

The Blotting Out of Sins

Robert D. Brinsmead

It is fundamental Adventist teaching that the blotting out of sins takes place through the special ministry of Christ in the most holy place. It is usual for Christian people to associate the blotting out of sins with the experience of forgiveness of sins. But those who have the light of truth that shines from the sanctuary should know that the forgiveness of sins and the blotting out of sins are two distinct works.

In the ancient sanctuary service there were the daily and yearly typical atonement services. Says the apostle: "the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year" (Hebrews 9:6, 7). The daily service of the sanctuary was concerned with the forgiveness of sins. When the repentant sinner brought his animal sacrifice to the door of the tabernacle, confessed his guilt upon its head, the priest would minister the blood in the first apartment of the tabernacle. Says the Levitical record, "and the priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him" (Leviticus 4:35). The original meaning of the word "forgiven" means *to send away, to let go, to release*. Through the blood of the sin offering the sinner was released from his guilt, and the sin was sent into the sanctuary.

Then on the great Day of Atonement the high priest, for the first time, entered the most holy place of the sanctuary to make a final atonement for Israel. Without, the people gathered about the sanctuary, afflicting their souls and pleading unto God for His mercy. Says the writer of Hebrews, "But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year" (Hebrews 10:3). Each candidate for the final atonement vividly recalled the sins which he had committed during the year and pleaded that because of them he would be covered by the incense and have his sins blotted out by the sprinkling of the blood upon the mercy seat.

The special service in the most holy place symbolized the final work of the blotting out of sins. The sins of Israel having been removed from the sanctuary were then placed upon the scapegoat who bore them away into the wilderness. Thus the sins of Israel

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were regarded as forever separated from the congregation. However, we must remember that this ancient service was only typical, as the apostle writes, "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Hebrews 10:1-4).

Now what was done in type in the earthly sanctuary is done in reality in the ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. The ministry of Jesus secures forgiveness of sins and the blotting out of sins for His people. These two experiences must not be confused. Forgiveness of sins is secured when the sinner exercises repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). This does not mean that upon acceptance of Christ the sin is finally blotted out. "For eighteen centuries this work of ministrations continued in the first apartment of the sanctuary. The blood of Christ, pleaded in the behalf of penitent believers, secured their pardon and acceptance with the Father, yet their sins still remained upon the books of record."--*Great Controversy*, p. 421. "The work of the investigative judgment and the blotting out of sins is to be accomplished before the second advent of the Lord. Since the dead are to be judged out of those things written in the books, it is impossible that the sins of men should be blotted out until after the judgment at which their cases are to be investigated."--*Ibid.*, p. 485.

The Experience of Forgiveness

The whole of the sanctuary and its service is an illustration of God's purpose for the human soul (see *Education*, p. 36). Forgiveness is an experience, not just a judicial act. Some obtain the idea that forgiveness means that God simply overlooks the sin which has been committed. If this is the meaning of forgiveness, then God never forgives sin. The Scripture says He can by no means clear the guilty. If God could forgive sin in this sense, then it would not have been necessary for Christ to suffer and die. His death is the eternal testimony to the truth that God cannot overlook sin. Both in the Hebrew of the Old Testament and in the Greek of the New Testament, the meaning of the word "forgive" signifies *to send away, to release, or to let go*. The only way that God can save the sinner is to deliver him from the sin in order that divine retribution may not fall upon him. Said the angel to Joseph, "thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people *from* their sins." There are many who wish to be saved *in* their sins, but the plan of redemption shows the way of salvation *from* sin.

Forgiveness is justification by faith, which is more than a judicial act; it is the mighty work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust and doing for him that which he cannot do for himself. Forgiveness has a broader meaning than many suppose. When God gives

the promise that He will abundantly pardon, He adds, as if the meaning of that promise exceeded all that we could comprehend, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:7-9). *God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation.* It is not only forgiveness for sin, but reclaiming from sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart.

David had the true conception of forgiveness when he prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10). And again he says, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:12). (See *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 114). Therefore, unless we are delivered from sin, we have not experienced forgiveness for sin; unless its power is broken in the life, so that the soul is set free in Jesus, there is no such thing as forgiveness. When a truly repentant sinner, through the working of the love of God upon his heart, turns from sin to Christ, then like the publican cries, "God be merciful unto me, a sinner," Christ, his advocate, stands for him before the Father and pleads, "My blood, My blood." Now the life is in the blood, which means that Jesus pleads His life for the sinner. Says the apostle, "we shall be saved by His life" (Romans 5:10). Jesus pleads that the repentant sinner be a partaker of His life, for he has renounced his sinful life and has in reality exchanged it for the new life of Christ. This is the meaning of forgiveness. It verily means an exchange of life.

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Peter 1:4).

The Experience of the Blotting Out of Sins

So too, the blotting out of sins is also an experience for those who shall be alive upon the earth to participate in it. There are so many who imagine that the blotting out of sins is merely a judicial act, just as there are many who think that forgiveness is only a judicial act. But this is not the teaching of the Word of God. When Israel of old gathered about the sanctuary for the great Day of Atonement, the high priest went in to accomplish a work for them. "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord" (Leviticus 16:30). On this great antitypical Day of Atonement, God's people also are called to gather at the sanctuary for the work of blotting out of sins. "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts; let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar" (Joel 2:15-17). God does not call His people to engage in this work merely

to perform a judicial act for them in heaven, but as the remainder of the chapter of Joel 2 shows, that He may, by the work of the final atonement finish the work of God's grace in the community of saints who shall be prepared for the great day of God.

There are some who have no little difficulty in comprehending that a further work is necessary after sins have been forgiven. Therefore, let us consider in more detail this work of blotting out of sins.

When we have a true sense of the awful reality of our sins being recorded, there will be heard among us on every hand, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin *against* God." But we stop at the form of the truth rather than grasping the substance of it: we content ourselves with the mechanical concepts of the sanctuary truth rather than embracing the reality which is Jesus Christ. In a very real sense He is the door of the enclosure. He is the altar and the laver opened for sin and uncleanness. He is the bread of the table, the light of the seven lamps, and the sweet incense of merit. Likewise His flesh is the veil, and His life is the law. He is the mercy-seat, the manna and the rod that budded. He is both Shekinah and High Priest, Judge and Advocate. So, too, in a very real sense, Jesus is the book of life, symbolized by the breastplate of judgment. The record states, "And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually" (Exodus 28:29). As Aaron bore on the breastplate the names of the tribes of Israel as he went into the sanctuary, so Jesus bears upon His heart the names of all who accept Him as the Saviour. As a book contains words and thoughts, so Jesus is the Word of God, the Father's thought made audible. This is indeed a Book "of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8). No wonder Jesus told His disciples to rejoice because their names were in the book of life! No wonder that men will weep and gnash their teeth when they look in vain to find their names in the book of life!

There is more to the book of remembrance and the book of record than cold ledgers of names, good deeds, and bad deeds. Jesus says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40). The angels who record our sins register the anguish and unspeakable sadness of Jesus as He is crucified afresh by those who are called by His holy name. "In the midst of the throne" there stands yet "a Lamb as it had been slain"--torn and bruised by our sin (Revelation 5:6). As His continued goodness leads us to repentance, He must take the burden of our guilt. Our High Priest must bear the iniquity of the sanctuary (Exodus 28:38; Leviticus 10:17). Because of the continual commission of sin, the Saviour must continually undergo the pangs of Calvary.

"Those who think of the result of hastening or hindering the gospel think of it in relation to themselves and to the world. Few think of its relation to God. Few give thought to the suffering that sin has caused our creator. All heaven suffered in Christ's agony; but

that suffering did not begin or end with His manifestation in humanity. The cross is a revelation to our dull senses of the pain that, from its very inception, sin has brought to the heart of God. Every departure from the right, every deed of cruelty, every failure of humanity to reach His ideal, brings grief to Him. When there came upon Israel the calamities that were the sure result of separation from God,--subjugation by their enemies, cruelty, and death,--it is said that 'His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.' 'In all their affliction He was afflicted: . . . and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old.' Judges 10:16; Isaiah 63:9."--*Education*, p. 263.

At the same time, we should have a true understanding of what sin does to us, for God says, "he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul" (Proverbs 8:36). Sin is not only recorded in living characters in heaven; it is recorded in the minds of men. "The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of their heart" (Jeremiah 17:1). In the inner apartment of the soul temple, upon those tables of the heart whereon God originally wrote His law, man has inscribed the law of sin and death. Those who imagine that sin is only a matter of guilt which is removed instantly upon repentance, should look at the awful consequences of sin in a different light. Let them consider how often Adam must have repented for his one "little" sin as he brought his sacrifices to the gate of Eden. Having eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that knowledge of evil remained in his mind. It was not just a knowledge about evil, but an actual experience in sin which left a lasting impress upon his mind. As he was obliged to battle with the ground cursed to bring forth thorns and weeds, he was constantly reminded about the evil of his nature. He was sentenced to "eat of it"--that is, experience the result of his sin--all the days of his life (see Genesis 3:17, 18).

A sinner may repent of his sin and be cleansed from its guilt; but as surely as that sin remains upon the records of heaven, its record remains upon him. To those who have received forgiveness, the Lord says, "Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations" (Ezekiel 36:31). Many things may be consciously forgotten, but even as neurologists have recently discovered, the whole stream of one's conscious life is retained in the unconscious mind. Every thought and emotion of the soul is recorded in the mind; as the Bible writer says, "graven on the table of their heart" (see Jeremiah 17:1).

The Apostle Paul shows that there can be no moral and spiritual perfection possessed experientially while this conscience and remembrance of sin remains (see Hebrews 10:1-3). That is why the Bible worthies are not described as men who lived in a state of sinlessness. "These all died in faith . . . God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect" (Hebrews 11:13, 40).

Then what is this "better thing" that God has provided for those

who shall not die in faith. Those who do not die in faith are those who experience the blessings of the cleansing of the sanctuary. In the ancient ritual, the high priest entered the most holy place with blood to make the final atonement for the people who afflicted their souls without. This symbolically blotted out the sin of Israel. So in completing His work of atonement in the sanctuary above, Christ blots out the record of His people's sin. This great work of final atonement, or blotting out of sin, is not a mere judicial act. It is an experience involving God and His people.

For Jesus' Sake. Firstly, the blotting out of sin is for Jesus' sake. Says the Lord, "Thou has bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou has made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Isaiah 43:24, 25). As unpleasant as the nightmare of sin has been to us, it has been worse to our Lord. Not just from the cold ledgers, but from the memory of the Saviour will our sins be removed. Says the Lord through the apostle, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin" (Hebrews 10:17, 18).

When will this take place? Just as soon as God's people receive the eyesalve to realize what is sin and what is the longsuffering love of Christ. Then will come the repentance of the ages. "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn" (Zechariah 12:10). Such repentance will not be inspired by fear of the judgment, the consequences of sin, or self-pity. It will be inspired by a sympathy for Christ as they will look upon Him as the sin-bearer of the sanctuary, and mourn for Him. This will be a new experience in repentance that transcends the normal Christian experience which expresses a longing to be free from the burden of sin. Here will be a longing to free the Saviour from the burden of sin. Here will be a consciousness that the sufferings of Calvary will not end until they be done with sin forever. Here will be supplications to have every root of the awful sin principle blotted from the heart for Jesus' sake.

For the People. Secondly, the blotting out of sin is for the people of God. This is explicitly taught in the tabernacle ritual. "And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place [most holy], until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel. For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord" (Leviticus 16:17, 30). When God remembers the sins no more, it will be a blessed experience for the saints to remember them no more. Says the prophet, "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there

shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve" (Jeremiah 50:20). This will not mean that God's people will have a mental amnesia to events in the history of sin, but it will mean that the record of sin itself--the thoughts, emotions, and ways of rebellion--will be erased from the human mind. Neither will any trace of that sin principle be remembered or found in the mind again. The worshippers will have "no more conscience of sins (Hebrews 10:2). "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah, . . . Oh Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name. They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish" (Isaiah 26:1, 13, 14).

The Former and the Latter Rain

While Christ ministers in the sanctuary in heaven, those who receive the benefits of His mediation have the blessing of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the sanctuary of the soul temple. It is the Spirit that makes effectual in the life what Christ does in His ministry in heaven. And these two experiences--the forgiveness of sins and the blotting out of sins--is accomplished in the life by the former and the latter rain. Forgiveness of sins is the former rain experience. Peter said, "Repent and be baptized. . . for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). Then looking forward to the time of the latter rain he said, "Repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19). It is the former rain that brings forgiveness to the life, which is deliverance from sin, victory over sin. God's people must have such an experience in forgiveness, that they will have the victory over "every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action."--*Early Writings*, p. 71. Only those who have such a victory over sin under the former rain will be prepared to receive the latter rain. It is the latter rain which completes the work of God's grace in the soul, and brings the seed to perfection (see *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 506). By the final baptism of the Spirit of God, sin is eternally vanquished in the lives of God's people. They are sealed for eternity.

For more than one hundred and twenty years Christ has waited to bestow this final experience upon His people. The mystery of God must soon be finished. The saints must be numbered and sealed. Only those who understand the final work of Christ in the most holy place and know what duties are required of them, only those who follow Him by faith as He goes in before God for His final work, will receive the benefits of His mediation.

"The peace of Christ is not to banish division, but it is to remain amid strife and division . . . The Prince of Peace, He was yet the cause of division." OHC 328.

The Marriage and the . . .

Second Advent

Robert D. Brinsmead

The return of Jesus is one of the most prominent teachings of the New Testament. The early Christians looked for the return of the Master in the not too distant future. Even the apostles thought of His return as an imminent event (see Hebrews 1:1, 2; 9:26-28; 10:37; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:10-12; Romans 13:11-13). True, the apostle Paul knew that there must come a falling away first, but he saw this falling away beginning, and in all probability he had no concept of an interval of two millenniums.

We must not look upon the inspired writers of the New Testament as mistaken and lose faith in their inspiration. The fact is that Christ could have returned very early in the Christian dispensation. But the coming of Christ depends on certain things, and these things, not having been fulfilled in the experience of the church, Christ could not return. Certainly God foresaw the long delay, and gave the prophecies concerning it in the book of Daniel. These things were sealed to the early church, and had the church continued in the "white horse" experience of the first seal (see Revelation 6:2), these prophecies could have remained sealed up forever.

Gradually, the hope of the soon return of Jesus faded from the church, and it was not until the last century that it was revived by the Adventists. An interesting thing to notice is that whereas the mass of professed Christians and their churches vigorously opposed the teaching of the second advent in the great advent awakening, many of these same churches are today preaching about the return of Jesus themselves. However, we must not imagine that those religious bodies which constitute Babylon have made any improvement since 1844. It is present truth which Satan always opposes. When some famous evangelist preaches about the second coming of Christ, many Adventist people become excited about such a prominent man preaching present truth. But preaching about the imminence of Christ's coming alone is not preaching present truth. We must remember that the false Christ is coming too, and that his coming will precede the true coming and take the professed Christian world captive. What we need to know is the vital truth about the coming of Christ.

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Christ's Coming Dependent on the Marriage

There is one great event connected with the second coming of Jesus --the marriage:

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. . . . And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself. And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Revelation 19:6-8, 11-15).

Notice from this Scripture: the wife makes herself ready, the marriage is consummated, then Christ comes. Christ cannot come until His wife makes herself ready and the marriage is consummated. In the Revelation, the wife is declared to be the New Jerusalem (see Revelation 21:9, 10). Christ has been waiting for this city to make itself ready. This does not pertain to an inanimate city. If we said that the city of Sydney made itself ready for the coming of the Queen of England, it would be understood that we referred to the real city of Sydney--not the buildings and streets, but the people who comprise that city. So too, the New Jerusalem is a community of people. Christ is waiting for that community to be developed and made ready for the marriage. So, the servant of the Lord says: "The church is the bride, the Lamb's wife."--*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 985.

In Paul's time, the church was "espoused. . . . as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:2). But the bride did not make herself ready so that the marriage could be consummated.

At this point we might appropriately ask, What does it mean for the wife to make herself ready, and why does such an event have to precede the return of Christ?

God created man to live for "the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:12). Man was to give such a display of the glory of God to the universe that the challenge of Satan against the government of God would be fully met. The fall did not change this eternal purpose which the Creator had for man. Christ's coming to this earth and His revelation of the character of God in human flesh was in part

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a fulfillment of God's purpose for human nature. But before the gospel plan is complete, there must be developed a community of saints who will give the final demonstration of the love, mercy, and grace of Christ. They must reveal that the plan of salvation is so effective, that the character of Christ can be fully revealed in human flesh. Now not one solitary individual can do this. Neither can a few scattered individuals do this. It will require *a church* to do it. The church is the body of Christ. It is not a disorganized identity, but it is a united entity. The plan of salvation has always envisaged the time when God would have a united community of saints upon this earth in whom He would be all in all.

"And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even *every one* that is written among the living in Jerusalem. . . . And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon *all* the glory shall be a covering" (Isaiah 4:3, 5, margin).

Here is a prophecy of the time when God will have a pure church. There will be not one sinner in it. Every one living in her will be holy. Upon all in her community the glory shall be for a covering, a seal of protection.

"The gift of His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, is to be to His church as an encompassing wall of fire, which the powers of hell shall not prevail against. In their untainted purity and spotless perfection, Christ looks upon His people as the reward of all His suffering, His humiliation, and His love, and the supplement of His glory--Christ, the great center from which radiates all glory."--*Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 18, 19.

Thus Revelation 18 will be fulfilled:

"And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory" (Revelation 18:1).

Paul says that "through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 3:10, RSV).

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the gospel commission can only be consummated when the gospel has developed such a perfectly united, perfectly purified community of believers. Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14). Many are not aware of all that is involved in this statement. The whole world cannot be lightened with the glory of the gospel message (Revelation 18:1) until the prayer of Jesus recorded in John 17 is fulfilled:

"That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in

Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me" (John 17:21-23).

The development of this state of the church is also brought to view in Paul's letter to the Ephesians:

"And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Ephesians 4:11-16).

When God has a community of saints who are perfectly united in Christ, with every man standing in his lot and place, and with all walking in exact order like a company of soldiers (see *Early Writings*, p. 271), then it will be that the "wife" will be ready for the marriage, and the whole earth will shine with the glory of the gospel message. Indeed, the gospel will then be preached in all the world for a witness, and then shall the end come.

Not One Individual, But a United Body

Down through the ages, God has had individuals who have manifested His character to a degree in this darkened old world. There have been such noble exemplifications of God's character seen in men like Joseph, Abraham, Job, Daniel and others. But each of these could only reveal one facet of God's character. God loved these men dearly, but He desired that there would be a united community of such characters who together would be the supplement of Christ's glory. Not one man could give such a demonstration. Hence Abraham looked forward to the development of that "city" that would be formed. God not only wanted to possess individuals in Jerusalem, but Jerusalem as a whole. But never in the history of ancient Jerusalem did that community allow God to be all in all. Each reformation was followed by a deeper apostasy. Finally old Jerusalem's day of grace passed. The Christian dispensation calls for a new Jerusalem in which every one written among the living in Jerusalem will be purified, united, and holy. The Christian age has had its characters which have wonderfully revealed the grace of Christ. But the full demonstration can only be given by the church which has reached that blessed state of unity and perfection called for in the plan of God. The early church did not reach that

state. There came a falling away. Read it in the opening of the apocalyptic seals! The white horse became red, then black, then deathly pale. Multitudes of true Christians were slaughtered by professed Christians until the blood of the saints cried unto God that their cause be vindicated. Each seal has one message in common--come! Come! COME! C O M E ! Lord Jesus. The sixth seal opened. The omens of Christ's coming were given in the great earthquake, the darkened sun, the blood-red moon, and the falling stars. Then the sixth chapter of Revelation ends with this tremendous question: "For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Revelation 6:17).

Who *shall* be able to stand? The answer is given in chapter 7:

"And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel" (Revelation 7:1-4).

This company of sealed believers is again brought to view in the fourteenth chapter:

"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads. . . . These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God" (Revelation 14:1, 4, 5).

Some have so bothered themselves over the literal numerics of the 144,000 that they have completely missed the mighty message given in their numbering. Their numbering clearly identifies them as belonging to the New Jerusalem (study the numerics of the city as given in Revelation 21). This community of sealed believers is indeed the New Jerusalem community:

"In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel" (Isaiah 4:2).

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white:

for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Revelation 19:6-8).

"And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee" (Isaiah 62:2-5).

Upon the 144,000 is written the name of God and Jesus' new name. The bride thus receives the new name on being married. Upon them is also written NEW JERUSALEM, for this community is indeed the New Jerusalem that God has for so long waited (see Revelation 3:12; *Early Writings*, p. 15). The prayer of Jesus as recorded in John 17 is fulfilled. Christ's mission is complete, His work in the sanctuary is ended. He can return in power and great glory..

The Time of the Marriage

This marriage is brought to view by the prophet Daniel:

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. . . . I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Daniel 7:9, 10, 13, 14).

This Scripture shows that Christ receives His New Jerusalem as a wife in the investigative judgment. The marriage therefore takes place in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, and must be consummated before Christ returns to earth. His coming is said to be His return from the wedding (see Luke 12:36).

Now the judgment began in the most holy place in 1844, but it did not then begin with the living. The sealing of the 144,000 did not then commence. In 1844 the judgment commenced with the dead of the house of God. Since the 144,000 are the living saints who shall be alive to meet the Lord when He comes, the marriage refers to the judgment of the living. The New Jerusalem is a living community. Only a living community can make itself ready, and fulfill the Scripture:

"And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the *living* in Jerusalem" (Isaiah 4:3).

Some of God's professed people suppose that no events will mark the time of the judgment of the living and the marriage. But we should not be ignorant concerning the time of the sealing of the 144,000. There are two marriages brought to view in Revelation --the true one and the false one. They will take place at the same period of earth's history. The false union is concerning a woman and the nations who will be united in a corrupt harmony. This woman is a church. Indeed, she is the religious world. She is also called a city. Her name is Babylon (see Revelation 17). Now this woman, or church, or city, will unite with the state and cause it "to make war with the remnant . . . which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 12:17). When this corrupt union takes place, God's people will be severely tested. They will be commanded on pain of starvation and death to receive the mark of the beast. Babylon will gloat, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow" (Revelation 18:7).

Now this great time of test will be the time when the 144,000 are sealed and brought before the world. The true church will be purified of all base elements, and will stand before the world as the monument of Christ's mercy. This time of test will bring to pass the triumph of the gospel:

"And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:1-4).

A comparison of Ezekiel 43:1-3, Revelation 7:2-4, and 18:1 makes it certain that this time when the last message goes to Babylon is the sealing time of the 144,000. Babylon's union with the nations brings us to the time when Christ will consummate His marriage to His city--the New Jerusalem.

Let us, then, not be in controversy as to who shall compose the 144,000, but let us strive with all our might that we be in that city which makes herself ready for the marriage.

"For Zion's sake will I not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. . . . I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence" (Isaiah 62:1, 6).

Life, Christ

Robert D. Brinsmead

Driving north into Queensland one summer day, I stopped for two university hitch-hikers. We began conversing about our respective philosophies of life. When I enquired of them, "What is life all about?" they confessed, "We do not know, but we are trying to find out." The apostle Paul found the Truth of life, and expressed it the most concisely when he said, "For to me to live is Christ. . . ." (Philippians 1:21). Paul expressed the absolute truth of Christianity--"Life is Christ" (*New English Bible*). If I had picked up Paul tramping along the road, and had asked him, "What is life all about?" quick and authoritative would be his reply: "CHRIST"!

"When the apostle Paul, through the revelation of Christ, was converted from a persecutor to a Christian, he declared that he was as one born out of due time. Henceforward Christ was all and in all to him. 'For to me to live is Christ,' he declared. This is the most perfect interpretation in a few words, in all the Scriptures, of what it means to be a Christian. This is the whole truth of the gospel. Paul understood what many seem unable to comprehend. How intensely in earnest he was! His words show that his mind was centered in Christ, that his whole life was bound up with his Lord. Christ was the author, the support, and the source of his life." --*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 903.

Paul was not being narrow-minded when he said that for him, "*life is Christ*". He was confessing reality. Anyone who cannot say and practise that *life is Christ* is denying reality and is under the spell of a peculiar form of insanity. This spell of insanity is what we might call *the original sin*.

Christ the Life of Sinless Adam

Christ is life. He is the fountain of it. "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:3, 4). Adam received his life from Christ. Indeed, Christ was his life, physically and spiritually. Although he had not one breath of physical or spiritual life innately, he could enjoy life as long as he enjoyed Christ.

Then Satan arrived on the scene and prevailed upon our first parents to accept the most unreasonable assertion--"Ye shall not surely die." That is to say, "You do not need God. You have life in yourself. You can enjoy life without Him." Now this is just as unrealistic as saying that a light bulb can shine without the current of electricity, or that the flower can reveal color without the sunlight. Yet Adam and Eve tried to have life without the Life; they tried to have light without the Light.

"Satan was dependent upon God for his life. He resolved to ignore this dependence, but he could not destroy the fact. . . . Satan

separated himself from God. . . . he prevailed on Adam to sin.
. . . Every sin committed awakens the echoes of the original sin."
--*Review and Herald*, April 16, 1901.

Thus we see that sin is folly and madness. It is a denial of reality, a form of insanity. One who cuts himself off from God cuts himself off from life. It is a kind of suicide. "For whoso findeth Me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against Me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate Me love death" (Proverbs 8:35, 36).

Life to All Through the Cross

Now Adam would have died immediately but for the eternal provision of the gospel. As soon as there was a sinner, there was a Saviour. Christ was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8). Only through the crucified One could Adam or any other sinner receive any kind of life. This truth is not clearly grasped, so we shall pause to consider its tremendous reality.

There is not one spark of physical life apart from Christ. "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being. . . ." (Acts 17:28).

"The physical organism of man is under the supervision of God; but it is not like a clock, which is set in operation, and must go of itself. The heart beats, pulse succeeds pulse, breath succeeds breath, but the entire being is under the supervision of God. 'Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.' In God we live and move and have our being. Each heart-beat, each breath, is the inspiration of Him who breathed into the nostrils of Adam the breath of life,--the inspiration of the ever-present God, the Great I AM."
--*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1081.

When man sinned, the curse rested upon all nature. Thorns and thistles sprang from the earth. In due time, however, Christ was revealed wearing the crown of thorns. This was a wonderful illustration of how Christ bears the curse wherever present. The only reason that seeds grow and the earth still yields her strength is that Christ bears the curse of nature and gives life through the provisions of the cross.

"There is not an article of food upon our tables that He has not provided for our sustenance. The stamp and superscription of God is upon it all. Everything is included in and abundantly supplied to man, through the one unspeakable Gift, the only begotten Son of God. He was nailed to the cross that all these bounties might flow to God's workmanship."--*Ibid*, vol. 4, p. 1146.

"Our Lord has said, 'Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. . . . For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed' (John 6:53-55). This is true of our physical nature. To the death of Christ we owe even this earthly life. The bread we eat is the purchase of His broken body. The water we drink is bought by His spilled blood. Never one, saint or sinner, eats his daily food, but he is nourished by the body and the blood of Christ. The cross of Calvary is stamped on every loaf. It is reflected in every water spring."--*Desire of Ages*, p. 660.

God tried to teach this lesson to ancient Israel. He took them to the desert where there was no bread, and gave them bread to eat from heaven. Christ was that bread (read John 6). He took them to a place where there was no water. The rock was smitten, and they drank. "That Rock was Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:4). All this was to show them that without the gift of the crucified One they would have neither bread to eat nor water to drink. It was to teach them that life came from Christ. Israel was slow to learn the lesson. Are we any better? Is it not just as true today: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider" (Isaiah 1:3)?

Wherever any life exists on this planet, it testifies of Christ and the power of the cross. The only life that sinful men have is that which they derive from Christ. Wherever there is any flash of intellect, any illuminating thought, Christ is the source of it. Wherever there is any joy or gladness, sympathy, kindness, justice, goodness, or mercy, Christ is the source of it. It is the most fundamental truth that Christ is Life, and life is Christ.

Christ and Spiritual Life

So Christ continues to give sinners physical life. All men, saints and sinners, live by virtue of, and by the power of, the cross. "Nevertheless He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17). His goodness and mercy follow men all the days of their life. Morning by morning His mercies are renewed. Great is His faithfulness to the unfaithful and the unthankful. But He continues to testify to sinners of His goodness; He endeavors to make them see that He is their life, that they have not an atom of it without Him. All this He does peradventure His goodness may lead men to turn to Him and confess the reality of life, "For to me to live is Christ." When the will and affections are given to Him, Christ quickens the soul dead in trespasses and sins, and gives it spiritual life.

Now he who has learned the fundamental lesson that his every breath comes from Christ, will more readily know that he has no spiritual life apart from Christ. A Christian is one who has found the Truth of life. *He confesses* reality--"Life is Christ." Christ is the substance of life. Does he want health and strength? Christ is his health and strength. Does he want righteousness? Christ is his righteousness. Does he want wisdom? Christ is his wisdom. There is no life or righteousness or wisdom apart from Him, and no joy or gladness or common earthly blessing that does not come through Him. And above all, the Christian says with the apostle Paul, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).

(To be continued)

The Substance Is Christ

Robert D. Brinsmead

A comparison between the message to the Colossians and the message to the Laodiceans.

When Paul sent his epistle to the believers at Colosse, he requested that it should also be sent to the believers at Laodicea. Wrote he: "And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea" (Colossians 4:16). Apparently, the needs of both churches were similar. And inasmuch as the problem which developed in the local church at Laodicea is symbolic of the condition of God's people who live in this judgment hour, we should study Paul's message to the Colossians in conjunction with Jesus' message to the Laodiceans. In this way, the book of Colossians takes on special significance for us who are trying to find the true remedy for the Laodicean condition.

A deceased pioneer minister of Australia, who was acquainted with Sister White, used to remark that the servant of the Lord frequently read Paul's epistle to the Colossians. Confronted as she was with the Laodicean condition of God's people, she could well have pondered Paul's message in the epistle which was intended to be sent on to the Laodiceans.

Form or Substance

As we read very carefully through the first three chapters of Colossians, we see that the apostle is aiming his message to meet a particular danger confronting the believers at Colosse and Laodicea. They were in grave danger of losing the substance of the gospel--Christ. The form of Christian teaching, the mechanics of the message, and philosophical views about the Christian message were in danger of overshadowing the reality--JESUS. The people were close to losing hold of "the solid fact [which] is Christ" (Colossians 2:17, Phillips), and being preoccupied with form, and religious *do's* and *dont's*.

Paul's message is a wonderful exaltation of Christ the Head of the body and substance of the Christian message. Writes he:

"For we must never forget that He rescued us from the power of darkness, and reestablished us in the kingdom of His beloved Son.

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For it is by His Son alone that we have been redeemed and have had our sins forgiven.

"Now Christ is the visible expression of the invisible God. He existed before creation began, for it was through Him that everything was made, whether spiritual or material, seen or unseen. Through Him, and for Him, also, were created power and dominion, ownership and authority. In fact, every single thing was created through, and for, Him. He is both the first principle and the upholding principle of the whole scheme of creation. And now He is the head of the body which is the Church. Life from nothing began through Him, and He is, therefore, justly called the Lord of all. It was in Him that the full nature of God chose to live, and through Him God planned to reconcile in His own person, as it were, everything on earth and everything in Heaven by virtue of the sacrifice of the cross.

*(Continued on Page 17).

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Peace and rest will come only when we bring our wills into subjection to Christ--MYP 73, 74

"The will must be brought into complete harmony with the will of God."--MKH 293



JESUS OUR PERFECT PATTERN

We have before us the highest, holiest example. In thought, word, and deed Jesus was sinless. Perfection marked all that He did. He points us to the path that He trod, saying, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."
--Matthew 16:24.

Christ unites in His person the fullness and perfection of the Godhead and the fullness and perfection of sinless humanity. He met all the temptations by which Adam was assailed, and overcame these temptations because in His humanity He relied upon divine power. This subject demands far more contemplation than it receives. Christians strike too low. They are content with a superficial spiritual experience, and therefore they have only the glimmerings of light, when. . . . they might discern more clearly the wonderful perfection of Christ's humanity, which rises far above all human greatness, all human power. Christ's life is a revelation of what fallen human beings may become through union and fellowship with the divine nature. . . .

Men and women frame many excuses for their proneness to sin. Sin is represented as a necessity, an evil that cannot be overcome. But sin is not a necessity. Christ lived in this world from infancy to manhood, and during that time He met and resisted all the temptations by which man is beset. He is a perfect pattern of childhood, of youth, of manhood.

The life of Christ has shown what humanity can do by being partaker of the divine nature. All that Christ received from God we too may have. Then ask and receive. . . . Let your life be knit by hidden links to the life of Jesus.

--The Faith I Live By, p. 219.

(Continued from Page 3).

"And you yourselves, who were strangers to God, and, in fact, through the evil things you had done, His spiritual enemies, He has now reconciled through the death of His body on the cross, so that He might welcome you to His presence clean and pure, without blame or reproach. . . . And the secret is simply this: Christ *in you!* Yes, Christ *in you* bringing with Him the hope of all the glorious things to come" (Colossians 1:13-22, 27, Phillips).

Moreover, the apostle urges home his message that Christ is the substance and reality of the gospel: "How I long that you may be encouraged, and find out more and more how strong are the bonds of Christian love. How I long for you to grow more certain in your knowledge and more sure in your grasp of God Himself. May your spiritual experience become richer as you see more and more fully God's great secret, Christ Himself! For it is *in Him*, and in Him alone, that men will find all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:2, 3, Phillips).

Then follows the warning: "In Christ you were circumcised, not by any physical act, but by being set free from the sins of the flesh by virtue of Christ's circumcision. You, so to speak, shared in that, just as in baptism you shared in His death, and in Him are sharing the miracle of rising again to new life--and all this because you have faith in the tremendous power of God, who raised Christ from the dead. You, who were spiritually dead because of your sins and your uncircumcision (that is, the fact that you were outside the Law), God has now made to share in the very life of Christ! He has forgiven you all our sins: Christ has utterly wiped out the damning evidence of broken laws and commandments which always hung over our heads, and has completely annulled it by nailing it over His own head on the cross. And then, having drawn the sting of all the powers ranged against us, He exposed them, shattered, empty and defeated, in His final glorious triumphant act!" (Colossians 2:11-15, Phillips).

What a Believer Has In Christ

Christ is the gospel. He is Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer. In Him is all wisdom and power. All that we may know about God is revealed in Jesus. Moreover, all spiritual blessings are in Him, and in Him alone (see Ephesians 1:3). He took human nature in its fallen condition into Himself, freed that human nature from sin and from its enmity, and created it anew in righteousness and holiness. While human nature was imperfect and sinful in Adam, human nature has been made perfect and sinless in Jesus. Says Paul to the Colossians, ". . . . In Him you have been brought to completion" (Colossians 2:10, New English Bible). Purification, perfection, and redemption of human nature has already been wrought out and accomplished in Christ.

The only way to secure the blessings of the gospel is to secure Christ Himself. Every blessing is *in Him*. Now let us not get the wrong idea of what *in Him* means. It does not mean that He is like a cupboard that we go to to take any blessing out of to apply it

to ourself. The only way to get anything from this "cupboard" is to take the whole "cupboard." In other words, we may not go to Christ to take forgiveness from Him. Paul says explicitly that we have forgiveness *in Him* (see Colossians 1:14). Therefore the only way to receive forgiveness is to receive Christ. So too, we do not get righteousness from Christ, but in Christ. We receive righteousness by receiving Him. We do not have life from Christ, but life in Christ. "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1:30). It is JESUS Himself who is wisdom, and forgiveness, and righteousness. The only way that we can embrace any spiritual blessing is by embracing Christ.

Those who profess Christianity, yet try to be righteous apart from the vital presence of Christ, do mistake altogether the whole substance of the gospel for the form of it. They lose the reality and embrace the shadow. This is what was happening at Colosse. And because the vital presence of the Substance was lacking, they were substituting a lot of human humbug as necessary to salvation. True, there was much religion; but their way of "salvation" was of carnal things. Their religious experience consisted of rules and regulations: "Don't touch this," and "Don't taste that," and "Don't handle the other" (see Colossians 2:21, Phillips). Said the apostle, "True, it has an air of wisdom, with its forced piety, its self-mortification, and its severity to the body; but it is of no use at all in combating sensuality" (Colossians 2:23, New English Bible). What these people were doing was simply playing the holy man. Their religious experience was a big, self-imposed act, and others were in danger of thinking them strict, religious, pious, humble believers.

In this epistle, the apostle is not negating his instruction about the body being the temple of the Holy Ghost, and that we ought to be conscientious in regard to our habits of eating and drinking. Any Christian worthy of the name will act according to principle in all that he does. But what the apostle is attacking unsparingly is the disposition to make religion a thing of eating and drinking, of "don't do this" and "don't do that." There are some today in Laodicea who need this message to the Colossians; for they think that their rigid and fanciful notions on health reform is the answer to the Laodicean condition. Others want to impose their self-inspired rules and regulations about marriage, dress, worship, or other matters on God's people. Now, says the apostle, take no notice of such humbug, do not be deceived by the pious appearance of these people, be not impressed by their show of humility. "Such people, bursting with futile conceit" (New English Bible), are really sensual in mind, are pious hypocrites, who act the holy man, but are ignorant and destitute of the true spirit and meaning of Christianity.

In this time of the end, Christ visited His people and gave them a message which He unsealed out of the little book which was in His hand (see Revelation 10:1-6). The message was the three angels' messages which were to go across land and sea with a great cry, even a loud cry as when a lion roareth. But have we ever stopped

to notice that the One who gave this message to His people to "eat" was clothed, or veiled, with a cloud? The great message of Revelation 14 was indeed a great and glorious revelation of Christ to be given to the world, a revelation in advance of any other message given by apostles and prophets, a revelation that was to lighten the earth with the glory of God (see Revelation 18:1). But after 1844, the message did not go with a loud cry, and the earth was not lightened with God's glory. Christ remained veiled in the third angel's message. That veil was caused by the unbelief of the people (see 2 Corinthians 3). True, great outlines of truth and prophecy were received by the Advent company. They rejoiced greatly in the increased light of the Word. They had in measure an experience in the grace of Christ. But their experience did not correspond to, nor was it proportionate to, the great truth about cleansing the heavenly sanctuary, and kindred truths. As time went on, the Advent believers became more and more smug and complacent in the knowledge that they had the truth, the Sabbath, the prophecies of the last days; that they were the remnant, the ones who were smart enough to find the true church, etc. They had the form of the third angel's message. They had the outline of the truth. But they were in the Laodicean state. The presence of God was not in their midst. They did not have the Substance of the message in proportion as the increased light demanded that they should.

Now the form of the truth is important. We would not disparage that. We are children, and have not yet come of age as perfected and matured sons of God, and while we are yet children we need such "childish" things as prophecy, knowledge, and outlines of the sanctuary and its service (see 1 Corinthians 13). We need the correct form of the truth so that we may correctly appropriate Christ, the reality of the message. But the problem with the Advent believers was that they were largely content with the form--with arguments about the Sabbath, the state of the dead, the 2300 days, and other points of the faith. The vital experience in the Reality was lacking.

Then came the 1888 message. Much has been written and will be written as to whether this message was accepted or rejected. But once we realize that this message was to bring the loud cry and the coming of Christ, we only have to ask ourselves, why are we still here, to get the right answer as to whether the message was accepted or rejected.

So we ask, What was the message? Is it not true that we naturally think of certain arguments presented, factual concepts given for the brethren to consider? We tend to think in terms of a doctrinal presentation that became the center of controversy; or perhaps the personalities involved at the historic Minneapolis meeting. However, if we will carefully examine the record of our prophet, we will see that it was the real, living person of Christ that was offered in the message; a deeper fellowship with Christ that was presented by how much deeper the third angel's message is than the ordinary "evangelical" concepts of the gospel.

Now the delegates at that great meeting, being good respectable

Adventist workers, and not realizing the sinfulness of the human heart (that the human heart has a deep-seated, hidden enmity against Christ), did not know what they were resisting. The old human mind, which is most deceptive, caused even the actors themselves to think that they were resisting certain doctrinal concepts, or that they were annoyed by certain personalities. They did not know that what they were resisting was an invitation to enter the real "marriage" experience with Christ, an experience called for in the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. It was hard for God in 1844 to find a people who would accept the form of truth given in the third angel's message. It was harder still in 1888 to find a people who would accept the verity of the third angel's message.

Waggoner and Jones caught a glimpse of what Christ was in the great message of Revelation 14. They kept shouting out, "*Christ is all,*" to the annoyance of most of the others present. The Spirit enlightened them to see how Christ was the substance of the message, and they longed to enter with their brethren into the Substance of the message. But the human heart said, "The form is enough. The Reality is disturbing." For seventy and more years Christ has continued to plead, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. . . ."

Today, we are witnessing throughout Adventism a revival, or awakening, and a re-emphasis of the great truths that have made Adventism what it is. New insights and glories of the great message in the light of the sanctuary have been brought to our attention. This should challenge us, as to whether we will content ourselves with the arguments or the message, the form of the sanctuary teaching, and the beautiful harmony and consistency of present truth. Now all this is necessary to have, but it is not sufficient in itself. We must see that in every way Christ is the reality and the substance of the truth. A correct road map cannot substitute for arriving at the destination. A good meal alone will not satisfy the appetite of a hungry man. We must see that Jesus is the substance of every point of present truth. He is the Reality of the sanctuary. He is the door, the white linen, the altar, the laver for sin and uncleanness; He is the light, the bread, the incense of merit. He is the mercy seat, the law made flesh, the shekinah, the advocate, the judge, the high priest, the manna, the rod that budded. He is the final atonement, the blotting out of sins, the seal of the living God. Christ is the blessing of the most holy place. We receive none of them from Him (in the sense of being apart from Him), but we may receive every blessing of the most holy place by receiving Him in the measure that He is promised through His final ministry.

The virgins are going forth to meet the Bridegroom in the judgment of the living. All have the form of the message. Only some, however, have the Living Reality.

(To be concluded)

"Nearly all the members of the human family eat more than the system requires . . . Even so-called health reform needs reforming on this point." H. L. 87.

“...In Christ”

Robert D. Brinsmead

"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:21, 22).

The sin of Adam affected all humanity, for all humanity were in the loins of Adam when he sinned (see Hebrews 7:9, 10; Romans 5:12-18). Men are not made to suffer because of Adam's guilt in his particular sin, but through inheritance they partake of his nature which is disposed to sin. Every man born is *in Adam*: he has Adam's sinful nature. It is as natural for him to sin as it is for him to breathe. He is not just in condemnation through the things which he does, but his very state of being abides in spiritual death.

However, God is not going to condemn men in the judgment because they were born in sin. They had no choice in the matter. Just as we might say that the whole human race was gathered up in Adam and was involved in Adam's sin, God gathered up the whole human race and involved it in the sinless life of Christ. "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life" (Romans 5:18). By being born of the flesh, men become identified with the sinfulness of Adam; but by being born of the Spirit men become identified with the righteousness of Christ. The free gift of justification to all men is the basis of the judgment.

If men are found condemned at last, it will not be that, through no choice of their own, they were born with Adam's nature; it will be because they *chose* to retain Adam's nature when the free gift of the sinless nature of Jesus was presented to them:

"For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:17-19).

Great was the fall of human nature through Adam's sin; but greater is the exaltation of human nature through the redemption of Christ. "The life which Christ offers us is more perfect, more full and complete than was the life which Adam forfeited by transgression." --*Signs of the Times*, June 17, 1897. ". . . where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20).

Humanity is Redeemed in Christ

Redemption of fallen humanity has already been accomplished. God has accomplished this *in Christ*.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is *in Christ Jesus*" (Romans 3:23, 24).

"For we are His workmanship, created *in Christ Jesus* unto good works. . . ." (Ephesians 2:10).

"For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God *in Him*" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

God has redeemed human nature in His Son Jesus Christ. As we consider what has been wrought out for us in Christ, it throws great light upon the meaning of the incarnation of the Son of God. It answers the question as to which human nature Christ took upon Himself. He did not take upon His divine nature the sinless nature of Adam; for if He had He would have redeemed nothing. Such a nature did not need redeeming. The Scripture is clear that Christ took the woman's nature. She was not immaculate as the Catholics teach. She had no inherent sinless nature to give Christ. The only thing she had to give was the nature of Adam the transgressor. Christ took unto Himself the nature of man in its fallen condition. This is not to say that He participated in the sin of humanity. He took that fallen human nature in order that by taking it upon His divine nature He could purify, restore, and reconcile that estranged nature to God. We repeat again: if Christ took not the nature of man in its fallen condition, He wrought out no salvation for fallen humanity. We could not then confess that our humanity has been made righteous in Christ. But the Scripture is clear as to what Christ did do for us in Himself:

"And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in His sight" (Colossians 1:20-22).

"For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity in Himself [margin]" (Ephesians 2:14-16).

Whereas in Adam humanity was made sinful, in Christ humanity was made to be the very righteousness of God (see 2 Corinthians 5:21). Whereas in Adam humanity was estranged from God, in Christ humanity was reconciled to God. Whereas in Adam humanity was defiled, in

Christ humanity was purged and presented blameless and unreprouvable in the sight of God (see Hebrews 1:3; Ephesians 1:3, 4). The gospel is the good news of what God has done for us in Christ. He has forgiven us, cleansed us, sanctified us, perfected us, reconciled us, redeemed us, exalted us, and given us heirship of the universe *in Christ*. Christ's mighty shout of victory from the cross, "It is finished," assures us that this is so.

Every Blessing is Given in Christ

Writes the apostle, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places *in Christ*" (Ephesians 1:3). This means that when God so loved us that He gave us His only begotten Son, He gave us every possible heavenly blessing. Jesus is the blessing of heaven. In Him is comprehended the accumulated riches of eternity. Every blessing is ours in Him. God would not have it said that He held one thing back. He gave all heaven in one Gift. When He gave us Christ He gave us forgiveness, reconciliation, righteousness, the universe. "All things are yours," He says, in giving us His Son (see 1 Corinthians 3:21). Such love is freely made manifest to the sinner to win his faith and affections. The mind born of flesh looks upon God as selfish, and upon His fellowship as unwelcome. But the gift of Christ reveals the Father's heart. When God gave Christ, He gave every possible blessing.

Every Blessing Received in Christ

We must not only see that God has provided every blessing for us in Christ, but we must see that we receive those blessings by receiving Christ Himself. He "is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1:30). And the only way that we receive wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption is by receiving Him.

Lest the full impact of this great truth of Christianity evade our perception, we must press this point home to our understanding. The apostle Paul does not present it to our minds that we receive blessings *from* Christ; he shows us that we receive blessings *in* Christ. Now this is a most important distinction. There are many who want certain blessings. They may want forgiveness, or righteousness, or wisdom. The Jews, for example, were most eager to secure these blessings. But they stumbled over the fact that the only way to receive any spiritual blessing was to receive Christ Himself. We cannot receive any blessing *from* Christ as if He were a cupboard to extract something from. The only way to obtain them is *in Christ*--that is to embrace Christ Himself, and when He comes into the life, every blessing comes in with Him. Thus the apostle writes:

"*In whom* we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. . . ." (Ephesians 1:7).

"*In whom* we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:14).

This gives us a wonderful concept of the meaning of forgiveness. Paul does not say that we have forgiveness *from* Christ, but that we have forgiveness *in* Christ. Do you want forgiveness? Then know that Jesus is your forgiveness. When you embrace Him as your Saviour, you have forgiveness in Him. Forgiveness, therefore, means having the very presence of the life of Christ in the soul. No sin can remain in His presence. He chases out the world's buyers and sellers from the temple of the human soul. Forgiveness means more than pardon for the past. It means more than a judicial act. It means exchanging the life of Adam for the life of Christ. It means a release from sin and a victory over it. It means freedom from the power of sin as much as freedom from its guilt. This is totally different from the usual, erroneous concept of forgiveness which views it as a mere overlooking of sin--which God can never do. "Oh, just keep your sins confessed," it is often said, as if forgiveness is like a constant indulgence. But the gospel says that Jesus is the sinner's forgiveness, and that he may have it freely by embracing Christ. But if he has not the very life of Christ in the soul, which is victory and deliverance from his sin, he has not forgiveness.

So too, Jesus is our righteousness. His name is "The Lord our righteousness." We do not receive righteousness from Christ, except it be in the receiving of Christ Himself. We receive righteousness by receiving Him. Throughout eternity, the only righteousness that the saints will have will be what they have in Christ. He will be their righteousness for eternity. This is very disappointing to those who want to have righteousness in themselves, innately. This was Adam's mistake, too. But let such ones consider that even in heaven, the song of the redeemed will be: "Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for *Thou only* art holy. . . ." (Revelation 15:4). Both now and forever, Jesus is our justification, our title to heaven.

Jesus is our sanctification, our fitness for heaven, too. He is our wisdom. Read Proverbs 8 and 9 and see how Jesus is personified as Wisdom. The servant of the Lord says to call no man brilliant who has not the wisdom to accept Christ. He may have great mental faculties, but the greater his powers, the greater fool he is if he embraces not Wisdom Himself.

So then every blessing is found in Christ and in the receiving of Christ. This is the true meaning of *bless* or *blessing*. It means to have Christ. He is the blessing of Abraham (see Galatians 3:14).

"Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed [now notice what this blessing is]. Unto you, first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, *sent Him to bless you*. . . ." (Acts 3:25, 26). *The presence of Christ is the blessing*. When God gives us forgiveness, He gives us Christ. When He gives wisdom, He gives it in Christ.

When we read that God blessed the Sabbath, we may know that He offered us in the Sabbath a special fellowship in the presence of

Christ. In blessing the day, He gave Christ to the day, so that He became the Lord of the Sabbath. Anyone who remembers the Sabbath to keep it may know that Christ belongs to him, Christ who is the power and the wisdom of God. And in that Christ belongs to him, all things belong to him; and being complete in Christ, he is altogether righteous and acceptable to God. Thus he may rest in the full assurance of a salvation which is finished and complete in Christ.

The Laodicean Message

To His people who boast that they are enriched with everything, Christ testifies that they are destitute of everything. True, His people have the form of the truth. They may have the right theory about justification by faith. But we complacent Laodiceans think that we have the truth while the Truth is outside of the life. We think that we have righteousness when the Lord our righteousness is knocking for admittance. But unless we have Him who is everything; we have nothing, but are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. Christ says that we cannot get any blessing from Him. *We must have Him.* He is every blessing that heaven can bestow. Without Him the richest is exceedingly poor. With Him the poorest is exceedingly rich. Behold, He stands at the door and knocks. He is the heavenly Merchantman. He is the gold that is tried in the fire. He is the wedding garment, the eyesalve, and every grace that is needed in the hour of judgment. Christ is the substance of Christianity.

(End of series)

Doers of the Law

Robert D. Brinsmead

"For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified."--Romans 2:13

It is well to remember that this statement comes from Paul's epistle to the Romans which contains the greatest exposition of justification by faith. Who shall be just before God? Who are righteous in His sight? Answer: "The doers of the law."

The apostle may well have been thinking of the words of the Master who placed such emphasis upon *doing* rather than mere saying or hearing:

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Matthew 7:21-27).

An Eternal Truth

When the apostle declared that the doers of the law shall be justified, he was expressing an eternal truth. This is true at any time, and in any age. The only standard of righteousness is the law of God which is the transcript of the character of the Lawgiver. Righteousness is right doing; it is conformity to the law, perfect obedience to its precepts. A righteous man is one who is in harmony with *all* the precepts of the law. Those who are doers of the law, all the law, all the time, are just before God, and no one else is just before God. The only way to be just before God is to be a doer of the law, and the only way to *become* just before God is to *become* a doer of the law.

"The condition of eternal life is now just what it always has been,-- just what it was, in Paradise before the fall of our first parents,-- perfect obedience to the law of God, perfect righteousness."
--*Steps to Christ*, p. 62.

How to be a Doer of the Law

Now who among men can claim of themselves to be a doer of the law? A doer of the law is one who does not only keep some of the law some of the time, but he verily keeps all the law all the time. Moreover, he keeps it not only through a sense of duty, but in the perfect joy and freedom that comes through the love of doing it. Now if there was a man who had perfectly kept that law except that he failed in one particular for one moment of his life, it could never be said thereafter that of himself he was a doer of the law. No subsequent obedience could atone for past failure. Therefore it is clear that among all the sons of Adam there is none that is of himself a doer of the law.

Since only the doers of the law are just before God, how can a man be just with God? Certainly he cannot be just by his attempts to keep the law. Firstly, because sons of Adam cannot keep the law (Romans 8:7); and secondly, even if they could perfectly keep it, no amount of future obedience could ever make them a doer of the law when failure has once marked their record. So it is written, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20).

Now we have two statements of truth before us: First, "the doers of the law shall be justified;" and second, "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified." These statements are not contradictory, but they show us that we cannot become doers of the law by our deeds of the law. In fact, if we try to become doers of the law by our deeds of the law we place ourselves under a curse: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Galatians 3:10). Notice carefully that the curse is not due to obedience, but to disobedience. One who tries to be righteous by deeds of the law is not cursed for his obedience, but he is cursed for his disobedience.

The gospel declares, "The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17). Therefore it is perfectly clear that the only way to become a doer of the law is by faith:

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By

what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Romans 3:20-28).

"For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Romans 4:3-5).

Harmony with the Law

One of the greatest stumbling blocks in the Christian age is the relationship of the law and the gospel. Many imagine that faith is a substitute for perfect obedience to the law of God. These stray from Paul's opening premise about a righteous man. The only man that Heaven can call a righteous or justified man is one who is a doer of the law. In the third chapter of Romans the apostle shows that the only way to become righteous in God's sight--that is, a doer of the law--is by faith in Jesus Christ. He closes the chapter with the words, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law" (Romans 3:31). Faith does not do away with the law and the necessity of obedience. Rather it brings the believer into conformity to the law. By faith he becomes a doer of the law.

Concerning the Publican who cried, "God be merciful unto me a sinner," Jesus said that this man went down to his house justified. This verily means that he went home a righteous man in the eyes of the Lord. Righteousness is perfect obedience to the law. The Publican who exercised faith to cry unto God for mercy went home a perfect doer of the law.

Likewise, the thief on the cross died a perfect keeper of God's commandments. He died with his life in perfect harmony to all the law of God. The judgment must find him to be a doer of the law. Yet it is perfectly evident that the only good works that were ever expressed in his life were the repentance and faith of his dying agonies.

The gospel declares that faith is counted for righteousness. It is counted for perfect obedience to the law of God. One who has faith in Jesus is in harmony with the law of God. Holiness is fully satisfied. The eternal righteousness of Christ is his. Let us consider these wonderful statements:

"The moment the sinner believes in Christ, he stands in the sight of God uncondemned; for the righteousness of Christ is his: Christ's perfect obedience is imputed to him."--*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 429.

"As the sinner, drawn by the power of Christ, approaches the up-lifted cross, and prostrates himself before it, there is a new creation. A new heart is given him. He becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. Holiness finds that it has nothing more to require.

God Himself is 'the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.'"--*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 163.

"The provision made is complete, and the eternal righteousness of Christ is placed to the account of every believing soul."--*Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 394.

"By faith in His merits I am free from the condemnation of the law. He clothes me with His righteousness, which answers all the demands of the law. I am complete in Him who brings in everlasting righteousness."--*Ibid.*, p. 396.

"Through the imputed righteousness of Christ, the sinner may feel that he is pardoned, and may know that the law no more condemns him, because he is in harmony with its precepts."--*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 240.

This latter statement is a good one to place alongside of this statement about the judgment:

"All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life."--*Great Controversy*, p. 483.

There are some who make a grave misuse of this statement. Because it says that the judgment must find our characters in harmony with the law of God, they conclude that the writer is saying that the saints must be found to be in a *state* of sinless perfection. Certainly they must be found in a *standing* of sinless perfection. The gospel declares that the moment a sinner believes in Jesus he is in harmony with the law. He is complete in Christ. Holiness finds that it has nothing more to require.

The Nature of Faith

There are many who misunderstand the nature of justifying faith. It is not a mere nod of assent that causes God to pronounce a man a perfect doer of His law. Faith is not an acknowledgment of the human intellect concerning the true facts of the gospel. Faith is not primarily man's own work, but it is God's work in him. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Corinthians 12:3). Faith is a creation of the Holy Spirit in the heart of a sinner. Man cannot produce faith in his own heart. It must be produced by the working of the Spirit of God.

How does the Spirit of God create faith? By presenting to the mind and heart of the sinner the reality of Christ lifted up and crucified for him (see John 3:14-16). The sinner has no righteousness of his own and can never achieve any by anything that he can do. But God took His Son and made Him to be the sinner's righteousness. "For he hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we

might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). As a man, Christ was a perfect doer of the law. Human nature was made obedient in Him. His death provided atonement for all transgression. Now God comes to the sinner and offers Him His Son. In Him there is perfect righteousness. The goodness of God creates a response of gratitude, trust, confidence, and love, in the heart of the sinner, so that all his affections are fastened upon Christ. *This is faith!* It unites the repenting sinner to Jesus. It makes him one with the Saviour. God pronounces him righteous, a perfect doer of the law, because of his vital connection with Christ. The repenting sinner verily has righteousness because he has Christ. Being in harmony with the Saviour, he is in harmony with the law. He trusts wholly in the merits of the sin-pardoning Saviour. This is all that heaven requires. God is pleased that the wayward child has responded to His great love. He asks for nothing else, and declares him righteous in the presence of the Universe.

Faith Working by Love

Faith is a creation of the Holy Spirit. It is begotten of the love of God. Love awakens faith, and faith works by love (Galatians 5:6). When faith lays hold of Christ, God has the heart and best affections of the believer. The will of the believer is merged in His will. Therefore, where faith is, good works will appear. They are the fruit of His sin-pardoning love.

It was the merits of Jesus that made the believer a perfect doer of the law to begin with. Some imagine that they will very shortly dispense with the merits of Jesus, and be a doer of the law solely through an infusion of righteousness. But the sanctuary service shows us something very different. Every sacrifice was to be salted with salt. This represented the merits of Christ's imputed righteousness (*Desire of Ages*, p. 439). All good works, all sacrifices made for Christ, must be made acceptable to God through the merits of His Son. We have all had the experience of eating bread, soya-beans, or some other things without salt. They may appear appetizing, but their taste is insipid. This illustrates how all our best efforts appear before God when they are not salted with His merits. Let us notice these statements which point out our continual need of Christ's imputed merits:

"It is the fragrance of the merit of Christ that makes our good works acceptable to God. . . ."--*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1122.

"Man's obedience can be made perfect only by the incense of Christ's righteousness, which fills with divine fragrance every act of obedience."--*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 532.

"Through the merits of Christ's imputed righteousness the fragrance of such words and deeds is forever preserved."--*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 270.

"The incense, ascending with the prayers of Israel, represents the merits and intercession of Christ, His perfect righteousness, which

through faith is imputed to His people, and which can alone make the worship of sinful beings acceptable to God."--*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 353.

"But that which God required of Adam in paradise before the fall, He requires in this age of the world from those who would follow Him--perfect obedience to His law. But righteousness without a blemish can be obtained only through the imputed righteousness of Christ."--*Review and Herald*, Sept. 3, 1901.

"Under the covenant of grace God requires from man just what He required in Eden--perfect obedience. The believing sinner, through his divine Substitute and Surety renders obedience to the law of God."--*Signs of the Times*, Sept. 5, 1892.

"Jesus is our great High Priest in heaven. And what is He doing? He is making intercession and atonement for His people who believe in Him. Through His imputed righteousness, they are accepted of God as those who are manifesting to the world that they acknowledge allegiance to God, keeping all His commandments."--*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 37.

"Men who have lived nearest to God. . . have confessed the sinfulness of their own nature. They have put no confidence in the flesh, have claimed no righteousness of their own, but have trusted wholly in the righteousness of Christ. So will it be with all who behold Christ."--*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 160.

If we will but receive the truth of the above statements, we will acknowledge that only through faith in the imputed merits of Jesus can we initially become doers of the law, and only through continual faith in His merits can we remain doers of the law. While it is through the *imparted* righteousness of Christ that we are enabled to obey the law of God, it is through His *imputed* righteousness that obedience reaches the standard of perfect obedience to the law.

We close with a statement which demonstrates why Christ's merits must be added to everything we do for God:

"The religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascend from true believers as incense to the heavenly sanctuary, but passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God. They ascend not in spotless purity, and unless the Intercessor, who is at God's right hand, presents and purifies all by His righteousness, it is not acceptable to God. All incense from earthly tabernacles must be moist with the cleansing drops of the blood of Christ. He holds before the Father the censer of His own merits, in which there is no taint of earthly corruption. He gathers into this censer the prayers, the praise, the confessions of His people, and with these He puts His own spotless righteousness. Then, perfumed with the merits of Christ's propitiation, the incense comes up before God wholly and entirely acceptable."--*Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 344.

The Fellowship of the Mystery

Robert D. Brinsmead

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3: 8-11).

The words of the apostle Paul are so weighty and powerful that we should pause to consider their deep significance. First, he humbly confesses that God gave him grace to preach. He left position, influence, wealth and worldly honour to accept the call of Christ. Paul went forth to preach among the Gentiles in order that by the results of the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the fellowship of the mystery would be made known unto all. It should be noticed that in the expression: "To make all men see", the word *men* is a supplied word. It is more in harmony with the context for it to read: "To make *all* see what is the fellowship of the mystery". The word *all* here refers not just to all men, but as the passage shows, even to all the intelligent inhabitants of the universe.

The apostle was deeply conscious that he and his fellow believers were a theatre, not only unto men, but unto angels; and that as he acquitted himself to stand in the arena of this world to preach Christ, he was not only doing so before Gentiles, but before the angelic hosts and the unfallen worlds.

The Gospel is not just for the salvation of sinners, but it is for the salvation of the whole universe.

The Fellowship of the Mystery

Paul said that *all*, that is, all the universe, were to see the fellowship of the mystery of God. The word *fellowship* means participation, a sharing, companionship. To be in fellowship means to unite in doing something together. This fellowship is between God and man.

From the beginning God purposed that man enter into a special partnership with Himself, that he would even share in Christ's glory

and have a seat with Him upon His throne. Many are the figures of the Scripture which seek to portray the wonderful fellowship that God has in mind for man. One of the most meaningful is that of the marriage, meaning the union of the divine and the human. This fellowship is called "the fellowship of the mystery".

In Colossians the first chapter, the apostle says: "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:26, 27). Therefore, the fellowship of the mystery is that from the beginning it has been God's purpose that Christ and man enter into such a wonderful union that Christ could reveal Himself in man unto all the universe. Man and God were to enter into a partnership, whereby all would see the manifold wisdom of God.

So Paul says "the fellowship of the mystery" is "to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by [means of] the church the manifold wisdom of God."

God's Purpose for Man

When Lucifer defected with one-third of the angels of heaven, the time had come for God to vindicate His government through "the fellowship of the mystery". Man was made in the image of God, and given the inestimable privilege of glorifying God unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places. Through man, God would answer the challenge of sin and Satan, and through the fellowship of the mystery He would place the universe on the basis of eternal security. Man was to be God's battle-axe and weapons of war through which He would overthrow the kingdom of darkness (Jeremiah 51:20).

Even though Adam failed in the purpose that God had in view for the human race, the Lord did not relinquish the eternal purpose in the fellowship of the mystery. Man was created for a specific purpose, and God determined that man would still fulfill that purpose. In the presence of our fallen parents God said to Satan: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15). Nothing could be clearer to show that it would be man, the seed of the woman, that would crush the head of Satan. This was according to God's eternal purpose, which He purposed in Christ Jesus the Lord.

The Second Adam

In fulfillment of the promise given in Genesis 3:15, we turn to Revelation 12:1-5:

"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten

horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne."

It is to be especially noticed that the scripture says that the woman brought forth a *man* child. He was the second Adam who came into this world as a man to accomplish the work which the first Adam failed to accomplish.

When the first Adam failed, and was incapable of fulfilling the glorious purpose that God had in view for the human race, God gave His only begotten Son to be the head of humanity, that in Him His eternal purpose for man could be fulfilled, and that the whole human race would enjoy and share in the benefits of His great victory. It was a man, the Man Christ Jesus, Who overcame Satan. On the cross of Calvary Jesus was not destroyed: Satan's kingdom was, in principle, destroyed.

The Final Victory of the Church

Although God's eternal purpose for man was met in Christ, His victory does not release God's people from the obligation or privilege of fulfilling the glorious destiny for which man was created. As the great prayer of Jesus as recorded in John 17 shows, Christ shares His victory with His people. This means that the great defeat of Satan which was wrought out on the cross of Calvary will never be fully vindicated unless it produces a people to be the supplement of Christ's glory.

The apostle Paul is explicit that the Church is to make known the manifold or many colored wisdom of God (Dutch translation) unto "the principalities and powers in heavenly places."

"The Church, being endowed with the righteousness of Christ, in His depository, in which the wealth of His mercy, His love, His grace, is to appear in full and final display. . . . The gift of His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, is to be to His church as an encompassing wall of fire, which the powers of hell shall not prevail against. In their untainted purity and spotless perfection, Christ looks upon His people as the reward of all His suffering, His humiliation, and His love, and the supplement of His glory--Christ, the great center from which radiates all glory."--*Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 18, 19.

It is in the final generation that God's purpose for His people is to be more fully realized. Says the Lord through the prophet Isaiah:

"Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them

away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 41: 14-16).

Again the Lord says: "Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms" (Jeremiah 51:20).

It is in this light that we are to understand the great prophecies of Daniel and Revelation which speak of the closing work of the church, and the final victory that the Lord will accomplish through His people. Says the familiar prophecy of Daniel 2: "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away" (Daniel 2:34, 35).

Zechariah, which is a supplement of Daniel and Revelation, says: "And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it" (Zechariah 12:3).

The seventh chapter of Daniel shows that the judgment, in the experience of the church, is the turning point in the history of the great controversy between the man of sin and God's people. "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end" (Daniel 7:26).

In answer to the challenge "Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" (Revelation 13:4), the saints enter the judgment, receive the final atonement, and experience the full victory over Satan's power within. Having the seal of the living God upon them, they go forth "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners" (Song of Solomon, 6:10). Although Satan leads Babylon, the religious world, on to destroy the saints, the revelation of God's truth which is given through the saints, causes great Babylon to be destroyed through internal disintegration.

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# The Investigative Judgment

TURNING POINT IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

Robert D. Brinsmead

The history of the professed people of God has for the most part been a series of successive failures. In the preflood age, we read that the sons of God amalgamated with the ungodly, and evidently, even the professed people of God became so corrupt that God decided to destroy the earth, save one family.

When the seed of this family became so corrupt upon the earth, God chose Abraham to make of him a nation through whom He could work for the accomplishment of His purpose. But the history of Israel was, for the most part, a history of repeated failure. Each reformation was followed by a deeper apostasy.

The major and minor prophets reveal God's lamentations and disappointment in His people. Yet each prophet speaks of the eventual success of the plan of God through His people. After delineating their sins, their disobedience and their failures, the prophets often conclude by saying: "But it shall come to pass in the last days . . ." They are full of hope that God's purpose for His people will eventually succeed.

The first promise of the Bible is that the seed of the woman would overcome the enemy. God promised to make His people a praise upon the earth, and to work through them to convert or overcome all the nations of earth. Yet the book of Daniel opens on a note of tragedy. Jerusalem, which could have stood forever as a diadem of glory in the hand of the Lord, was overrun by the Babylonians and laid in ruinous heaps. God said to the last king of Israel:

"And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him" (Ezekiel 21:25-27).

The crown was removed from Jerusalem, and from her king, and given to Babylon. Babylon persecuted and trod down the saints. Then the crown passed successively to the kingdoms of Medo-Persia, Greece

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and Rome. All these powers were used by Satan to oppress and persecute the people of God.

In Daniel 7 these powers are represented by wild ravaging beasts; the lion, the bear, the leopard, and the fearful nondescript beast. Yet worse was to come. Out of old Rome the Papacy arose and made war with the saints. Said the prophet: "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; . . . And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time" (Daniel 7:21, 25).

But there comes a dramatic turning point in the history of the conflict between the man of sin and God's people. Says the prophet Daniel: "I beheld *till the thrones were cast down*, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. . . . I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; *until the Ancient of days came*, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. . . . And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. *But the judgment shall sit*, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end" (Daniel 7:9, 10, 21, 22, 25, 26).

It is the judgment that brings the victory over the man of sin to God's people. It causes a "great change" (*Early Writings*, 271) in the experience of the church.

The book of Revelation explains the picture of the final conflict. Revelation 13 depicts the beast and his image uniting with spiritualism to enforce upon all men the mark of the beast. In the next chapter, God offers a way of escape; for the angel brings the message of the good news that: "The hour of his judgment is come" (Revelation 14:7). It is the judgment that brings victory over the beast to God's people, and victory over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name (Revelation 13:17; 14:11). For it is in the judgment, as God's people gather around the sanctuary with prayer, fasting and deep searching of heart, that Christ blots out the sins of His people and gives to them the seal of the living God (see *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 472-475).

## The Armies of the Living God

"But Providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon. When the earth is lighted with the glory of the angel of Revelation eighteen, the religious elements, good and evil, will awake from slumber, and the armies of the living God will take the field"--*S.D.A. Bible*

*Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 983. Solomon's Song speaks of the time when the church of God will become as a conquering army, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners" (Song of Solomon 6:10).

But such an army will not be formed before God's people gather at the sanctuary (see Joel 2), enter the judgment and receive the seal of the living God. Says Daniel: "The judgment shall sit, and *they* shall take away his dominion" (Daniel 7:26). God's people go forth to take away the man of sin's dominion in consequence of the victory and the blessing received in the judgment.

"Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 41:14-16).

"Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion: for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth" (Micah 4:13).

"Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms" (Jeremiah 51:20).

". . . A great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness. They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining: and the Lord shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great" (Joel 2:2-11).

"Said the angel: 'List ye!' Soon I heard a voice that sounded like many musical instruments, all in perfect strains, sweet and harmonious. It surpassed any music I had ever heard. It seemed to be

so full of mercy, compassion, and elevating, holy joy. It thrilled through my whole being. Said the angel: 'Look ye!' My attention was then turned to the company I had seen, who were mightily shaken. I was shown those whom I had before seen weeping and praying with agony of spirit. The company of guardian angels around them had been doubled, and they were clothed with an armor from their head to their feet. They moved in exact order, firmly, like a company of soldiers. Their countenances expressed the severe conflict which they had endured, the agonizing struggle they had passed through. Yet their features, marked with severe internal anguish, now shone with the light and glory of heaven. They had obtained the victory, and it called forth from them the deepest gratitude, and holy, sacred joy.

"The numbers of this company had lessened. Some had been shaken out, and left by the way. The careless and indifferent, who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to perseveringly plead and agonize for it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness, but their numbers were immediately made up by others taking hold of the truth and coming into the ranks. Still the evil angels pressed around them, but they could have no power over them.

"I heard those clothed with the armor speak forth the truth in great power. It had effect. I saw those who had been bound; some wives had been bound by their husbands, and some children had been bound by their parents. The honest who had been held or prevented from hearing the truth, now eagerly laid hold of it. All fear of their relatives was gone. The truth alone was exalted to them. It was dearer and more precious than life. They had been hungering and thirsting for truth. I asked what had made this great change. An angel answered: 'It is the latter rain, the refreshing from the presence of the Lord, the loud cry of the third angel.'"--*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, pp. 181-183.

Is it not time that God's people be awakened and called to the judgment, to enter by faith into the most holy place where Christ has promised to make a final atonement for His people, and clothe them with an impregnable armor? How important that we understand the present work of our great High Priest, and know what privileges and duties belong to us.

# The Work of Faith

Robert D. Brinsmead

In a certain syllabus on righteousness by faith, a syllabus that is produced for students in one of our schools, the editor makes this introductory statement:

"We are justified by faith and sanctified by works."

We have no hesitation in saying that this is pure Galatian heresy in its most blatant form. Such a statement rests on the assumption that justification by faith in the merits of Christ is insufficient for salvation; that when God declares a believer righteous because of his faith, it is not a true declaration. Now if justification by faith is not sufficient, then something needs to be added--that is, our own works. But the apostle Paul says, "Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Galatians 3:3). Again he says, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him" (Colossians 2:6).

The apostolic writers knew no difference between the means of justification and sanctification. In fact the Bible writers sometimes use "sanctification" to mean justification, or vice versa. A believer can be no more righteous before God than *justified*. From the forensic standpoint, there is no higher point to which he can rise. The merits of Christ completely satisfy the Father. *Sanctification* is that daily experience of learning to rest more entirely upon the merits of Christ. It is faith, and faith alone, which is counted for righteousness (see Romans 3:21 - 4:5).

## Works Not Separate From Faith

There is not one Bible writer that disparages good works. But we must be careful to understand what a "good work" is. If the work is aimed at supplementing justification, it is an expression that we have fallen from grace. If it is a work of good intention that originates from the human agent, it is a work of the old covenant, as when Abraham took Hagar to be his wife. Works that are performed to prove that we love the Lord are either born of a Jehu-like zeal or a Pharisaical hypocrisy. If they are works that are performed without the unction of the Holy Spirit, they are works of the flesh.

Many have been confused as to the correct relation between faith and works. They have thought that if faith is too strongly emphasized it will lead to fanaticism, and if works are too strongly emphasized they will lead to legalism. But, rightly seen, we can not have too much faith nor too many good works; neither can we emphasize one without magnifying the other.

There is no question but that sinners can be made righteous by faith. Men are not made righteous by *faith plus works* but by "*faith which worketh*" (Galatians 5:6). Note: "faith which worketh. . . ." The only faith that justifies is the "faith which worketh. . . ." So James declares that if faith "hath not works, [it] is dead" (James 2:17). That is to say, it is not faith at all, but a counterfeit of faith, a dead substitute for the living, active, working article. Said Luther, "Oh, it is a living, busy, mighty thing, this faith."

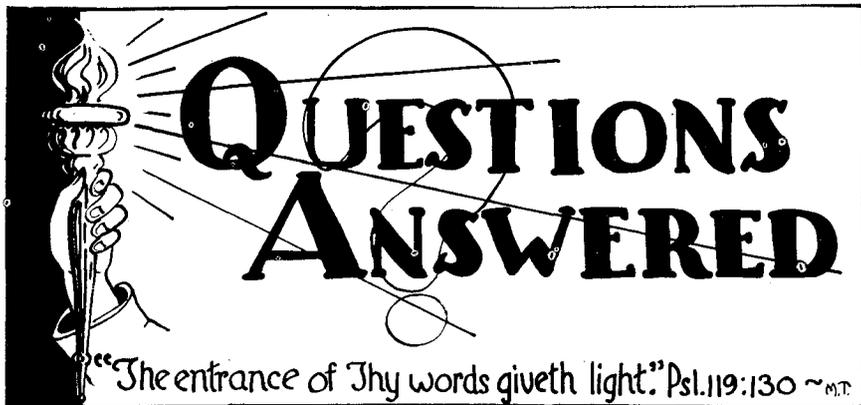
The trouble is that many think that faith is an opinion, an assent to truth, instead of such a hearty response to the love of God that it unites the affections, the will, and the whole body, soul and spirit to Christ. Naturally those who put a mental assent for faith have to stir themselves up to do some work in a vain attempt to justify their faith. They must fain demonstrate that their faith is not dead; hence they may multiply goals, reports, emulations, group pressure, praise of men and other carnal stimulants to stir up the flagging zeal of the Laodicean community.

## Faith Is a Work

We should not view faith and works (I mean genuine faith and genuine works) as two separate things. They should be viewed as being one and the same thing. Faith is not a passive acquiescence to the truth; it is a positive, active response to the love of God. Faith is itself a work, the only work that is pleasing to God. Paul commended the believers at Thessalonica for their "work of faith" (1 Thessalonians 1:3). When the Jews asked Jesus what could they do to perform the works of God, Jesus replied, "This is *the work* of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent" (John 6:29). The entire chapter of Hebrews 11 is a testimony to the truth that faith is a work. There is no such thing as *faith* (genuine) without works. Neither is there any good work which is not a "work of faith," for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23).

Faith is therefore a work, a work of love because God first loved us. Where men appreciate and trust God enough to obey His every word without question, there is faith. By faith Abel offered sacrifice, Noah builded an ark, Abraham left Babylonia, Sarah gave birth to Isaac, Moses forsook Egypt, Israel crossed the Red Sea, and men of God were strong for God and did exploits. Such a work of faith is well pleasing to God because it springs from a heart response to His love, it is formed by trusting His Word, and it relies wholly on the merits of Christ for its acceptance before Him.

Faith is the only work that is a righteous work. God says to His people, "I know thy works. . . ." (Revelation 3:15). But He goes on to say that He cannot accept them. Then comes the counsel to buy of Him "gold tried in the fire." This precious element is faith that works by love, and Jesus testifies that those who obtain it will be rich--rich in good works.



IS THE WEDDING GARMENT SINLESS PERFECTION?

Robert D. Brinsmead

"And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment" (Matthew 22:11).

"In the parable of Matthew 22 the same figure of the marriage is introduced, and the investigative judgment is clearly represented as taking place before the marriage. Previous to the wedding the king comes in to see the guests, to see if all are attired in the wedding garment, the spotless robe of character washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. He who is found wanting is cast out, but all who upon examination are seen to have the wedding garment on, are accepted of God, and accounted worthy of a share in His kingdom and a seat upon His throne. This work of examination of character, of determining who are prepared for the kingdom of God, is that of the investigative judgment, the closing work in the sanctuary above."--*Great Controversy*, p. 428.

Some who oppose the present truth take the extreme position that the wedding garment is supposed to represent an experience of sinless perfection that all must attain to before the judgment of the living. Such would-be detractors of the final atonement promise do wrest and pervert the Scriptures, and demonstrate that they do not understand the basic principles of the glorious gospel of Christ. A consideration of a few straightforward points will set the matter in its true perspective:

1. The parable is dealing with the judgment of all who profess to be God's people--both those who have died, and those who shall be in the judgment of the living. If the wedding garment means an experience in sinless perfection, then this would mean that those who have died must have either attained to sinless perfection while living or they will be cast out of the judgment--a foolish proposi-

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tion, to say the least. God has made provision for a final atonement for the righteous dead:

"This atonement [in the most holy place] is made for the righteous dead as well as for the righteous living. It includes all who died trusting in Christ, but who, not having received the light upon God's commandments, had sinned ignorantly in transgressing its precepts."--*Early Writings*, p. 254.

2. The wedding garment represents the spotless robe of Christ's perfection which is received when a believer is converted to Christ: the following statements and their context make this very clear:

"The white raiment is the righteousness of Christ, the wedding garment which Christ alone can give."--*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 965.

"When we are clothed with the wedding garment of His righteousness, we become one with Him. . . ."--*Ibid*, p. 925.

(continued on p. 14)

## Tidings of Great Joy

This is a fundamental booklet on the awakening message in the light of Revelation 18 that you will wish to give to your SDA friends. It has an attractive red outside cover and is very readable. Some of the topics covered are:

- The Angel of Revelation 18*
- Revelation 18:1-4 is Revelation 14 Repeated*
- Why Revelation 14 is Repeated*
- Why the Loud Cry Has not Yet Been Sounded*
- Christ Unveiled in the Three Angels' Messages*
- Entering the Judgment of the Living by Faith*
- How to Prepare for the Judgment*
- The Good News of the Judgment*
- The Personal Meaning of "Babylon is Fallen"*
- The Final Cleansing of the Church*
- The Seal of God*
- The Coming Crisis & the Final Test for the Church*
- The False Revival*
- The Ten Virgins*
- The Great Deliverance*
- How Revelation 14 is Repeated*

Once the present small supply of this booklet is exhausted, it will not be re-printed. We suggest that you order 5 or 10 copies to have on hand to give to your SDA friends. This is a wonderful introduction to the judgment hour message. The price is only 25¢ or 10 for \$2.00. (The former price was 75¢).

"Give to God the most precious offering that it is possible for you to make; give Him your heart. He speaks to you saying, 'My son, My daughter, give Me thine heart. Though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow; for I will cleanse you with My own blood. I will make you members of My family--children of the heavenly King. Take My forgiveness, My peace which I freely give you. I will clothe you with My own righteousness,--the wedding garment, --and make you fit for the marriage supper of the Lamb. When clothed in My righteousness, through prayer, through watchfulness, through diligent study of My Word, you will be able to reach a high standard. You will understand the truth, and your character will be molded by a divine influence.'"--*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 98.

"Christ's righteousness alone can avail for his salvation, and this is the gift of God. This is the wedding garment in which you may appear as a welcome guest at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Let faith take hold of Christ without delay, and you will be a new creature in Jesus, a light to the world.

"Christ is called 'the Lord our righteousness,' and through faith each one should say, 'The Lord my righteousness.' When faith lays hold upon this gift of God, the praise of God will be upon our lips, and we shall be able to say to others, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world' (John 1:29)."--*Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 331. (Note that the whole chapter is a call to accept Christ, a call to an experience of conversion).

"When we submit ourselves to Christ [that is, when we are genuinely converted to the Saviour], the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. Then as the Lord looks upon us, He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah."--*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 312.

This "perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah" does not mean that we have attained to sinless perfection. The following statements show what the writer means:

"However weak and compassed with infirmity the people of God may be, those who turn from disloyalty to God in this wicked and perverse generation, and come back to their allegiance, standing to vindicate the holy law of God, making up the breach made by the man of sin under the direction of Satan, will be accounted the children of God, and through the righteousness of Christ will stand perfect before God."--*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 41.

"But that which God required of Adam in paradise before the fall, He requires in this age of the world from those who would follow Him,--perfect obedience to His law. But righteousness without a blemish can be obtained only through the imputed righteousness of Christ."--*Review and Herald*, Sept. 3, 1901.

". . . all who make full surrender are clothed with the robe of His righteousness."--*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 388.

"Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided, can make us meet to appear in God's presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul."--*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 311.

"None are so sinful that they cannot find strength, purity, and righteousness in Jesus, who died for them. He is waiting to strip them of their garments stained and polluted with sin, and to put upon them the white robes of righteousness; He bids them live and not die."--*Steps to Christ*, p. 53.

"We receive righteousness by receiving Him."--*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 34.

"Jesus stands in the holy of holies, now to appear in the presence of God for us. There He ceases not to present His people moment by moment, complete in Himself. But because we are thus represented before the Father, we are not to imagine that we are to presume upon His mercy, and become careless, indifferent, and self-indulgent. Christ is not the minister of sin. We are complete in Him, accepted in the Beloved, only as we abide in Him by faith."--*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 933.

Continued on next page

Many say, "If I had only lived in the days of Christ, I would not have wrested His words, or falsely interpreted His instruction. I would not have rejected and crucified Him as did the Jews;" but that will be proved by the way in which you deal with His message and His messengers today. The Lord is testing the people of today as much as He tested the Jews in their day. When He sends His messages of mercy, the light of His truth, He is sending the spirit of truth to you, and if you accept the message, you accept of Jesus. Those who live in this day are not accountable for the deeds of those who crucified the Son of God; but if with all the light that shone upon His ancient people, delineated before us, we travel over the same ground, cherish the same spirit, refuse to receive reproof and warning, then our guilt will be greatly augmented, and the condemnation that fell upon them will fall upon us, only it will be as much greater as our light is greater in this age than was their light in their age.

--*Review and Herald*, April 11, 1893.

Conclusion:

We receive righteousness by receiving Christ. He is the wedding garment. Those found in Christ will certainly stand in the judgment. The pre-requisite for the judgment and final atonement is *conversion*, a genuine daily conversion. Thus, the apostle Peter says, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out [in the investigative judgment], when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19). Since the wedding garment is received at conversion it does not mean attaining an experience in sinless perfection, for none but an extremist could contend for instantaneous perfection.

3. The services of the day of atonement show that the imputed righteousness of Christ is needed in the judgment, either for the dead or the living. Even though Israel put away all known sin, they were required to humble themselves before God. They could not enter into the presence of God themselves. The high priest went in for them with blood and much incense, which represented the imputed righteousness of Jesus. At the judgment a final atonement is made for the righteous dead and for the righteous living. The final atonement does something for the righteous dead and for the righteous living. (See *Early Writings*, p. 254; Leviticus 16:30; and *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 472-475).

4. God's people are sealed after their cases have been investigated. As soon as God's people reach the experience of perfection they are sealed (see *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1118). Why not come before the judgment? We need go no further than the following statement:

"Man may grow up into Christ, his living head. It is not the work of a moment, but that of a lifetime. By growing daily in the divine life, he will not attain to the full stature of a perfect man in Christ until his probation ceases."--*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 367.

## Syllabus No. 3

Syllabus No. 3 contains a new approach to the third angel's message. The plan of salvation is revealed in its practical application to the nature of man. It shows the work of the Holy Spirit on the will, emotions, thoughts, memory and the physical health of man. The difference between holy flesh concepts and a holy or perfect character is also very clearly defined in this syllabus. Many of the common objections to the sanctuary message are answered. It is packed with truth. Price: \$2.00. Send your order to: GEMS OF TRUTH, Strafford, Missouri 65757.

# Ensamples ... For Our Admonition"

Robert D. Brinsmead

*"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."--1 Corinthians 10:11.*

We live in an age of special and thrilling interest. This is the great antitypical day of atonement. Christ is in the most holy place for His final work on behalf of His people. The judgment is set; the books are opened. The door to the most holy place is open, and we are invited in to receive the benefits of Christ's final atonement. A special work of preparation should characterize the experience of the Israel of God.

The Old Testament experiences furnish us with some illuminating types of the experience that God has for His people in the work of cleansing the sanctuary. Not that we prove our doctrinal points by these happenings. Such parables are not given to prove basic doctrinal points, but to illustrate them. They do not establish truth but they illuminate truth. We are not indebted to prove our position from them, for we have the explicit declarations of Scripture concerning the cleansing of the sanctuary, the hour of judgment, the call to repentance, the outpouring of the latter rain, the sealing of the saints, etc. Yet our insight into the experience before us can be enriched and enlightened by considering God's dealings with His people in past ages. We will now examine some of these which furnish illustrations of the experience that awaits God's people as they enter into the most holy place, the judgment of the living, and the outpouring of the latter rain.

## Esther

In the time of Queen Esther, a decree was passed against the people of God. The Jews were threatened with destruction. Now this decree was very similar in character to the final test to come

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to the church in connection with the beast and his image, a time when another decree will be passed against the people of God who refuse to bow to the false Sabbath. (See Revelation 13:14-18; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 213).

When the decree was passed against the Jews, Mordecai sent word to Esther "to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people" (Esther 4:8). The account goes on as follows:

"And Hatach came and told Esther the words of Mordecai. Again Esther spake unto Hatach, and gave him commandment unto Mordecai; All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days.

"And they told to Mordecai Esther's words. Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this? Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer, Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish. So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

"Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house. And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre. Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom" (Esther 4:9-17; 5:1-3).

The story goes on to show how that the Jews were placed on vantage ground against their enemies, and how that the decree was made of none effect through the deliverance obtained by pleading before the king.

Now there are a number of interesting parallels in this experience with the experience that is before the church of God. When the decree went forth, the only way open for deliverance was through the intervention of the king. But his grace and mercy had to be supplicated. The king was in the inner court where it was not legally permissible for any to enter save those who found favor in the eyes of the king.

ENSAMPLES -- continued from page 3

Esther and her people prayed for three days in preparation for her entry into the presence of the king. She put on her royal apparel before entering. She found favor in his eyes and was granted not only what she asked for, but an equal share with him in the kingdom.

When the decree goes forth and the great Sabbath test comes to the church of God, the only hope of deliverance for God's people will be that their great King will grant them grace and mercy. They must enter into His presence and plead for deliverance. But the King will be in the most holy place, even in the great work of judgment. Death is the lawful penalty for any man who enters the most holy place (see Leviticus 16). The only hope of the people of God is that they may find favor in the eyes of their great King. Nothing that they have or have done will grant them a reprieve from the sentence of eternal death. In themselves they cannot meet the standard of absolute perfection that the law demands. Therefore they afflict their souls before God as is the requirement of the great antitypical day of atonement. It is with a holy boldness--"If I perish, I perish"--that they risk all in entering the presence of the judgment of the living to receive deliverance. The church, represented by Esther, puts on her royal apparel, even the wedding garment of His righteousness (Matthew 22:11) and enters into the most holy place. Through the righteousness of Christ, they find favor in the eyes of the great Judge. They are not just acquitted, but greatly favored. They receive half of the kingdom of the great king. "... Christ now asks that this plan be carried into effect, as if man had never fallen. He asks for His people not only pardon and justification, full and complete, but a share in His glory and a seat upon His throne."--*Great Controversy*, p. 484.

Upon the church is placed the seal of the living God which will be her seal of protection in her final conflict with the powers of evil.

Queen Esther's experience should be compared with the section called "Joshua and the Angel" found in *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 472-5. Also, what is the significance of the three days' preparation? Israel was three days preparing at Sinai before hearing the law. There is a three day shaking experience to precede the latter rain (see Hosea 5:13 to 6:3). What is the meaning of this? No time setting, remember!

#### Isaiah

"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone;

because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me" (Isaiah 6:1-8).

That which brought conviction to Isaiah should be clearly understood. It was not that he was committing overt acts of sin, for he was a prophet of God. Isaiah sensed his own *state* of sin, his depravity of human nature, as did Daniel and John when they beheld the glory of infinite love.

"In the year that King Uzziah died, Isaiah was permitted in vision to look into the holy place, and into the holy of holies in the heavenly sanctuary. The curtains of the innermost sanctuary were drawn aside, and a throne high and lifted up, towering as it were to the very heavens, was revealed to his gaze. An indescribable glory emanated from a personage on the throne, and His train filled the temple, as His glory will finally fill the earth. Cherubim were on either side of the mercy seat, as guards round the great king, and they glowed with the glory that enshrouded them from the presence of God. As their songs of praise resounded in deep, earnest notes of adoration, the pillars of the gate trembled, as if shaken by an earthquake. These holy beings sang forth the praise and glory of God with lips unpolluted with sin. The contrast between the feeble praise which he had been accustomed to bestow upon the Creator and the fervid praises of the seraphim, astonished and humiliated the prophet. He had for the time being the sublime privilege of appreciating the spotless purity of Jehovah's exalted character.

"While he listened to the song of the angels, as they cried, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory,' the glory, the infinite power, and the unsurpassed majesty of the Lord passed before his vision, and was impressed upon his soul. In the light of this matchless radiance that made manifest all he could bear in the revelation of the divine character, his own inward defilement stood out before him with startling clearness. His very words seemed vile to him.

"Thus when the servant of God is permitted to behold the glory of the God of heaven, as He is unveiled to humanity, and realizes to a slight degree the purity of the Holy One of Israel, he will make startling confessions of the pollution of his soul, rather than proud boasts of his holiness."--S.D.A. *Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, pp. 1139-40.

Now this experience which came to Isaiah clearly represents the experience that must come to the people of God as they look by faith into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary (see *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 575). There will come to them such revelations of the glory of God's character, that deep conviction of the

sinfulness of their natures will take hold of them, and they will enter into the experience of deep repentance and affliction of soul that characterized the great day of atonement.

"The vision given to Isaiah represents the condition of God's people in the last days. They are privileged to see by faith the work that is going forward in the heavenly sanctuary. 'And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament.' As they look by faith into the holy of holies, and see the work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, they perceive that they are a people of unclean lips,--a people whose lips have often spoken vanity, and whose talents have not been sanctified and employed to the glory of God. Well may they despair as they contrast their own weakness and unworthiness with the purity and loveliness of the glorious character of Christ. But if they, like Isaiah, will receive the impression the Lord designs shall be made upon the heart, if they will humble their souls before God, there is hope for them. The bow of promise is above the throne, and the work done for Isaiah will be performed in them. God will respond to the petitions coming from the contrite heart."--S.D.A. *Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1139.

When Isaiah was cleansed he was ready to take God's message. When the people of God are cleansed of all inward defilement they will be ready to take God's loud cry message.

#### Moses

"And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by" (Exodus 33:18-22).

"And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. . . .And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him" (Exodus 34:5-7, 29).

Moses's experience illustrates the experience that will come to God's people in the reception of the latter rain. "As the third message swells to a loud cry, and as great power and glory attend

the closing work, the faithful people of God will partake of that glory. It is the latter rain which revives and strengthens them to pass through the time of trouble. Their faces will shine with the glory of that light which attends the third angel."--*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 353.

Whereas Moses ascended Mount Sinai, the people of God are also called to a mount. "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, . . . and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Hebrews 12:22, 24).

Before Moses could see the glory of the Lord, he had to be hid in a cleft of a rock. Moses saw God's glory because he was meek and humble. It is not an arbitrary act that prevents men from discerning the Lord's glory. God is the most humble Being in the universe. He can only reveal the glory of His character to the humble. If the people of God do not humble themselves before God and afflict (humble) their souls by repentance of their sins, they will not be able to discern the glory of the latter rain. They will call it a false light, and will brace themselves to resist it. If we are not ready to discern the glory of the latter rain, then in rejecting it we will pass eternal judgment upon ourselves.

Moses saw the Lord's glory because he was securely hid in the cleft of the rock. So today, only those hid in the Rock of Ages will be ready for the outpouring of God's Spirit.

*Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.*

Paul's desire was: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death" (Philippians 3:10). To be found in Christ means to be justified by faith. The great message of justification by faith is given to prepare us for the judgment and outpouring of the sealing latter rain. The message of justification by faith is declared to be the advancing glory of the light which shall fill the whole earth (*Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 363; Revelation 18:1). Only the experience of justification by faith can put the glory of man in the dust and prepare him to discern the glory of God's character.

As Moses beheld the glory of the revelation of the character of God, wave after wave of that glory passed over him. "And Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped" (Exodus 34:8). Self became as nothing in his eyes; Christ was everything. When he turned to come down from the mount, his face shone with the glory of the light of heaven, but he was wholly unconscious of it.

When the people of God are baptized with the latter rain, they will receive a wonderful victory and a mighty experience:

"I was shown those whom I had before seen weeping and praying in agony of spirit. The company of guardian angels around them had been doubled, and they were clothed with an armor from their head to their feet. They moved in exact order, like a company of soldiers.

Their countenances expressed the severe conflict which they had endured, the agonizing struggle they had passed through. Yet their features, marked with severe internal anguish, now shone with the light and glory of heaven. They had obtained the victory, and it called forth from them the deepest gratitude, and holy, sacred joy."--*Early Writings*, p. 271.

But this mighty experience will be preceded by such deep self-abasement (see *Early Writings*, pp. 269-270), that when the experience is finally granted to the people of God, they will be as unconscious of it as Moses was when he came down from the mount. Now the latter rain does bring God's people to a *state* of complete moral and spiritual perfection (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 506). But in the light of Moses' experience we see that they will never claim sinlessness for themselves.

### Crossing the Jordan

After Israel had wandered for forty years in the wilderness, Joshua said to them, "Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the Lord will do wonders among you" (Joshua 3:5). Accordingly, the Lord led His people across the Jordan.

Bible students have often likened the crossing of the Red Sea to conversion, and the crossing of the Jordan to death and the entrance into the heavenly Canaan. Yet the crossing of the Jordan is more applicable to the final atonement experience of the living generation of saints who shall stand in the judgment of the living. The Red Sea represents baptism into Christ at conversion (see 1 Corinthians 10:1, 2) or the former rain experience. How much discipline, disappointment, and correction follows this experience before there is a readiness to cross Jordan, give the loud cry around Jericho, and go home to Canaan. The Jordan crossing represents the final atonement and baptism of the latter rain (Acts 3:19). When God's people enter this experience then they will be fully circumcised from all that savors of "Egypt." (See Joshua 5:2). So conversion is not complete in the fullest sense until the final work of grace is wrought in the life:

"Every living Christian will advance daily in the divine life. As he advances toward perfection, he experiences a conversion to God every day; and this conversion is not completed until he attains to perfection of Christian character, a full preparation for the finishing touch of immortality."--*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 505.

When the "Jordan" experience is crossed (i.e., when God's people enter the judgment of the living, have their sins blotted out, receive the baptism of the sealing latter rain) then will they be able to encompass Babylon, call the Rahabs out of her, and enable God to utterly overthrow her. Then the living saints, without

tasting death, will enter the heavenly Canaan. We repeat: The Jordan experience more especially represents the experience of those who do not die in the wilderness, but who enter the heavenly Canaan without dying.

Another interesting point to consider is, How close are we to the "Jordan"? As a movement, the Advent people crossed the "Red Sea" at the great disappointment in 1844 (see *Great Controversy*, pp. 457-8). When ancient Israel crossed the Red Sea she was only about 11 days' journey from the promised land, but murmuring, disobedience, and unbelief kept her in the wilderness for forty years.

According to the Spirit of Prophecy, 1844 brought us across the Red Sea and very close to our journey's destination--heaven. Why are we still here? Have we done better than ancient Israel?

One would think that forty years' wandering would be enough. God thought so, and in 1888 he sent His message of justification by faith to be the advancing glory of the loud cry message. There is no need to dispute as to whether we accepted it or rejected it. That we are still here is sufficient proof to end all controversy. After laboring for 13 years to get the church to accept the message, the servant of the Lord wrote, "We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel, but for Christ's sake His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action."--Letter 184, Dec. 7, 1901 (*Evangelism*, p. 696).

In the Awakening Message, God has shown us the banks of the Jordan. He said: "Sanctify yourselves: for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you." This same message is sounded in Joel's call to the experience of the antitypical day of atonement:

"Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?" (Joel 2:15-17).

When the people thus sanctify themselves, God will respond. "Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things. . . . And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. . . . And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit" (Joel 2:21, 25, 28, 29).

## The Bones of Joseph

There was, however, a dead man who crossed the Jordan. It was Joseph. Before his death in Egypt, he gave a commandment concerning his bones. The living Israel were to take them across the Jordan. The only way that he could get to Canaan was through the action of living Israel.

Concerning those who have died in the Lord, the Scripture says, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. . . . God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect" (Hebrews 11:13, 40). Here it is explicitly stated that those who have died in the faith cannot reach that state of perfection, which state they shall enjoy upon entering the heavenly Canaan, unless the living generation of God's people reach a *state* of holiness. Now the final generation of saints shall reach a "state of holiness" as Enoch did and will be translated to heaven without seeing death (see *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 88-89). This final generation, the 144,000, are called the "firstfruits" (Revelation 14:4). The harvest cannot be reaped unless the firstfruits are developed, presented, and accepted. The dead in Christ must remain in their graves until the perfected 144,000 are developed. The 144,000 are like Israel who cross the Jordan with the bones of Joseph.

## Hezekiah's Invitation

"And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel. For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the passover in the second month. For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem. And the thing pleased the king and all the congregation. So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written.

"So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria. And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers, who therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see. Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the Lord, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever: and serve the Lord your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you.

"For if ye turn again unto the Lord, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him. So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them. Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem" (2 Chronicles 30:1-11).

While those obedient to the call were down in Jerusalem, at the sanctuary, keeping the feast, the king of Assyria entered Israel, captured Samaria, and carried the people of Israel away captive. Only those who were gathered in Jerusalem escaped. Isaiah refers to this in his prophecy of Isaiah 4:2-6:

"In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain" (Isaiah 4:2-6).

Now it is very evident from this prophecy of Isaiah 4 that the experience of *escaping* from Israel and *remaining* in Jerusalem has an application to this day of atonement when God will have a pure church wherein all are holy and covered with the seal of God's protection.

Hezekiah's invitation represents the call to God's people to "enter into His sanctuary" (see *Early Writings*, p. 78). The Israel of today is called to gather in Jerusalem, at the sanctuary of God with prayer and deep repentance before God. (See Joel 2:15-17; Zephaniah 2:1-3). Only those who take part in the work of following Christ by faith in His work of cleansing the sanctuary will receive the purging by the Spirit of judgment and by the Spirit of burning, and be covered with the seal of God's glory. These will have a refuge in the time of trouble (Isaiah 4:6).

The invitation today comes from the great King at "Jerusalem". Jesus also refers to this invitation in His parable of the wedding:

"And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold,

I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them" (Matthew 22:1-6).

Now this "wedding" takes place in the most holy place (see *Great Controversy*, p. 427). The time for it began in 1844. God sent forth His servants in 1888 to call His people to the wedding, but they would not come. In our day there comes yet another call, a stronger invitation to come to the marriage. Apparently, most of God's people treat this message of gracious invitation and the ones who bear the message in the same way as the Israelites treated the invitation of Hezekiah and the messengers whom he sent.

In Hezekiah's day the terrible king of the north, the Assyrian, came like a whirlwind and carried away multitudes of God's people. In our day we have a similar event about to take place: "He [the modern king of the north] shall enter also into the glorious land, and *many* \*shall be overthrown" (Daniel 11:41). Read about this coming invasion into the church recorded in Habakkuk 1:5-11. Multitudes will be swept aside when the great test comes to the church of God (see *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 81). Shall any escape? Yes! The prophet Daniel records, "At that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (Daniel 12:1).

Isaiah records: "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel" (Isaiah 4:2).

Joel records: "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call" (Joel 2:32).

These delivered saints refer to those who stand in the judgment of the living and who are sealed by the final baptism of God's Spirit.

What does it mean to escape from Israel, yet remain in Jerusalem? How can Israel and Jerusalem be identified in the final conflict? May we search the Scriptures, and meditate often upon those things which are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come.

*\*Countries* in Daniel 11:41 is a supplied word. Hence we omit it as it makes the sense more in keeping with the whole tenure of events.



# Weightier Matters of the Law

Robert D. Brinsmead

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith; these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone" (Matthew 23:23).

The most outstanding religionists in the days of Jesus were rebuked for utterly neglecting the essential truths given to Israel. As genuine piety and practical godliness declined the humbug of religious paraphernalia increased. They belittled that which was great, and magnified that which was small. Said Jesus, "Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel."

Israel had no excuse for its failure to understand the essential principles of true worship and the practice of genuine religion. Through every sacred writer God appealed for *justice* and *mercy* among His people.

"Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:6-8).

"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for *it is* time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hosea 10:12).

"Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually" (Hosea 12:6).

"Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother" (Zechariah 7:9).

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## Ceremonialism versus Vital Godliness

One of the most impressive features about the major and minor prophets is their constant protest that God's professed people were *unjust* and *unmerciful*. The people were not rebuked for being irreligious. They were exceedingly religious. But their systems of worship had become a cloak for wicked hearts and a means to blind the mind and to harden the heart. God said to them, "I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hosea 6:6). "To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice. . . . The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, *when* he bringeth it with a wicked mind?" (Proverbs 21:3, 27).

Micah declared that the Lord was not pleased with calves, burnt offerings, thousands of rams or even rivers of oil. No amount of religiosity could atone for Israel's destitution of the fruits of *justice* and *mercy*.

Through Amos the Lord declared, "I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream" (Amos 5:21-24).

## True Sabbath Keepers

These lessons are just as applicable to modern Israel. As Sabbath-keepers we are all familiar with the great texts on the Sabbath which are found in Isaiah 56 and 58. We should notice that the gospel prophet points out that *justice* and *mercy* will characterize God's true Sabbath-keeping people.

"Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment and do justice: for my salvation *is* near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed *is* the man *that* doeth this, and the son of man *that* layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil" (Isaiah 56:1-2).

"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.

"Wherefore have we fasted, *say they*, and thou seest not? *wherefore* have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as *ye do this day*, to make your voice to be heard on high.

(Continued on page 17)

(WEIGHTIER MATTERS -- continued from page 3)

"Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? *is it* to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes *under him*? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? *Is* not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

"*Is it* not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward.

"Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I *am*. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity: and *if* thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness *be* as the noon day. And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

"And *they that shall be* of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

"If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, *from* doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking *thine own* words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isaiah 58).

If we as Sabbath-keepers today are neglecting these weightier matters of the law, then our Sabbath-keeping is vain, and the Lord says, "I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies" (Amos 5:21).

#### The Character of God

In calling us to be *just* and *merciful*, God is inviting us to be like Him and to walk with Him. "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, *and to humble thyself to walk with God*" (Micah 6:8, margin).

*Justice* and *mercy* are the two great pillars of the divine government. The man of sin had good reason to expunge the second commandment as well as to change the fourth, for it is in the second

commandment that these two great attributes of God's character are set forth: ". . . visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments" (Exodus 20:5, 6; compare chapter 34:6, 7).

The Psalmist says, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face" (Psalm 89:14). The wise man says, "Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy" (Proverbs 20:28). The very throne of the universe is upheld by the two great pillars of the law of Jehovah--justice and mercy. The principle is shown to be applicable to earthly rulers.

To the proud Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel said: "Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity" (Daniel 4:27).

To the king of Moab, Isaiah warned, "And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness" (Isaiah 16:5).

"He [God] loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the mercy of the Lord" (Psalm 33:5, margin).

"Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness [justice] is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O Lord, thou preservest man and beast. How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings" (Psalm 36:5-7).

### The Great Controversy

The great controversy between Christ and Satan is concerning the law of God. The adversary of God and man declared that since the law of God was founded upon the principles of justice and mercy it was an impossible arrangement, for with the advent of sin, God would be forced to change His law. For God to punish sin, he declared, would mean that mercy would have to give way. On the other hand, if God forgave, Satan declared that the Lord would not be a God of truth and justice. To Lucifer's mind, the reconciliation of justice and mercy was an absolute impossibility. God could not be both, he said. Thus he saw himself substituting his own principles for the principles of God's government, and uprooting Jehovah in the affection of the universe.

But the cross took Satan completely by surprise. He had no idea that such a plan existed in the divine mind from the days of eternity. With the advent of sin the time had come for Deity to fully unfold the law, and reveal the mighty bridge that unites the prerogatives of justice and mercy. God's law is *love*. Neither justice nor mercy is inconsistent with love; on the contrary, divine love

blends the two together in perfect balance. God's love led Him to humble Himself, even to the death of the cross. Lucifer had said, "Justice and mercy are antagonistic." God responded, "My love and humility shall unite them." And at the cross divine love and humility revealed the bridge that united justice and mercy.

"Christ's death proved God's administration and government to be without a flaw. Satan's charge in regard to the conflicting attributes of justice and mercy was forever settled beyond question." --*Questions on Doctrine*, p. 674.

"His [Christ's] object was to reconcile the prerogatives of justice and mercy." --*Ibid*.

This deep mystery of the union of justice and mercy was shadowed forth in the ancient sanctuary service. In the most holy place stood the holy law of Jehovah, the great rule of perfect justice and perfect mercy. Over the ark which contained the law of God was a special lid on which the blood of the sin offering was to be sprinkled once a year. Hence this covering over the law was called the *kapporeth*, or literally, the *place of atonement*. (Today, it is commonly called the *mercy seat*, which term comes over from Luther's German. But *place of atonement* is actually the meaning and intent of the word.)

Now the place of atonement is Calvary. Here God was showing that Calvary is not something that is to be left without the sanctuary, but it is to be brought inside and placed in its true relationship to the law of God. The Revelator saw the "lamb as it had been slain" (Revelation 5:6) in the midst of the throne. Calvary stands between the cherubim, over the law of God. It is here that "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Psalm 85:10).

"As the bow in the cloud is formed by the union of the sunlight and shower, so the rainbow encircling the throne represents the combined power of mercy and justice. It is not justice alone that is to be maintained; for this would eclipse the glory of the rainbow of promise above the throne; man could see only the penalty of the law. Were there no justice, no penalty, there would be no stability to the government of God.

"It is the mingling of judgment and mercy that makes salvation full and complete. It is the blending of the two that leads us, as we view the world's Redeemer and the law of Jehovah, to exclaim, 'Thy gentleness hath made me great.' We know that the gospel is a perfect and complete system, revealing the immutability of the law of God. It inspires the heart with hope, and with love for God. Mercy invites us to enter through the gates into the city of God, and justice is sacrificed to accord to every obedient soul full privileges as a member of the royal family, a child of the heavenly king." --*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, pp. 1071, 1072.

What a precious revelation that in the meek and lowly One, justice and mercy blend. It is the humility of divine love which forms the rainbow of hope and promise to every son and daughter of Adam.

## The Last Demonstration

When we realize that divine love humbled itself to the cross to unite justice and mercy, then we may realize what it will mean to us to "deal justly, and to love mercy." We cannot blend the divine attributes without humbling ourselves to lift the cross and follow Christ. Thus Micah says that the only way that we can be just and merciful is to humble ourselves to walk with God.

By nature, our hearts are proud. The proud heart is neither just nor merciful. If you wanted help and mercy from a fellow traveller of life, you would not go to a proud man for help, for sympathy and mercy. Would you not seek a humble man? A humble man is conscious of his own weakness, of his own shortcomings, and his need of divine succor. Such a man will show mercy with cheerfulness (Romans 12:8). ". . . the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth" (Psalm 37:21).

Isaiah called Moab to exercise justice and mercy, but added: "We have heard of the pride of Moab; he is very proud." So too, while Nebuchadnezzar remained proud and lifted up in heart he could neither break off his sins by righteousness, nor show mercy to the poor. It is only at the cross that man can learn how to deal justly and to love mercy. For what is seen at the cross? "Mercy and truth are met together!"

As the proud sinner contemplates the love and humility of Deity in blending justice and mercy, what takes place? "By mercy and truth iniquity is purged" (Proverbs 16:6). "It is the blending of the two that leads us, as we view the world's Redeemer and the law of Jehovah, to exclaim, 'Thy gentleness hath made me great.'"--*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1072.

Thus it is the cross, blending truth and mercy, that makes an end of sin in the heart of the believer in Jesus. Here the proud heart is humbled, the glory of man is put in the dust, and the repentant sinner takes up his cross to follow Christ.

As the meek and lowly Redeemer blended justice and mercy, and demonstrated to the entire universe the immutability and goodness of the law of Jehovah, so it is His purpose that His church give a similar demonstration of His divine life.

"[The purpose is] that through the church the complicated, many-sided wisdom of God in all its infinite variety *and* innumerable aspects might now be made known to the angelic rulers and authorities (principalities and powers) in the heavenly sphere" (Ephesians 3:10, *The Amplified New Testament*). The Dutch translation of Ephesians 3:10 says the "many-coloured wisdom" of God.

So the church is to reveal to man and to angels the rainbow of His grace. When justice and mercy perfectly blend in the experience of God's people, the rainbow will be seen, and even the wicked will acknowledge the truth and worship at the feet of the saints.

# AGAPE --

## THE LIFE OF GOD

Robert D. Brinsmead

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:7-19).

While the favorite words of the apostle Paul seem to be *faith* and *righteousness*, John repeatedly speaks of *love* and *life*. We should, of course, realize that the Holy Spirit is teaching the same truths through the two writers. "Righteousness is love, and love is the light and the life of God."--*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 18.

The apostle John commands us to love one another. He knows, however, that of ourselves, this is impossible. Too often we fail through trying to love one another. We cannot love by trying. It cannot be produced in our hearts though we bend every effort. For the love of which the apostle speaks is not an attribute of the natural heart. It is not even an innate quality of any creature, whether human or angelic. "Love is of God . . . God is love." He is the only source of it, as verily as He is the only source of light and life.

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Love is not begotten in the human heart by trying, but by beholding:

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:9,10).

The words of John are very similar to the words of Jesus to Nicodemus:

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:14-17).

Nicodemus was trying to enter heaven by his own works. But somehow his heart was unsatisfied. He thought he needed more theological information, so he came to Jesus prepared to seek information from "the tree of knowledge." Jesus closed every avenue to the tree of knowledge, and presented only the *tree of life*. Nicodemus was told that what he needed was not theological discussion, but a spiritual regeneration. This could come about not by *trying*, but by *beholding*. His attention needed to be directed away from his own efforts to obtain salvation, and he needed to contemplate the love of God. He who was seeking salvation for his own egotistical satisfaction, needed to behold the divine love giving itself for those most unworthy of its gift.

### This Is Love

"Herein is love", says the apostle, as if to say "Let us behold what this love is, so that you will know what I mean when I tell you that we must love one another." "Herein is love, not that we loved God . . ." Did God love us because we loved Him? Indeed not! God's love does not seek friends--it makes friends. Unto whom did God manifest His love? Unto those who did not love Him! Indeed, God manifested His love to those who were disposed to hate Him, to those who were in rebellion against Him.

"For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared . . ." (Titus 3:3, 4).

The apostle Paul points out that among men could be found a few examples of "love" so great that man would lay down his life for worthy men. But this is not the divine love. Divine love is higher than that by how much heaven is higher than the earth. It led Him to lay down His life for His enemies, for those who despised and hated Him:

"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love

(AGAPE -- continued from page 3)

toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. . . . For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Romans 5:7, 8, 10).

In the Greek language, there were several words which we translate as *love*. But they do not mean the same thing. The divine love that was manifested toward us is called *agape*. It is different from *phileo*--filial love. It is different from *eros*--the sensual affection of creatures. *Phileo* and *eros* are natural. *Agape* is supernatural. *Agape* is an unselfish concern for another. It means not only to love the enemy and the unworthy, but to give to such, hoping for no advantage in return. This love is set forth in the words of the Master Himself:

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you: that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:43-48)

Notice how these thoughts are recorded by Luke:

"And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil" (Luke 6:34, 35).

Jesus tells us that if our "love" is in the form of a calculated investment bestowed because it has in view our ultimate advantage, then it is the love of publicans and sinners, of scribes and Pharisees; the kind that will never enter the kingdom of heaven. *Agape* is further illustrated in the parable of Jesus:

"Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed: for they cannot recompense thee . . ." (Luke 14:12-14).

God did not manifest His love toward us because we were able to recompense Him. Throughout eternity, there will be nothing that we can do to recompense Him, but it will be His eternal joy to impute to us the righteousness of His Son.

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). The cross is the supreme manifestation of *agape*. What could Christ hope for Himself in the Garden of Gethsemane? Could He see any advantage to Himself through His offering of love for the benefit of man? Indeed, He could see no prospect of rising from the tomb. For Himself, there was nothing but blackness, anguish, and eternal separation from God. But He so loved us, that He gave Himself for us, that He might benefit us at an eternal cost to Himself. And what are we but ungrateful rebels, unworthy sinners, and unthankful enemies! For such Christ died, hoping for nothing again but that His love might make us the friends and the children of God. "Herein is love . . ."

### Christ, Our Atonement

"He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." The word *propitiation* literally refers to the cover over the ark which we call the mercy-seat. For this reason some translations render "*propitiation*" as "*mercy-seat*". God sent His Son to be our *mercy-seat*. The same thought is expressed by the apostle Paul in Romans 3:25: "Jesus . . . hath [been] set forth to be a *mercy-seat* through faith in his blood." The apostle John is saying that God loved us so much that He made Jesus to be our mercy-seat.

Even the word *mercy-seat* does not convey the full meaning of what Christ has been made for us. In the original Hebrew, the word translated *mercy-seat* more truly means *place of atonement*. The place of atonement is the cross, the place where justice and mercy blend in the Lamb of God. This gives us a proper view of the cross and the suffering Lamb of God. It is not just a matter of a past historical event. Christ is still our mercy-seat or place of atonement (see Revelation 5:6; *Education*, p. 263).

The atonement is the fruit of *agape*. This becomes strikingly evident when we study 1 Corinthians 13:

"Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away" (1 Corinthians 13:4-8).

Now since God is love, we can substitute *God* for *love* in reading this passage:

"God suffereth long, and is kind . . . God seeketh not His own [is never selfish], is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil . . . God beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

It is not the nature of love to accuse and condemn. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world

through him might be saved" (John 3:17). When we were full of evil, in rebellion against God, and fleeing from Him more and more, what were His thoughts toward us? They were thoughts of peace, and not of evil, for love thinketh no evil. This means that even while we were yet sinners, God refused to think evil of us. "Herein is love." Certainly, we think evil of God, for sin is the disposition to think evil of God. Although we have no grounds to mistrust Him, our evil hearts tend to think He has "brought us out into the wilderness to kill us." To think evil is to be guilty of doing evil. Because we thought evil of Him we crucified Him, and stand condemned in the light of the cross as murderers. But what does God think of such murderers? Even though we think evil of Him, does He think evil of us? "Love thinketh no evil." On the contrary, love believeth all things, hopeth all things. God continued to hope the very best of us. Divine love refused to lose faith in humanity (see Romans 3:3).

If God would think no evil of us, who are sinners, He still must be just, as well as merciful. Instead of thinking evil of us, yes, refusing to think evil of us, He put Himself in our place. That is the nature of *agape*. It puts itself in the other's place. Says the apostle Paul: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; . . . For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:19, 21). Divine love imputed not our sins to us, because it refused to think evil of us, but putting itself in our place, it took the burden. In another place Paul says, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). What is the law of Christ? To bear another's burden! This is *agape*. Love beareth all things. God came in the person of His Son to take our burden; to take our place.

What a mighty object-lesson in what it means to love one another! It means to think no evil of another, not only when the other does right, but even when the other does wrong. The apostle says, "Speak evil of no man" (Titus 3:2). There is no other command that we so readily and blithely transgress. "Speak evil of no man." If we are to speak evil of no man we must think evil of no man. And it is only divine love which thinketh no evil. Now when we think that a brother has injured us, let us contemplate what divine love did when we crucified it. Instead of condemning, thinking evil and speaking evil, love shows us the more excellent way. Instead of imputing the sin to the one who has wronged us, we shall put ourselves in his place, bearing all things, hoping all things, enduring all things.

### Know and Believe

"And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1 John 4:16).

Here is the first step in being changed from sinners to saints, from death to life, from darkness to light. We are to know and to believe in the love that God has for us. We must put away the thought that such love is not for us. We must see that our greatest sin is our

thinking evil of God, of doubting His goodness and mercy toward us. Christ is our atonement. We can make no atonement for ourselves. We may flee to Him just as we are, knowing that God has manifested His love to enemies, murderers, and ungodly rebels. First we must *know* the love that He has for us. The knowledge of this love will bring us faith. To believe that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son will change the heart and reproduce in us the image of God.

### Entering the Sanctuary

"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world" (1 John 4:17).

Because God loved us He put Himself in our place. He sent His Son to be our mercy-seat. He is still our mercy-seat. Christ yet stands as the great burden bearer of humanity. He feels the woes of every sufferer. He is crucified afresh by the sins of His people. He takes the burden of sin from every repentant sinner. He still bears all and suffers all for us. Now His love is to bring forth such a response in our hearts, that we will love Him "because He first loved us." When we love Him, we will put ourselves in His place. He is in the most holy place, at the mercy-seat. This is the only way to enter the most holy place. What is He doing in the most holy place? He is cleansing the sanctuary. What does this mean? It means, above everything else, that sin will be so finished with in the hearts of His people that He will no longer have to bear the burden of it all in the heavenly sanctuary; that His sufferings may end, and that He may come to take His bride home to the mansions above. If His love has brought forth a response in our hearts, we will come into sympathy with Him even as He came into sympathy with us. As He is, so will we be in this world. We shall go with Him into the judgment, before the mercy-seat and behold the full revelation of His love in the light of the cross which is there revealed.

"We are in the day of atonement, and we are to work in harmony with Christ's work of cleansing the sanctuary from the sins of the people. . . . As He is, so will His followers be in this world. We must now set before the people the work which by faith we see our great High-priest accomplishing in the heavenly sanctuary. Those who do not sympathize with Jesus in His work in the heavenly courts, who do not cleanse the soul temple of every defilement, but who engage in some enterprise not in harmony with this work, are joining with the enemy of God and man in leading minds away from the truth and work for this time."--*Review and Herald*, January 21, 1890.

### The Blotting Out of Sins

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (1 John 4:18).

As we have often considered in the light of the sanctuary, Christ's work in the judgment is to blot out sins and give His people the

seal of God in the outpouring of the latter rain (see Joel 2:15-28; Acts 3:19). The latter rain is the full baptism of divine love which completes the work of grace in the soul and brings the believer to perfection (see *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 506). In the sealing baptism of the latter rain, perfect love will cast out all fear.

When Adam sinned, he was afraid, and hid from the face of God. It is this fear, brought about by sin, that has prevented mortal man from seeing God face to face these 6000 years. Even converted Christians are not perfected in love, and therefore are not ready to see God face to face. This complete casting out of all fear is what Paul calls in Hebrews 9 and 10 the perfecting of the conscience, wherein the worshippers will have "no more conscience of sins." It is what we as Adventists are accustomed to call *the blotting out of sins*. It will take place in the judgment, by the baptism of the latter rain.

Those who have the love of God perfected in them will have the seal of God, for the love of God is the seal of God. We have elsewhere considered its significance as associated with the Sabbath. Those who have the seal of God will not even sin again by as much as a thought, for love "thinketh no evil." They will endure through the time of trouble without a Mediator, and will withstand the greatest temptations, for love "never faileth."

They will be ready to stand before the glory of the Son of God and meet Him without fear for they will have no conscience of sins. On the other hand, those without the seal of God will be tormented during the time of trouble day and night, without rest (see Revelation 14:11). This torment will not be caused by an arbitrary act of God in punishing, but as John says, "fear hath torment." Their own thoughts and consciences will accuse them day and night. Their prayers ascend as "smoke", and having no Mediator to stand in their place, such prayers will find no answer "forever and ever."

## Syllabus No. 3

Syllabus No. 3 contains a new approach to the third angel's message. The plan of salvation is revealed in its practical application to the nature of man. It shows the work of the Holy Spirit on the will, emotions, thoughts, memory and the physical health of man. The difference between holy flesh concepts and a holy or perfect character is also very clearly defined in this syllabus. Many of the common objections to the sanctuary message are answered. It is packed with truth. Price: \$2.00. Send your order to: GEMS OF TRUTH, Strafford, Missouri 65757.

# The RAINBOW of Promise

Robert D. Brinsmead  
A Sermon Report

The message that God has given His people in these last days is the third angel's message. But do we really understand it? Why is it that after one hundred and twenty years, we still wait for its loud cry? Do our Laodicean eyes really see the full light of gospel truth in the glorious banner of "the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus"? Surely it is time that we awake from our slumberous complacency and dig beneath the surface of truth which we have hardly scratched. Or dare we have a real confrontation with the truth as it is in Jesus?

## The Pillars of God's Law

The foundation of the divine economy is the law of God. It may be expressed in one word--Love. Love is founded on two great immutable principles--justice and mercy. As it is written: "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face" (Psalm 89:14). In giving His law to Israel, and proclaiming His character to Moses, the Lord clearly identified these two great pillars of His government (See Exodus 20:5, 6; 34:6, 7). As all things continued in perfect harmony with the law of God, there was seen no conflict between the prerogatives of divine justice and mercy. With the advent of sin, things appeared differently however. To the greatest intellect outside the Godhead, it now appeared that the law of God was an impossible arrangement. As Lucifer saw things, justice was inconsistent with mercy. If divine justice and truth were maintained, would not mercy have to give way? If God exercised the prerogative of divine mercy in the pardoning of the transgressor, would not justice have to give way? So, said Lucifer, God's law would have to be changed. Indeed, he took it upon himself to force God into a situation where He would have to change it (See *Desire of Ages*, p. 761). Even when Christ went out after Lucifer, and offered him forgiveness, (although his heart was touched and he was inclined to surrender to the sovereignty of love) he became more bold in his challenge to the law of God (See *Great Controversy*, pp. 495, 496). It appeared to him that God was weakening.

Since God was extending to him the offer of mercy, was not that an admission that God was prepared to surrender the principle of justice upon which the law was established? As the great rebel viewed

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the perspective of the whole controversy, he was sure that his theology was faultless, and that God was in a corner, with no way out. One third of the angels became convinced of this, and elected to follow Satan in his rebellion against the law of God. The loyal angels could not answer the seemingly unanswerable. Theirs was an act of faith in waiting for God to vindicate the honor of His law.

## God's Secret Weapon

The apostasy of Satan did not take the Lord by surprise. There was a plan hidden from the days of eternity, a secret weapon, that took Satan completely by surprise. It was the gospel. Divine love is infinite unselfishness and humility. It never entered into the mind of Lucifer; indeed it would be beyond the comprehension of any finite creature, that the High and Holy One upon the throne of the universe would be so self-sacrificing that He would humble Himself even to the death of the cross (Philippians 2:5-8). On the cross of Calvary, God, in human flesh, magnified the law and made it honorable (Isaiah 42:21).

"Justice and mercy stood apart, in opposition to each other, separated by a wide gulf. The Lord our Redeemer clothed His divinity with humanity and wrought out in behalf of man a character that was without spot or blemish. He planted His cross midway between heaven and earth, and made it the object of attraction which reached both ways, drawing both justice and mercy across the gulf. Justice moved from its exalted throne and with all the armies of heaven approached the cross. There it saw One equal with God bearing the penalty for all injustices and sin. With perfect satisfaction justice bowed in reverence at the cross, saying, 'It is enough.'"

"Christ's death proved God's administration and government to be without a flaw. Satan's charge in regard to the conflicting attributes of justice and mercy was forever settled beyond question."

"God bowed His head satisfied. Now justice and mercy could blend. Now He could be just and yet the justifier of him who should believe in Christ."--*Questions on Doctrine*, pp. 673, 674.

In divine justice and divine mercy is the strength of Omnipotence. Since neither would surrender its claim, it led the Creator to the cross. At Calvary, divine justice was fully carried out, and as Christ died on the cross it could say: "It is enough." As the crimson current flowed forth in a tide of pardoning love, divine mercy could say: "It is enough."

## The Cross a Revelation and Vindication of the Law

Now it must be seen above everything else that the cross is both a revelation and a vindication of the law of God. For it was here that "mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Psalm 85:10). This blending of justice and mercy in the Lamb of God forms the rainbow of promise around the throne of God (See Ezekiel 1:28; Revelation 4:3; 5:6).

(Continued on page 12)

(RAINBOW -- continued from page 3)

"As the bow in the cloud is formed by the union of the sunlight and the shower, so the rainbow encircling the throne represents the combined power of mercy and justice. . . . It is the mingling of judgment and mercy that makes salvation full and complete."--S.D.A. *Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, pp. 1071, 1072.

The rainbow of promise is the gospel, which is a perfect and complete system revealing the immutability of the law of God. As a rainbow is pleasing to the eye, so when we look at the law of God through the prism of the cross, we see all the beautiful colors of the spectrum of the law. We can never fully understand the gospel until we realize that the gospel is but the law unfolded. We are to see in the gospel the beauty and majesty of the law of God. The cross is not to eclipse our view of the law, but it is to magnify it and reveal its surpassing goodness. "The law of Jehovah is the tree, the gospel is the fragrant blossoms and fruit which it bears." --*Ibid.*, p. 1073.

When the angels and the unfallen worlds saw Jesus die on the cross, with one voice they exclaimed: "O how great is Thy law." The blending of divine justice and mercy in the cross of Christ brings eternal security to the universe. The cross upholds all things: it draws all things together and keeps the universe from disintegrating. First, it is the means of drawing all hearts in the universe into oneness with God (See John 12:32), and secondly, it is the same power that upholds the material universe. "Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy" (Proverbs 20:28).

### The Third Angel's Message and the Cross

It was the law which produced the gospel, for the gospel is the fruit of the law. Calvary vindicated the law of God and made the doom of Satan certain. Yet neither men nor angels understood the full meaning of the cross when Jesus died (See *Desire of Ages*, p. 761). It is true that the angels saw justice and mercy blend at the cross, but they did not fully see what this blending of justice and mercy would accomplish for the believers in Jesus. As a tree is known by its fruit, so the law is to be known by the gospel. The message of the gospel as so plainly declared by the apostle Paul is that God declares a man righteous who has faith in Jesus. God imputes to the believing sinner His own absolute and eternal righteousness (See Romans 3:21-28). In the gift of justification, the believer is not given human perfection; he is not given angelic perfection; but he is given divine perfection in the imputed gift.

The greatness and power of God's imputed gift has not fully entered into the heart of the church. We see in the early church how it was misunderstood. The Galatian believers failed to grasp that faith in the merits of the divine righteousness was all that God required. They misunderstood the nature of sanctification. They began their Christian experience by depending wholly on the merits of Christ, but were deceived into thinking that they must add some works of their own in order to reach a state of perfection. Thus

the believers lost their total dependence upon the merits of Christ as fully satisfactory to the Father, and Paul designated theirs as a state of apostasy.

Justification by faith makes the believer fully righteous in God's sight. The divine merit of Christ fully satisfies the Father. Imputed righteousness is not to be seen as a cloak to cover sinfulness, but it is to be appropriated as the great and only motive-power to expel sinfulness from the life. The enemies of the gospel claim that God is not really just in justifying the believer in Jesus. Satan objects: "You call these people righteous, but your way of making them righteous doesn't really constitute them as a righteous people." Now, what remains to be proven in the great controversy? God must be seen to be just in His way of justifying the believer in Jesus (See Romans 3:26). The only way that God can be declared just is by the fruit that the experience that justification by faith produces. In order that Calvary and God's imputed righteousness stand vindicated, in order that God can be shown to be just in justifying the believer in Jesus, it is necessary that the product that is intended to be produced thereby will be produced.

Now, what is the third angel's message?

"Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, 'It is the third angel's message in verity.'"--*Selected Messages*, Vol. 1, p. 372.

The imputed righteousness of Christ by which man is justified, is not just a part of the truth. It is the whole truth. When this is grasped fully, that the divine perfection is imputed freely to such a vile sinner as a Laodicean murderer, it will be such a revelation of God's redeeming love, that sinfulness will be expelled from the human heart and blotted out. Then there will be full conformity to the law. Human nature will then commit itself fully without default, without reservation for eternity, to rely on the imputed merits of Christ. When that experience is reached, then God's people will be in a state of human perfection. God will then be demonstrated as being just in justifying the believer in Jesus. Calvary will be vindicated by the product it produces. It will be seen that a sinner without righteousness can be made perfect by relying on the merits of Christ alone. This will demonstrate that God only is holy (See Revelation 15:4).

God is depending upon His people to vindicate His way of making man righteous. Calvary will never be fully understood by the angels without that demonstration by the final generation. The heavenly hosts are very interested in the experiment of the grace of God upon human hearts. Satan flings the charge into the face of God: "You are making a cloak of the imputed righteousness of Christ." God has to show that the imputation of divine perfection to the believer in Jesus is the only way of banishing sin for eternity from the human heart.

Sanctification is often misunderstood. Sanctification is the experience of appreciating the power and sufficiency of justification. To the extent that a man realizes his own nothingness, and depends wholly on the imputed righteousness of Christ, to that extent is he sanctified. What is the perfection of the hundred and forty-four thousand? When humanity depends fully, without default, upon the divine perfection imputed to the believer in Jesus, then is there a state of human perfection. No creature in himself will be intrinsically or innately holy. Even in heaven the saved will sing: "Thou only art holy" (Revelation 15:4). That which we call human perfection is that state wherein the human heart relies fully, without default, and forever, upon the truth that it is God which justifieth.

### Third Angel Reveals Justice and Mercy

At the cross, justice and mercy blended. It was this blending of justice and mercy which potentially destroyed Satan. Satan knows this, and since Calvary he has been working to blind the eyes of men to the reality of the cross. The idea prevails that because of Calvary, mercy somehow eclipses justice. The imputed righteousness of Christ has been looked upon as only the exercise of divine mercy to the believer in Jesus, rather than a manifestation of divine justice as well as divine mercy. The relation of the law to the gospel has not been fully grasped.

To Luther the imputation of God's righteousness was overwhelmingly a matter of mercy. Hence he translated the Hebrew word *Kapporeth* (the cover, or lid, of the ark) as *mercy-seat*. The word actually means *place of atonement*. The cover of the ark was where mercy and truth met together: where righteousness and peace kissed each other. Therefore it is clear that *kapporeth* or *place of atonement* is in reality the cross of Christ. In plain English, the mercy-seat is in reality the cross.

Now let us consider the third angel's message in this light. In *Early Writings*, pp. 254-256, it is stated three times that the third angel points upward to the most holy place of the sanctuary. What is the most central thing in the most holy place? The law and the mercy-seat, or more plainly, the law and the cross. Thus, in vision, John the Revelator saw in the midst of the throne the "Lamb as it had been slain" (Revelation 5:6). It is clear that the third angel is pointing to the cross, for the cross is fully revealed in the most holy place. The third angel's message is light from the cross of Calvary. The message shows plainly that the cross is above and in the midst of the law. It shows us that the cross is the revelation and the unfolding of the law. The gospel is seen to be a blending of perfect justice and mercy; of law and grace. This is what is symbolized by the rainbow around the throne of God. When a sinner repents and believes in Jesus, it is not mercy alone that saves him. Divine justice embraces the believer in Jesus as a man who has the perfect righteousness of God, while divine mercy expels sin from the heart.

When God's people fully grasp the verity of the third angel's message, which is justification by faith, the power of Satan will be fully broken in their experience (See *Gospel Workers*, p. 161). When

God's people depend fully upon the combined power of justice and mercy and are satisfied to be righteous in Christ alone, then will their lives bear witness that God is just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Calvary will be vindicated in the 144,000. Thus Paul says that the "manifold wisdom of God" will be revealed "unto the principalities and powers" by the church (Ephesians 3:10. See also *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 17, 18). The Dutch translation of Ephesians 3:10 says, ". . . the many-colored wisdom of God." So when the church fully appropriates the righteousness of Christ, perfect justice and mercy blend in their lives as a rainbow which reveals all the beautiful colors of God's law to the angelic hosts and unfallen worlds.

### The Cleansing of the Sanctuary

The blending of the power of divine justice and mercy at Calvary opened the way for God to be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. The message of the gospel is that a man is made righteous by faith--by a full reliance on the merits of Christ. God knows that when the unspeakable love that is revealed in the imputed righteousness of Christ enters fully into the heart of man, it will reverse the original sin of unbelief and the desire to be independent of God.

Yet Satan and the enemies of the gospel still say: "Look at God's people--they still sin. God's way of justifying them is to make a cloak for them, and call them righteous, when in reality they are not righteous." The only reason that God's people still sin is that they have not fully appreciated and appropriated justification by faith. In this light, can we grasp the real meaning of the cleansing of the sanctuary which is brought to view in Daniel 8:14? Here is a people that come up around the sanctuary and afflict (humble) their souls. They throw themselves without reservation to trust wholly and for eternity upon the merits of Christ. They will be so committed to depend upon His righteousness, that God will be able to keep them from all sin all the time. God will be able to present them as the first fruits of total redemption from sin (Revelation 14:4), and the product of faith in His righteousness. Thus the sanctuary in heaven will be "cleansed", when God is seen to be just in justifying the believer in Jesus.

### The Laodicean Message

What is the problem of Laodicea? The Lord says that we are blind, and because we are blind we should anoint our eyes with eyesalve to enable us to see. That which we need to see is the cross, which alone can give us a true knowledge of our deplorable condition.

Is our condition deplorable because basically our standards of Christian conduct are not high enough? Or is it because we do not work hard enough in the Lord's cause? No! This is not the real point in the Laodicean message. It is not a call to rend the garments (merely a change in outward conduct), but it is a message designed to rend the heart. Christ is the heavenly Bridegroom. Laodicea is the bride-elect. Christ is in the most holy place where

the marriage is to be consummated (See *Early Writings*, p. 55). But the marriage cannot be consummated, for Laodicea has not a true, zealous and fervent response to the Divine love. Such a feeble response from the heart of Laodicea is nauseating to Christ Who has given her all the riches of His accumulated love. Yet Laodicea does not know what her real problem is. She is like a woman devoid of the capacity of a true love response, and who is unaware that, unconscious to herself, there is in her heart a hidden resentment towards her bridegroom. Not until this resentment is pointed out can there be an improvement of the relationship. So the only hope for Laodicea lies in anointing her eyes to see the cross. The cross is that which reveals "the thoughts of many hearts." It reveals the thoughts of God's heart and the hidden thoughts of the Laodicean heart.

"God is love." The apostle Paul says that love "thinketh no evil." It is full of hope, ready to believe the best of every person (See 1 Corinthians 13:4-8). Now when we were full of sin, enmity and rebellion against God, fleeing from Him more and more, God thought the very best of us and refused to think evil of us. Rather than impute sin to us, He put Himself in our place to take the blame and punishment. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. . . . For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:19-21).

When God refused to think evil of us, He still had to be true to Himself. The only way that He could be just and merciful was to humble Himself to the death of the cross. Divine love is that which puts itself in the other's place. It is to be concerned for others. As the apostle Paul says: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). That is what Christ Himself did. Refusing to think evil of us, who were full of sin, He put Himself in our place and bore our burdens. Love "beareth all things." Furthermore, love "believeth all things; hopeth all things." God refused, in His unspeakable love, to think evil of us. He was willing to take our place so that He could believe the very best about us and hope the very best about us. The cross is the revelation of God's faith in humanity.

The divine psychology is as if a rich man put a thief in charge of all his property. Yes, and more than that; it might be likened unto a certain rich man who had one son who was murdered. The man sought all over the world for the man who was responsible for the murder of his son. Finally he confronted the murderer and said: "I want you to be my son." Impossible? No! This is what God has done. When Jesus was here on earth, on meeting degraded human beings, He bestowed His confidence upon them. They were greatly moved that One so pure and holy could love and trust them, that they responded, and reached an experience wherein they would rather die than betray the trust that the Master reposed in them. So God comes to the sinner and says: "I have great faith in you. I have not thought any evil of you, but I have given you the best Gift of heaven." Nothing stops a sinner in his tracks so much as that. It is hard to kick against such pricks.

Christ put Himself in our place. Then what did He do? He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. He took humanity in its fallen condition unto Himself; then washed, purged, and perfected human nature in Himself. So He says: "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins" (Isaiah 44:22). The cleansing of humanity, the perfecting of humanity, the blotting out of sins is an accomplished reality in Christ. He has done it in Himself. The new covenant is sealed by the blood of Christ. We often say that the gospel is good news, but do we really get the import of the gospel? The gospel is more than good news of what God *will* do for humanity. It is the good news of what God *has done* for humanity in Christ. He has done all things for humanity in His Son, and therefore He gives the invitation: "All things are ready." The gospel is a call to enter into His rest.

But the cross also reveals the hearts of men. It is to reveal the hidden heart of Laodicea. We who have been studying the awakening message have found that in the experience of the cleansing of the sanctuary, in the presence of the investigative judgment of the living, there is to be a remembrance again of sins, as all the deeds and thoughts of all of God's people will go before them like the scenes of a panorama. Now, what is it that brings such a revelation to God's people? It may become more apparent to our minds if we consider as to what happens to the wicked who surround the city at the end of the millennium. This is graphically described in *Great Controversy*, pp. 666-672. Here we are told that Christ shows the cross to the wicked. For the first time they are given a complete revelation of the cross, and as they see it, every thought and deed of their lives goes before them as clearly as though traced in letters of fire. All is made plain. All the blindness of their minds is swept away, and they see what sin is and just what they have done (See also *Desire of Ages*, pp. 57, 58).

Now is Laodicea going to wait until such a time to see a revelation of the cross? Is not the third angel pointing us to the most holy place, to the mercy-seat which is in the most holy place, which is in reality the cross of Christ? Opportunity is given to God's people today to gather at the judgment, to seek for the revelation of the cross now, rather than at the judgment of the wicked. When Laodicea anoints her eyes to see the cross, the hidden thoughts of her heart will stand revealed. The inhabitants of Jerusalem will look upon Him Whom they have pierced (See Zechariah 12:10). They will see that the sin of Calvary is their own. Laodicea will know why she has been unable to respond with an uninhibited response to the love of Christ. God's people will be fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives (See *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 472, 473). Just as God put the knife into the hand of Adam and bade him slay the lamb so that he could see somewhat of the nature of his crime, so we will see ourselves nailing God's Son to the tree. And yet, while we see all this, God will have us see that He loves us and puts full faith in us, and is ready to believe the very best of us. Such a revelation will completely purge the conscience and blot out the evil heart of unbelief. This revelation will show, to the full extent, our own nothingness and the infinite Gift of imputed righteousness. It will cause God's people to step fully upon the plat-

form of imputed righteousness without any reservation for eternity. This it will usher in the experience of human perfection which is simply an unreserved dependence upon divine perfection. Justification will be full and complete in the experience of the saints (See *Great Controversy*, p. 484).

Oh, that we as God's people may anoint our eyes with the eyesalve that we might see the cross, whither the third angel is pointing us. In reality, that is, in Christ, our sins are already blotted out. God says: "I have done it." It was done in Christ at the cross. What God did there in Christ is made fully available to God's people in the most holy place. When faith reaches the mercy-seat, it will become a reality in our experience. Therefore it may be truly said: "All things are ready: come unto the marriage."

Since God has already blotted out our sins, the final atonement is in reality the blotting out of the evil heart of unbelief. The reason why we do remember our sins is that we do not believe that God has blotted them out. When we fully believe, we shall not remember them because we are constant in the faith that it is God that justifies. Divine love thinketh no evil. He thought not evil of us, but He thought good of us. We will think no evil of Him. Unbelief is to think evil of God. "Love never faileth." That is why the saints will not fail in the time of trouble. They will think no evil. Not even by a thought will they be brought to yield to the power of temptation. God, too, will forget our sins, and remember them no more.

We may illustrate it this way: Jesus said that when a woman is with child and is in pain at the time of her deliverance, she has sorrow. But when the child is born, immediately she forgets her sorrow, for the joy that a child is born into the world. So when God is proved to be just in justifying him that believeth in Jesus, when the fruit of justification is brought forth in a perfected people, God will forget all the pain and sorrow caused by our unbelief, for the joy that His image is seen upon His people. With sin swept away from the human heart, the marriage can be consummated. "Soon I heard a voice like many musical instruments all sounding in perfect strains, sweet and harmonious. It surpassed any music I had ever heard, seeming to be full of mercy, compassion, and elevating, holy joy. It thrilled through my whole being."--*Early Writings*, pp. 270, 271. This voice is the voice of the Bridegroom. "For as a young man marryeth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee" (Isaiah 62:5). Thus comes to pass the complete realization of the new covenant promise: "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 10:17). In His eternal joy God forgets the pangs of Calvary.

### The Counterfeit Kingdom

Let us now see by way of contrast the pillars of Satan's kingdom. While the pillars of God's kingdom of love are justice and mercy, those of Satan's kingdom of selfishness are falsehood and force. Satan was a liar and a murderer from the beginning. On the cross

of Calvary Jesus bore the pillars of Satan's kingdom with Him to the ground (See *Questions on Doctrine*, p. 651). We see this illustrated by the experience of Samson, who in some respects was a type of Christ. Because Samson put himself on Satan's ground he was bound by deception and force, and had his eyes put out. He was brought out before the crowd of mocking sinners, and although he could not see, he took hold of the two great pillars of Dagon's temple, and gave himself as a sacrifice that he might overthrow it. Jesus did not put Himself on Satan's ground as Samson did, but He was placed there for us. He was bound by falsehood and force. The sins of the world put His "eyes" out, for He could not see through the portals of the tomb. There was the mocking crowd around the cross, as there was before Samson. But Jesus Christ, in His infinite love, took hold of the two great pillars of Satan's kingdom, and brought them down with Him to the grave. Thus the cross of Calvary swept away the lying deceptions of the devil, and made all the power of satanic force ineffectual. It proved that God is not selfish: He had not held anything back from humanity, but He has given us all the riches of eternity. It proved that His love is greater than force, and His truth triumphs over all error. As Jesus brought down the pillars of Satan's kingdom, He reared up the pillars of justice and mercy upon the eternal heights.

Now let us take a view of the final conflict which is brought to view in the third angel's message. While the third angel points us to the most holy place, where are seen the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, it warns us of another system called the beast and his image. The thirteenth chapter of Revelation shows how these powers will unite the principles of force and deception to deceive the whole world. We are warned that the religious world will form a confederacy to be held together by the blending of the principles of falsehood and force. As God's people are faced with this great test, they will enter the most holy place by faith, that the prayer of Christ as recorded in John 17 might be fulfilled in their experience. Here is a group of saints that are held together by the combined power of justice and mercy, bound to the throne of God and to one another in the ties of indissoluble union.

Satan and all his hosts will not be able to smash the oneness of this company. All his falsehoods and all his force will have no power over them. Thus his kingdom will be brought down. This is the victory over the beast and over his image. Babylon falls, and great is the fall thereof. The great city of lies and force finally disintegrates, and God's kingdom stands forever. In the midnight darkness of the fifth plague, which is caused by the blending of falsehood and force, the light of God and the rainbow of promise is seen around each praying company of saints. Thus comes the time when God vindicates His law and delivers His people. Therefore the only way of deliverance from this sinful world is in the vindication of God's righteousness.

**"The Saviour gives no encouragement to any to think that He will accept a patchwork religion. Such a religion is of no value in His sight. There may at first seem to be some of self and some of Christ; but it is soon seen that there is none of Christ." OHC 342.**

## TAKING AWAY

# Satan's Dominion

Robert D. Brinsmead  
A Sermon Report

Let us consider some thoughts from the books of Daniel and the Revelation. We are exhorted to a closer study of these books. We are also told that when they are better understood by the people of God, the latter will have an entirely different religious experience. This is a challenge. Sister White says: "Let Daniel speak, let Revelation speak." In these books, the prophecies of last day events are presented in their order. We are directed by the Spirit of Prophecy to observe this order.

In studying the Prophetic Scriptures, especially the major and minor prophets, we can be misled unless we consider them in connection with the great outlines of prophecy so clearly presented in the books of Daniel and Revelation. It is impossible to arrive at any chronological sequence of the prophecies contained in Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Amos, and Joel, etc., without understanding the clear, chronological outline of events in Daniel and Revelation. For instance, nearly every text in Revelation is either a citation from, or an allusion to, an Old Testament text or event. Revelation takes the Old Testament scriptures and puts them in order.

### God's Purpose in the Creation of Man

In order to get a true picture of the background of Daniel and Revelation, and the message of these books, we should follow the advice given in the book *Education*: that is, to give consideration to God's purpose in the creation of man. Unless we do this, and keep it before our minds, it is hard to see the true picture of these two glorious books.

Let us read a text from the Old Testament, and then one in the New Testament, as to the purpose of God in creating the human race: "I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him" (Isaiah 43:7).

"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who

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created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3:9-11).

God purposed that after having created many orders of beings, He would finally bring a race of beings into existence through which He would give an object lesson of His manifold wisdom unto the entire universe. Immediately after Lucifer and his sympathizers were cast out of heaven, God said, "Let us make man in our image" (See *Early Writings*, pp. 145, 146). God made man, purposing through him to sweep away the kingdom of Satan. Man was to be God's instrument, His battle axe, with which He was to smash the kingdom of Satan and wipe it out of existence. This is the glorious picture presented in Daniel and Revelation; a picture that will lift our thoughts to God's purpose for His people, which is "higher than any human thought can reach."

The prophetic outline of events begins with Daniel 2. Here we have presented to us the kingdoms of human devising through which Satan has been working to carry forward his opposition to the work of God. These powers are seen to continue until a stone, uncut by human hands, came and smote the symbolic image upon its feet:

"Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (Daniel 2:34, 35).

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Daniel 2:44).

Notice that it says that this stone is a "kingdom". Other prophets also speak of this "stone":

"Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it" (Zechariah 12:2, 3).

"Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 41:14-16).

(Continued on p. 10)

(*Dominion*, cont. from p. 3)

God is going to take a worm and thresh the mountains with it. Mountains in the Bible symbolize kingdoms.

"The portion of Jacob is not like them; for he is the former of all things: and Israel is the rod of his inheritance: the Lord of hosts is his name. Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms; and with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider; and with thee will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider; with thee also will I break in pieces man and woman; and with thee will I break in pieces old and young; and with thee will I break in pieces the young man and the maid" (Jeremiah 51:19-22).

"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father" (Revelation 2:26, 27).

Let us now see when this great drama will be, and how it will be:

#### The Stone Cut Out in the Judgment

The books of Daniel and Revelation give the chronology of events. Daniel, chapter 2, shows when the "stone" or "kingdom" shall be cut out without hands; when the Lord will take His battle axe to smite the nations; when He will beat the hills as chaff with His threshing instrument, so that the wind shall carry them away. In studying the books of Daniel and Revelation, we must bear in mind that this was God's original purpose in the creation of man--to sweep away the kingdom of Satan. God's Word shall not return unto Him void. Daniel 7 takes us down through the same history of earthly powers until the time when the judgment would begin in the most holy place:

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened" (Daniel 7:9, 10).

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him; and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom" (Daniel 7:13, 14).

This vision has a direct link with Daniel 2, for the stone that smites the image is declared to be "a kingdom". In the judgment Christ comes into the most holy place as the great High Priest to receive this *kingdom*. In Revelation and in the Spirit of Prophecy, this reception of the kingdom by Christ is called "the marriage" to the New Jerusalem. It is in the judgment that He cuts out the "stone".

"These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth" (Daniel 7:17).

Satan's kingdoms are represented by wild ravaging beasts. Why? Because they depict the principles of Satan's kingdom--selfishness, force and falsehood. The symbol of Christ's kingdom is a lamb. The heathen powers continue in possession of the kingdom until the judgment takes place. Then the prophet says: "But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom" (Daniel 7:18).

The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom! This language is clear. If an historian said that General Napoleon *took* the city of Leipzig, we would know what he meant. The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom. This has ever been God's purpose for His people.

In the major and minor prophets we read of God's disappointment in His people. They have never lived up to His expectations. God has been disgraced and put to shame, but the messages of the prophets end on a note of victory. Often it is stated: "It shall come to pass in the last days. . ." The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom.

"And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and *they shall take away his dominion*" (Daniel 7:25, 26).

Who are these that "take away his dominion"? Who is it that sweeps the kingdom of the man of sin away? It is the saints! God made man for this purpose:

"*Thou* art my battle axe and weapons of war: for with *thee* will I break in pieces the nations, and with *thee* will I destroy kingdoms; and with *thee* will I break in pieces the horse and his rider; and with *thee* will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider" (Jeremiah 51:20, 21).

"I will make of *thee* a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: *thou* shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. *Thou* shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them" (Isaiah 41:15, 16).

#### Who Shall Make War with the Beast?

In the thirteenth chapter of Revelation the challenge is given: "Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" During the Middle Ages the man of sin ruled supreme among the nations. The nations of Christendom had given their homage to the Papacy. The bulwarks of Rome seemed secure, impregnable. Many tried to stand up against her, but they were just swept aside. The challenge went forth: "Who shall make war with the beast?" Then Protestantism was born. The Protestants took the great message of justification by faith and made war with the beast. They shook the nations loose

from the Papacy, giving it a deadly wound. It is often said that the inflicting of the deadly wound was when General Berthier went down into Rome and took the Pope prisoner. But that was only the demonstration that there was no power left to help the Papacy. Sr. White speaks of Protestantism giving the man of sin a deadly wound. "Who shall make war with the beast?" They *made* war with the beast by giving the great truth of justification by faith, and inflicted the deadly wound on the beast.

It is interesting to read the introduction to the King James version of the Bible (the salutation to King James). There it states that the Reformation "hath given such a blow unto that man of sin, as will not be healed." That was written in 1611. The Protestants regarded themselves as having given such a deadly blow to the man of sin that it would not be healed. And they did give him a blow, a deadly wound, with the preaching of the truth at that time. But what has happened? The wound is healing. Why? The experience of justification by faith that came to Protestantism through the ministry of Christ in the first apartment of the sanctuary was neither complete nor permanent. Neither was the deadly wound complete or permanent. Prophecy shows us that very soon all the world is to wonder after the beast again. Great Babylon will say: "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." Again all the world will be swept into the grasp of Babylon.

Right at this crisis in earth's history something is to take place. Daniel 7 says: "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion." "They" refers to the saints. They are going to take away the dominion of the man of sin. In righteousness they shall make war on the beast. When the challenge is given, "Who shall make war with the beast?" God will have a people ready to answer that challenge. This time they will take away his dominion, and, to use the words of those who wrote the salutation to King James, give him "such a blow . . . as will not be healed." God created man for this purpose--to be a stone, a battle axe, a new sharp threshing instrument with which to smite the kingdom of darkness.

#### The Judgment the Turning Point of History

When shall they take away his dominion? How shall they take away his dominion? "*The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion.*" There is to be a great war, a great conflict. This war (spoken of many times in the Scriptures) begins at the time of the Sunday decree (Revelation 13:14-17), and proceeds until the seventh plague when the voice of God declares, "It is done."

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 12:17).

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful" (Revelation 17:14).

At this time of crisis, God will have a great and mighty army such as has never been seen upon this earth to make war with the beast and to take away his dominion:

"The powers of evil will not yield up the conflict without a struggle. But Providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon. When the earth is lighted with the glory of the angel of Revelation eighteen, the religious elements, good and evil, will awake from slumber, and the armies of the living God will take the field."  
--S.D.A. Bible Commentary, Vol. 7, p. 983.

When the earth is lighted with the glory of the angel of Revelation 18, the armies of the living God take the field. It is then that they make war with the beast.

We must now see the connection between this and the judgment. "The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion." It is evident that they *cannot* go forth as an army to take away his dominion until that judgment sits for them. It is equally evident that the judgment gives them an armor, a great defense, a sword whereby they can fight in this battle. *The judgment does it!* The judgment and the ministry of Christ in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary are the focal point of the prophecy. And so the armies of the living God take the field because of what Christ does for them in the judgment.

The message of Acts 3:19 will help to clarify the picture: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted [this is the work of preparation], that your sins may be blotted out [this is in the judgment], when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." Or, as some translations have it, "then times of refreshing shall come." The judgment and the blotting out of sins comes with the great test of the mark of the beast and his image. Then the armies of the living God take the field as a result of the judgment.

Now let us read from the Song of Solomon, a text so often quoted by the servant of the Lord. God's army is an interesting army, very much like the army of Jehoshaphat (See 2 Chronicles 20). I think there will be singers out in front of this army too, as there were in the days of Jehoshaphat.

"Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" (Solomon's Song, 6:10).

Notice where the Spirit of Prophecy places the going forth of this army:

"The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be, rather

than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. The contest is between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. In this time the gold will be separated from the dross in the church. True godliness will be clearly distinguished from the appearance and tinsel of it. Many a star that we have admired for its brilliancy will then go out in darkness. Chaff like a cloud will be borne away on the wind, even from places where we see only floors of rich wheat. All who assume the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ's righteousness, will appear in the shame of their own nakedness.

"When trees without fruit are cut down as cumberers of the ground, when multitudes of false brethren are distinguished from the true, then the hidden ones will be revealed to view, and with hosannas range under the banner of Christ. Those who have been timid and self-distrustful will declare themselves openly for Christ and His truth. The most weak and hesitating in the church will be as David --willing to do and dare. The deeper the night for God's people, the more brilliant the stars. Satan will sorely harass the faithful; but, in the name of Jesus, they will come off more than conquerors. Then will the church of Christ appear 'fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.'"--*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 81, 82.

When the judgment sits at the time of the test, and seals the faithful ones, God's people become "terrible as an army with banners."

Here is the Lord's battle axe. When the challenge is given, "Who shall make war with the beast?" "The judgment shall sit, and *they* shall take away his dominion." The church will go forth, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and *terrible* as an army with banners."

"Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict. 'Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners,' she is to go forth into all the world, conquering and to conquer."--*Prophets and Kings*, p. 725.

Beginning with the decree of Revelation 13:15-17, and continuing to the time of the seventh plague is the time of the *final conflict*. The conflict does not end at the close of probation. It merely increases in intensity after probation closes, and goes right on until the voice of God pronounces the victory. When the battle is won by the saints, the Jubilee rest commences.

### The Armies of the Living God

Let us compare Joel 2 with Daniel 7, for both chapters are dealing with the great Day of Atonement. The Spirit of Prophecy comments on Joel 2 (See *Testimonies*, Vol. 1, pp. 179-183), and gives us a striking portrayal of the armies of the living God.

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been any ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them; and behind them the flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness. They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining: and the Lord shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great" (Joel 2:1-11).

Compare this passage with the Inspired comments on Joel 2:

"Said the angel: 'Look ye!' My attention was then turned to the company I had seen, who were mightily shaken. I was shown those whom I had before seen weeping and praying with agony of spirit.

The company of guardian angels around them had been doubled, and they were clothed with an armor from their head to their feet. They moved in exact order, firmly, like a company of soldiers. Their countenances expressed the severe conflict which they had endured, the agonizing struggle they had passed through. Yet their features, marked with severe internal anguish, now shone with the light and glory of heaven. They had obtained the victory, and it called forth from them the deepest gratitude, and holy, sacred joy."--*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, pp. 181, 182.

"Who shall make war with the beast?" God's people! Recall what took place in the days of Queen Esther. When the great test came upon the people of God and they were threatened with destruction, she went into the *inner court* to plead before the king. What were the Jews given? Weapons to fight! So when the great crisis comes upon God's people, they enter into the judgment, into the inner court of the King's sanctuary. What will they be given? "Weapons" to fight! "The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion." The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but the mighty Word of God.

#### Loud Cry Cannot Sound without the Judgment

It is only when the judgment sits that Revelation 18 can sound, and the armies of the living God will take the field. The prophet Joel directs our attention to the great work of preparation that is required of the Lord's people to fit them for their place in this army:

"Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness. . . . Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?" (Joel 2:12-17).

Sister White says children are going to be in the army of the Lord during this final conflict. Some parents may be locked up in jail; so the prophet says that the children must be prepared to act their part. All must gather around the sanctuary for this anti-typical Day of Atonement. There must be a great work of repentance and putting away of sin. The saints will then be clothed with an armor from their head to their feet, and they will go forth "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

Certainly the Protestants had an armor and weapons with which to fight the beast. They gave the man of sin a death stroke. But here is a people, strong and mighty, such as never was. They have ap-

propriated the fulness of what Christ has for them in His final ministration. The judgment sits, clothes them with an armor, and they go forth into the final conflict.

#### The Sealed Church

The Reformation of the sixteenth century is likened to the morning star, but the last great reformation is likened to the rising sun:

"And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory" (Ezekiel 43:2).

It is clear that this glory which comes from the east is the seal of the living God:

"And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads" (Revelation 7:2, 3).

When this glory comes by way of the east, what happens to the earth? The whole earth shines with His glory. The sealing is likened unto the rising sun. Some would put the sealing *after* the latter rain has done its work. Could you imagine the whole earth being filled with light, and then the sun rising some time later? First the sun rises, and then the earth is filled with glory! So, as the sealing begins, the earth shines with His glory:

"And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory" (Revelation 18:1).

When does the sealing take place? In the judgment. The judgment and the sealing begin at the time of the Sabbath test. The sealing takes place in order that the earth may be flooded with the glory of God. The armies of the living God take the field as a result of what is done for God's people in the judgment. In the judgment they are sealed with the fulness of His Spirit.

The Reformation of the sixteenth century, which shook the nations loose from the Papacy, is likened to the morning star; but what is this final Reformation likened unto? The rising sun! Can you compare the morning star with the rising sun? Look what the morning star did to the Papacy! Now you can imagine what the rising sun is going to do to it. It will expose the sins of Babylon in such a way that a great harvest of souls will be gathered out to join the armies of the living God (See *Great Controversy*, pp. 606, 607). When all on earth have been tested (no one will escape), probation will close.

The order of events in Joel 2 is very clear. First is the gathering at the sanctuary for the work of judgment, then follows the latter rain. Acts 3:19 gives the same order: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

First comes the work of repentance, conversion and genuine putting away of sin; then there is the work of blotting out of sins in the judgment, followed by the loud cry going forward under the power of the refreshing. Daniel 7 gives the same order too. The judgment sits, and *they* take away his dominion--the armies of the living God take the field.

### The Kings of the East

When all the saints are sealed, probation closes. The plagues then begin to fall on great Babylon. Let us consider the significance of the climactic sixth plague: "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared" (Revelation 16:12).

In Old Testament times there was the city of Babylon, oppressing God's people. Many of the Jews were captives in Babylon. Cyrus the Great dried up the river Euphrates and the kings who were with him marched down the dry river bed and into the city of Babylon. Cyrus was from the east, and the kings who overthrew the city were the kings of the east (See Isaiah 41:2, 25; 45:1, 2; Jeremiah 51:11; 50:41). Cyrus is a type of Jesus--the great King of the east. When He comes in the clouds of heaven, He comes from the east. Yet Babylon is overthrown by the kings of the east before Jesus comes. Who are these kings who are associated with Christ in the final conflict? "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and *with him* an hundred forty and four thousand" (Revelation 14:1). Who is this army that is with the Lamb? It is the hundred and forty-four thousand. They are men born to be kings.

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are *with him* are called, and chosen, and faithful" (Revelation 17:14).

"The battle of Armageddon will be fought, and that day must find none of us sleeping. Wide awake we must be, as wise virgins having oil in our vessels with our lamps. . . .

"The power of the Holy Ghost must be upon us, and the Captain of the Lord's host will stand at the head of the angels of heaven to direct the battle. Solemn events before us are yet to transpire. Trumpet after trumpet is to be sounded, vial after vial poured out one after another upon the inhabitants of the earth. Scenes of stupendous interest are right upon us.

"Two great opposing powers are revealed in the last great battle. On one side stands the Creator of heaven and earth. All on His side bear His signet [that is His seal]. They are obedient to His commands. On the other side stands the prince of darkness, with those who have chosen apostasy and rebellion."--*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, pp. 982, 983.

We must be wide awake, ready, waiting. When the angel of Revelation 18 sounds we must be ready then to take the field, to receive the

outpouring of the Holy Spirit. When the judgment sits, oh, may we be accounted worthy to have that armor placed upon us, to go forth as terrible as an army with banners.

These are the kings of the east that go in and take the city. Here is the stone. The Lamb stands on Mount Zion and with Him an hundred and forty-four thousand. In the final conflict, all the nations are represented as gathered around that mountain. Then the great stone rolls out of that mountain and smites the image upon its feet. "The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion." The nations make war with the Lamb, and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful. While Jesus is King of kings, those with Him are His kings and priests.

God must prepare an army such as He has never yet prepared upon this earth, to win the final conflict against the man of sin. We live in such an hour. The light is shining from the most holy place of the sanctuary. There is the judgment bar of God, with Jesus standing before it to make the final atonement for His people. Joel 2 calls us to gather around the sanctuary and make preparation for the judgment of the living. Sister White says in *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 80: "The Lord *will* have a people, pure and true."

John the Baptist told the Jews in his day, "Say not to yourselves that we have Abraham for our Father." As the Jews read the prophecies of the Bible, they thought that God could not fulfill His purpose without them. But John the Baptist told them that God was not dependent upon the Jews. He could reject them all and raise up, of the stones, children unto Abraham.

God will have a people pure and true, a mighty army. Prophecy must be fulfilled. The only conditional part about it is, Will it be us? Will it be God's people in their present institutionalized capacity? It is entirely possible that God could reject every Seventh-day Adventist in this world, if they were unfaithful, yet His purpose would be fulfilled. He will have a people pure and true, and He will still have an Advent Movement. God will have a people who will enter the judgment, take the sword of the Spirit, bathed in the lightnings of heaven, and make war with the beast. Right through the time of the plagues, through all the terrible conflict, the Lord will lead His people by ways they know not. Not only will He lead them to victory as we know victory, but He will lead them to victory through paths of apparent failure and defeat.

The climax of the conflict comes under the fifth, sixth, and seventh plagues. During the fifth plague the great darkness falls upon the wicked. As they look out through the darkness, they see the light of God with each praying company, and the rainbow (the combined power of justice and mercy) around them. The wicked see God's promise fulfilled to the saints: "I will keep thee in the hour of temptation." There are the praying saints, bearing in their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus. They are holy, harmless, and undefiled. The revelation of Jesus is seen through them. This time of trouble and crisis brings out the Christlike characters. Then, at the climax, the wicked look and see a mighty revelation of the cross of Jesus in the

saints. What do they do? Seeing that Babylon has deceived them, they withdraw their support from her. Thus the "river" is dried up. The wicked kneel at the saints' feet, confessing: "God has loved you". Then it is, as James White wrote, that Revelation 2:28 is fulfilled--God's people have power over the nations. Babylon falls, the victory is won, and the conflict is over.

Great Babylon is not going to be overthrown by the coming of Jesus. It must be overthrown before He comes. He is not coming to overthrow great Babylon with a great show of force. Satan's kingdom must fall before the coming of Christ, from within itself, through the revelation of the principles of God's truth. This having taken place, Christ comes to receive His victorious people, and to destroy the remnant of the wicked with the brightness of His coming.

*Those who in sincerity and truth believe the words of Christ sent to them through His ambassadors, will understand what is the import of those words; but those who have intrenched themselves in unbelief, will be as were the Jews, blinded to the light. By rejection of evidence, they lost their spiritual eyesight, and could not discern between good and evil, between truth and error, light and darkness. Those who are filled with unbelief can discern the least thing that has an objectionable appearance, and by beholding the objectionable feature, they can lose sight of all the evidence that God has given in manifesting His abundant grace and power, in revealing precious gems of truth from the inexhaustible mine of His word. They can hold the objectionable atom under the magnifying glasses of their imagination until the atom looks like a world, and shuts out from their view the precious light of heaven. But instead of placing that which appears objectionable beneath the eyes, why not bring before the soul the precious things of God? Why make the things of priceless value of little esteem, while the worthless things are made much of? Why take so much account of that which may appear to you as objectionable in the messenger, and sweep away all the evidences that God has given to balance the mind in regard to the truth?*

*With the history of the children of Israel before us, let us take heed, and not be found committing the same sins, following in the same way of unbelief and rebellion.*

*--Review and Herald, April 18, 1893.*

# Something to Think About

R.D. Brinsmead

Some time ago I was having a discussion with a Seventh-day Adventist theologian, a leading Bible teacher in the denomination. One point of mutual interest was the human nature of Christ. There was much that we could agree upon. For instance, we agreed that Christ was sinless by nature and not just by deed, that He had no propensities to sin, no sinful passions, and no carnal mind. Yet there was *something* that divided us doctrinally. That difference was so basic that when we considered almost every field of Christian truth we found ourselves looking at things with different glasses on! As our discussion continued, we finally saw that our concept of the humanity of Christ shaped every other Christian concept. After allowing the dust of many points to settle, we finally saw very clearly the basis of our difficulty. I now wish to share this important matter with you.

We both agreed that the humanity of Christ is a revelation of God's purpose for man. We both saw that the life of Jesus of Nazareth was a demonstration of what God had in mind for man on this earth. But then the teacher asked; "Was the sinless humanity of Christ a revelation of what God had in mind for Adam, or was it also a revelation of what He had in mind for fallen man?" My reply was unhesitatingly: "Christ's sinless humanity is a revelation of what God can do for fallen man -- *us*."

He then asked me: "Is your view that which has been held by the main stream of Christian scholarship down through the centuries?" I replied: "The apostolic view was that the human nature of Jesus was a revelation of what God could do for fallen man in this life. This concept of the gospel became lost early in the history of the church. I believe that the Spirit of Prophecy revives the apostolic view."

The theologian politely disagreed. To him, the humanity of Jesus was merely a revelation of what Adam could have been. It was not a revelation of what we may be in this life. We saw that our respective theologies stood or fell on this basic premise. He readily conceded that I had on my side the views of Adventist Bible expositors prior to 1956, but he pointed out that he had on his side the main stream of Protestant scholarship since the days of the Reformation.

Are you aware, dear reader, that two parties are forming within the Seventh-day Adventist church, and that this is according to prophecy (2SM 114)? Before the 1950's, there is no evidence that there was any difference among Adventists in regard to the humanity of Jesus Christ. Any Adventist theologian would have readily conceded that the sinless life of Jesus was a revelation of what God can do for us. All that has now changed. A large section of Adventist scholarship has gone back to accept the typical Protestant view of the humanity of Jesus. They see His humanity as a demonstration, not of what we may be through divine grace, but of what Adam could have been if he had not fallen.

In this new view of the incarnation, gone is the original Adventist concept of the perfecting of the saints in the last days. Oh, how can it be that so many of God's people are so fast asleep that they are completely oblivious to what is taking place? Men now stand in our pulpits painting a different "Christ" than the Christ that was painted by the founders of Adventism. This new "Christ" is indeed the "Christ" of Babylonian Protestantism. This new "Christ" kept the law for us, but since he is not a revelation of what we may be, the worship of him does not mean that God can do the same for us. He is a "loving", "Merciful" (indulgent) "Christ". Having had no part in our fallen nature, this "Christ" makes allowances for and overlooks the sins that we commit in our weak, fallen nature. This new "Christ" promises those who believe on him that he is coming soon, and when he comes he will then make his people morally perfect and sinless. The life of this "Christ" verily teaches men that perfect obedience and sinlessness are impossible for us in this life.

Dear reader, which Christ is your Saviour? Whom do you worship? As you study and contemplate the sinless humanity of Jesus of Nazareth, is He a revelation to your soul of what God is waiting to do for you? or is His life something for you to gaze upon wistfully, without hope of reflecting His image fully?

If you are not sure where you stand on this great issue, I suggest that you read the New Testament again, seeking prayerfully for the answer. Take *The Desire of Ages* and see which Christ is boldly presented in this masterpiece of the Spirit of Prophecy. Consider carefully the following passages:

"Satan represents God's law of love as a law of selfishness. He declares that it is impossible for us to obey its precepts. The fall of our first parents, with all the woe that has resulted, he charges upon the Creator, leading men to look upon God as the author

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Never is the tempest-tried soul more dearly loved by His Saviour than when he is suffering reproach for the Truth's sake. A.A. p. 85.

of sin, and suffering, and death. Jesus was to unveil this deception. As one of us He was to give an example of obedience. For this He took upon Himself our nature, and passed through our experiences. 'In all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren.' Heb. 2:17. If we had to bear anything which Jesus did not endure, then upon this point Satan would represent the power of God as insufficient for us. Therefore Jesus was 'in all points tempted like as we are.' Heb. 4:15. He endured every trial to which we are subject. And He exercised in His own behalf no power that is not freely offered to us. As man, He met temptation, and overcame in the strength given Him from God. He says, 'I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart.' Ps. 40:8. As He went about doing good, and healing all who were afflicted by Satan, He made plain to men the character of God's law and the nature of His service. His life testifies that it is possible for us also to obey the law of God.

"By His humanity, Christ touched humanity; by His divinity, He lays hold upon the throne of God. As the Son of man, He gave us an example of obedience; as the Son of God, He gives us power to obey."  
-- *Desire of Ages*, p. 24.

"It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man's nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life." -- *Ibid.*, p. 49.

"In our own strength it is impossible for us to deny the clamors of our fallen nature. Through this channel Satan will bring temptation upon us. Christ knew that the enemy would come to every human being, to take advantages of hereditary weakness, and by his false insinuations to ensnare all whose trust is not in God. And by passing over the ground which man must travel, our Lord has prepared the way for us to overcome. It is not His will that we should be placed at a disadvantage in the conflict with Satan. He would not have us intimidated and discouraged by the assaults of the serpent. 'Be of good cheer,' He says; 'I have overcome the world.' John 16:33.

"Let him who is struggling against the power of appetite look to the Saviour in the wilderness of temptation. See Him in His agony upon the cross, as He exclaimed, 'I thirst.' He has endured all that it is possible for us to bear. His victory is ours.

"Jesus rested upon the wisdom and strength of His heavenly Father. He declares, 'The Lord God will help Me; therefore shall I not be confounded: . . . and I know that I shall not be ashamed. . . . Behold, the Lord God will help Me.' Pointing to His own example, He says to us, 'Who is among you that feareth the Lord, . . . that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.' Isa. 50:7-10.

"'The prince of this world cometh,' said Jesus, 'and hath nothing in Me.' John 14:30. There was in Him nothing that responded to Satan's sophistry. He did not consent to sin. Not even by a thought did He yield to temptation. So it may be with us. Christ's humanity was united with divinity; He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And He came to make us partakers of the divine nature. So long as we are united to Him by faith, sin has no more dominion over us. God reaches for the hand of faith in us to direct it to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, that we may attain to perfection of character." -- *Ibid.*, pp. 122,123.

"His experience is to be ours." -- *Ibid.*, p. 363.

"His perfect humanity is that which all His followers may possess, if they will be in subjection to God as He was." -- *Ibid.*, p. 664.

"Having taken our fallen nature, He showed what it might become, by accepting the ample provision He has made for it, and by becoming partaker of the divine nature." -- *Questions on Doctrine*, p. 657.

When you are sure that you know the truth, then stand for that truth though the heavens fall.

#### FORTITUDE

*Those who are finally victorious will have seasons of terrible perplexity and trial in their religious life; but they must not cast away their confidence, for this is a part of their discipline in the school of Christ, and it is essential in order that all dross may be purged away. The servant of God must endure with fortitude the attacks of the enemy, his grievous taunts, and must overcome the obstacles which Satan will place in his way.*

*Satan will seek to discourage the followers of Christ, so that they may not pray or study the Scriptures, and he will throw his hateful shadow athwart the path to hide Jesus from the view, to shut away the vision of His love, and the glories of the heavenly inheritance. It is his delight to cause the children of God to go shrinkingly, tremblingly, and painfully along, under continual doubt. He seeks to make the pathway as sorrowful as possible; but if you keep looking up, not down at your difficulties, you will not faint in the way, you will soon see Jesus reaching His hand to help you, and you will only have to give Him your hand in simple confidence, and let Him lead you. As you become trustful, you will become hopeful.*

--Messages to Young People, p. 63.

# The Ministry of the Most Holy Place

R. D. BRINSMEAD

The most unique doctrine introduced by the pioneers of Adventism was the doctrine of Christ's entrance into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary in 1844. This teaching has been subject to strenuous attack by the opponents of the Advent Message. Throughout our history, the major apostasies on doctrinal pretexts have centered on this point. The Ballenger defection was perhaps the most prominent. In recent years, a number of Adventist scholars have leaned very much toward Ballenger's views. This development is bound to come more and more out into the open in the near future. It behooves all to know where they stand upon this point.

Did Christ actually enter the most holy place of the sanctuary in 1844? What is our Biblical basis for this teaching? A few weeks ago, while conducting a Bible study, I called upon a group of believers to defend their position Biblically. I put to them such arguments as are used by those who refute this fundamental Adventist doctrine. The group became so alarmed at their inability to give an adequate reason for the hope that is within them that they began studying in earnest to find a proper Biblical basis for their faith.

What is our Biblical basis for proving Christ's entrance into the second apartment of the sanctuary in 1844? Remember, everything depends upon this point!

## Some Early Adventist History

Before the great disappointment of October 22, 1844, the Advent believers were not altogether ignorant regarding the sanctuary. For instance, in the summer of 1844 they discovered that Daniel 8:14 referred to the great anti-typical Day of Atonement. With this knowledge, they were able to fix the date of the end of the 2300 years--October 22 -- the day that corresponded to the 10th day of the Jewish 7th month. Accordingly, they expected that their High Priest would come out of the holy of holies to "cut off" the sinners in the church and to bless His waiting people. At that time all Christians took it for granted that Christ was in the holy of holies in heaven, and therefore they thought that the event foretold in Daniel 8:14 could only refer to His coming out of the holy of holies. Even the translators of the King James Version of the Bible had the popular view of Christ being in the holy of holies, and therefore they colored their translation of the book of Hebrews in that light [See Hebrews 9:8 and 10:19. Here "holiest of all" and "holiest" should have been translated "sanctuary".]

The morning after the disappointment, Hiram Edson reconsidered the sanctuary and the great Day of Atonement. He was impressed with the overwhelming evidence that on the Day of Atonement the High Priest entered for the first time into the holy of holies. This was the key to explain the disappointment. In order to fulfil the type, Christ must have entered the holy of holies of the heavenly sanctuary at that time. Every distinctive Adventist doctrine now centers around this explanation of the disappointment.

### The Biblical Evidence

Briefly, here is the Biblical evidence for Christ's entrance into the most holy place in 1844:

1. Daniel 8:14 and Daniel 7:9,10,13,14 are the same event. The judgment and cleansing of the sanctuary would take place in Christ's sanctuary at the end of the 2300 years. Since the ancient tabernacle is a type and shadow of the heavenly, we must go back to the type to learn more about the judgment and the cleansing of the sanctuary. There were only two services of the ancient tabernacle -- the *daily* and the *yearly*. The yearly, called the Day of Atonement, clearly typified a work of judgment. On that day the sanctuary was cleansed from the sins of Israel. It was on the Day of Atonement that the high priest entered the most holy place.
2. If Christ entered His ministry in the most holy place at the time of His ascension, then the judgment would have taken place at that time. But the announcement of the judgment in progress is given in the last days, by the first angel of Revelation 14.
3. If the antitype of the high priest's ministration in the second apartment began at the time of Christ's ascension into heaven, when did the antitype of the *daily* ministration in the first apartment take place? Daniel 8:11,12 shows that the Papacy warred against the *daily*. Hence, during the time of Papal apostasy, Christ would have been carrying forward His ministration in the holy place.
4. The daily and yearly round of Jewish ceremonies clearly typified the whole Christian dispensation. The *daily* occupied the great period of the year. The *yearly* was only a climactic service at the close of the year.
5. In the Revelation, the throne of God is presented as being in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary at the opening of the seven seals and at the commencement of the seven trumpets (See Revelation 4:5; 8:2,3). God's throne, according to Ezekiel 1, is a living, moving throne. In the earthly type, the presence of God was not only manifested in the most holy, but often in the holy place, and sometimes even in the outer court.
6. Daniel 7:9-14 gives evidence of the movement of the throne of God at the commencement of the judgment. The expression, *thrones were cast down*, signifies movement. Then it says that Christ came "with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him" (Daniel 7:13). Now Christ entered

into the presence of God at the time of His ascension. But here Christ is shown to be entering into the presence of God again. Indeed, He is conveyed by a great retinue [cloud] of angels to where the Father has taken His place on the throne. Daniel 8:14 explains this. As a High Priest, Christ comes to the Father in the most holy place. At His ascension, He came to the Father in the holy place.

7. The great Jewish convocations were typical of the great events in the Christian dispensation. There were the Passover, Pentecost, Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles. The Passover and Pentecost took place at the beginning of the Jewish sacred year. These events met their reality at the beginning of the Christian dispensation. The four gospels record how Christ and His disciples were together for the Passover celebration. The book of Acts shows how the early believers received the blessing of Pentecost (Acts 2). Nowhere do the gospels or Acts, or the epistles of the New Testament, speak of God's fulfilling the type of the ancient Day of Atonement. The reason is that the Atonement and Tabernacles, coming close together, were figurative of events that close the gospel dispensation. The Feast of Tabernacles [Harvest Rejoicing] takes place immediately after the harvest of earth is gathered at the coming of Christ (See Revelation 15:15). The great multitude of saved in the kingdom of God are shown, in Revelation 7:9, to be waving-palm branches, indicating that they are fulfilling the ancient type of harvest rejoicing. In the type, the Atonement came just five days before the Tabernacles. So it is evident that the anti-typical Day of Atonement would be the great event preceding the coming of the Lord. This is shown to be so by the first angel's message of Revelation 14; by the sealing of Revelation 7; and by the leading away of the anti-typical scapegoat of Revelation 20. Joel 2:1,15-17, places the anti-typical gathering of the congregation at the sanctuary in soul affliction just prior to the Day of the Lord.

Another interesting and important point: just as Acts 2 shows that the blessing of Pentecost was the former rain, Joel 2 shows that the blessing of the Day of Atonement is the latter rain.

We trust that our readers will become familiar with these great points of faith given of God as a most precious heritage. May the consideration of these things not only lead us to tenaciously hold to these fundamental points, but to also realize God's purpose for us in the ministration of the holy of holies. May we sense the mighty privilege which is ours to enter the open door by faith and by so doing, lay hold of the blessing of the judgment -- which blessing is the latter rain (Acts 3:19).

" . . . The Pharisees could see no beauty in Him that they should desire Him. His simple attire, and humble life, devoid of outward show, rendered Him to them as a root out of dry ground."--Review and Herald, March 15, 1887.

# Contending for the Faith

Robert D. Brinsmead

The apostle Jude exhorts God's people to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). Unceasing conflict, constant vigilance, and untiring warfare are called for to maintain a hold on the purity of the faith.

It is a source of perplexity to many that the blessed truths of heaven are the subject of much contention and conflict. But it should be remembered that Christianity was born in conflict. Christ was the Prince of peace, yet He was the cause of division. Read the book of John and let the imagination take in the fierce conflicts between Jesus and the Sanhedrin. Read the book of Acts and see the mighty arguments of truth being presented in much conflict and contention. And so on through the ages the contest between truth and error has continued, waxing fiercer and fiercer. We now stand on the threshold of that time called "the final conflict."

## Satan's Strategy

We should be acquainted with the strategy of the enemy of truth. In the time of the apostles he bitterly opposed the central truth presented by the apostles -- that Jesus was the Son of God and that the resurrection was the seal of His divinity. Millions were called to seal their testimony for Jesus with their blood. But the fires of persecution could not wipe out the truth that was daily winning converts. Then Satan changed his strategy. He stopped his opposition to the truth of the resurrection of Jesus. He himself influenced multitudes "to accept Jesus as the Son of God and to believe in His death and resurrection."-- *Great Controversy*, p. 42. It is hardly believable, yet this is what Satan did. And when the majority of Christians saw that opposition ceased to the doctrine of Jesus and the resurrection, they exulted at the sudden success of their mission. Their vigilance ceased. "Now the church was in fearful peril. Prison, torture, fire and sword were blessings in comparison with this." -- *Ibid.* Satan is the prince of fantastic deception. He had his ministers preach the resurrection. That which was the trump card in the preaching of the apostles, was made his own trump card. He advanced the idea, in supposed honor of the resurrection, that Sunday should be consecrated as the day of worship.

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While the truth of Jesus' divinity and His resurrection was the special point of controversy in the days of the apostles, it is no longer the focal point of controversy in the religious world. This does not mean that Satan has ceased his opposition to truth. His opposition has merely changed its form.

How the early Christian church in general rejoiced when Christianity suddenly became well accepted, and millions flocked to join the church! They went wild with elation and excitement! The greatest men in the empire began to espouse the Christian religion. They could even number the emperor himself on their side. Surely God was mightily blessing the church, they thought, and the work was going with far greater rapidity than in apostolic times!

Before we sit in judgment on the stupidity of those early Christians, let us imagine what would happen if Adventism suddenly became more popular. Imagine if some of the world's great preachers and religious leaders came out publicly and declared that Adventists were right! What would our reaction be if instead of the church going forward in thousands numerically, it grew by millions. What if so much money poured into the coffers of the church from worldly great men that the treasury began to burst at the seams! Well, this is what happened in the days of the early church, and what was enthusiastically hailed as the sudden success of the church was her sudden overthrow. Has history taught us anything? Do we still judge by outward appearance? Evidence would indicate that we are not altogether secure from the devices of Satan.

## Justification by Faith

In the days of the Protestant reformers the conflict was not over the divinity of Christ and His resurrection. The church of Rome gave lip service to all of this. Her creed was most correct on these points. The Reformation was born in conflict and grew up in the heat of severe spiritual warfare. The issue was now justification by faith. The Roman church was peddling indulgences and teaching that salvation was to be secured by the observance of all the works and ceremonies enjoined by the Church. The sword of present truth, justification by faith, gave the man of sin such a stroke, that the nations of Europe were able to break from the stranglehold of the papal church. Luther's doctrine of justification by faith met with fierce assault, but it made its way against the popular errors of the time. Luther himself was regarded by the Catholic Church as one who was the symbol of all that was diabolical and heretical. This attitude to the great Reformer remained until this present decade.

But in our day a sudden change has come. The church of the anti-christ has ceased opposing Martin Luther. There has been a sudden about-face. It is almost unbelievable. Catholic authorities of this decade have begun to laud Luther as a great man of God. We must realize that for Catholics to accept Martin Luther is about the same as the Jews accepting Jesus as the Messiah. Yet the "impossible" has happened. A recent issue of *Time* had this to say:

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CONTENDING, *cont. from p. 3*

"The most remarkable aspect of the Luther renaissance is that it is enthusiastically endorsed by Roman Catholics, whose post-conciliar hymnbooks are patently incomplete if they do not include his martial hymn, *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*. Less than a generation ago, Luther was scorned -- even by Catholic scholars who should have known better -- as a sensuous, psychotic, fallen monk, the deliberate destroyer of Christendom. . . . Today, the vast majority of Catholic theologians concedes that Luther was a profound spiritual thinker who was driven into open revolt by the corruption of the Renaissance church and the intransigent stupidity of its Popes. Jesuit John Courtney Murray, for example, calls Luther 'a religious genius -- compassionate, rhetorical and full of insights.' An American theologian teaching in Rome allows that 'Luther was right on indulgences and on most points.'" -- *Time*, March 24, 1967.

Since Catholicism has stated that it accepts Luther's teachings on justification by faith, how are the Protestants, who were founded upon this truth, responding to Rome's stance now?

"Protestant scholars, in turn, have been rediscovering how much of Luther was essentially Catholic. . . . One leading Luthern scholar, Dr. Carl Braaten of Chicago's LUTHERAN School of Theology, insists that Protestant union with Rome is precisely in accord with the reformer's wishes. 'The Reformation was always meant to be a temporary movement,' he contends. 'When the Roman Catholic Church is reformed, there will be no justification for a separate Protestant church.'" -- *Ibid.*

### The Second Coming of Christ

In the last century, God sent an Advent awakening to the Protestant churches, especially in America. They bitterly rejected the message of the imminent return of Jesus. Thousands were forced to leave the good "fundamental" Protestant churches for confessing faith in the soon coming of Jesus. Among those disfellowshipped from the Methodist Church were the Harmon family, one of whom later became Mrs. E. G. White. We must remember that our spiritual fathers were men who were thrust out of their churches because of their faith in the soon coming of Jesus.

In consequence of the churches' rejection of the Advent message, they experienced a moral fall in 1844. God rejected these Protestant churches as His instruments to accomplish His work, and sent a message pronouncing them Babylon. The Spirit of Prophecy tells us that since that time these bodies have been becoming more and more corrupt, and that as organized churches, God does not smell in their assemblies. They constitute Babylon, and we must not expect that God will work with them as religious bodies (*Early Writings*, pp. 260, 261, 273-276).

Some of these Protestant bodies met in Berlin in October, 1966, to hold a World Congress of Evangelism. Representatives attended from all over the world. Seventh-day Adventist leaders were invited as

observers. One of these leaders reports that it was a wonderful gathering which recognized that little time remains until Christ comes. He said: "Over and over again the thought of the coming of Christ was set forth as the blessed hope of the church, and always we were impressed with the fact of the shortness of time that remains until that blessed event." -- *Ministry*, February, 1967.

Evidently the Adventist ministry in attendance were mightily impressed with how much the Babylonian churches are coming to accept the Adventist point of view. This article in *The Ministry* adds, "This meeting was unusual because of the nature of the messages presented. The great need of the indwelling presence of Christ and the power of the Spirit of God in the life and service of the ministry was forcefully emphasized. The messages were fundamental, spiritual, scholarly, Christ-centered, Bible based, and earnest. Almost without exception these messages could have been preached in any Seventh-day Adventist church and would have been well accepted."

If what this man reports is truth, then the second angel's message of Revelation 14 is a delusion. But "let God be true and every man a liar." Listen to what the Spirit of Prophecy says:

"I was told that men will employ every policy to make less prominent the difference between the faith of Seventh-day Adventists and those who observe the first day of the week." -- *Selected Messages*, Book 2, p. 385.

The men doing this work are not all outside the Seventh-day Adventist church.

### Opposition to Present Truth

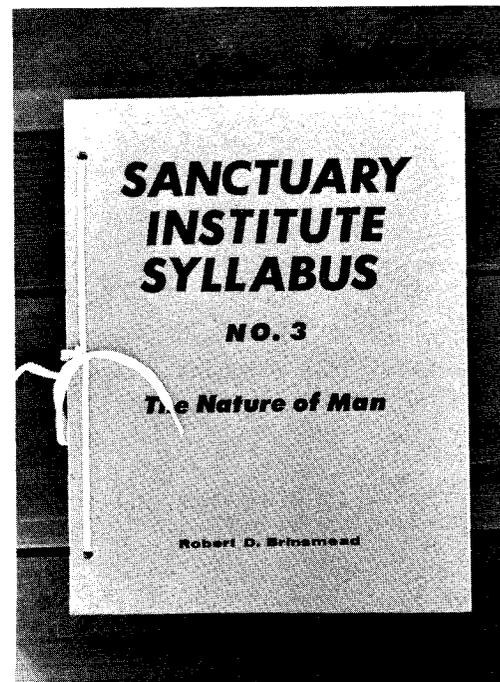
See how Satan has been working! First he fights the truth of the resurrection. Then he "accepts" it and preaches it himself. He opposes the Protestant teaching of justification by faith. Then he "accepts" it and preaches it. He wars against the truth of the second coming of Christ. Then he makes it the popular message of the day. But there is one truth that Satan consistently hates and openly opposes -- that is PRESENT TRUTH. Brother Christian, if you want to be at the hottest point, at the forefront of the Christian battle, you must stand with present truth, and as you take your place beneath the standard of present truth, you will witness all the hatred, deception and force of his Satanic majesty.

Yet the safest place to be, in fact the only safe place to be, is right where Satan is directing his main attack. There was a present truth in the days of the apostles. There was a present truth in the days of Luther. There was a present truth in the days of Miller. There is a present truth for the church of God today. It is here that we are called to earnestly contend for the faith. Here is no place for fence-sitters or anonymous supporters. The true child of God will always join in the battle for truth, counting it all joy that he may suffer something for Jesus.

The present truth for today is found in the third angel's message. This message points to the most holy place of the sanctuary (See

*Early Writings*, p. 254). Here Jesus stands to make a final atonement which is to bring an end to sin in the experience of the church. Only in the light of this great Day of Atonement message is the Sabbath invested with special significance for these last days.

Now before 1844 Christ was not ministering in the second division of His ministration. He was then carrying forward a work that was the antitype of the *daily* service of the earthly tabernacle. The man of sin directed his warfare against the daily. The Papacy fought bitterly against the Reformers' message of justification by faith. But we have come to the time when the whole Christian world will unite on a lip-service to justification by faith. Satan realizes that the present truth is Christ's ministration which is the antitype of the yearly service of the ancient tabernacle. He is now warring to take away from God's people the *yearly*. He is even prepared to make a "reasonable" bargain. He will allow us to have the *daily* as long as we reject the *yearly*. From the early church he took away the daily. From this church he is trying to take away the yearly. Do we understand the issues at stake? Are we ready for the overmastering delusion as Satan is converted after the modern order of things?



This Syllabus presents an entirely original approach to the third angel's message. The following questions are answered at some length:

- ++What was God's original purpose in creating man?
- ++How does the nature of Christ relate to our message on health reform?
- ++What is the basic difference between the Adventist conception & that of Protestantism on the soul?
- ++What is character?
- ++What is "holy flesh"?
- ++What place do emotions have in conversion?
- ++What is perfection?

You cannot afford to be without this important series of lessons. Order your copy without delay and an extra for a friend. Price: \$2