



*"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

THE ECUMENICAL LABYRINTH

SDA's - A Church Wandering in Its Maze

In the April issue of *"Watchman, What of the Night?"* (p. 5), we wrote about the ecumenical service held in the Watsonville, California, Seventh-day Adventist Church. This service was a part of the observance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The bulletin for the occasion was either supplied by, or purchased from the "Graymoor Ecumenical Institute." It is at this point we begin our attempt to "thread" our way through the ecumenical labyrinth in which the Seventh-day Adventist Church is wandering today.

On January 16, 1863, at Millington, Maryland, Lewis Thomas Wattson was born. As a young man, he prepared himself for the priesthood of the Episcopal Church. After his ordination in 1886, he began to work for the reunion of all Protestant bodies with the Holy See. To this end "in 1898, with Mother Mary Lurana White, an Episcopal nun, [Wattson] founded at Graymoor, N.Y., the Society of the Atonement, comprising Franciscan friars and Franciscan sisters of the Atonement." (*New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 14, p. 828)

Having taken the name Paul James, Wattson in 1903 began editing a paper called *The Lamp*, "in which he defended papal infallibility and urged all Anglicans to return to Rome." Then as an experiment, "he in-

augurated an 8-day period of prayer called the Church Unity Octave. Under Catholic auspices this became the Chair of Church Unity Octave, held each year January 18 to 25, and observed by non-Catholics as the Universal Week of Prayer for Christian Unity." (*Ibid.*) This is the annual service which the Watsonville Seventh-day Adventist Church hosted January 12, 1986.

In 1909, the Graymoor community of 17 friars, sisters, and laymen were received corporately into the Catholic Church through permission of Pius X transmitted via the Apostolic delegate to the United States. Shortly thereafter, the group was received into the Franciscan Order as the Third Order Regular of St. Francis of Assisi. In 1910, Wattson was ordained into the priesthood of the Roman Catholic Church as Paul James Francis Wattson. The remaining 30 years of his life were spent promoting Church unity with Rome from Graymoor.

"The Chair of Unity Apostolate office at Graymoor is the center of various activities for promoting Christian unity. As a development of the octave, the friars direct the League of Prayer for Unity under the patronage of Our Lady of the Atonement." (*Ibid.*, Vol 1, p. 1027) In fact, prior to his death, Wattson placed his whole work for unity "under the patronage of Our Lady of the Atonement. In 1920 the Faith and Order movement, an antecedent of the World Council of Churches, first called for a week of prayer during Pentecost. In 1940 it commended the January observance so as to coincide with the Catholic time of prayer. Since the formation of the World Council at Amsterdam in 1948, this period of prayer has been sponsored by its Faith and Order

Commission." (Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 422) Note it was not Rome who changed her date for the period of prayer, but it was Protestants who altered their date to coincide with Rome. It must also be kept in mind that this prayer period is to pray not for unity per se, but for unity with Rome! Further it must be remembered that since 1967, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is represented on the Faith and Order Commission, which sponsors in connection with Graymoor this "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity."

The work of the Graymoor Ecumenical Institute has the Papal blessing. When the group was received corporately into the Roman Catholic Church, Pius X approved the prayer crusade for religious unity. In 1916, Benedict XV extended the crusade to the universal Church granting indulgences through the apostolic letter - Romanorum pontificum. In part it read:

In every age the Roman Pontiffs, our predecessors, have had much at heart and in it is our very particular concern that Christians who have separated themselves from the Catholic religion should return to the Church as to a mother whom they have abandoned. (Ibid.)

Pius XI, who followed Benedict XV, "often offered Mass during the Octave for its development and success. Pope Pius XII renewed and increased the indulgences, and wrote a letter to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the Octave. Pope John XXIII wrote a letter to the father general of the Atonement Friars to commend the observance of the Octave ever more widely throughout the world." In this letter he wrote:

Prayer is the first and principle means to be used to bring about this yearned-for-unity, as your beloved Founder, Father Paul Wattson, so clearly saw; and he therefore promoted the Chair of Unity Octave, during which fervent supplications should be raised to the Almighty for the return to the one true Faith." (Ibid.) [Letter dated, October 28, 1959]

John XXIII had cause to highly recommend this Church Unity Octave. "In January of 1959, Pope John XXIII surprised the non-Catholic world by announcing his intention to convene a Council of the Roman Catholic Church. He made clear that his decision was not the result of long premeditated deliberation; the inspiration came during a time of prayer. The time was that period

particularly devoted to prayers for the reunion of Christendom, the Christian Unity Octave of January 18-25." (Observer at Rome, p. 6)

"Vatican Council II was summoned by John XXIII to stimulate the movement toward unity, among other things." (New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 5, p. 98) In seeking to forward this objective he established the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. Heading this secretariat was the ecumenical minded Jesuit, Augustin Cardinal Bea. Also appointed to this new secretariat of the Catholic Church was Msgr J. G. M. Willebrands who in 1952 founded the Catholic Conference for Ecumenical Questions. This Conference "has had impressive though unobtrusive influence and worked with the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC." (Ibid.)

Vatican Council II convened October 11, 1962, and ran through four sessions. John XXIII died in 1963, and his successor Paul VI announced his intention to pursue the policies of his predecessor. It was at the fourth and final session that contact was made between a SDA observer, and one from the WCC. (So Much in Common, p. 98)

Out of the Conversations which took place two distinct fellowships in the Ecumenical Movement followed. One was the participation in the annual meeting of the Secretaries of the World Confessional Families since 1968. This Conference not attached to the World Council of Churches is nevertheless served by the Faith and Order Commission "in a consultative manner." Religious News Service (May 19, 1977) quoted Bishop John Howe, then president of the Conference, as to the results of the 1977 annual meeting - "We have been able to decide how we shall work together more with the World Council of Churches in understanding the ecumenical role that all of us have." This was reporting a Vatican Radio interview, and Dr. B. B. Beach, now of the SDA General Conference, was there at the same time with Bishop Howe giving assent as the Secretary of the Conference. This same RNS release stated - "The Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity and the Seventh-day Adventists became regular participants in the Conference in 1968." Also, it was at this annual meeting in Rome in 1977, that B. B. Beach presented to Pope

Paul VI, a medallion as "a gold-covered symbol of the Seventh-day Adventist Church." (Review, August 11, 1977, p. 23)

The second fellowship resulting from the Consultations between representatives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the appointees of the WCC was the selection of a SDA theologian to sit on the Faith and Order Commission. This took place in 1967, when the WCC Central Committee selected with General Conference approval, Dr. Earle Hilgert of Andrews University. After Dr. Hilgert left Andrews University and the Seventh-day Adventist Church to teach at the McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, his place on the Faith and Order Commission was filled by Dr. R. F. Dederen, also of Andrews University.

When in 1948 the World Council of Churches was formed, the Faith and Order Movement which had functioned since 1920 became a "commission" of the WCC. As a Commission of the World Council of Churches, its purposes and objectives need to be clearly understood in relationship to the overall objectives of the World Council.

Article I of the Constitution of the World Council of Churches reads:

The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (So Much in Common, p. 40)

While the World Council does not assume universal authority controlling what all Christians should believe and do, yet the member churches - now over three hundred - are all committed to close collaboration in Christian witness and service. Further, they are striving together to realize the goal of visible Church unity. Herein, enters the Faith and Order Commission. Its objective is stated - and keep in mind that the SDA Church is represented on this Commission:

To assist the churches toward this goal, the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council provides theological support for the efforts the churches are making towards unity. Indeed the Commission has been charged by the Council members to keep always before them their obligation to work towards manifesting

more visibly God's gift of Church unity. So it is that the stated aim of the Commission is "to proclaim the oneness of the Church of Jesus Christ and to call the churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and common life in Christ, in order that the world might believe." (By-Laws) (Faith and Order Paper #11, pp. vii-viii)

Much has transpired toward the objective of the Faith and Order Commission since 1967, when a Seventh-day Adventist was appointed to the Commission. In January, 1982, in Lima, Peru, over 100 theologians met and "recommended unanimously" an agreed statement on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry "for the common study and official response of the churches." These theologians "represented virtually all the major church traditions: Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Old Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, Reformed, Methodist, United, Disciples, Baptist, Adventist and Pentecostal." (Back Cover, Faith and Order Paper #11, emphasis supplied)

The three statements on baptism, eucharist and ministry "are the fruit of a 50-year process of study stretching back to the first Faith and Order Conference at Lausanne [Switzerland] in 1927." (Ibid., p. viii)

Wm. H. Lazareth, Director of the Secretariat on Faith and Order and Nikos Nissiotis, Moderator of the Commission on Faith and Order have co-authored a Preface to the Lima Text as this paper on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry is called. In it they state:

The Lima Text represented the significant theological convergence which Faith and Order has discerned and formulated. Those who know how widely the churches have differed in doctrine and practice on baptism, eucharist and ministry, will appreciate the importance of the large measure of agreement registered here. Virtually all the confessional traditions are included in the Commission's membership. That theologians of such widely different traditions should be able to speak so harmoniously about baptism, eucharist and ministry is unprecedented in the modern ecumenical movement. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the Commission also includes among its full members theologians of the Roman Catholic and other churches which do not belong to the World Council of Churches itself. (Ibid., p. ix)

WE WILL ALL BE THERE

In our Foundation Elementary School program, I am teaching my grandson his Bible lesson each day that I am on campus. Presently, we are studying the doctrines of the Bible in preparation for his baptism. This week we have been focusing our attention on the 1000 years of Revelation 20, and the Second and Third Comings of Jesus.

Doctrines could be compared to steel girders around which we build the edifice of our spiritual life. Sometimes they seem just as rigid and matter of fact as a real steel girder in a large building. But when we put ourselves into the picture created by the doctrine, it comes to life with real force and challenge. Such is the doctrine of the 1000 Years of Revelation 20.

First let us catch the setting for the closing scenes connected with the 1000 years. Satan is "loosed out of his prison." (20:7) The "rest of dead" now come forth. (20:5) The "blessed and holy" have been with Christ a 1000 years. (20:4) These return with Him to earth with the Holy City which becomes "the camp of the saints." (20:9) The city has walls "of jasper," "clear as crystal." In fact the city is of "pure gold, like unto clear glass." (21:11,18) What army - numbering as "the sands of the sea" - would not like to overwhelm this city and possess its riches. So Satan inspires the "dead" - for that is how those who come up in the second resurrection are perceived in Scripture (20:12). They gather around the city and the saints are inside.

Here is where the picture begins. For one time and for one time only, all the family of Adam meet - and they can see each other through the clear wall. What a family reunion! Cain and Abel will be there. The last time they saw each other while perception was still vivid - Abel could see only the cruel hate in his brother's eyes. And Cain, he saw the first human's eyes close in death, death he caused. He who wouldn't shed the blood of an animal in recognition of his own sin, now sees his own brother's blood flow as life ebbs away. Now their eyes meet once again. What will go through their minds? He who

tried to satisfy God by offering to Him the works of his own hands - setting the criterion for acceptance, rather than obeying the directives - will then see the price he paid.

Jacob and Esau will be there; Jacob inside, Esau outside. Will Esau remember the fateful day, he sold his "birthright" to spiritual blessings for a mere bowl of food? Yes, and he will realize the terrible cost of that bowl of food - for its actual price will be there before him - the city of God! What judgment, or should we say, lack of judgement, Esau exercised! Yet how many today are making similar decisions. The material which is seen has greater value than the unseen which must be perceived by faith; but then the unseen will be seen. As with all human perception, "works" are more real than "grace." Possessions and things have more meaning than the City of God which we have not seen, but must accept by faith in God's word. What a figure is written on the price tag of earthly things - eternity, life everlasting - and yet the vast majority will be willing to pay just that price for they are outside the city walls.

Paul and Agrippa will be there. Paul inside the city close to Jesus for whom he counted the loss of all things as but dung. There will be Agrippa outside looking in - remembering the price of "almost." (Acts 26:28) "Almost but not wholly saved, means to be not almost but wholly lost." (COL, p. 118)

You and I will be there. The question is simple - Will we be looking in on what we missed, or looking out on what we missed. We have a heaven to win and a hell to shun. What we do with truth - and this is really the only issue - will determine where we will be at the time of the final family reunion of Adam. We will either be with him who abode not in the truth, or with Him who is the Truth.

The final time is upon us. We can either be caught up to meet the Lord in the air at His second coming, or we can be destroyed with the brightness of that coming. We can either be with the Lord a thousand years where He is, or we can lay as decaying corpses ungathered on the earth. We can either be inside the city looking out or outside

NEW TAPES -

END-TIME LINE - RE-SURVEYED

Presentation in Two Parts with Study Guides

STUDY EXCLUSIVELY from the WRITINGS

In recent months, directly and indirectly, we have been informed of vicious rumors being circulated that we no longer believe that Ellen G. White has the spiritual gift known as the gift of prophecy. In 1982, I was asked to present a lengthy study at the first Redwood Retreat on Ellen G. White and her Writings. I did so under the title - "Earthen Vessels." Before presenting the study, I read a prepared paper clearly setting forth in unequivocal terms my position, and from this I have not varied. [Both the statement and presentation were taped.] Concerning the writings and work of Ellen G. White, I stated:

1) I believe that in the life and ministry of Ellen G. White was manifest the spiritual gift known as the gift of prophecy, albeit the manifestation was in, as in the bestowal of all the gifts of the Spirit, an earthen vessel. ..."

[Those who wish a copy of the statement in full context may obtain one by writing to the Foundation.]

Ellen G. White never claimed infallibility (SM, i, p. 37), neither was she impeccable. She as with all mortals, whether prophets or apostles, messengers of God, or men and women possessed by the Spirit, had "feet of clay."

Today apostasy is rampant whether coming from the right or the left in Adventism. Those on the extreme left are seeking an easy road to "heaven" by what is termed - "cheap grace" - in other words, live as you please, God will save you in your sins! However, those on the extreme right are seeking "easy answers" by elevating the writings of Ellen G. White to a "third canon" or a "last testament" of Scripture. Some are so bold to use one of these terms, while

others but thinly veil their heresy. They write - "Use the sacred Scriptures - the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy - to test what is being said."

This is in absolute contradiction to what Ellen G. White herself has written. She stated:

God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrine and the basis of all reforms. (SP, IV, p. 413. Emphasis supplied)

The question is simple - Do you want to be the people whom God will recognize in the final hour of human history, or do you want to set up your own standards and doctrines through the misinterpretation of the Writings? We have been warned on this point likewise. Ellen White warned:

There will be those who will misinterpret the messages God has given, in accordance with their spiritual blindness. (SM, bk. i, p. 41)

We need an intelligent faith, not one based in spiritual blindness.

The terrible confusion in the right wing of Adventism today is traceable to these two factors - 1) The establishment of the Writings of Ellen G. White as a "third canon" of Scripture, and 2) the misinterpretation of what they have created.

Specific key interpretive principles have been given in the Writings as to how they are to be used and applied. Note the following:

The testimonies themselves will be the key that will explain the messages given, as scripture is explained by scripture. (Ibid., p. 42)

As one compares scripture with scripture to arrive at Bible truth, so likewise must the testimonies be compared with testimonies to arrive at the truth set forth in the Writings. What Ellen G. White did not say is equally as important as to what she did

say in this statement just quoted. She did not say that scripture is to be explained by testimony, nor that testimony was to be explained by scripture. When the study of each is properly done, there will be two harmonious lines of truth side by side.

Then governing the first interpretive tool is a second:

Regarding the testimonies, nothing is ignored, nothing is cast aside; but time and place must be considered. (Ibid., p. 57)

In the same counsel, Ellen G. White affirmed that "every jot and tittle is essential and must appear at an opportune time." The "time and place" of a counsel in the past are vital to a proper understanding of what was written. Likewise, "prophetic" testimonies do not become understandable until their "opportune time" has arrived.

Booklets, papers - printed and mimeographed, are coming through the postal service seeking to establish the "judgment of the living." The National Sunday Law is invoked as a "section corner." Graphs, diagrams and other supportive evidence are urged upon the reader. To find truth and to check the mass of material streaming through the postal service to the doors and boxes of Adventists - both concerned and unconcerned - we detailed a study of the end-time line exclusively from the writings of Ellen G. White in harmony with her counsel as to how her writings were to be studied. This has been placed on two tapes with a study guide for each.

When we followed the interpretive guidelines which Ellen G. White herself set forth by which her writings were to be studied, we discovered a "prophetic" testimony given at the height of the Righteousness by Faith presentations in the 1890's that cannot fit into the "time and place" rule until this very decade in which we are now living. Then when we considered the testimonies cast into the milieu following the rejection of the 1888 message by the leadership of the Church, and the apostasy in the organizational reform at the 1903 General Conference Session, the whole picture dropped into place.

There are those who are concerned with the present deviation from historical Adventism, and rightly so! For example, Hartland Institute sponsors the Firm Foundation Semi-

nars. But Dr. Standish has not presented this "prophetic" testimony so far as I have been able to discover. Why? Perhaps he is not aware of it, but if he is, it jars his and his staff's positions.

A Committee of Five has been organized to present the 1888 Message, the chief speakers being Elders R. J. Wieland and Alexander Snyman. There can be no question but that the message of 1888 needs to be proclaimed. It is truth. But when it is presented in the setting of 1950, and not in the setting of 1886, and when the "prophetic" testimony is ignored - neither man at present will even tell their hearers about it; perhaps they do not know about it either - those who listen to the presentations are left on "enchanted ground" feeling good about the truth of "righteousness by faith," but totally unprepared to meet the issues outlined in the "prophetic" testimony.

The righteousness of Christ is declared to be "pure, unadulterated truth." (TM, p. 65) The omission of truth does not give the message its full strength, and thus a vital ingredient is missing. The whole truth is not being given by the speakers for the The Committee of Five. It was to meet head-on this deficiency that these tapes have been carefully prepared by diligent study and research.

When we quote and use the writings, let us use them according to the key interpretive principles set forth in the Writings, and stop adding to the confusion by either ignoring what has been written, or misinterpreting that which has been given. And let us give the whole truth in its proper setting as we present the righteousness of Christ. This is not being done, in fact what is being done is a fulfillment of the "prophetic" testimony itself.

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Note

The two tapes and study guides may be obtained for \$5.00 per set by writing to the Adventist Laymen's Foundation of Arkansas, P. O. Box 789, Lamar, AR 72846.

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The Church today defined - "A mild-mannered man standing before a group of mild-mannered people exhorting them to be more mild-mannered."

From p. 3 - The Ecumenical Labyrinth

In 1980 when a new Statement of Beliefs was voted at the General Conference Session in Dallas, Texas, Article I of the World Council of Churches' Constitution was incorporated into the Statement. (Key Doctrinal Comparisons, p. 12)

The Seventh-day Adventist Church continues to wander in the ecumenical labyrinth. What the outcome will be, the future alone will reveal. However, the conclusion of the prophet about ancient Israel, likewise applies to modern spiritual Israel in its apostasy: "My God will cast them away; because they did not hearken unto Him; and they shall be wanderers among the nations." (Hosea 9:17; See also Rev. 3:16)

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From p. 4 - We Will Be There

the city, looking in.

It states that the "dead" must stand before God to be "judged out of those things which are written in the books according to their works." (Rev. 20:12) If we are absolutely honest with ourselves, we must admit that not one of us can face the record of our lives, and expect to be judged worthy of being inside the city. We have no merit nor the means to accrue it. Our only hope is to have our "name" retained in the Lamb's Book of Life. He who became the Lamb pre-figured in Abel's offering alone can make the confession for us before His Father, and our angel. (Rev. 3:5) And only those who overcome - "by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony," and who "loved not their lives unto death," will Jesus confess. (Rev. 12:11) These are the ones inside the city. You, too, can be there. In the one-time family reunion of Adam, where will you be?

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Comment on Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 8, p. 247 - "As of 1986, the Seventh-day Adventist Church as such will not even take official cognizance of this 'testimony' or discuss it." - A. L. Hudson, Church Triumphant, #27, p. 1.

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IN THE MAIL

Recently from Australia, I received a picture postcard of the Coffs Harbour, N.S.W., Seventh-day Adventist Church with a large billboard type of sign in front advertising meetings at the Coffs Harbour Showground by Leighton Ford. I couldn't believe what I was seeing so I wrote to the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, and they confirmed that Leighton Ford, Billy Graham's brother-in-law actually held meetings at that time in Coffs Harbour. The back of the card indicated that the Adventist Church was also promoting the same "Babylonian doctrines."

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"I picked up "Watchman, What of the Night?" where I work from a fellow worker's rubbish bin! I have quietly read it through and realize what the paper said is very true. I would like you to send it to me so I can share it with my friends as I feel we must know what is going on."

Australia

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"I have received the first three issues of "Watchman, What of the Night?" for 1986. I feel that the Lord is leading in this ministry. We are told that what God's people will need as the end draws near is 'straight testimony'. Too much of what we receive from the local church is watered down messages to appeal to the Laodicean condition instead of messages to arouse us from our slumber. We do not need the sensationalism of such speakers as Charles Wheeling and Lewis Walton. What we need is the Word of God. His word is powerful enough. It does not need the propaganda of the world to make it appealing."

Illinois