt natures, we ruin everything we touch. We take the perfect Law into our own hands and fashion it into an instrument of evil and death, to be used for our own selfish ends. Instead of loving God and our neighbor, we use the Law to establish our own moral achievements. Under the letter, our natural love is superficial and false. We want our obe-

dience to be measurable so we can compare with others. God must keep score so He can reward us accordingly.¹⁵ That is how the Law becomes an idol of our vanity, so the elemental spirits can enslave us. We are alive to them, but dead to God. The only solution for us is death.

Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God (Rom. 7:4).

When we die with Christ, we are raised with new spiritual life. It is a clean, supernatural life from out of this world. We died to our rebellious natures, to our religions, and to the elemental spirits of the world. And, we have also died to the Law. The law of the Spirit of life has set us free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2). Because, vs. 3,

God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh...

Jesus became sin for us, and was condemned for our rebellion and deceit. Every sinful thing we ever thought or did *or will do* is forgiven and cancelled forever. That is the power of His sacrifice for us.

Vs. 4: ...in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Jesus came to fulfill the Law as our Substitute, and His righteousness is counted as ours. The single righteous requirement of the Law is fulfilled in us when we have new life through faith in His sacrifice. All 613 commandments are now condensed into one commandment (Jn. 15:10-12; 1 Jn. 3:23). All the letters of the Law and Prophets have come to life in One Word, who dwells among us (Jn. 1:14; Heb. 1:1, 2). We are able to love because His life is in us. We will not love perfectly, but our love will be true. When we have His love in us, we fulfill every jot and tittle of the Law.

Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Rom. 13:8, 9).

Lights and Shadows

When Jesus said "It is finished" and bowed His head, He took all our guilt and punishment and killed it. He defeated every accusation and power that would threaten our peace. He "cancelled the record of debt that stood



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against us" (Col. 2:14). Now, there is no law that can condemn, and no power that can harass those who call upon His name. Christ has conquered! He shamed and disarmed all those other authorities we might have served (Col. 2:15). We have one Authority who commands our steps, our King Jesus, so there is "no guilt in life, no fear in death."¹⁶

Christ has fulfilled every law, so there are no letters to kill us, only the Spirit to give us life. We have no more need of those shadows of Him, for "when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away" (1 Cor. 13:10). He is our Sacrifice, our High Priest, and our Sabbath. Now in His presence, our worship is no longer governed by any celestial motions or calendars, or any created thing that would interrupt our fellowship with Him. In Him, our rest and worship never cease. And at last in His city, clear as crystal, there will be no more shadows cast by sun or moon, for God and the Lamb are its continuous light (Rev. 21:5). The Sun of Righteousness has risen, and will never set. Nothing can ever separate us from the love of Christ Jesus our Lord! †

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Because we love Adventists

COLLEEN TINKER



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The accusations are recurring and predictable: “I’ve never seen such hate.” I’m sorry you were so hurt by the church.” “Why do you bash Adventists instead of just preaching the gospel?” “Jesus won people with love; He never criticized them or spoke harshly to them.” “Why do you do this?”

The answer is simple: because we love Adventists. We resonate with Paul’s prayer for the Jews in Romans 10:1-3:

Brethren, my heart’s desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation...For not knowing about God’s righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

When Jesus cried out, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites” eight times in Matthew 23, He was not tolerating their unbelief with gentle comments. When Paul preached in the synagogues throughout the book of Acts, declaring the crucified and risen Christ to his Jewish brothers until they finally threw him out, he was not offending them because he had been hurt by Judaism. On the contrary, Jesus said the gospel would be an offense.

This issue of *Proclamation!* addresses the core issues of the Adventist doctrine of salvation: the defilement and cleansing of the sanctuary. Inevitably when we discuss the more esoteric details of our Adventist heritage, people respond, “I don’t believe that! Whether the scapegoat is Jesus or Satan is not essential for my salvation. I believe in Jesus; that’s all that matters.”

The shape of the foundation

The details of the belief system we embrace, whether they are public or buried deeply in the founding traditions, matter. Everything that Adventism espouses is built on the pioneers’ founding doctrines formulated to explain the Great Disappointment. The great controversy worldview held by Adventists everywhere is rooted firmly in the doctrine of Satan as the scapegoat and on the belief that Jesus’ blood transferred the sins of believers onto Him in the heavenly sanctuary, thus defiling it.

No matter how much one objects that he or she doesn’t believe Satan will bear believers’ sins in the end and pay their penalty, the fact is that Ellen White (EGW) said he will. Even if one can rationalize away the “inspired” words of the Spirit of Prophecy, Adventists still believe Satan is the scapegoat as a basic tenet of their faith.

Implications

Whether Satan eventually carries the sins of the saved to be punished for them, as EGW says, or whether he merely

pays for his part in causing believers to sin, the Adventist doctrine of Satan-as-scapegoat is unbiblical and has grave implications.

Never is Satan connected, even peripherally, with making atonement, nor is heaven defiled by any supposedly transferred sin. The biblical-sounding words Adventism has grafted on top of the foundational doctrines do not

change the fact that the Jesus of Adventism is limited and does not fulfill every type and shadow of the atonement. The Bible tells us, “He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people” (Heb. 2:17-18).

For Him to become like us “in all things”, He had to bear both the guilt and the responsibility for human sin. Only Jesus, the Son of God, became flesh and “became sin” (2 Cor. 5:21)—while being completely spotless Himself.

Integrity

When we see the Scriptural truth about Jesus and His completed atonement on the cross once for all, we face a decision. Even if in our own minds we reject the prophetic status of Ellen White, we are double-minded if we also endorse an organization that holds unbiblical doctrines. James warns against this spiritual compromise: “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded” (Jas. 4:8).

The risk of loss looks overwhelming; it feels as if we might lose ourselves. This fear of loss keeps many of us stuck, rationalizing Scripture and trying to make it fit our preconceived ideas and familiar great controversy paradigm. Yet Jesus said, “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it” (Mar 8:35).

The cost of integrity, however, is paltry compared to the peace of having a single-minded loyalty “in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus” (Eph. 4:21) and a clear conscience (Heb. 9:9, 14).

Moreover, Jesus has promised that He will provide all we need to eat, drink, and wear if we seek His kingdom first (Matt. 6:25-34).

We are not bashing our own former identity. We are, rather, appealing to our brothers and sisters who are still caught in cognitive dissonance and fear to trust God and His word. Embrace the Jesus revealed in Scripture, and allow Him to remove from your life all that is not from Him.

He is faithful, and He is more than enough. †



RICHARD PIEFER

Who are you?

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I was adopted. As a result of several loving decisions, I became Richard Peifer. Much later, I found out who my birth mother was, but I never considered her to be my mom. Esther Peifer was my mom; Gene Peifer was my dad. Jerry and Bruce are my brothers. I always was and always will be a “Peifer” regardless of my DNA. I derived my identity from my family.

Such is the concept and importance of identity. Identity determines purpose. Purpose answers the question, “Why am I here?” Purpose determines our life’s pursuits, answering the question, “Where am I going?” But how are we to answer the first question, “Who am I?”

I believe that a proper identity is defined in the context of God. As Paul put it in his prayer, “For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name...” (Eph. 3:14-15). I will demonstrate this by explaining human attempts to declare identity, the Bible’s definition of identity, how to

get a proper identity and the practical implications of that proper identity.

One of the tragedies of our society is that so many people grow up not knowing who they are, or, more precisely, whose they are. Untold numbers of lives have been ruined because of this.

When a person derives no identity from his or her family ties, or those ties have been broken or abused, he or she is left to define identity in whatever manner is at hand. We hear statements like these. “I am a surgeon.” “I am a bus driver.” “I am the mother of three children.” “I am a mid-

Really?

dle-aged man.” “I am poor.” “I am married.” “I am divorced.” “I am bi-polar.” “I am an alcoholic.”

What is the common thread among all these statements? The use of the words “I am.” Humans tend to use words reserved to God alone to identify ourselves. The futility of this is demonstrated by asking a few simple questions.

You’re a surgeon. Who will you be when arthritis robs you of your hands?

You’re a bus driver. Who will you be when cataracts ruin your eyes so you can’t drive?

You’re the mother of three children. Who will you be when they leave home?

You’re married. Who will you be when your spouse dies or leaves?

Don’t make the mistake of suggesting that these statements are merely colloquialisms. Don’t presume we know better than to tie up our identities in the chimera of external things. If this is true, why are so many people depressed? Why do people party until they collapse in the attempt to dull the ache of emptiness consuming them?

An even bigger tragedy is that many people live, work and die without ever knowing their spiritual identity. This is especially bad when people attempt to resolve the situation by joining a religious organization, thinking that association with the larger group will give them meaning and purpose.

“I am a Baptist.” “I am a Methodist.” “I am a Catholic.” “I

am a Charismatic.” “I am a Seventh-day Adventist.” Notice the ongoing assertion—“I am.”

What do these groups believe? What do they stand for? Most of their adherents can’t answer these questions, but they don’t really care. As long as they’re associated with a group that speaks for God, they imagine they’re safe.

Again, a simple question reveals the peril of holding such an identity.

You are a Seventh-day Adventist. Who will you be when key parts of the SDA belief system are shown to be unbiblical and, therefore, incorrect?

According to the Bible, for humans there are only two possible identities. Both of them are based on permanent paradigms. Here’s the first: “**God created man in His own image**, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” (Gen. 1:27, emphasis added).

Here’s the second: “When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son **in his own likeness, according to his image**, and named him Seth” (Gen. 5:3, emphasis added).

Something meaningful changed between Chapters 1 and 5. Somehow humankind went from being created in God’s image to losing that image and being born in Adam’s image. Paul contrasts these two identities succinctly and very powerfully in Romans 5:12-21 (Read along in your own Bibles.).

I hope you find this table useful.

Verse	“In Adam”	“In Christ”
12	Sin entered the world through Adam. Death entered the world through sin. Death came to all because all sinned.	
13-14	Even though there was no law, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command.	
14	Adam was a pattern of One to come.	
15	The many died by the sin of one man.	God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflowed “much more” to the many!
16	Judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation to all.	God’s gift is not like the result of Adam’s sin. The gift followed many sins and brought justification.
17	By the sin of one man death reigned through that one man.	Those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and gift of righteousness will reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!
18	Result of one sin was condemnation for all men.	One act of righteousness resulted in justification of life for all men.
19	Through the disobedience of one man the many were made sinners.	Many will be made righteous through the obedience of the one man.
20	[From Moses on] the Law was added so that sin might increase.	Where sin increased, grace increased all the more.
21	Sin reigned in death.	The point was for grace to reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus.

Clearly, Adam's list does not lead to a positive self-image. In fact, there is a very large part of me that wants to run up to Adam after this is all over, grab him by the lapel and scream, "What were you thinking?!"

There is a wrinkle in Paul's lists. He describes "in Adam" and "in Christ" quite differently than a collection of "I am" statements. All of the entries are results: the first of Adam's failure, the second of Jesus' victory. If a person is "in Adam" then all that flows from Adam accrues to that person. If a person is "in Christ" then all that flows from Jesus accrues to that person. In both cases, identity is derived from a person's relationship to one or the other of these paradigms. A person cannot be both "in Adam" and "in Christ."

Note the number of times the word "grace" or "gift" is used to describe what humans can have in Jesus. Just as something horrible happened between Genesis 1 and 5, something indescribably wonderful happened because of Jesus.

Paul explains how overwhelming God's plan for saving us really is. In every aspect of salvation God demonstrates that He is uniquely adequate to meet our need. Such is His power to change our identities!

Grace certainly existed in the Old Testament. Grace is the reason Adam and Eve were not destroyed outright when they sinned. Grace is the reason all families of the earth were blessed through Abraham even though he could not wait for God to fulfill His promise to him but did his own thing with disastrous results. Grace is the reason David was a man after God's own heart even though he sinned grievously by having Bathsheba's husband murdered after committing adultery with her.

But grace changed when Jesus died, was buried and rose again. Grace changed from a "what" (those things God did for His people as they walked by faith) to a "Who" (the indwelling life of Christ via the Holy Spirit).

Paul tells us why God did this for us in Romans 8:29 – "For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the first-born among many brethren..." God's intent is to restore His image in us, and the Holy Spirit is the deposit guaranteeing that He will finish what He started (Eph. 1:13-14).

Another way to describe being in Adam is "child of Adam". The phrase the Bible uses to describe the result of receiving the Holy Spirit, of being in Christ, is "child of God" (see Rom. 8:16).

Based on Romans 5:12-21 it seems obvious that everyone would want to be a child of God instead of a child of Adam. This is true, but our presumptions create road blocks to understanding. Let's walk through the process as it is described in the Bible.

First, is being a child of Adam optional? No. "In Adam" is our DNA. For the longest time I believed that I was born neutral, that I was walking along the top rail of a fence and it was up to me to repudiate Adam and accept Jesus. I was wrong. Romans 3:23 cleared it up: "...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..." All have sinned because all are children of Adam. This is what it means to be born in the image of

Adam (Gen. 5). All are born spiritually dead. This is not a neutral position. All sin because all are sinners from birth (Ps. 51:5) and are "by nature children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3). Jesus confirmed this fact in John 3:3: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Second, is becoming a child of God optional? Yes. As the writer of Hebrews told us, "Therefore, since it remains for some to enter it [God's rest], and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience [defined as unbelief at the end of Hebrews 3], He again fixes a certain day, 'Today,' saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, 'Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts'" (Heb. 4:6-7). If someone hasn't entered God's rest, then that person has chosen not to become a child of God. Becoming a child of God is a matter of adoption, but adoption based upon our choice to accept Jesus (see Rom. 8:14-15).

So, humans are in a real jam. We're born spiritually dead and we don't automatically become spiritually alive. In short, we're born without the very Person necessary for identity. Is it any wonder that people without Jesus try to derive identity from everything but Jesus! Identifying oneself as a drug addict is better than having no identity at all. It may be a horrible identity, but it explains why I do what I do—it's who I am. In a way that only Satan could have devised, using identity this way actually excuses my sinfulness.

Please understand, I know there are physical-chemical issues that result from drug addiction, but at its core it is a spiritual problem, not a physical-chemical problem. Therefore, a drug addict can be set free by the Holy Spirit on the basis of the finished work of Christ on the cross where He provided for full and complete deliverance.

For those who have chosen a more positive identity (surgeon or minister, for example), the issue is the same even though the behaviors are more socially acceptable. "It's OK that I neglect my family or work myself into exhaustion because I'm helping people. In fact, I'm doing God's work. Right?" Wrong!

It doesn't matter what a person does while a child of Adam. He still is spiritually dead and condemned to hell.

How does a person become a child of God? Paul laid it out in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4—"Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, **by which also you are saved**, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures... (emphasis added)."

First, notice there are only three components of the gospel that saves: 1) the death of Jesus, 2) the burial of Jesus, and 3) the resurrection of Jesus. There is nothing else. Any attempt to add to these three components really makes it another gospel (Gal. 1:7). Paul's response to these extras is incredibly strong: "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to

you, he is to be accursed! As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!" (Gal. 1:8-9).

Jesus' death provided reconciliation (see 2 Cor. 3-5). His burial demonstrated that the past (in particular, sin) has been left behind (see Phil. 3:12-14 and Rom. 6:1-14). His resurrection provided eternal life now to anyone who would accept it (see Rom. 5:10; 6:19-23).

Accepting all that Jesus is and does results in being born again of the Holy Spirit. As we saw above, this is salvation, being made spiritually alive, and this salvation changes our identity from child of Adam to child of God. As Paul explains in Romans 8, anyone who has the Spirit is a child of God; anyone who does not have the Spirit does not belong to Christ. Christ's death, in other words, cuts the believer off from the family line of Adam, and His resurrection makes it possible for him to be born again into the family of God by the indwelling Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:1-4; 1 Pet. 1:3-5).

As other articles in this issue of *Proclamation!* explain, getting this correct is a matter of life and death. The SDA belief system ruins the "gospel that saves" right at the first point. Their positions regarding blood and the scapegoat completely deny the very thing Jesus accomplished on the cross. Their additions to the gospel—10 commandments, seventh-day Sabbath as a test of faith, 1844, the Investigative Judgment, etc.—ruin the rest of it. In short, it is very difficult for a practicing Adventist to have a proper self-image.

What are the practical ramifications of being a born-again child of God?

1. You will understand salvation. I invite you to sit down with your Bible and a concordance. Look up words like forgiveness, eternal life, the indwelling Holy Spirit, justification and sanctification. Read about them in context. Don't take my or your church's word for it. Study it for yourself. If you've never done this before, your life will be changed forever.

2. The Holy Spirit will renew your mind according to Romans 12:1-2, and you will prove what God's will is. This is where honesty comes into play. Rather than excusing sin by hiding it behind a false identity (alcoholic, divorcee, Seventh-day Adventist, anorexic, professional golfer, business man ...), you will begin to admit the sin that so easily entangles you. Because of the gospel you are a forgiven person, so admitting sin for what it is will not result in your being rejected by God. Instead, you will be gathered into His arms and supported while the Holy Spirit completes the work He started in you (Phil. 1:6). Only this kind of honesty permits this kind of growth in Jesus!

3. You will continue to battle with the flesh, or indwelling sin. Remember, even though you have eternal life

as a result of being born again of the Spirit, God has not, and will not, redeem your flesh. Flesh and blood will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 15:50). Satan constantly tries to get us to stop looking to Jesus for identity, focusing instead on our behaviors, weaknesses, strengths and memberships.

4. In spite of this battle, you no longer need to give in to the desires of the flesh. Study Galatians 5:16-26. Here is the key to moving beyond your old identity. The only way to gain real victory over sin is to walk by faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Nothing you do in your own strength will accomplish anything. It is all of Jesus and none of you. By His death Jesus won total victory on your behalf, and when you die to sin by placing your faith in Jesus Christ, you receive the Holy Spirit who will give you His power to resist sin. Even though you still live in mortal flesh, sin no longer reigns over you (see Rom. 6). Jesus' death—not his sinless life—has set you free.

If you are stuck in a false identity, there is hope.

If you know you still are a child of Adam, admit it and come to Jesus for forgiveness and life! If you know you are a child of God, but still suffer from various false identities, admit them and allow the Holy Spirit to continue renewing your mind.

You can be a child of God even if you no longer can perform surgery, no longer have a spouse or no longer have children living in your home.

Knowing that you are a child of God is the only way to overcome addictions. You stop giving yourself permission to practice the deadly behaviors ("That's what drug addicts do."). Instead, admit them for the sin they are, accept the forgiveness Jesus provided at the cross, accept His eternal life, and then allow that life to overflow into the lives of others.

You can be a child of God who attends any church or no church at all. You are neither saved nor lost by belonging to an Adventist church, but judge carefully whether you have substituted membership in that church, or any other church, for a living, vital relationship with Jesus Christ. It is important for many readers of this magazine to remember that you are not a "former Adventist." You are a child of God who once attended an Adventist church.

The choice is clear: Remain "in Adam," a slave to your sin-DNA, or be adopted by God so that you are "in Christ." He will give you a new identity, child of God, and He will work everything He is into everything you are so that His image is recreated in you. †

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Theology is said to be the study of God. It is a life course from which we never graduate. While we study, however, there is value in reviewing what we can know from what God has revealed.

In this study, we will focus on the longest sentence in the Bible: Ephesians 1:3-14. Paul, in an intense moment of contemplation of God's work for our salvation, pours forth a profound introduction of our Father's love. I pray He will reveal Himself as we study.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ (Eph 1:3).

First we are to understand it was the Father's love that prompted the blessings brought through Christ. Some say that the Father was out to destroy us but for the intercession of Christ. Yet here it is stated clearly that it was the Father who blessed us. Note that "has blessed" is rooted in a past event but the blessing continues. How big is the blessing? "...has blessed us with every spiritual blessing." How does one grasp the extent of "every spiritual blessing"? We read on, "every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." Characteristic of the Trinity, when one member works, they all are involved. The Father blesses us with every spiritual (think Holy Spirit) blessing in Christ. These multitudinous blessings are said to be "in the heavenly places". Actually, the original states "in the heavnlies." What does this mean? These spiritual blessings are "In Christ", and they are where He is. They are blessings in the spiritual realm where we are "seated with Christ". They are present realities seen through the eye of faith and experienced in the spirit.

"just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him (Eph 1:4).

Paul will now enumerate some of the spiritual blessings that come to us through the Father's love. The Father chose us in union with Christ before the foundation of the world. Just when and upon what basis did the Father choose us? Here we again peer into a mystery. First we note that that Father chose us in union with Christ. Some take this to mean that we, individually, were elected to eternal salvation before the foundation of the world while others were elected to damnation. Others, however, believe that the Father before time chose all those who would believe in Christ. Either way, the goal of election is clear: that we would be holy and blameless in the Father's sight. As we proclaim the riches of God's infinite grace and mercy and trumpet the good news that "this man receives sinners," let us never pull down the goal of salvation: that we would be holy and blameless. Note, however, the phrase does not stop there. We are holy and blameless "in the Father's sight." Does this mean the Father "sees us in union with Christ" and therefore sees us in Christ's righteousness? Yes. Does this mean that someday we will actually be holy and blameless? I believe it does; however, that day will not fully come until this mortal puts on immortality.



The love of **OUR FATHER** revealed

DALE RATZLAFF

In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will (Eph 1:4-5).

There are many reasons people adopt children today—yet here we see only one: unmerited agape love. Those of us who may have come from a performance background need to stop and contemplate this verse and let its message sink deep into our spirits. There is nothing mentioned here about trying to be good enough to pass the future judgment, trying to be overcomers, or seeking in many small or large ways to be accepted by God. No, nothing is stated about us, what we have, or what we will do. It all springs from the Father's love through Jesus Christ.

Adoption is a term that adds warmth to the Father's love. Picture a crackling fire on Christmas Eve and the smell of cinnamon, apples, and spice. Observe the bright eyes of expectant children who know good gifts are ready and waiting to be unwrapped at the father's word! We are no longer strangers, excluded from the family of God; now, in Christ, we are sons—yes, more than sons—we are chosen, adopted, sons and daughters of the Father with full rights of inheritance. We are heirs not because we were good, beautiful, smart, or obedient, but always and only "according to the kind intention of His will."

"to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved (Eph 1:6).

Paul, even with his studied use of language, seems unable to put into words the abounding grace of Father God "which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved." From his Pharisaic



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background of legalism, he emphasizes over and over again the gift of salvation: grace (unmerited favor) “freely bestowed” (an unearned gift, given with no strings attached). All these blessings from the Father are bestowed on us in union with Christ.

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, which He lavished upon us (Eph 1:7,8).

Drilling deeper into the meaning of the Father’s grace, Paul enumerates several key concepts. Too often we read over the term “redemption” without understanding its full meaning. The Greek word translated “redemption” means a paying of a ransom to release someone from bondage. We think of the Somali pirates who have recently been commandeering ships and then holding the ships and the crews for ransom, often collecting millions of dollars. In Romans 7:4 the Apostle states that we were “sold into bondage to sin.” We also think of times the child of a wealthy family has been kidnapped, and because of the great love for the child, the wealthy father, willing to do anything to get his beloved child back, pays the asking price. But notice the difference here. Let what follows sink deep into your mind, soul and spirit. Our Father gave His only Son—yes—His beloved Son, to die for us. We—sinners by birth, action, neglect, thought, and lack of faith—are the treasure kidnapped by sin that the Father desperately seeks! We are the beloved children! For the Father so loved the world (think us) that He gave His only begotten Son (price paid for us) that whosoever (think all sinners) believes may have everlasting life.

Sometimes in real life the kidnapper harms, even kills, the beloved child. It was, so to speak, a bloody crime scene there at the cross when the price for sin was paid. Today, in our sanitary society, blood ransom is shunned, sometimes taken out of hymnals, sermons and theology. Yet it is clear that we have “redemption through Christ’s blood.” Remember, too, that Christ is God, and the Godhead is not only gracious, but also holy and just. Paul cannot stop adding words to widen the horizon of grace. “...which He lavished on us”. The Greek word translated “lavished” in the NASB is “abound”. It carries the idea of being not only enough, but there is abundance left over. Just as a huge Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings not only satisfies our hunger, there is enough for us to stuff ourselves—and then come pie and ice cream! Even after that, when the guests have moved their chairs back from the table, there is still an abundance left over for future needs—even enough for the dogs!

In all wisdom and insight He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth (Eph 1:8-10).

This is a complex series of statements and can only be understood in the larger context of this book and the rest of Paul’s letters. Later Paul makes it clear that the mystery he speaks of is that “the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,” (Eph 3:6).

This is an outgrowth of Paul’s adoption metaphor and is stated clearly in Galatians 3:14:

“In order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”

No longer are the Jews to be pitted against the Gentiles. Now, in Christ, we are one body, saved by one gospel, with the barriers of culture and ritual laws of food, circumcision, and Sabbath broken down.

All things are summed up in Christ. He is the expression of the Father’s love and grace. In him we have our access to the Holy Father who loved us before the Christ event, before the blood of the cross. Now, however, after the cross, we are reconciled, adopted and clothed with Christ’s righteousness, and this new position has opened up a new relationship. Through the Spirit we now have restored fellowship with the Father and the Son.

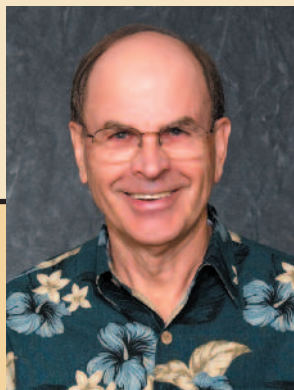
In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory (Eph 1:10-12).

The Greek “have obtained” and “having been predestined” are aorist passive indicating past action done to or for us by another! These verses underline again that the inheri-

tance itself and the means of our inheritance are both received by us without our involvement. This was done for us by the will of the Father. Believers, says Paul, are set forth as “praise to His glory.

In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation— having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory (Eph 1:12-14).

Now, for the first time in this symphony of praise, Paul mentions human involvement. Note that there is no merit here but there is human cooperation. What did the Ephesians to whom Paul was writing do? They listened to the message of truth, the gospel of their salvation.



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Then, after listening, they believed. As soon as they believed, they were “sealed in Christ, with the Holy Spirit of promise”! Our acceptance of the gospel brings praise to the Father! Paul is not content to state the simplicity of saving faith just once. He repeats it again. In essence he says, “you listened to the proclamation of the Gospel; you responded in faith by believing; this resulted in your being sealed with the Holy Spirit—which, in turn, is your pledge or guarantee of your future inheritance and redemption. And all this is to the praise of the Father’s glory.

The apostle John put it this way: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life” (Jn 3:16) Belief is simply the empty hand accepting the riches of God’s grace. It is a simple act, but a necessary one. Throughout the New Testament, belief (think faith and trust) in Christ is set forth as the ONLY way of salvation.

It is my prayer that we each grasp the riches of the Father’s love and grace that He has lavished on us in union with Christ; that we listen to the gospel of our salvation and trust our lives to that gospel so that we can be sealed by the Holy Spirit, assuring our adoption into the heavenly family, fully qualified sons and daughters of God. †

This is how it feels to be free! FROM PAGE 5

place with the right person, I would be content. My husband and I moved to northern Norway, a utopia of cross-country skiing and breathtaking scenery. My fantasy ended abruptly, however, and I found myself going back to America—alone.

I settled in Southern California where I had friends, and soon after arrival, I was invited to attend Trinity Church in Redlands. I’ll never forget that first visit. The greeters welcomed me with warmth; I looked around the worshipping congregation and saw tears and joy. The sermon ended with a call to trust Jesus. While I didn’t know what trusting Jesus meant, I knew I had found something compelling.

The next Friday evening I was invited to the Former Adventist Fellowship Bible study at Trinity church. I joined the group’s study of Galatians—the very words in which Martin Luther had discovered grace!

It seemed Paul was writing his letter directly to me. Like the Galatians, I was confused about my relationship to the Old Testament law. Now, reading the Bible without EGW’s input, I began to understand that Jesus’ life and death fulfilled the law and prophets. Both Jew and Gentile are under a new covenant with God. Gradually the gospel of Jesus Christ began to sound like good news!

Paul says it clearly in Galatians 2:16 (NIV): “know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So

we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.”

Adventism had blinded me from seeing the fullness of Jesus—who He is, what He did for me on the cross, and what He continues to do for me. Now, at last, the veil has lifted and my eyes fall upon Jesus. He is there on the cross—fully God (Jn. 1:1) and fully man (Jn. 1:14) so that He is my sin offering (Rom. 8:3) whereby my sins are forgiven, and I am declared righteous and justified before God (Rom. 3:24) by simply trusting Jesus Christ (Rom. 2:8,9).

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus, the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death” (Rom. 8:1,2).

There is now only one Della. In Jesus, I am a daughter of my Father in heaven, born again of the Spirit and being transformed by Him. I still have moments of despair, confusion, and insecurity, but Jesus lifts me into His joy, peace, and hope., and my purpose is clear. Jesus is God’s final Word to us—we need no other (Heb. 1:1-4).

Glory Hallelujah, I am FREE! †

*By Shawn Craig, Dave Clark and Don Koch

New Adventist president shares his vision

The 29th Seventh-day Adventist General Conference session met in Atlanta, Georgia, from June 23 to July 3, 2010. Business accomplished during the session included election of officers, some revisions in the church manual, the decision to do a comprehensive study of the theology of women's ordination, and the adoption of several resolutions.

The resolutions addressed these subjects: freedom of speech and defamation of religion; ending violence against women and girls; the Bible's worldview (creation during a literal seven-day week and a universal flood); the nurture and protection of children; global poverty (joining "the global community in supporting the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals for reducing poverty" and partnering with "civil society, governments and others... to participate in God's work of establishing enduring justice in a broken world"); the Holy Bible (affirming its presentation of "Christ as the most sublime revelation of God's love" and encouraging members to hear the word daily), and the Spirit of Prophecy as manifested in the ministry and writings of Ellen G. White (EGW).

The Spirit of Prophecy resolution affirmed EGW as having the gift of prophecy, calling on members to study her messages, on institutions to follow her counsels for them, on pastors to use her in planning sermons, and on administrators to make her writings widely available and affordable.

President Wilson's sermon

Ted N. C. Wilson, son of past General Conference president N. C. Wilson, was elected the new president of the worldwide Adventist organization. Daniel R. Jackson, formerly president of the Canadian Union of Seventh-day Adventists, was elected the new president of the North American Division.

In his sermon on the last Sabbath (Saturday) of General Conference, July 3, President Wilson addressed the world church. In his hour-long sermon, Wilson outlined his desires for the church, striking a noticeably historic tone. He affirmed Sabbath keeping as the mark of the remnant: "The observance of the Sabbath is not only a sign of His creatorship in the beginning but

will be THE sign of God's people in the last days in contrast to those with the mark of the beast representing an attempt to keep holy a day which God has not set apart as holy."

Ellen G. White promoted

Wilson further affirmed Ellen White as "the spirit of prophecy" marking Adventists as the "remnant people" described in Revelation 12:17 and 19:10. "Just as the Bible is not outdated or irrelevant, neither is the testimony of God's end-time messenger," he said. Moreover, he said God gave her "inspired insight" and instructed, "Let us read the Spirit of Prophecy, follow the Spirit of Prophecy and share the Spirit of Prophecy."

He reminded the approximately 70,000 people in the Georgia Dome that God raised up Adventism "with a mission of salvation to the world that must continually go forward in the humility of Jesus." The success of this mission depends on individuals asking for revival so the Holy Spirit can pour out the latter rain. "Let us not make God wait any longer to begin the latter rain so that Jesus can come," he admonished, and quoted EGW: "When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own."

Wilson warned against accepting worship and outreach methods "because they are new or trendy." He said not to reach out "to movements or megachurch centers outside the Seventh-day Adventist Church" and said to "stay away from non-biblical spiritual disciplines or methods of spiritual formation that are rooted in mysticism." He asserted that members are to "look within the Seventh-day Adventist Church" to pastors, evangelists, scholar, and other leaders who "can provide evangelistic methods and programs that are based on solid Biblical principles and 'The Great Controversy Theme.'" Everything, he stated, must be tested by the Bible and the counsel of Ellen G. White.

Quoting liberally from EGW throughout the sermon, Wilson urged members to accept her writings as God's gift not only for the past but even more for the future. They provide "clear, inspired counsel to aid our application of Bible truth," he said; "it is a

JOSEF KISSINGER/ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK



The newly elected president of Adventism's General Conference, Ted N.C. Wilson, addresses the church on Saturday, July 3, 2010.

reliable theological expositor of the Scriptures. The Spirit of Prophecy is to be read, believed, applied and promoted."

Wilson defined grace as "the promise of God's pardon and the provision of God's power—justification and sanctification," and he defined the everlasting gospel as "the righteousness of Christ".

Editor's comments

Wilson's definition of the gospel as "the righteousness of Christ" reveals Adventism's foundation. Instead of defining the gospel as Paul did in 1 Cor. 15:1-4, stating Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again on the third day according to Scripture, Adventism sees the gospel as Jesus living a sinless life, thus demonstrating how we also may live, and dying to make it possible for humans to be justified for their past sins and enabled to progressively experience sanctification.

In the Bible, the power of the gospel is the blood of Jesus shed on the cross which completely atoned for human sin. In Adventism, the "power" in the gospel is Jesus' sinless life which demonstrates humanity's potential for a similar "victory".

Instead of the biblical revelation of "grace" as God's kindness in sending His Son as a sacrifice of atonement, Wilson's definition exposes Adventist belief that God's grace is not summed up by the cross but by His making it possible for mankind to achieve the same obedience Jesus demonstrated with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Wilson's sermon suggests that Adventism may make a swing back toward its historic roots, thus presenting its true nature to the world instead of attempting to camouflage its unique beliefs behind evangelical-sounding language. †

True proclamation

My neighbor loaned me a copy of *Proclamation!* (Jan-March, 2010) to look at and see what I thought. It's a great magazine—what a true proclamation of the true gospel. Praise the Lord. Glory to His name...

I am a retired missionary and Baptist pastor. Please put me on your mailing list to receive *Proclamation!* If at all possible, could you send me three copies of the last issue. I'd like a copy for my personal files and the other two for my

God said that He has changed His mind and no longer wants each seventh-day Sabbath to be the memorial and reminder that in six days He created the earth and everything on it.

Sabbath was God's creation, and Sunday is man's tradition...

You try to discredit God's messenger and prophet, Ellen White; Jesus reminded the scribes and Pharisees that their ancestors had killed many of the prophets. It's nothing new. Please cancel my name from your mailing list;

message repeated throughout the New Testament: the gospel is the good news that Jesus was crucified once-for-all for the sins of the world (see Rom. 3:21-26; Heb. 10:12). He died and rose to life on the third day—and all these details were foretold in the Old Testament. His death on the cross completed the atonement in full; there is no continuing application of His blood in the heavenly sanctuary. When we trust Christ for His payment of our sin, we are counted righteous (Rom. 10:3-4), and we pass from death to life (Jn. 5:24) as the Holy Spirit brings our dead spirits to life (Jn. 3:3-6) and seals us as a guarantee of our future physical glorification (Eph 1:13-14).

Claiming to "follow Jesus" does not make one a Christian. Accepting God's verdict that we are condemned to eternal death (Jn. 3:18; Eph. 2:3) and in need of a Savior, and placing our trust in the Lord Jesus to have paid in full the debt of our past, present, and future sins results in our being born again. This new birth is what makes a person a Christian (Jn. 3:3-6; Eph. 1:13-14; 2:4-10).

Proclamation! exists to share the biblical gospel with those who have only learned a distorted gospel which Paul says is really not a gospel at all (Gal. 1:6-10).

If you have a problem with Adventist teachings, you should get down on your Christian goody knees and beg the Almighty for forgiveness.

sons-in-law who are active Baptist pastors... Thank you and God bless
EVERETT, WA

Jesus is coming soon. You don't have time to twist and misinterpret the plain teachings of God's word.

QUEENSBURY, NY

Killing the prophets is not new

Surely the money that is spent to publish *Proclamation!* would be far more wisely spent if it were used to help spread the gospel to the many around the world who haven't heard it yet. Using this money to tear down the faith of loyal followers of Jesus is certainly not what God had in mind when He asks us to be faithful stewards.

At the end of creation week, God rested from all His work—on the seventh day; therefore God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, as a perpetual memorial and reminder that He is the Creator. He has commanded (not suggested) that we keep the Sabbath holy and rest from our labors, too. The fourth commandment is the only one of the ten that begins with the word "Remember". Nowhere in His word has

Editor's note: Because we frequently receive letters that challenge us to spread the gospel to those who don't know Jesus instead of "attacking" Adventism or dividing the body of Christ, I'm going to address this issue raised again in this letter.

First, we have to define our terms before we understand each other's challenges. The biblical gospel is defined clearly in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4: Christ died for our sins according to Scripture; He was buried, and He rose to life on the third day according to Scripture. These three historic facts are the pure gospel which Paul says is "of first importance". This is the message he faithfully delivered everywhere he preached.

Newly elected General Conference president Ted N. C. Wilson defined the gospel thus during his sermon on July 3, 2010, on the last Sabbath of the 29th Seventh-day Adventist General Conference session:

The Sabbath and its significance relates to each of the three angels' messages in Revelation 14. The first angel, "having the everlasting Gospel"—the righteousness of Christ—proclaims, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water." God is the Creator and is to be worshiped on His Sabbath day as a sign of our loyalty to His Word and creative power.

The Bible never defines the gospel as "the righteousness of Christ", nor does it link Sabbath-keeping with the gospel. Paul's definition in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 echoes the same

Love your magazine

I love to read about people getting saved. It touches my heart. I am not an Adventist and never have been. I married a former Adventist, and we attend Pastor Mark Martin's church. I know little about Adventist doctrine and want to know less, but I love your magazine.

PHOENIX, AZ

Better cold than lukewarm

I was struck by your question on your cover, "Do your children know Jesus?" Well, mine do—as well as I can teach them. I teach them that Jesus is the "Lamb of God", our Passover. Jesus is more important than your Easter bunny and boiled eggs.

I want to be taken off your list. I believe the Adventists are better off as cold as they are than lukewarm as you and your group are becoming—or already are.

TYLER, TX

Proclamation integral

I want to thank you for the latest issue of *Proclamation!* I felt that your reply to "Steps to Christ" was excellent, as you answered the challenge with both Christian love and Biblical truth!

I really appreciated the article "Do Your Children Know Jesus?" All the articles were good, but this one especially spoke to me. Right now, early in our journey out, I am appreciat-

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MISSION

To proclaim the good news of the new covenant gospel of grace in Christ and to combat the errors of legalism and false religion.

MOTTO

Truth needs no other foundation than honest investigation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and a willingness to follow truth when it is revealed.

MESSAGE

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God; not of works, that no one should boast." Ephesians 2:8,9

ing articles that point out where we were led astray over the deeper theologically-based ones. It was so enlightening to see where as a sixth generation SDA I had been taught error and to have you back it up with Biblical truth. I am now better equipped to root out deception and see the truth according to God's Word.

Proclamation! has been an integral part of our journey out of Adventism, our quest to discovering the truth in God's Word, and to our taking off Adventist sunglasses—thank you for being faithful to Him!

CAMINO, CA

Beg for forgiveness

I wrote your office about this garbage that you keep sending us. If you have a problem with Adventist teachings, you should get down on your Christian goody knees and beg the Almighty for forgiveness. We do not want your literature to ever be sent to us. You have a lot of nerve; because you're unhappy you are trying to indoctrinate all Adventist Christians. The best thing for your magazine would be to preach how happy you are in your newfound glory and work on saving non-believers instead of trashing the Adventist church.

We do not want your magazine to clutter our post office box.

TRI CITIES, WA

Deliverance from the bondage of sin

I just recently left Adventism and now attend an evangelical congregation. I have never felt such freedom and deliverance from the bondage of sin as I do now.

I grew up Adventist and left about 2 years ago when I was 19. Doubts about my beliefs began to creep into my mind as I delved deeper into Adventist theology. It was through my time spent teaching Adventist prophecy meetings and "magabooking" (I was a literature evangelist with the Iowa-Missouri conference of Seventh-day Adventists and basically sold E. G. White books door-to-door) that I began to question my beliefs. After leaving Adventism, all my Adventist "friends" began to treat me unkindly and even harassed me through phone calls, at my work place, and also by visiting my home. People I respected now viciously attacked me and my family, calling us "Babylonians" and our new evangelical church "Babylon." Like the old saying says, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words may never hurt me." No hateful words can take away my newly found salvation.

I am very happy in my new church home and enjoy the freedom I've received from Jesus Christ's saving grace! Please send me your magazine so I can continue to learn why Adventism is so dangerous and unbiblical.

SPRINGFIELD, MO

Happy Adventist

God's blessings to all of you! I am a current Adventist and am very happy in Christ and in this church. Christ ALONE is my LORD and Savior, and I have chosen the Adventist church as my church because I feel that in Christ alone I am saved, and because of my love for Him I choose to worship on Saturday. I am not plagued by guilt or fear but am motivated by love through my personal relationship with God. I don't feel those who worship on Sunday or Wednesday or any other day of the week are somehow bad or lost. We should worship God every day of the week anyway!

And I agree that He is my rest and that in Him alone I find my joy, my peace, my rest and my salvation. I have even found this in my experience within the Adventist church. I am sorry that people have been hurt by others in this church, or have been misguided by some teachers who point at other things rather than Jesus. But this is not the case for all Adventists. There are always those who are off-base in any group of people, seeing we are all human. Please don't throw all of us under the bus saying we are all a cult or all fear we are not saved, etc.

I am saddened by the finger-pointing on both sides and I want to apologize for anything wrong or hurtful that Adventists or a church may have done. However, I know our Jesus is full of grace and I hope we can keep our eyes on Him, not on each other, as we grow in our per-

sonal relationship with Him, and in so doing He will bring unity, not division. I don't mind getting your magazines, and if you could please include some responses from Adventists that aren't crazy, such as this one, I'd appreciate it! May God continue to bless each of us in our walk towards Him!

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cance; "soul sleep", or the belief that humans are physical bodies enlivened by breath or a "life force" but without an immaterial spirit that survives death; a "great controversy worldview", the belief that Satan is the scapegoat, and some level of loyalty to Ellen White, either as a prophet or as a historically significant person who helped shape the Adventist organization under God's direction.

Praying for you

All five of these core beliefs are extra-biblical and have no Scriptural support. It is because of the foundational doctrines of Adventism that we have left that organization and now produce this magazine. We did not leave because we were hurt or because we were disillusioned by misguided teachers. We left because the core doctrines of Adventism deny Christ's finished atonement, distort the nature of man, present a Jesus who could have failed and a God who is on trial, credit Satan with more importance than he has and with being in a continuing conflict with Jesus, and Adventism endorses an extra-biblical prophet who contradicts the Bible.

We were also happy Adventists, but the joy of knowing the sovereign, infallible Jesus and trusting His inerrant word has eclipsed all other identities. There is no greater thing.

Just yesterday I found out about an Adventist website trying to "counteract" Dale Ratzlaff's ministry—how sad. I keep you all in my prayers every day and know that God is leading. I was a 4th generation SDA & had 16 years of SDA education but started wavering when I was finishing college—information about EGW's plagiarism and "Glacier View" were big factors. I never felt entirely comfortable not observing the Sabbath until about 3 years ago, when I found an internet discussion about Jesus being our Sabbath rest. Then I found Dale's book *Sabbath in Christ* and ended up on your mailing list. Thank you so much for your excellent magazine.

I just wanted to let you know there are people praying for you and your ministry.

SALEM, OR

VIA EMAIL

Editor's response: First, if you are secure in your salvation and confident that one's day of rest does not have to be Sabbath, perhaps you should ask yourself why you stay in an organization that teaches that the seventh-day Sabbath will be the dividing line between the saved and the lost.

Further, although there are superficial differences between various Adventists, all hold to certain foundational beliefs. These core beliefs are: Sabbath as "holy time" with eternal signifi-

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The life **A F T E R** with Chris Lee

The stage lights dimmed from a blaze to bathe the platform in an ocean of glowing aqua. I had come to hear a note of nostalgia, the last gasp of a reconstituted band from my youth. The moment had come for the much-lauded guitar hero to take his solo. Aging, craggy, with smoke scarred voice and stainless steel hip—could any of the old magic be unleashed after so recent a stint in rehab?

The notes began to float out over the crowd, languidly at first. As his fingers recreated the old familiar patterns, they began to dance with increasing rapidity.

Finally, with both hands on the neck of the guitar, his fingertips tapped trills with blinding speed and stunning accuracy. My attention was drawn to a teenage boy who spontaneously rose to his feet, a look of wonderment upon his face. Surely too young to remember the group's last studio album, he led a sea of more jaded concert-goers who rose, uncharacteristically silent, awed in the presence of musical genius. In that moment, blending with the blue lighting, came a strange sense of melancholy. My mind turning to the wonder of God's gifts and the responsibility that comes with them.

These days, I no longer draw bright lines between "the secular" and "the religious", but I see God's hand everywhere. Believers and unbelievers both experience God's common grace in the natural abilities they have been given, but how they use and acknowledge their talents is very different. As I write this I'm watching a World Cup Soccer match between England and USA. The field is populated by men who have been blessed magnificently with athletic prowess. An English player scores and runs from the net with both arms outstretched at his sides, index



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fingers raised as if to say, "I'm number one to the max!" By way of contrast, a US player takes a moment after scoring to bow his head and direct fingers and eyes to the heavens. I know nothing about what either player truly meant by their gestures, but it does make me think about using our talent to glorify God.

Which brings me back to our aging guitarist: he had been referred to as a "guitar-god" since his youth. At some point, he probably started believing it. His unparalleled talent was used in self-gratifying and self-glorifying

ways even as his personal and professional life was self-destructing. My sadness came in the contemplation of what such a prodigy could have accomplished had his life been devoted to glorifying God. It also hit me that glorifying self is not the only way one can waste talent. We also fail to glorify God by not using our talent at all. This failure often occurs when people leave their religious tradition along with their place in that culture. It's easy to leave and just drop out. Sometimes it's comforting just to be anonymous, slipping in and out of services with little commitment to the gathered Body. While anonymity may be natural for a time, I experience the same sense of sadness that washed over me during the guitar solo when I hear of people staying disconnected from the Body on an ongoing basis.

Even unbelievers are blessed with talents which shouldn't be squandered, but believers have been gifted far beyond just natural gifts. Every believer is also empowered by the Holy Spirit for ministry, service, edification of the Body, and glorifying God. The ways in which natural talents combine with spiritual gifting are unique and provide unique ways to serve. Are you using your unique talents and gifts for God's glory? Don't waste another day. It's time to start living the life after. †



Chris Lee lives in Lincoln, Nebraska with his wife, Carmen, and daughters, Ashlyn and Alyssa. They attend the Lincoln Berean Church. Chris is a self-described "theology junkie" whose mission is to proclaim the unfathomable grace of Christ in a clear, understandable, and Biblical way. He leads a Life Group Bible study for former Adventists at Lincoln Berean. You may contact Chris by email at ambulater@gmail.com.