

"Watchman, What of the Night?"

COMMENTARY

Volume I

Number 1

IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial - Why the Commentary?	2
"Thou Shalt Not Steal"	3
Editor ... Not So Firm	8
Walla Walla Wallowing	10
Birds of a Feather	12
A Critique	13
The Peddlers of the Big "Lie"	17

WHY THE COMMENTARY?

With so many publications and mimeographed sheets coming to the mail boxes of the members of the Adventist community, why even consider another publication, even if it is only going to be issued quarterly? Two recent letters, we believe give the answer. One respected brother wrote:

The following sentence in your last Watchman [XX-1] cheered my heart as nothing has in your publication: "No one can grow spiritually with a diet composed of the revelation of apostasy even if it be letters written by church leaders in support of Sunday legislation." I could hope that your efforts in positive presentation of the truth as it is in Jesus in the four angels' messages will grow larger and larger and documentation of apostasy smaller and smaller. A thousand times more documentation of apostasy will not convince those whose eyes are closed, and those who recognize a need must have spiritual food, not carrion.

Then from Australia came this word from a dedicated brother:

I have been reading the latest issue of your "Watchman, What of the Night?" dealing with T. A. Davis and R. S. Donnell. This was a bit of a shock! I had purchased Was Jesus REALLY Like Us? at a Standish meeting here sometime ago, but had not gotten around to go through it carefully. I may not have picked up the problem anyway.

We do believe as we wrote, the concerned in Adventism do need "spiritual food." However, there are some who if awakened will respond positively. These still need documentation of the apostasy.

However, a third need is evidenced by the letter from Australia. Those who are professing to teach historic Adventism, and the message of Christ's righteousness are mingling truth with error. Sadly, due to the conditioning received through fellowship in the Church, the laity have been taught to take whatever a respected leader would say without questioning its validity by the Word of God. Thus over the years, the common person has not been encouraged to distinguish between the voice of a true shepherd and the voice of an hireling.

The Scripture is clear that not only will Satan appear as an angel of light, but "it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as ministers of righteousness." (II Cor. 11:14-15)

To the Philadelphian church, besides telling them, "Behold I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast," they are also told they will be confronted by those "which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie." (Rev. 3:11, 9) An open apostate is not hard to identify in Adventism today. He has denied the sacred trust - the sanctuary truth of the final atonement. But what about those who make a profession of the sanctuary truth and weave into their teaching deadly errors?

No one will enter heaven without the righteousness of Christ, be it imputed or imparted. It is clearly taught that the righteousness of Christ is "pure and unadulterated truth." (TM, p. 65) This allows

To page 19 ----

THOU SHALT NOT STEAL

By the time of the printing of this first issue of Commentary most readers will be aware of the Harris Pines Mills bankruptcy. The impact of this loss upon the denomination is hard to comprehend. Many jobs will be lost to our people, especially to academy and college students. Not only this, but the denomination stands to lose millions of dollars from the treasury. **However, thanks to the vote of the Board of Harris Pine Mills and the General Conference Corporation, millions will be saved for the Church at the expense of the creditors of Harris Pine Mills!**

God's holy law, a transcript of His character, says, "Thou shalt not steal." (Ex. 20:15) Jesus in the New Testament magnified the law as prophesied. (Isa. 42:21) True Christians today do not think of the commandments in the narrow way as did the Jews of Christ's day. The genuine Christian perceives the commandments as "exceeding broad." To withhold something which rightfully belongs to a person is thievery just as surely as to directly steal it from them.

God committed His oracles to ancient Israel. They, in turn, were to show God's character to the world. In the 19th century God entrusted His final message to the Seventh-day Adventist church so they might show His character to the world - a character revealed in His holy law and in a people who

keep "the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." With the church betraying its sacred trust in the area of the final atonement in the heavenly sanctuary, it becomes easy to see how we have betrayed God in revealing the character of Satan rather than the character of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As the plight of Harris Pine Mills became worse, a six-man survival team was appointed. It was made up of Adventist business men with H. F. Otis, President of the Review and Herald, and only church employee, as chairman. The committee was to study to see if Harris Pine Mills could be saved. After three months the team concluded it could not be saved. On December 3, 1986, the survival team met with the Harris Pine Mills' board and the General Conference Corporation to decide the fate of the industry. In reporting to the Church, Elder Neal C. Wilson wrote:

The meeting lasted the entire day. Board members agonized over the situation, probing the data and the findings of the survival committee, seeking to find a way that Harris Pine Mills could be saved. But it became evident that there was now no chance of survival. It was one of the saddest, most traumatic meetings that I have ever had to chair.

Eventually the board concluded that it was faced with only two realistic options. One was to place the company in voluntary dissolution. This means that the company would

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wind up its operations as quickly as possible, dispose of its assets in the most profitable manner it could, and try to pay off its creditors.

Although this option included some pluses, it involved heavy negative factors. Most problematic was that under this course of action the church faced an open-ended situation with regard to continuing and ongoing losses. The survival team estimated that the winding up of the company would result in unbearable additional financial losses. They estimated that the General Conference could stand to lose \$30 to \$40 million, with the figure possibly rising significantly. Further, during this time of voluntary liquidation any one of the creditors might attempt to foreclose and force the church into involuntary bankruptcy. (Adventist Review, Jan. 1, 1987, p. 7)

The first option was not very appealing. Losses could be very high. The General Conference could stand to lose \$30 to \$40 million or more! The church might even be forced into involuntary bankruptcy! However, with this option, the church would at least "try to pay off its creditors." An honest attempt would be made to do the right thing. Wilson continues:

The other option, which was strongly recommended by the survival team, was to stop the economic hemorrhage by filing under Chapter 7 of the Federal Bankruptcy Code. (On December 12, 1987, the filing was changed to Title 11. This means that Harris Pine Mills is requesting permission, under bankruptcy laws, to reorganize and reopen its doors, while at the same time to meet the demands of the creditors via bankruptcy litigation.) This has the effect of placing immediately the operation and the

assets of the company in the hands of the court. Under this option the church's total losses could be as high as \$15 million, depending on factors such as the marketable value of the inventory. (Ibid.)

Wilson states that losses could be as low as \$5 to \$15 million with this option. Where is the difference between the \$40 million mentioned in the first option, and the possible \$5 million mentioned in the second? It would be a loss that some of the creditors of Harris Pine Mills would have to suffer!

Stealing from the creditors was the option chosen rather than take the chance of the loss of the General Conference organization. Wilson goes on to add:

This is the first time an entity associated with the Seventh-day Adventist Church has found itself facing this prospect. At last, having weighed all the options, the board regretfully voted to take this course. Two days later, on December 5, papers were filed for voluntary bankruptcy under Chapter 7 with the federal district court in Portland. (Ibid.)

Wilson says the board voted "regretfully" to take the bankruptcy option. Not only was this option taken by the board "regretfully", but it must have been taken also very reluctantly. In a letter dated, December 11, 1986, Columbia Union President, Ron Wisbey, sent an update to the Union pastors revealing the then current status of Harris Pine Mills. (See p. 6) Included with Elder Wisbey's letter was a chronology of the "Key Events of the Last Three Months". This information reveals the vote
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taken by the members of the Harris Pine Mills board. They voted 7-5 for bankruptcy. Some felt that "bankruptcy would cheat honest people." Only one vote changed would have produced a tie vote of 6-6. Apparently, there were at least five men who wanted to do the legitimate thing - make a truly honest attempt to pay off the creditors and trust the Almighty God that the denomination would not be forced into bankruptcy.

If the Seventh-day Adventist Church is truly God's appointed church of today, then the board should have had no reservations about the possible loss of money. Does not God own "the cattle upon a thousand hills"? (Ps. 50:10) Does not the Lord say, "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine"? (Haggai 2:8) God is well able to make up any loss which might occur in an honest solution to the problem. Even \$40 million is no large sum for the Creator of the universe.

The most revealing part of the Wisbey letter was the vote count taken by the General Conference Corporation. If the Corporation voted "regretfully" for the bankruptcy option, they were not so reluctant as the Harris Pine Mills board. The vote of the Corporation was 12-3 in favor of the bankruptcy option.

The greed and avarice that was shown in the days of Christ is being repeated today. What a parallel exists between the present situation and John 11:47-50. Read it carefully and note the following parallel:

Then gathered the General Conference Corporation and the Harris Pine Mills board and said, "What shall we do? We are millions in debt. If we try to pay off our debts, the world could foreclose upon us, and they shall come and take away our place and denomination." And one N. C(aiaphas) said unto them, "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider it is expedient for us, that some creditors should suffer that the whole denomination perish not"... and they took forth counsel for bankruptcy.

The mismanagement of funds at Harris Pine Mills cannot be overlooked. As reported by Wilson in the Adventist Review (Jan. 1, 1987), the losses had risen to \$50,000/day. (This was later upped to \$60,000 per day. (See p.7) In the Adventist Review (Dec. 4, 1986) was an article which asked the question - "What Will \$50,000 Buy?" This article lists 90 different items that could be used by the different divisions of the world field, each item costs around \$50,000. These included: 210 bicycles for Ugandan pastors; salaries for 28 pastors for one year in Malawi; 25 to 50 jungle chapels or lamb shelters; 25,000 copies of The Great Controversy in Arabic; etc. Simple mathematics shows that as one reader of the Thought Paper wrote - "Instead of years of squandering the Lord's money, 3 months of proper management could have purchased all of these items."

As bad as the management problem was, the worst evil was the bankruptcy action which will cause us to stink before the creditors and the onlooking world.

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Let us remember that it is a Remnant "which keep the commandments of God." (The 8th is included as well as the Sabbath) David says in the Psalm - "It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law." (119:126)

A. Stump

COLUMBIA UNION CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, New Jersey, Delaware

December 11, 1986

Dear Pastors,

You may have heard the story that Harris Pine Mills filed for bankruptcy last Friday. It's true.

You also may have heard plenty of rumors. Rumors never bless the work of the Lord. When rumors run rampant, losses never shrink. When rumors run rampant, the number of layoffs never becomes less. When rumors run rampant, the descriptions of character never become more Christ-centered.

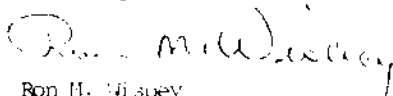
I've shared two pages of information with you in this packet:

1. A description of the events connected with the Harris bankruptcy--as completely as we know those events today.
2. A description of the impact of the bankruptcy in the Columbia Union--as completely as we know those events today.

I'll share other information with you as it becomes available, so that you can be the informed source in your church. I hope you'll use this information to squelch outlandish rumors.

I look forward to seeing you during the Union Ministerium in January.

Sincerely,



Ron M. Wisney
President

KEY EVENTS OF THE LAST THREE MONTHS

September

Harris Board stops waiting for management consultant's report ordered a year earlier. Instead, Board appoints Survival Team--6 Adventist businessmen chaired by the only church employee on the Team, Harold F. Otis, president of Review & Herald. Survival Team is to study ways to keep Harris operating.

October

Complaints about Harris' record keeping mount. Board receives only financial compilations, not audited statements. Survival Team unable to get all needed operating information.

Survival Team visits plants, says several changes necessary if Harris is to survive: new management, marketing plan, better manufacturing control, new product development, cost analysis of present product lines.

Later, Harris Pine requests loan from General Conference. GC votes \$3 million loan, to be secured by Harris timber resources.

November

Survival Team member gives use of his corporate jet so members can visit all 26 Harris branch plants.

Enough information finally found to estimate Harris operating loss: \$30,000 a day. Otis reports that most income is generated by selling lumber, not finished product.

Survival Team discovers inventory problems. Most inventory is parts of furniture, not finished pieces. Thus, inventory inflated.

December 3

The Survival Team tells Harris Board company can't be saved. They recommend voluntary liquidation or Chapter 7 bankruptcy.

Chaotic records still make

analysis difficult, prompting Otis to comment, "None of us would stake our reputation on the report we present today." One thing is sure: the problem grows daily. \$7 million more debt is discovered during the committee meeting. No one is sure how high the loss may grow. "All this began to fall apart in 1980," Otis tells the Board.

Two Survival Team members say that in September they had thought of buying the company and running it. Both say now there's no way.

Board debates all day on bankruptcy or voluntary liquidation. Voluntary liquidation could cost twice as much as bankruptcy. But some feel bankruptcy would cheat honest people. Others say voluntary liquidation would waste church dollars. Final vote among Harris Board members is 7-5 for bankruptcy. Final vote among GC Corporation members is 12-3 for bankruptcy. Harris Board is dissolved.

General Conference Corporation, sole Harris stockholder, appoints three-member interim Board to facilitate the bankruptcy: Harold Otis, Don Gilbert, Karl Bahr. All three are church employees--Otis at Review & Herald; Gilbert, GC treasurer; and Bahr, GC associate treasurer.

December 8

General Conference votes to send each full-time employee a gift of about two weeks wages. Otis says the gift is "an act of compassion."

December 11

Trustee discovers additional losses for fiscal 1987, doubling the previous loss. Loss now estimated to run \$60,000 per day, or \$9 million in 5 months.

**EDITOR
OUR FIRM
FOUNDATION**

**THE
WAYMARKS
OF
ADVENTISM**

NOT SO FIRM

Our Firm Foundation is not as firm as it might appear. When WWN XX-2 reached the field, an alert friend wrote calling our attention to a book written by its editor, Ron Spear - The Waymarks of Adventism. In this book, Spear teaches the same Holy Flesh concept on the doctrine of the Incarnation as Elder Thomas Davis is teaching, and as R. S. Donnell taught in Indiana. He wrote:

Yes, Christ had an advantage in one sense: He had a sanctified will from birth to the cross. He was born with the nature that becomes ours when we are born again - humanity combined with divinity. (p. 39, emphasis his. See next page.)

This concept as expressed by Editor Spear has some interesting overtones. If I receive at the time I am "born again" a sanctified will, then is this not teaching instantaneous sanctification? The quotes from the Writings upon which Spear bases his deduction does not say what he says it says. Read it carefully. It says Jesus "kept his will surrendered and sanctified."

Spear's further teaching is even more alarming. He writes concerning the prenatal experience of Jesus - "In the prenatal experience, while in her womb, Christ was inheriting Mary's love for God." Unbelievable! He, whom the Scriptures tell us was "in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18) bonded by an everlasting love each for the other, in His prenatal state "inherited" love for God from Mary? When once error is embraced, there is no limit to the depths one will go in developing that error, and seeking to make it look like truth.

Ronald D. Spear

Edited by Dorothy Hilmer

"Jesus revealed no qualities, and exercised no powers, that men may not have through faith in Him. His perfect humanity is that which all His followers may possess, if they will be in subjection to God as He was."--DA 664

"As a man He supplicated the throne of God, 'till His humanity was charged with a heavenly current that connected humanity with divinity. Receiving life from God, He imparted life to man."--Ed 80, 81

When we supplicate the throne as He did, we will have the power that He had. Did Christ really have an advantage over me? The answer is "yes" and "no."

No. He was tempted far beyond what we will ever be tempted. He had divinity. I do not. The devil provoked Him for 33 years, trying to get Him to use His divinity to keep from temptation or sin. The wilderness experience was one place where he was tempted to use divinity, so was His daily confrontation with church leaders and finally the cross. He used only the Holy Spirit to keep from sin and to work miracles. His divinity was then a disadvantage.

"Had there been one deviation from the divine mind in the work of Christ, the plan of redemption would have proved a failure."--RH February 15, 1898

Yes. Christ had an advantage in one sense: He had a sanctified will, from birth to the cross. He was born with the nature that becomes ours when we are born again--humanity combined with divinity.

"Jesus Christ is our example in all things. He began life, passed through its experiences, and ended it with a sanctified will. He was tempted in all points like as we are, and yet because He kept his will surrendered and sanctified. He never bent in the slightest degree toward doing of evil or toward manifesting rebellion against God."--ST October 29, 1894

As God, He chose Mary to be His Mother. She was chosen because of her piety and her devotion and love to God. She was everything that God could find in a human mother, a sinner, but filled with love for God and her fellow men. In the prenatal experience, while in her womb, Christ was inheriting Mary's love for God. In the post natal experience, He saw God through his mother. Mary was continually yielding her will to God's will. Christ learned these lessons from His mother's knee.

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This is not all of Spear's heresy. The next sentence reads: "In the post natal experience, He saw God through his mother." We might think that Spear is alluding to the teaching Jesus received "from His mother's knee." But no, he covers this in the next sentences:-- "Mary was continually yielding her will to God's will. Christ learned these lessons from His mother's knee." (See above) Was Mary the appointed mediator between

Jesus and God? It is only a small step between this role for Mary, and the teaching that Mary is the Mediatrix between man and Christ.

When the doctrine that Christ took in the Incarnation, the same nature as a "born again" person was first taught in Indiana, Elder S. G. Huntington warned that it had papal overtones. Ron Spear, in his book - The Waymarks of Adventism - gives us some insight as to what those papal overtones could be.

The sad part of this whole picture is that folk are deceived into thinking they are receiving firm and fundamental Adventist teaching when they follow the guidance of Ron Spear as editor of Our Firm Foundation.

This further points up the fact as noted in the introductory article - "Why the Commentary?" - that all one has to do is bring together a paper containing unlimited numbers of articles from the Writings, and many concerned Adventists will not even detect error that is mingled in the paper, or bother to check the heresy of its editor.

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"Without controversy great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the flesh... Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith..."

1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1

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THE EDGE

PG PARENTAL GUIDANCE SUGGESTED
SOME MATERIAL MAY BE DISTURBING FOR SOME TEENAGERS

FEATURE FILM

PG PARENTAL GUIDANCE SUGGESTED
SOME MATERIAL MAY BE DISTURBING FOR SOME TEENAGERS

FEATURE FILM

WWC LYCEUM
Sat., Jan. 10 8:00 p.m.
WWVA Auditorium

A student interviewed said - "This movie showed nudity, had implied sex between non-married couples, and had bad language in a couple of brief instances."

ELEMENTS OF ARGUMENT

A Text and Reader

Annette T. Rottenberg
University of Massachusetts at Amherst

EG ENGL 122 H
COLLEGE WRITING

3 Required

GRADE

*** REQUIRED ***

LESTER DON 10735 SF
WRITING RESEARCH PAPERS 5TH 187

PEARLMAN DON 411 MAC
GUIDE TO RAPID REVISION (P) 3RD 182

ROTTENBERG DON 2482 STMAR
ELEMENTS OF ARGUMENT (P) 185

Deep Throat

NORA EPHRON

EXCERPTS, p. 304

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Deep Throat, as I write, is currently in its twenty-second record-breaking week at "the mature World Theatre" on Times Square, and is thirty-seventh on the list of *Variety's* top grossers, having so far taken in some \$1,500,000. The film cost \$40,000 to make, and its profits are such that Frank Yablans of Paramount Pictures, who speaks in sentences that sound suspiciously like *Variety* headlines, calls it "The *Godfather* of the sex pix."

The plot of *Deep Throat*—that it has one at all is considered a breakthrough of a sort—concerns a young woman, Linda Lovelace playing herself, who cannot find sexual satisfaction through intercourse. "I want to hear bells ringing, dams bursting, rockets exploding," she says. She goes to a doctor and he discovers that her problem is simply that her

Nora Ephron is a journalist and novelist known for her diversity of styles and approaches and her frequent focus on popular culture.

Using Linda had been the idea of Gerry Damiano, the director-writer of *Deep Throat*. "The most amazing thing about Linda, the truly amazing thing," she remembers him saying enthusiastically to Lou Perraino, who bankrolled the movie, "is that she still looks sweet and innocent." Nonetheless,

In fact, watching Linda perform in public as a prostitute had given Damiano the idea for *Deep Throat* in the first place. He had been at a party where men lined up to be the beneficiaries of the sexual sword-swallower trick Linda had been taught by her husband and keeper, Chuck Traynor. By

The Real Linda Lovelace

GLORIA STEINEM

EXCERPTS, p. 309

← ← ←

Gloria Steinem was a founder and editor of *New York* and *Ms.* magazines and a founding member of the National Women's Political Caucus

(We have omitted the grossest details of the oral sex vividly described)

Walla Walla Wallowing - cont.

At Registration for the Winter Quarter at Walla Walla College, a paper, evidently a student production, asked each registrant to indicate "the courses in which he would like to enroll."

Among the listed courses in the area of Business and Career was "BC201 How to Profit From Your Own Body"; under Home Economics, "HE-23 The Repair and Maintenance of Your Virginity"; under Health Care, "HC312 High Fiber Sex" and "HC401 Understanding Nudity"; and under Crafts, "C102 How to Draw Genitalia."

While this may have been thought of as a "practical joke(?)", it does reveal a mind bent. And while it was merely a student production without the consent of the administration of the college, what other reaction could be forthcoming with the "menu" being fed the student body as indicated on the previous two pages?

Should not the committee on Lyceums and the teacher of English 122H give serious consideration to the counsel of Paul in Philippians 4:8? Surely there are better quality of programs available for Lyceums than a PG rated movie, and text books free from the filthy side of human behaviour. If there are no such texts perhaps it might improve the quality of education offered at Walla Walla to use some of the Writings of Ellen G. White as examples for Essay writing. True, it might be a bit "old fashioned" to do so, but what a blessing over the sex-orientated "new fashion"! At

least it would not encourage the risk of AIDS.

#

BIRDS of a FEATHER

An announcement came to the desk about some forthcoming tapes to be available through a tape production ministry. It read - "Advance notice: We should have the cassettes of the JOHN OSBORNE-CHARLES WHEELING series just completed in San Bernadino, CA in several weeks."

This was interesting, because various announcements have been noting Osborne as "Elijah." How can an "Elijah" form a confederacy with one who is seeking to tear down the prophetic basis of the message of the Three Angels of Revelation 14? Did not God ask - "How can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3)

The old adage still holds - "Birds of a feather flock together." Add to this "flock" Ron Spear and you have quite a "flock" - hardly the voice of Elijah! (See pp. 8-9) Osborne is merely the key popular spokesman for a confederacy with a great agenda - sensationalism, error, and much truth, or else it would not be capable of deceiving.

Do not forget that the righteousness of Christ is truth, pure and unadulterated. See TM, p. 65.

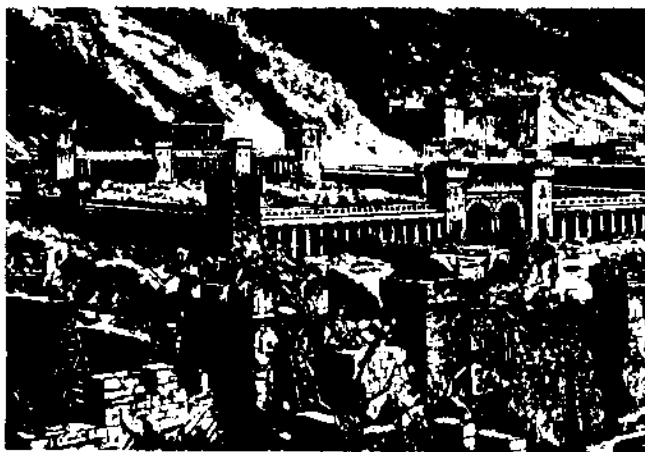
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NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

Commentary is to be published quarterly by the editors of Watchman, What of the Night?

THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION AND CHURCH HISTORY

A C R I T I Q U E



After receiving five copies of the manuscript - The Abomination of Desolation and Church History - by Robert Sessler from different persons, some of whom asked for comment, I thought a critical analysis of this work would be very appropriate for the first issue of Commentary. The manuscript contains 208 pages of mimeographed quotations from the Writings with comments interlaced between the various quotations. In addition, there are two appendices.

A summary gives the thrust of the manuscript. Beginning with 1855, the author gives a series of dated conclusions ending with the statement - "Without a doubt, satan is the leader of the professed Seventh-day Adventist church!" (p. 208, emphasis his)

Assembling the material, the author adopted two recommendations from the Writings themselves: 1) "The Lord has declared that the history of the past shall be rehearsed as we enter upon the closing work." And 2) "Regarding the testimonies, nothing is ignored; nothing is cast aside; but

time and place must be considered." (p. 7, Emphasis his) Based on these two principles, Sessler groups successive time periods in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church beginning with 1844-1868, gathering from the Writings various concepts to support his presupposition. There can be no question that there is needed a clear understanding of our church history; neither can the method of analysis proposed - taking into consideration "time and place" - be faulted. However, the application of the method as used by Sessler is open to serious question.

Just because a statement may have been written at a certain date, does not mean that the application is at that time. The internal context of the "testimony" must be considered. For example, the chapter - "The Seal of God" (5T:207-216) - though written about 1880, specifies the "time" of application to be when "Jesus is about to leave the mercy-seat of the heavenly sanctuary." The chapter is also closely tied to the events portrayed in "the visions of God" (8:3) given to Ezekiel (8:1-11:25).

This internal evidence is ignored by Sessler in his application of Ezekiel 8 with events in the history of the Church. On page 185 of the Manuscript [hereafter designated as ADCH], he indicates the fulfillment of Ezekiel 8:16 to have been in the selection of the General Conference Committee in 1901, just because there are 25 men involved in both instances.

This application could have come

about because of two factors: One, Sessler was not aware of the fact that "the visions of God" given to Ezekiel cover chapters 8 through 11, and that in the 11th chapter, there 25 men are brought to view again as "the men that devise mischief and give wicked counsel" in Jerusalem. (11:2) While the evidence is inconclusive as to whether these are the same 25 in each instance, both constitute apostate leaders in Judah. And two, Sessler apparently did not take time to check the make-up of the General Conference Committee following the adoption of the new Constitution in 1901. This committee contained among others, the following: - S. N. Haskell, A. T. Jones, D. H. Kress, J. N. Loughborough, David Paulson, W. W. Prescott, E. A. Sutherland, and E. J. Waggoner. These men could not be equated with either the 25 men of Eze. 8:16, or 11:2, if different, for they were not "sun-god" worshipers, nor "men that devise mischief and give wicked counsel" in Jerusalem.

Only a total lack of knowledge of the significance of the 1901 session could have caused Sessler to jump at the seeming parallel of 25 men in Ezekiel with the 25 men who made up the GC Committee in 1901. While "thorough work" was not done (8T:106), decided progress was made at the session toward the structure of organization God designed His church to have. It was in 1903 that a reversal took place and the church began to be "leavened with her own backsliding." (8T:250) But the

committee resulting from the 1903 Constitution had more than 25 members. Faulty applications lead to faulty conclusions.

Because the manuscript is primarily a series of quotations from the Writings, one is unable to check to see if every quotation is used in context. However, a very serious and gross use is made of one key reference. To warrant the conclusion drawn, it had to be lifted completely out of context. On page 127 of ADCH, Sessler quotes from Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. IV, p. 232 on the definition of "Babylon" as used in the Second Angel's Message of Revelation 14. He emphasizes the sentence which reads - "The message announcing the fall of Babylon must apply to some religious body that was once pure, and has become corrupt." To Sessler, this is the Seventh-day Adventist Church. But had he added the next sentence to his quotes, the application as intended by Ellen G. White is clearly given: - "But how appropriate the figure as applied to the Protestant churches, all professing to derive their doctrines from the Bible, yet divided into almost innumerable sects."

This is not the end of Sessler's perversion of truth. He compares the sentences he quotes from the 1884 edition of Great Controversy with a non-referenced statement which says the same thing in substance, his quotes would have, had he given it in full context. But he charges that the SDA leadership "tampered with Mrs White's testimony" and accuses them of

"deception." Now the church's leadership is guilty of many things, but the deception which Sessler charges them with in this instance falls back on his own head, because of gross misrepresentation of the facts in an attempt to prove his presupposition.

The question naturally arises: if Sessler has been as loose with context in his use and application of the other statements which he has gathered together, where is the credibility of the whole manuscript?

Sessler's basic premise upon which he based his summary and conclusion is that "the abomination of desolation" spoken of in Daniel and noted by Jesus has a double application. In its second application it supposedly enters the Seventh-day Adventist Church even as the actual fulfillment of this prophetic designation stood in "the holy place" - Jerusalem. But instead of treating this phrase as a proper noun, he separates the phrase and considers the words as common nouns.

Jesus, Himself, clearly defined this prophetic designation to be found in Daniel. (Matt. 24:15; Luke 21:20) In the prophecy of Daniel, it represents Rome in both its pagan and papal phases. Even as Pagan Rome destroyed the earthly type of the ministration of Jesus as priest and High Priest, just so, Papal Rome has sought to abolish through its false mediatorial system, the heavenly ministry of Jesus Christ.

The concept of the duality of Rome in the prophecies of Daniel is clearly emphasized. In Daniel 2, the "iron" continues down into the toes of the image. In Daniel 7, the "little horn" comes out of the non-descript beast and is never separated therefrom. The "little horn" of Daniel 8 continues until it is "broken without hand." (8:25) In simple language, this term, "The Abomination of Desolation" - cannot be understood by breaking the term down and treating each noun as a common noun. It can be understood only by considering the whole phrase in the context of the prophecy in which it is found in the light of Jesus own definition.

Now if Sessler had wished to pursue the concept of "papalism" in the Church, he could have found a solid foundation in the Writings; because Ellen G. White does speak of the Church as "following in the track of Romanism." (TM, p. 363)

Sessler in seeking to give Matthew 24:15 a dual application is merely following Desmond Ford's "apotelesmatic principle" which states that "a particular prophecy... may have more than one application in time." (Daniel 8:14, etc., p. 302) Our pioneer fathers, on the other hand, taught:

[The Lord] unscales the prophet's eyes, and opens to his view coming events. The historian sits to record them as they occur. Providence never mistakes, nor wheels around, to roll by the predicted event the second time. No, when the event has been recorded, it

is, like the Deluge, in the past. There is no second series of the four great empires, no second first Advent. (The Advent Review, August, 1850, p. 8)

In his summary, Sessler stated that "satan is the leader of the professed Seventh-day Adventist church!" He begins his summary with the date 1855, prior to the organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Did "satan" organize the Church? Have what we believed over the years, now to be accounted as error - that God raised up the Advent Movement? Before "satan" could become "the leader" of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the church would have to be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, and pronounced, "Found wanting" - in other words, spued out. This is not saying that this has not occurred, but this is the only basis upon which "satan" could become "the leader" of the Church.

In summary, the manuscript - The Abomination of Desolation and Church History - is based upon a wrong hermeneutic (interpretive principle) and is deceptive in its contextual use of some of the Writings. It serves thus as merely another decoy to detract God's people from the real work which needs to be done now in "the sealing time of the 144,000." (3T, p. 266)

WHG

Prophecy fulfilled demands a response, but prophecy unfulfilled counsels restraint.

Marty Wold Fingers --

The PEDDLERS of the BIG "LIE"

In a letter dated, January 6, 1987, written to subscribers of Christian Liberty, Marty Wold, who had just taken over the editorship from Ian Jones, tells of having prayed "earnestly for the Lord's will to be done in [his] life and the lives of [his] little family in these final moments of earth's history." Then he tells what answer the Lord gave: - "Like a flash of lightning across a darkened sky, my mind was stirred with some startling and humbling realizations. The Lord distinctly impressed me with the thought that Christian Liberty was not needed in this final hour."

As the letter continues, Brother Wold tells how the Lord broke from his mind "the traditions of the Pharisees" which had leavened his soul. Had not the Lord intervened, he would have dug his "heels deep into the dung hill of tradition," wrapping himself in "the many quotes of the Spirit of Prophecy to justify" his position. Then he makes some very perceptive evaluations. That the force of what he wrote, and how he wrote might come through not only clearly but as forceably as it did to me when I first read it, I will copy those paragraphs without mixing in any personal comment. He wrote:

Today, many conscientious, zealous individuals are damning their souls by compiling statement after statement to justify their "work for the Lord." Schools, restaurants, sanitariums, printing presses, etc., are springing up all over the place. There is a superficial conservative revival in the wings of Adventism which believes, although not admitted, that a return to the FORMS of Adventism will usher in the latter rain upon the earth. Christ looks at this nauseous spectacle and declares, "your house is left unto you desolate." Christ is not in this superficial conservative movement, for they have chosen the seen for the unseen, the FORM for the power.

Unsuspecting souls are being swept to perdition by such conservative ministries as The 1888 Message Conferences (Robert Wieland), Our Firm Foundation (Ron Spear), Hartland College (Colin Standish), Amazing Facts (Joe Crews), etc., etc. Although differences arise between these various ministries, there is one deadly thread which weaves these ministries into a powerful coalition of evil. The damnable heresy, LIE, spread far and wide by these zealous crusaders is - The SDA organization is "going through" to the kingdom. They actually believe that God will cleanse the SDA organization of all the bad, leaving the good to receive the latter rain and sail "the ship" safely into harbor. What a delusion!

Just before the destruction of

Jerusalem, while Roman armies besieged the temple, false prophets were bribed "to proclaim...that the people were to wait for deliverance from God." As a result, more than a million Jews spilled their deluded blood. What a tragedy! All because of believing that "the ship" would go through!

Oh, can't we see that history is being repeated to the very letter! However, instead of one million Jews perishing this time, more than five million Seventh-day Adventists will die in their delusions. "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." 2 Thess. 2:10, 11.

The Lord's wrath is kindled against the denominational and the self-supporting work. His judgments will SOON be upon those who cling to such filthiness. He is now calling for the honest in heart to FORSAKE these dead forms of religion and to repent and be converted that their "sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." Acts 3:19. He is calling for His people to enter by faith into the holy of holies and be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

"How is the faithful city become an harlot!" Isa. 1:21 [See also 8th, p. 250] The Seventh-day Adventist Church and all the "self-supporting ministries which bow down and worship the golden calf which she has erected are repre-

sented in this passage. Included also in this message is any individual, although claiming to be a reformer, who refuses to call the honest in heart OUT of bed with this harlot. For a harlot is anyone who worships ANY object above God, and many zealous "reformers" are worshipping none other than the abominable idol of SELF. They refuse to bear ALL the straight testimony for fear of making themselves of no reputation. I know, for I was one of them. But now praise God for opening my blinded eyes that I might see.

Some may wince at the strong language and the comparison with the Jews which Brother Wold uses. Is this, however, any stronger than what is used in the Writings? Consider the following:

Here we see that the church - the Lord's sanctuary - was the first to feel the stroke of the wrath of God. The ancient men, those to whom God had given great light, and who had stood as guardians of the spiritual interests of the people, had betrayed their trust. ... These dumb dogs, that would not bark, are the ones who feel the just vengeance of an offended God. Men, maidens, and little children, all perish together. (5T:211, Emphasis mine)

Are not the peddlers of the big lie cherishing the same idea as the Jews of old? Note:

The Jewish people cherished the idea that they were the favorites of heaven, and that they were always to be exalted as the church of God. (COL, p. 294)

What happened in A.D. 34, and in A.D. 70? We are living antitypically between these two dates. #

From p. 2 - **Why the Commentary**

for no mixtures, nor half truths. It must be the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Further, too many today, do not even exercise the discernment of the Jews of Christ's time. If someone can simply bring together a series of quotations from the Writings, many will sit and listen to him as a voice from God, without checking further. The Jews knew that one speaking for God must be commissioned by God to speak. There were evidences which supported that commission, such as, fulfilled prophecy, or coming in fulfillment of prophecy. (See John 1:19-23; Mark 1:15; and Matt. 21:23)

Today, there are "many voices" professing to be giving a true message to the concerned in Adventism. This was foretold. (See R&H, Dec. 13, 1892) But many are running with no message of substance even as Ahimaaz in the days of David. (II Sam. 18:22) But worse today, these messages are mingled with error. Some who are running find it very "profitable." One even brags about the "deep pockets" he goes for. All of this is covered under the facade of promoting the "firm foundation", or the message of the righteousness of Christ, or both. God's message is truth, pure and unadulterated, supported by Him, without appealing to man for support.

These factors, in the present confusion of voices, need to be openly called to the attention of the con-

cerned people of God. Thus we see the two publications of the Adventist Laymen's Foundation meeting these three needs: 1) Documentation of the apostasy in Adventism; 2) Feeding from the Word of Truth, the awakened in Adventism; and 3) Warning those awakened of the deception being practiced behind a facade which professes to banner historic Adventism. We hope to keep "Watchman, What of the Night?" confined to objectives #2 and #3, while Commentary will primarily involve #1, and also cover items under #3 which we cannot cover in Watchman for lack of space.

This first issue of Commentary is being sent to everyone on the mailing list for Watchman. Only those who fill in the form below and return it to us on a postcard or in an envelope, will receive future issues.

Dear Editor;

Please place my name on the new mailing list for Commentary. I recognize that it is free, and therefore, assume no obligation in making this request.

NAME: _____

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