



# "Watchman, what of the night?"

*The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come. Isaiah 21:11-12*

## KEY DOCTRINAL COMPARISONS FROM STATEMENTS OF BELIEF 1872-1980

In the June issue of "Watchman, What of the Night? we asked the question - What Do We Believe? - and reproduced three different sets of doctrinal statements; one from the viewpoint of Elder James White, one from the pen of Elder Uriah Smith, long-time Editor of the Review and Herald; and the third, the 1950 General Conference approved Fundamental Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventists. Since that time more information and documentation has become available to us, and now in this thought paper we share a comparative analysis of key doctrines as presented in Statements of Belief from 1872 to the present, 1980.

In forthcoming thought papers, we shall discuss each of these comparisons noting how we see the variations and changes, and what these changes are saying to us. But in the meantime, we are giving to each reader the opportunity to study for himself these comparative statements on key doctrines. We have first noted the statements as to how we have viewed, and presently view the Holy Scriptures; and then placed immediately following these the statements regarding the Spirit of Prophecy. How the statements relative to the Bible read, govern what can be said about the writings of Ellen G. White. However much we profess to adhere to the ringing challenge of William Chillingworth - "The Bible, I say, the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants!" (Emphasis his) - the creedal statement voted at the 1980 General Conference Session declares the writings of Ellen G. White to be "a continuing and authoritative source of truth." (GC Bulletin #9, p. 25) No previous statement ever assigned such authority to the writings of Ellen G. White. A serious study of the comparison of the other key doctrines as given on the following pages will also be thought provoking. For example, in the voted Statement we read concerning the Incarnation - "God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ." How do we harmonize this with the concepts in all previous statements that the Lord Jesus Christ "while retaining His divine nature, . . . took upon Himself the nature of the human family"?

We should say a word about our sources. For past Statements of Beliefs, we have relied heavily on The Yearbook. The first Yearbook resulted from an action of the General Conference Committee in December, 1882, and contained "the statistics of our denomination, the proceedings of our General Conference, T. and M. [Tract and Missionary] Society, and other associations, the financial condition of our institutions, our General and State Conference constitutions, a good calendar, and full directories of all our Conferences and various societies throughout the country." (Quoted in SDA Encyclopedia, Revised Edition, p. 1336) Such made the Yearbook an authoritative voice of the Church's position and standing. A break occurred in the publication of the Yearbook from 1895-1903. During these years

## WHAT DO WE BELIEVE?

### The Bible

1872 Tract; 1874 Signs of the Times Editorial; 1889 Yearbook:

III - That the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, contain a full revelation of His will to man, and are the only infallible rule of faith and practice." (Yearbook, p. 148)

1894 - Membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Battle Creek, Mich.:

That the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and contain a revelation of His will to man, and are an infallible rule of faith and practice. (p. 12)

1905, 1907, 1908-1914 Yearbook same as the 1889 Yearbook statement. (Beginning with the 1908 Yearbook, a notation was included which read - "By the late Uriah Smith.")

1931 Yearbook:

1. That the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, contain an all-sufficient revelation of His will to man, and are the only unerring rule of faith and practice.

1979 - Annual Council Recommended "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists":

That the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration through "holy men of God" who spoke and wrote as they were "moved by the Holy Spirit." These Scriptures are the all-sufficient, authoritative, and effective revelation of His gracious purpose and will. They are the source of all true doctrine and the only unerring standard of faith and practice. (Adventist Review, Feb. 21:1980, p. 8)

1980 - Statement presented to Delegates, 1980 General Conference Session:

The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration through holy men of God who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. These Scriptures are the living, all-sufficient, trustworthy and authoritative revelation of God's gracious purpose and will. They are the source of all true doctrine and the only infallible standard of faith and practice. (p. 62)

1980 - Voted "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists":

The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration through holy men of God who spoke and wrote by the Holy Spirit. In this Word, God has committed to man the knowledge necessary to salvation. The Holy Scriptures are the infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, and the test of experience, the authoritative revealer of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God's acts in history. (Adventist Review, May 1, 1980: GC Bulletin #9)

### The Spirit of Prophecy

1872 Tract; 1874 Signs of the Times Editorial; 1889 Yearbook:

That the Spirit of God was promised to manifest itself in the church through certain gifts, enumerated in I Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4; that these gifts are not designed to supercede, or to take the place of, the Bible, which is sufficient to make us wise unto salvation, any more that the Bible can take the place of the Holy Spirit; that in specifying the various channels of its operation, that Spirit has simply made provision for its own existence and presence with the people of God to the end of time, to lead to an understanding of that word which it had inspired, to convince of sin, and work a transformation in the heart and life; and that those who deny to the Spirit its place and operation do plainly deny that part of the Bible which assigns to it this work and position.

1894 - Membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Battle Creek, Mich.:

That the subject of spiritual gifts is a doctrine clearly taught in the Scriptures, being repeatedly set forth in various books of the Old and New Testaments; and we learn from history that the gifts have continued all along the gospel dispensation; and there is the strongest evidence that the spirit of prophecy has been manifested among those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus during the last half century. (p. 15)

1905, 1907, 1908-1914 Yearbook same as the 1889 Yearbook statement.

1931 Yearbook:

That God has placed in His church the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as enumerated in I Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4. These gifts operate in harmony with the divine principles of the Bible, and are given for the perfecting of the saints, the work of the ministry, the edifying of the body of Christ.

1950 - General Conference Session added the following two sentences to the 1931 Yearbook statement:

That the gift of the Spirit of Prophecy is one of the identifying marks of the remnant church. The remnant church recognizes that this gift was manifested in the life and ministry of Ellen G. White.

1979 - Annual Council Recommended "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists:"

14. That God has placed in His church spiritual gifts, which are "inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportioned to each one individually as He wills." These gifts will continue in the Church to equip the saints for ministry, to build up the body of Christ, and to develop the unity of the faith.

15. That the presence of the spiritual gift of prophecy is an identifying mark of the remnant Church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord's messenger she provided guidance to the Church, instruction in the Scriptures, and counsel for spiritual growth. Her writings uplift the Scriptures as the standard of faith and practice, and function as a continuing source of divine counsel. (Adventist Review, Feb. 21, 1980, p. 9)

## Spirit of Prophecy - continued

1980 - Statement presented to Delegates - General Conference Session

17. The presence of the gift of prophecy, one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, is an identifying mark of the remnant Church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord's messenger she provided guidance to the Church, instruction in the Scriptures, and counsel for spiritual growth. Her writings, which uplift the Scriptures as the ultimate standard of faith and practice, provide a continuing source of truth and divine counsel. (p. 67)

1980 - Voted - "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists":

One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord's messenger, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth and provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. (Adventist Review, May 1, 1980, pp. 25-26)

## The Godhead

1872 Tract; 1874 Signs of the Times Editorial; 1889 Yearbook; 1894 Membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Battle Creek, Mich.; 1905, 1907-1914 Yearbook:

That there is one God, a personal, spiritual Being, the Creator of all things, omnipotent, omniscient, and eternal, infinite in wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, truth, and mercy; unchangeable, and everywhere present by His representative, the Holy Spirit.

That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father, the One by whom He created all things, and by whom they do consist. . .

## 1931 Yearbook

That the Godhead, or Trinity, consists of the Eternal Father, a personal, spiritual Being, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, infinite in wisdom and love; the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father, through whom all things were created and through whom the salvation of the redeemed hosts will be accomplished; the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, the great regenerating power in the work of redemption.

That Jesus Christ is very God, being of the same nature and essence as the Eternal Father.

1979 - Annual Council Recommended "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists":

2. THE TRINITY - That there is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a self-existing Unity in Trinity. God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, transcendent and immanent, the absolute Reality whose infinite and personal being is a mystery forever beyond human comprehension. (Adventist Review, Feb. 21, 1980, p. 8)

The Godhead - continued

3. GOD THE FATHER - That God the eternal Father is the Creator, the ultimate Source, Sustainer, and Sovereign of all that is. He is infinite and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

4. GOD THE SON - That God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through Him all things were created, the character of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is accomplished, and the world is judged. . .

5. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT - That God the eternal Spirit was active with the Father and the Son in creation, incarnation, and redemption. He inspired the writers of Scripture and filled Christ's life with power. He draws and convicts us, renews and transforms us into the image of God. Sent by the Father and the Son to be always with us, He extends spiritual gifts to the church, empowers it to bear witness to Christ, and leads it into all truth.

1980 - Statement presented to Delegates, 1980 General Conference Session

2. THE GODHEAD OR TRINITY - There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of Three co-eternal Persons, the Godhead or Trinity. God is all-powerful, all-knowing, and ever-present, above all, through all and in all. He is infinite and beyond human comprehension, yet known through His self-revelation. He acts in and through nature and history. He is forever worthy of worship, adoration, and service by the whole creation.

3. THE FATHER - God the eternal Father is the Creator, the ultimate Source, Sustainer, and Sovereign of all Creation. He is just and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. The qualities and power exhibited in the Son and Holy Spirit are also revelations of the Father.

4. THE SON - God the eternal Son is He through Him (sic) all things were created, the character of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is accomplished, and the world judged. . .

5. THE HOLY SPIRIT - God the eternal Spirit was active with the Father and the Son in creation, and the incarnation. He inspired the writers of Scripture. He filled Christ's life with power. Sent by the Father and the Son to be always with us, He is active in redemption. He draws and convicts human beings; and those who respond He renews and transforms into the image of God. He extends spiritual gifts to the Church, empowers her to bear witness to Christ, and in harmony with Scripture leads her into all truth.

1980 - Voted "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists":

2. THE TRINITY - There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three co-eternal Persons. God is immortal, all-powerful, all-knowing, above all, and ever present. He is infinite and beyond human comprehension, yet known through His self-revelation. He is forever worthy of worship, adoration, and service by the whole creation.

3. THE FATHER - God the eternal Father is the Creator, Source, Sustainer, and Sovereign of all creation. He is just and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to

## The Godhead - continued

anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. The qualities and power exhibited in the Son and the Holy Spirit are also revelations of the Father.

4. THE SON - God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through Him all things were created, the character of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is accomplished, and the world is judged. . .

5. THE HOLY SPIRIT - God the eternal Spirit was active with the Father and the Son in creation, incarnation, and redemption. He inspired the writers of Scripture. He filled Christ's life with power. He draws and convicts human beings; and those who respond He renews and transforms into the image of God. Sent by the Father and the Son to be always with His children, He extends spiritual gifts to the church, empowers it to bear witness to Christ, and in harmony with the Scriptures leads it into all truth. (Adventist Review, May 1, 1980, p. 23)

## The Incarnation

1872 Tract; 1874 Signs of the Times Editorial; 1889 Yearbook:

That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father. . . . that He took on Him the nature of the seed of Abraham for the redemption of our fallen race; that He dwelt among men, full of grace and truth, lived our example. . .

1894 - Membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Battle Creek, Mich.:

That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father, . . . . that He took on him the nature of man, for the redemption of our fallen race; that He dwelt among men, full of grace and truth, lived our example. . .

1905, 1907-1914 Yearbook same as the 1889 Yearbook.

1931 Yearbook

That Jesus Christ is very God, being of the same nature and essence as the Eternal Father. While retaining His divine nature, He took upon Himself the nature of the human family, lived on the earth as a man, exemplified in His life as our example the principles of righteousness, . . .

1979 - Annual Council Recommended "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists":

4. GOD THE SON - That God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. . . . Forever truly God, He became truly man, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived and experienced temptation as a man, but perfectly exemplified the righteousness and love of God. (Adventist Review, Feb. 21, 1980, p. 8)

1980 - Statement present to Delegates, General Conference Session:

4. THE SON - Forever truly God, He became truly man, the man Jesus, the Christ. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. As our Example He lived and experienced temptation as a human being, yet without sin. He perfectly exemplified the righteousness and love of God. (p. 62)

## The Incarnation - continued

1980 - Voted "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists":

4. THE SON -God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. . . . Forever truly God, He became also truly man, Jesus the Christ. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived and experienced temptation as a human being, but perfectly exemplified the righteousness and love of God. (Adventist Review, May 1, 1980, p. 23)

Led by the Holy Spirit we sense our need, acknowledge our sinfulness, repent of our transgressions, and exercise faith in Jesus as Lord and Christ, as Substitute and Example. (ibid., p. 25)

## The Atonement

1872 Tract; 1874 Signs of the Times Editorial: (Elder James White)

That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, . . . that He . . . died our sacrifice, was raised for our justification, ascended on high to be our only Mediator in the sanctuary in heaven, where, with His own blood, He makes the atonement for our sins; which atonement, so far from being made on the cross, which was but the offering of the sacrifice, is the very last portion of His work as priest, according to the example of the Levitical priesthood, which foreshadowed and prefigured the ministry of our Lord in heaven.

1889 Yearbook:

That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, . . . that He . . . died our sacrifice, was raised for our justification, ascended on high to be our only mediator in the sanctuary in heaven, where, through the merits of his shed blood, He secures the pardon and forgiveness of the sins of all those who penitently\*come to him; and as the closing portion of His work as priest, before He takes His throne as king, He will make the great atonement for the sins of all such, and their sins will then be blotted out and borne away from the sanctuary, as shown in the service of the Levitical priesthood, which foreshadowed and prefigured the ministry of our Lord in heaven. (p. 147)

1894 - Membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Battle Creek, Mich.:

That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, . . .that He . . . died our sacrifice, was raised for our justification, ascended on high to be our only mediator in the sanctuary in heaven, where, through the atoning merits of His blood, He secures the pardon and forgiveness of all who penitently come to God through Him; and as the closing portion of His work as priest before He comes again as King of kings, He will make the final atonement for the sins of all believers, and blot them out, as foreshadowed and prefigured by the Levitical priesthood. (p. 12)

1905, 1907-1914 Yearbook same as the 1889 Yearbook except for the word - penitently -\*the word, "persistently" is substituted. (This could be a type-setting error.)

## The Atonement - continued

### 1931 - Yearbook

That Jesus Christ. . . died for our sins on the cross, was raised from the dead, and ascended to the Father, where He ever lives to make intercession for us.

### 1979 - Annual Council Recommended "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists":

9. THE DEATH OF CHRIST - That in the suffering and death of Jesus Christ, God Himself provided the only means of atonement for human sin, so that those who accept this atonement by faith may have eternal life, and the whole creation understand the infinite and holy love of the Creator. This act of atonement forever establishes the righteousness of God's law and the graciousness of His character; for it both condemns our sin and forgives it. Thus the death of Christ is a complete and perfect atonement, substitutionary and expiatory, reconciling and transforming. (Adventist Review, Feb. 21, 1980, p. 9)

### 1980 - Statement presented to Delegates, General Conference Session.

In Christ's life of perfect obedience to God's will, His suffering, death, and resurrection, God provided the only means of atonement for human sin, so that those who by faith accept this atonement may have eternal life, and the whole creation may better understand the infinite and holy love of the Creator. This act of atonement forever establishes the righteousness of God's law and the graciousness of His character; for it both condemns our sin and provides for our forgiveness. The death of Christ is substitutionary and expiatory, reconciling and transforming. The resurrection of Christ proclaims God's triumph over the forces of evil, suffering and death, and makes possible personal victory for those who accept the atonement. It declares the Lordship of Jesus Christ, before whom every knee in heaven and on earth will bow. (p. 64)

### 1980 - Voted "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists":

In Christ's life of perfect obedience to God's will, His suffering, death and resurrection, God provided the only means of atonement for human sin, so that those who by faith accept this atonement may have eternal life, and the whole creation may better understand the infinite and holy love of the Creator. This perfect atonement vindicates the righteousness of God's law and the graciousness of His character; for it both condemns our sins and provides for our forgiveness. The death of Christ is substitutionary and expiatory, reconciling and transforming. The resurrection of Christ proclaims God's triumph over the forces of evil, and for those who accept the atonement assures their final victory over sin and death. It declares the Lordship of Jesus Christ, before whom every knee in heaven and on earth will bow. (GC. Bulletin, #9, p. 25)

## Christ's High Priestly Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary

### 1872 Tract; 1874 Signs of the Times Editorial: (Elder James White)

That the sanctuary of the new covenant is the tabernacle of God in heaven, of which Paul speaks in Hebrews 8, and onward, of which our Lord, as great High Priest, is minister; that this sanctuary in the antitype of the Mosaic tabernacle, and that



## Christ's High Priestly Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary - continued

the priestly work of our Lord, connected therewith, is the antitype of the work of the Jewish priests of the former dispensation; that this is the sanctuary to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days; what is termed its cleansing being in this case, as in the type, simply the entrance of the high priest into the most holy place, to finish the round of service connected therewith, by blotting out and removing from the sanctuary the sins which had been transferred to it by means of the ministration in the first apartment; and that this work, in the antitype, commencing in 1844, occupies a brief but indefinite space, at the conclusion of which the work of mercy for the world is finished.

### 1889 Yearbook:

That the sanctuary of the new covenant is the tabernacle of God in heaven, of which Paul speaks in Hebrews 8 and onward, and of which our Lord, as great high priest, is minister; that this sanctuary is the antitype of the Mosaic tabernacle, and that the priestly work of our Lord, connected therewith, is the antitype of the work of the Jewish priests of the former dispensation; that this, and not the earth, is the sanctuary to be cleansed at the end of the two thousand and three hundred days, what is termed its cleansing being in this case, as in the type, simply the entrance of the high priest into the most holy place, to finish the round of service connected therewith, by making the atonement and removing from the sanctuary the sins which had been transferred to it by means of the ministration in the first apartment; and that this work in the antitype, beginning in 1844, consists in actually blotting out the sins of believers, and occupies a brief but indefinite space of time, at the conclusion of which the work of mercy for the world will be finished, and the second Advent of Christ will take place. (p. 149)

### 1894 - Membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Battle Creek, Mich.:

That the sanctuary of the new covenant is the tabernacle of God in heaven, the antitype of the earthly tabernacle erected by Moses in the wilderness; and that the cleansing of the sanctuary corresponds to the investigative judgment in heaven, which immediately precedes the second coming of Christ. (p. 13)

### 1905, 1907-1914 Yearbook same as 1889 Yearbook

### 1931 Yearbook:

That the true sanctuary, of which the tabernacle on earth was a type, is the temple of God in heaven, of which Paul speaks in Hebrews 8 and onward, and of which the Lord Jesus, as our great High Priest, is minister; and that the priestly work of our Lord is the antitype of the work of the Jewish priests of the former dispensation; that this heavenly sanctuary is the one to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14; its cleansing being, as in the type, a work of judgment, beginning with the entrance of Christ as High Priest upon the judgment phase of His ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, foreshadowed in the earthly service of cleansing the sanctuary on the day of atonement. This work of judgment in the heavenly sanctuary began in 1844. Its completion will close human probation.

### 1979 - Annual Council Recommended "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists":

## Christ's High Priestly Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary - continued

That there is in heaven a sanctuary in which Christ ministers in our behalf, making available to believers the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross. He was inaugurated as our High Priest and began His intercessory ministry at the time of His ascension; He entered the second and last phase of this atoning work in 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days. Thus began an investigative judgment, typified by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. (Adventist Review, Feb. 21, 1980, p. 10)

1980 - Statement presented to Delegates, General Conference Session:

At His ascension Christ was seated in majesty and authority at God's right hand. He watches ceaselessly over the affairs of His Church and of the race for whom He died. As High Priest of the heavenly sanctuary He draws all to Himself and makes available to those who receive Him the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross. At the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, in 1844, He entered the second and last phase of His ministry: He began a final work of judgment which is a part of the ultimate disposition of all sin, a work typified by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the day of atonement. (p. 69)

1980 - Voted "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists":

There is a sanctuary in heaven, the true tabernacle which the Lord set up and not man. In it Christ ministers on our behalf, making available to believers the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross. He was inaugurated as our great High Priest and began His intercessory ministry at the time of His ascension. In 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, He entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry. It is a work of investigative judgment which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin typified by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. In that typical service the sanctuary was cleansed with the blood of animal sacrifices, but the heavenly things are purified with the perfect sacrifice of the blood of Jesus.

## The Place of the Study of Prophecy

1872 Tract; 1874 Signs of the Times Editorial:

That the world's history from specified dates in the past, the rise and fall of empires, and the chronological succession of events down to the setting up of God's everlasting kingdom, are outlined in numerous great chain prophecies; and that these prophecies are now all fulfilled except the closing scenes.

1894 - Membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church at Battle Creek, Mich.:

That prophecy is a part of God's revelation to man; that a blessing is pronounced on those who study it; and that, as the Saviour himself has called attention to Daniel's prophecy, it is but reasonable to suppose that the prophecies may be understood; that the world's history, the rise and fall of empires, is outlined in numerous great chains of prophecy. and that these prophecies are now all

The Place of the Study of Prophecy - continued

fulfilled except the closing scenes. (p. 13)

1889, 1905, 1907-1914 Yearbook:

That prophecy is a part of God's revelation to man; that it is included in that Scripture which is profitable for instruction; that it is designed for us and our children; that so far from being enshrouded in impenetrable mystery, it is that which especially constitutes the word of God a lamp to our feet and a light to our path; that a blessing is pronounced upon those who study it; and that, consequently, it is to be understood by the people of God sufficiently to show them their position in the world's history and the special duties required at their hands. (p. 148, 1889 Yearbook)

1931 Yearbook: (NONE)

1979 - Annual Council Recommended "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists": (NONE)

1980 - Statement presented to Delegates, General Conference Session: (NONE)

1980 - Voted "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists": (NONE)

Identification of "the Man of Sin"

1872 Tract; 1874 Signs of the Times Editorial; 1889 Yearbook:

That, as the man of sin, the papacy has thought to change times and laws (the law of God, Daniel 7:25), and has misled almost all Christendom in regard to the fourth commandment; we find a prophecy of a reform in this respect to be wrought among believers just before the coming of Christ.

1894 - Membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Battle Creek, Mich.:

That the man of sin, the papal power, has thought to change times and laws (the law of God), and has misled almost all Christendom in regard to the fourth commandment; and that there are numerous prophecies of a great Sabbath reform to be wrought among believers just before the second coming of Christ. (p.14)

1905, 1907-1914 Yearbook same as the 1889 Yearbook

1931 Yearbook: (NONE)

1979 - Annual Council Recommended "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists": (NONE)

1980 - Statement presented to Delegates, General Conference Session: (NONE)

1980 - Voted "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists": (NONE)

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it was replaced by the General Conference Bulletins. In 1889, 1905, 1907-1914 the Yearbook contained a section devoted to "Fundamental Principles of Seventh-day Adventists." This statement of beliefs was prefaced by the comment that -

Seventh-day Adventists have no creed but the Bible; but they hold to certain well-defined points of faith, for which they feel prepared to give a reason "to every man that asketh" them. The following propositions may be taken as a summary of the principle features of their religious faith, upon which there is, so far as is known, entire unanimity throughout the body. (1905 Yearbook, p. 188)

The next Statement of Beliefs to appear in The Yearbook was in 1931, but this was a new statement and revised.

It is interesting to observe that the first Yearbook to contain a Statement of Beliefs was The Yearbook following the General Conference of 1888. It is also noteworthy that no statement again appeared till the time of the Alpha apostasy (circa, 1905) and Special Testimonies, Series B, Nos. 2 & 7 were published. It was during this period - 1890-1904 - that the divergent statement of beliefs was printed in the Membership Directory of the headquarters church at Battle Creek, Michigan, and the Holy Flesh Movement, which also espoused divergent doctrines, engulfed the Indiana Conference. And when the Statement of Beliefs again appeared in the 1905 Yearbook, it was continued only up to the death of Ellen G. White. In other words, we never even exemplified the experience of ancient Israel who "served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that He had done for Israel." (Joshua 24:31)

[Please keep this issue of the thought paper for reference. In future thought papers starting with the November issue, we shall discuss the changes that have taken place in these major doctrinal areas. You will need this paper to which to refer. We are planning a very Special Issue for December, and will resume the doctrinal discussion in the January, 1981, thought paper.]

Postage Please! - In the July issue of the thought paper, we mentioned the 14 page tract on the question - "Does God Destroy?" We listed the price as "Ten for a Dollar, plus postage." One person sent for 10 copies, and included only a 15¢ stamp for return postage. Now really is this being honest with postage rates what they are? The sister that wrote the tract, and had them printed should at least be able to obtain her costs back. Now if you are interested in this tract distribution they are still ten for a dollar plus postage. Write to Mrs Klacena M. Ferguson, Rt #1, Box 235-S, Oroville, CA 95956.

Fall Meetings - We are planning a Fall itinerary to include appointments East of the Mississippi River. If you would like a visit, or a meeting in your area, or knowledge of a meeting near you, please write to us at the address below and state your desires. We will try to give consideration to each request.

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