



*"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*

# REPENTANCE ON DEMAND

## Wieland's New Objective

In the previous Thought Paper - The Special Report on the 1888 Message Conference held at Andrews University, August 20-24 - we commented but briefly on two factors in Elder R. J. Wieland's latest book - "As Many As I Love". This book was not cleared by any book committee of the church, and is, therefore, a private publication. However, this book is directed primarily to the denomination and specifically refers to the leadership of the Church.

Noting the trust committed to the Church from the various Writings - omitting key references - Wieland writes:

If the Seventh-day Adventist church has such a trust committed to her, it is equally true that Christ's message to Laodicea is addressed primarily to her. But notice that in Revelation 3:14-21, Christ is not speaking primarily to the church at large, but to its ministerial and administrative leadership. (p. 59)

What does Wieland perceive the response of the "ministerial and administrative leadership should be? Since the leadership is symbolized by "the angel of the church of Laodicea," he believes that Christ "intends that the 'angel of the church' shall repent first, and then administer the experience to the worldwide church." (p. 60)

Then the question is asked - "Suppose the leadership fails, or rejects the Lord's appeal?" The answer given is unique! "Israel's

history demonstrates that 'the people' can intervene and demand repentance." [Jeremiah 26 is cited as a reference] (Ibid.) This is repentance on demand!

Before commenting further on what this means when applied, we need to understand the meaning of the word itself, and words and phrases connect with the gospel message as committed by Christ to His church.

The word repentance is translated from the Greek word, metanoia, which means simply a change of mind which leads to a reversal of the past. Connected with this, is the word - "converted." Peter told the "men of Israel" gathered together in Solomon's porch of the Temple, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted." (Acts 3:19) This word in the noun form, epistrophē, signifies "a turning about, or turning around."

Biblically and prophetically, there is another dimension to this picture. The prophecy of Malachi indicates that prior to the coming of the Lord, "Elijah the prophet" will be sent. (Mal. 4:5) The objective is to turn the children of Israel to the Lord, lest He "come and smite the earth with a curse." (Compare Mal. 4:6 & Luke 1:16) The end-time prophecy of Isaiah states - "the curse devoured the earth." (Isa. 24:6) The context of this prophecy is based in the experience of Elijah who was sent to Israel to arrest the worship of Baal. The tide of Baal worship was only momentarily effected. Israel went into captivity never again to be a nation of the Ten Tribes.

The fulfillment of this prophecy at the first Advent of Christ in John the Baptist

presents vital factors for consideration. Noting the Pharisees and Saducees who came to observe his preaching and baptizing, John cried out - "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matt. 3:7) Then he challenged them: "Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance." (Luke 3:8) Here is the key. Any genuine repentance on the part of the leadership of the church must be marked by a change of mind which leads to a reversal of the past.

What is Wieland's concept of the repentance called for by the Lord when he challenges "the angel of the church" to repent? He asks - "Would repenting of our rejection of the beginning of the latter rain lay the axe to the root of our present spiritual problem?" Then he answers - "Yes, for this is indeed its root." (p. 84, emphasis his)

There is no question but that the church in its highest session - the General Conference - did in 1888 "reject" the beginning of the latter rain. A. T. Jones through congregational response verified this at the 1893 General Conference session. Here is the report of this exchange:

Now brethren, when did that message of the righteousness of Christ, begin with us as a people? [One or two in the audience: "Three or four years ago"] Which was it, three? or four? [Congregation: "Four"] Yes, four. Where was it? [Congregation: "Minneapolis."] What then did the brethren reject at Minneapolis? [Some in the congregation: "The loud cry."] What is that message of righteousness? The Testimony has told us what it is; the loud cry - the latter rain. Then what did the brethren in that fearful position in which they stood, reject at Minneapolis? They rejected the latter rain - the loud cry of the third angel's message. (1983 GC Bulletin, p. 183. Emphasis his)

Jones did not stop there. In his 15th study at the same session, he again entered into dialogue with the delegates. Here is that record:

Now I want to ask a few questions on what we have gone over. What is the latter rain? [Congregation: "The teaching of righteousness according to righteousness."] What is the loud cry? [Congregation: "The message of the righteousness of Christ."] The loud cry has already begun in the message of the righteousness of Christ. Where does the latter rain come from? [Congregation: "From God."] All of it? [Congregation: "Yes."] What is it? The Spirit of God. (Ibid., p. 359)

Here is the key as to what was rejected:

It was the Spirit of God - the Spirit of truth. (John 16:13) Ellen G. White concerning what happened at Minneapolis wrote in these words:

All the universe of heaven witnessed the disgraceful treatment of Jesus Christ represented by the Holy Spirit. Had Christ been before them, they would have treated Him in a manner similar to that in which the Jews treated Christ. (Special Testimonies, Series A, #6, p. 20)

And what did the Jews do to Christ? They turned Him over to the Romans to be crucified!

The "rejection" in 1888 is also defined as the rejection of "the message of the righteousness of Christ," which has been defined as "pure, unadulterated truth." (TM, p. 65) To define "rejection" simply in terms of "the beginning of the latter rain" without amplification of all that that meant is to create a false basis for "denominational" repentance. Individuals thus could be led to believe that the achievement of denominational repentance on demand will be much easier than they first thought it to be. It is very conceivable for "the angel of the church of Laodicea" to recognize the very clear statement in the 1893 Bulletin, and so publicly admit that that is what was done back there. BUT would this be genuine repentance? It could well be repentance on demand without bringing forth "fruits worthy of repentance."

While the "rejection" of "the beginning of the latter rain" took place in 1888, when did the fruitage of that rejection begin to take permanent form? In 1903, Ellen G. White wrote - "Unless the church which is now being leavened with her own backsliding, shall repent. . ." (8T:250) [Let it be kept in mind that this very reference from the Writings was that which Wieland and Short based their call for denominational repentance in 1950. See 1888 Re-Examined, pp. 202-203; A Warning and Its Reception, p. 242]

What had taken place at the 1903 General Conference session? (Ellen G. White wrote this testimony only eight days after the session closed in Oakland, California, and prior to its reconvening in Battle Creek on April 22.) The simple fact is that the reorganization called for and accomplished at the 1901 session was reversed. A new organization was set up; a new constitution was adopted. Of this 1903 Constitution,

# AN ALLEGORY

Allen Stump

[Editor's Note: This Allegory was presented as a part of one of the evening messages during the 1986 Annual Fellowship Meeting. It is being printed by the request of those who heard it.]

Once there was a certain Rabbi, who was the leader of a synagogue. One day he went out to hear a certain Greek or Hellenist speaking on God's salvation. As he listened, he was thrilled to hear this so called Gentile speak on the righteousness of God. He even heard this Greek say, "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." The Rabbi was so thrilled with what he heard that he requested an interview with the man.

To the surprise of the Rabbi, the Greek told him that the Jews were not really God's chosen people; they were too interested in working their way to heaven and did not realize that salvation was a free gift. To this the Rabbi replied, "I am a born again believer as much as you are." To this the Greek said, "How could that be so, Rabbi? You are a Pharisee, one who majors in works." To this the Rabbi responded, "All of our people do not believe as you think they do. We have many who are born again as I am. I think that we should get together and talk about this."

So in the passing of time, meetings were arranged between the Jews, who were truly the people of God, and the Greeks, who were just as lost in their sins as Sodom and Gomorrah were lost the night of their visitation. Four of the best Rabbis were chosen to participate in the meetings with the up and coming great minds of the Greeks.

Now just why the Pharisees thought they needed the acceptance of the Greeks has never been revealed; however, it became clear that the Jews were willing to make almost any compromise to be called evangelical and to be able to have unity with the Greeks. One of the first things that had to be taken care of was this idea of only one God. The concept of the "Trinity" had been officially introduced twenty-four years before the conferences. Now it must be reaffirmed in the strongest of terms. From now on the Jews were to accept the doctrine of the Trinity

(or three gods), as one of the pillars of their faith. Also the idea of the sanctuary services having any typological significance had to go. Then there was the teaching that when the Messiah came, He would come as a man among men. This could not be tolerated.

As if this was not enough, the evangelical Greeks insisted that the Jews give up their confidence in the latest "messenger" God had sent to His people. Not only this, but no longer could the Jews consider themselves the chosen of God, but rather they were only just a part of the body of God along with the rest of the evangelical world. To all these issues, and more, the Pharisees were willing to compromise their faith for the sake of unity. Not only did they compromise their faith, but they agreed to sway as many of their fellow believers as within their power to this "New Theology." To prove this, they would publish a scroll entitled, The Pharisees Answer Questions on Doctrine. This would show to all the Gentile world the "true" position of the Evangelical Pharisees.

Immediately after the publishing of the scroll, the greatest living Rabbi of the Pharisees took issue with the "New Theology" that was taught in the scroll. A student of the Torah, he was mighty in the Holy Writings, especially had he done much study in Leviticus. (Chapter 16) In the teachings of the new scroll the aged Rabbi could see the whole unearthing of the Jewish faith. Speaking with the leaders of the synagogues and the Sanhedrin, he hoped to stop these erroneous teachings and bring about a true work of repentance. The Sanhedrin would not give ear to the protests of the old Rabbi, saying, "Poor old Emel, he's lost his mind." Since the Sanhedrin would not give ear to him, Rabbi Emel took his case to the people of Judah. Writing scrolls to be read among the people about the apostasy, he hoped to alert some as to what was going on.

Since Rabbi Emel had been a teacher in the School of the Prophets, he received a portion of the tithes as his support for the teaching and preaching he had done. However, when word got around as to what he was doing, his retirement was cut off. When he went to the Romans for welfare (you see he was well advanced in years at this time), the Proconsul asked him whom he had worked for

during his lifetime. Rabbi Emel explained that for more than 50 years he had been in the service of the Jewish religious establishment, but that the Jews had quit paying his retirement because of disagreements they had. At this the Proconsul was shocked, and ordered the Sanhedrin to resume his payments.

As Rabbi Emel thought, the mind of the aged scholar went back to a meeting of the Sanhedrin that he had listened in on, when he was much younger. At this meeting, a Rabbi by the name of Alballen had been stripped of his credentials for believing and teaching the same doctrine as was written in the "New Theology" scroll. How it hurt him to see his people move into the broad road of apostasy. The writings of Rabbi Emel inspired others to study and to take a stand for the truth.

During this time the little flock who were standing by the pillars of the faith read from the Holy Writings words such as these:

Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath [God] Christ with Belial? or what agreement hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?

The people shall dwell alone and shall not be reckoned among the nations.<sup>2</sup>

This faithful little flock standing in the light turned to the Writings of the Lord's "Messenger" and read:

There is to be no compromise with those who make void the law of God. It is not safe to rely upon them as counselors. Our testimony is not to be less decided now than formerly; our real position is not to be cloaked in order to please the world's great men. They may desire us to unite with them and accept their plans, and may make propositions in regard to our course of action which may give the enemy an advantage over us. "Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy." (Isa. 8:12). While we should not seek for controversy, and should not needlessly offend, we must present the truth clearly and decidedly, and stand firm to what God has taught us in His Word. You are not to look to the world in order to learn what you shall write

or what you shall speak.<sup>3</sup>

At just the time many were making an attempt to discredit the Writings of the Lord's "Messenger," the little flock, while thinking of the apostasy that had occurred as a result of the Evangelical Conferences, found this message written by the servant of the Lord:

I am bidden to warn you that deceptive sentiments are entertained, a false modesty and caution, a disposition to withhold the profession of our faith. In the night season, matters have been presented before me that have greatly troubled my mind. I have seemed to be in meetings for counsel where these subjects were discussed, and written documents were presented, advocating concessions. Brethren shall we permit the world to shape the message God has given us to bear?<sup>4</sup>

This testimony gave courage to the little flock as they could see that Jehovah God was not taken by surprise in anything that had happened, and that He was still in control of the destiny of the world.

How sorry that our story cannot finish here with a sweet ending. The Jews, because of their acceptance of the "New Theology", went deeper and deeper into apostasy. The principles of truth that God in His wisdom had given them were discarded. Their religion was changed. The fundamental principles that sustained the work were accounted as error. A new organization was established. Other scrolls of a new order were written. A system of intellectual philosophy was introduced. The founders went into the cities of the Roman world and did a seemingly wonderful work. The Sabbath, of course, was lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing was allowed to stand in the way of this new movement, despite calls from messengers for corporate repentance. The people went to sleep becoming lukewarm in their experience. The Jews joined the World Council of Faith and Order, and finally played a great roll in helping the abomination that maketh desolate to stand in the holy place. The leaders taught that virtue was better than vice, but God being removed, they placed their dependence on human power, which being without God, was worthless. Their foundation was built on sand, and storm and tempest swept away the structure. The nominal Jew became so Laodicean that when the Messiah did come, He had to spew them out.<sup>5</sup> (Let him

P. T. Magan, prior to its adoption, stated:

It may be stated there is nothing in this new constitution which is not abundantly safeguarded by the provisions of it; but I want to say to you that any man who has ever read Neander's History of the Christian Church, Mosheim's, or any of the other great church historians, - any man who have ever read those histories can come to no other conclusion but that the principles which are to be brought in through this proposed constitution, and in the way in which they are brought in, are the same principles, and introduced in precisely the same way, as they were hundreds of years ago when the Papacy was made. (1903, GC Bulletin, p. 150)

It is interesting to note that A. T. Jones at the 1893 session contrasted the true message of righteousness by faith with the papal teaching. He used a book entitled, Catholic Belief, by Di Bruno, and stated as his reason for so doing - "I shall read some from it. And that you may have the two things - the truth of justification by faith, and the falsity of it - side by side,..." (p. 261) The lesson that can be drawn is again very simple - You depart from the true message as given in 1888, and that "backsliding" will inevitably lead not only to papal teaching but to a papal form of organization. In other words, it is either the Spirit of truth, or the spirit of error - the spirit of him who abode not in the truth!

Then will the call to "corporate repentance" include only the admission of the rejection of "the beginning of the latter rain," or will it also involve a call to a change of mind that would lead to a reversal of the past backsliding? Or is "Jerusalem" to continue as it now is - "in bondage with her children"? (Gal. 4:25) Is "repentance on demand" to be merely a "whitewash"?

What about the denial of sacred truth entrusted to God's people that has been set aside, and was being set aside when Wieland and Short first called for "corporate repentance" in 1950?

As is already known by many, in 1949, the Review & Herald requested Professor D. E. Rebok to revise the book, Bible Readings for the Home Circle. This revision involved the alteration of the Doctrine of the Incarnation in the chapter on "The Sinless Life." Documentation of this can be found in the following references: Movement of Destiny, pp. 427-428; and in the manuscript published by the Adventist Laymen's Foundation - An Interpretive History of the Doctrine of the

Incarnation, pp. 64-66. But not alone was this doctrine being altered. On May 6, 1948, the General Conference Committee voted to set up a committee composed of D. E. Rebok, A. G. Emmer, and Robert Kitto to prepare an Academy textbook on Bible Doctrines. (Committee Minutes, p. 1039) Then in 1951, the General Conference officers appointed a Bible Textbook Reading Committee to give final approval to the textbook - Principles of Life. (Minutes, May 23, p. 138) This is still in use. This Academy textbook reads in the lesson on "The Day of Atonement": "Jesus has made full and complete provision for the putting away of the sins of all who are willing to accept His sacrifice on Calvary's cross. There is no need for any further atonement." (p. 234)

[It might be argued that the context of this statement was to contrast the ministry of Christ with the work typified by the "scapegoat". The whole lesson being on the services of the Day of Atonement in the earthly type, the contrast, if this was indeed the point, could have been established by directing the student to Leviticus 16:20-21 - "when he (the high priest) had made an end of reconciling" then was the live goat brought into the services of that day.]

In whatever way this may be rationalized, it remains a fact that during the 1955-1956 Seventh-day Adventist-Evangelical Conferences, the Adventist conferees compromised the faith in these two areas. See Questions on Doctrine, pp. 381, 383; Andreasen's Letters to the Churches, Series A, #1 & #6. Is "repentance on demand", therefore, going to include only the rejection of the latter rain in 1888, or is genuine repentance to include the fruitage of the rejection of the Spirit of truth. Is it to be lip service, or is it to be, as in the call of John the Baptist - "fruits worthy of repentance"?

It must be kept in mind that when Wieland and Short made their representations to the General Conference officers in 1950, they charged that the emphasis at the Ministerial Association meetings on "Christ-centered preaching" was "in reality merely anti-christ centered preaching." (Emphasis theirs; quoted in Preliminary Memorandum, p. 3; See WWN, XIX-9, p. 1 for full context) When this theme was developed further in their manuscript - 1888 Re-Examined - this "anti-christ" emphasis was likened to Baal worship. The final four chapters of this manuscript was

devoted to documentation of this fact. Chapter 10 - "Warnings of Subtle, Internal Apostasy" - is introduced by the following perceptive deduction:

If the findings of this essay are correct [and they were] that the light of the loud cry, as presented at Minneapolis in the teaching of Christ's righteousness, was rejected and spurned by "us", it can be seen how inevitably there would be an infatuation with false and counterfeit "light". Precisely in proportion as the true, genuine light presented at Minneapolis was undiscerned and misunderstood will the counterfeit "light" be undiscerned and misunderstood for its true nature. The apostasy within would therefore be unconscious, specious, subtle, and would likely become widespread before it is discerned. (p. 121)

How true this has been! But are we to ignore this apostasy which has now been discerned and say that if we can merely create enough voices to demand repentance and the hierarchy hearing the outcry gives lip service to the fact that "the beginning of the latter rain" was rejected in 1888, this will turn the church around? Is this the message coming to us from the Lord's servant? In 1905, over two years after Ellen G. White had written that the church was then being leavened with its own backsliding, she wrote:

One thing it is certain is soon to be realized, - the great apostasy, which is developing and increasing and waxing stronger, and will continue to do so until the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout. (Special Testimonies, Series B, #7, pp. 56-57)

Is this not saying in simple language that which makes certain what the True Witness said in His message to "the angel of the church of Laodicea" - "I will spue thee out of my mouth"? How deceptive then, to hold out to Laodiceans now in 1986, this false hope as evidenced in the book - "As Many As I Love"!

One is led to ask some questions: Why so late in human history, standing on the very verge of the eternal world, have Wieland and Short deviated from the call which the Lord laid on them in 1950? Has Baal worship ceased in the Church? Is the Church teaching "pure and unadulterated truth" - the basis of the message of the righteousness of Christ? Will mere lip service to a fact of history really be laying the axe to the "root" of the tree? Have they forgotten what they wrote in 1950?

Another characteristic of modern prophets of Baal is

their lack of courage to stand forth boldly for what they are convicted in their souls is truth. The omission of the principle of the Cross from their Christian experience is the cause of this cowardice, which is falsely represented to be "patience" or broad-mindedness. There are still today many who secretly believe on Him, but because of the Pharisees do not confess, lest they should be put out of the fraternity. For they love the praise of men more than the praise of God. A love for majority-opinions, and a fear of singularity, are inevitable effects of Baal-worship. (1888 Re-Examined, p. 169)

There is a fact that is overlooked - "the principle of the Cross." We can search for the Cross - but we will never find it in "Jerusalem." No cross was ever erected there only sword and famine desolated the doomed in the city during the final Roman seige. The real, true, and genuine Cross was erected outside the city gates on a hill called, Golgotha. To that place the ones to whom the book of Hebrews was addressed, were counseled to go:

Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. (Heb. 13:12-13)

There is a warning that is also overlooked. God is no respecter of persons, be he a common layperson, or a messenger called of God. When we will not receive the love of the truth, and refuse to recognize the facts of history, God permits strong delusion to becloud our vision. (II Thess. 2:10-11) We are willing to believe that the True Witness does not mean what He says - "I will spue thee out of my mouth." We reject the voice of Christ as heard outside of the door of the Church, saying to the individual, "If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him." (Rev. 3:20) We seem to overlook in our delusions that "the state of the Church represented by the foolish virgins, is also spoken of as the Laodicean state." (Review and Herald, August 19, 1890) However, it is very true as Elder Wieland has pointed out so emphatically - "the Seventh-day Adventist Church is in a unique sense Laodicea." ("As Many As I Love", p. 59)

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"Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is always dangerous." (5T:292)

## LAODICEA or PHILADELPHIA WHICH?

Elder R. J. Wieland in Appendix B of "AS Many As I Love" has written:

Serious efforts have been made to convince church members to leave the organized Seventh-day Adventist Church, or at least to withdraw their support and fellowship. The argument is that Philadelphia, not Laodicea, represents the true church that will be ready for Christ's coming. Joseph Bates is cited as a venerable authority for this view. But this dear pioneer was mistaken in this, as he was on some other points as well. (p. 96)

What did Joseph Bates actually teach? In the first issue of The Review and Herald, published in Paris, Maine, November, 1850, Elder Bates wrote an article on "The Laodicean Church." He concluded his article by stating:

"In all the land saith the Lord: TWO PARTS therein shall be cut off, and die; but the THIRD shall be left therein. God says he will bring the THIRD PART through the fire and refine them. They shall call upon him, and he will hear them. He will say IT IS MY PEOPLE; and they shall say the LORD IS MY GOD." First part, Sardis, the nominal church or Babylon. Second part, Laodicea, the nominal Adventist. Third part, Philadelphia, the only true church of God on earth, for they asked to be translated to the city of God. Rev. iii,12; Heb. xii, 22-24. In the name of Jesus, I exhort you again to flee from the Laodiceans, as from Sodom and Gomorrah. Their teachings are false and delusive; and lead to utter destruction. (p. 8)

Interestingly, we can find this teaching in church publications as late as 1911. In the Signs of the Times, January 11, 1911, Milton C. Wilcox wrote:

The last three churches present three present-day conditions: (1) Great worldliness, dead while professing to live, having not the life of Christ, seen in the great popular churches; (2) Devoted, earnest seeking of God, manifested among a far smaller number who are looking for their Lord's coming; (3) Those who possess an outward knowledge of God's truth, who feel rich because of their knowledge, proud because of their superior morality, but do not know the sweetness of God's grace, the power of His redeeming love.

There is no hope in neither Sardis nor in Laodicea. Out of these conditions must the victors come into that of Philadelphia - brotherly love. He pleads with the few names in Sardis. Upon the greater part of them in Sardis, Christ will come as a thief in swift judgment, but He will save some. He has no promise to Laodicea as a whole. "If any man hear my voice," - He pleads

with the individual; but the individual who opens the heart's door and lets Christ in, who comes into that wonderful communion with his divine Lord, will by that very process come into the condition of brotherly love. They will constitute the remnant who keep the word of His patience, against whom He has no condemnation, who are ready for translation. Out of that condition of lukewarmness means a hard struggle, earnest zeal, severe conflict; but he who wins shall share Christ's kingdom eternally. (Emphasis his)

Ellen G. White adds her endorsement:

The 144,000 were all sealed and perfectly united. On their foreheads was written, God, New Jerusalem, and a glorious star containing Jesus' new name. (Early Writings, p. 15; compare with Rev. 3:12)

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### HELP NEEDED

Would you like to help in a project? Do you live in an area where there are long needle pine tress? If so, and you would be willing to gather up some of the fallen needles, please contact us for further information. Write: P. O. Box 789, Lamar, AR 72846.

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An Allegory - from p. 4

that readeth, understand.)

<sup>1</sup>Acts 17:28

<sup>2</sup>II Corinthians 6:14-16; Numbers 23:9

<sup>3</sup>SM, bk ii, p. 371

<sup>4</sup>CtoW, pp. 94-95

<sup>5</sup>See SM, i, pp. 204-205; Revelation 3:14-22.

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