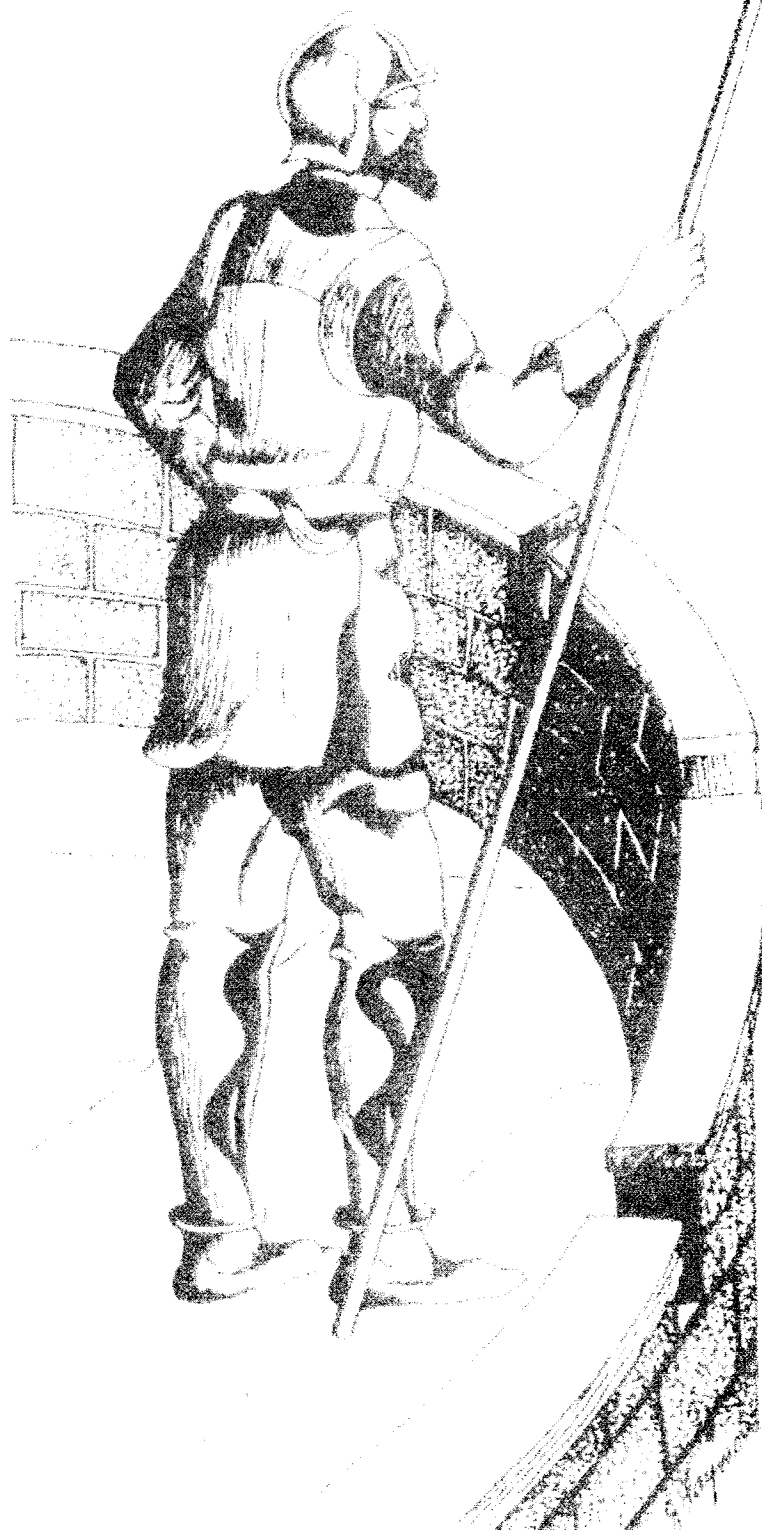


*“ Watchman,
what of the night? ”*

*“The hour has come, the hour is striking and striking at you,
the hour and the end!”* Eze. 7:6 (Moffatt)



Decades of Conflict and Apostasy -1

1952—Present

Editor's Preface

Moses introduces his second book and the details of Israel's "way out" of Egypt with the terse announcement that "there rose up a new king over Egypt which knew not Joseph" (Ex. 1:8). Few there are in Adventism today who were active as the Church entered the last half of the 20th century. Assured by the 1952 Bible Conference that all was well and that the doctrinal basis of Adventism was sound, the Church was ill prepared to confront the challenge which the SDA-Evangelical Conferences brought. It was not that some of the questions raised by the Evangelicals didn't need deeper study and clarification. Some of them did, even in fundamental areas such as the atonement. While the atonement was not completed at the cross, a sacrificial atonement was made there. It was to be concluded in the final atonement. In God's revelation to Israel through the sacrificial system divinely inaugurated, there was revealed a dual atonement.

Instead of recognizing the duty that was ours, for having been made the "repository of sacred truth" to develop "that truth on a higher scale than it had hitherto been done, we compromised that truth and sought to eliminate those who would not go along with the compromised version. From all the composites given as to what the nature of "the omega of apostasy" would be like and seek to accomplish, one can recognize in that which took place at the SDA-Evangelical conferences and the results which followed, prophecy fulfilled .

Decades of Conflict & Apostasy 1952 – Present

To even suggest that it would be possible for me to write with a detached objectivity the history of the doctrine of the Incarnation as taught by the Church during this period of time would be to create a credibility gap in the mind of the reader. During the decade prior to 1952, I served as conference evangelist in Georgia and pastor-evangelist of the first church in Toronto, Ontario. During the decade of 1952-1962, my ministry continued in pastoral-evangelism climaxing as head of the Bible and History Department of old Madison College. From then to the present it has been focused in the editorship of WWN. Both in preaching and through writing, I have defended what I believed to be the historic position of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in this area of doctrinal teaching. This manuscript, as first published in 1972, was evidence of the in-depth study that I made to determine this position.

At the time of the first publication of the manuscript – *An Interpretive History of the Doctrine of the Incarnation as Taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church* – most of the principals in the conflict and apostasy were still living, with the exception of Elder M. L. Andreasen, prince of Adventist theologians, who defended to the end the historic position of the Church. Naturally, the original publication of the manuscript on this research involved the actions and writings of people then living. There are those, who, when living personalities are involved, hope and even pray that the research writer will use extreme caution and reserve in interpreting their writings and actions. The gravity of the conflict then and recent revelations now forbid such an approach. This is no minor issue. It was a matter of life and death. The destiny of the Church was at stake. The words spoken in the night season to the messenger of the Lord regarding those who accepted the sentiments found in *The Living Temple* by Kellogg, apply with equal force to those who would accept the sentiments

regarding the nature of Christ's humanity as found in certain publications issued during this time period. How one should relate himself in evaluating this situation was also spelled out by the "voice" in the same night season. Here are the words of counsel:

The sentiments in "Living Temple" regarding the personality of God have been received by men who have had long experience in the truth. When such men consent to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, we are no longer to regard the subject as a matter to be treated with greatest delicacy. That those men we thought sound in the faith should have failed to discern the specious, deadly influence of this science of evil, should alarm us as nothing else has alarmed us (*Special Testimonies, Series B, #7, p. 37*).

The research of this chapter will be presented in harmony with the counsel of the "voice" in the night. It will not be written with "delicacy," but as an alarm sounding in the "holy mountain" of the Lord.

The last half of the 20th century for the Church began with a re-introduction of the 1888 Message. In 1950 the General Conference session elected Elder Wm. H. Branson as president. At the same session two young workers from Africa, R. J. Wieland and D. K. Short, home on furlough, attended the session and became alarmed by what they saw and heard. They approached the leadership of the Church, and voiced their concern. In response, they were asked to write out their convictions. This resulted in the manuscript, *1888 Re-Examined*. It was, however, placed under interdict. While I first heard about this document from Elder Henry F. Brown, of the General Conference Home Missionary Department, when he visited the Toronto First Church in 1950, it took another decade for me to obtain a copy so as to read it for myself. However, there was an immediate effect.

[Note: In 1987, a "revised and updated publication under the same title was released by Wieland and Short. It was altered and "watered-down" compared to the original edition. The original manuscript was preserved in a documentary, *A Warning and Its Reception*, put together and first

published by A. L. Hudson "for the study and guidance of the members of the Executive Committee of the North Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists" ("Preface", p. i) This documentary is today available through the Foundation office.]

Authorized by Annual Conference action, Branson set in motion plans for a Bible Conference in 1952, the purpose of which was to affirm the foundation of the Church's faith and indirectly the message brought to the 1888 General Conference by A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner. Branson made this latter aspect of the Bible Conference very clear in his presentation captioned, "The Lord Our Righteousness." He stated:

To a large degree the church failed to build on the foundation laid at the 1888 General Conference. Much has been lost as a result. We are years behind where we should have been in spiritual growth. Long ere this we should have been in the Promised Land.

But the message of righteousness by faith given in the 1888 Conference has been repeated here. Practically every speaker from the first day onward has laid great stress upon this all-important doctrine, and there was no prearranged plan that he should do so. It was spontaneous on the part of the speakers. ... Truly this one subject has, in this conference, "swallowed up every other."

And this great truth has been given here in this 1952 Bible Conference with far greater power than it was given in the 1888 Conference because those who have spoken here have had the advantage of much added light shining forth from hundreds of pronouncements on this subject in the writings of the Spirit of prophecy, which those who spoke back there did not have.

The light of justification and righteousness by faith shines upon us today more clearly than it ever shone before upon any people. No longer will the question be, "What was the attitude of our workers and people toward the message of righteousness by faith that was given in 1888? What did they do about it?" From now on the great question must be, "What did we do with the light on righteousness by faith as proclaimed in the 1952 Bible Conference?" (*Our Firm Foundation*, Vol. 2, pp. 616-617).

These words of Branson stand as an attempted

answer to the challenge which Wieland and Short placed in their manuscript as presented to the General Conference Committee in 1950.

No speaker at the conference was assigned the subject of the Incarnation. Reference was made to it by Elder H. L. Rudy in his presentation of "The Mediatorial Ministry of Jesus Christ." He declared, speaking of the sacrifice provided by Jesus Christ:

The providing of this sacrifice was possible only at an infinite cost. It included more than just the death on the cross. As the Father's representative He must fulfil all righteousness. Every day of His humiliation in *sinful flesh* was a day of suffering. It was in the days of His flesh that He "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears" (*Our Firm Foundation*, Vol. 2, p. 17; emphasis mine).

In three years (1955), the SDA-Evangelical Conferences would begin resulting in a compromise and denial of basic truth held by the Church in the areas of the Incarnation and the Atonement. It was in 1957 that I first awakened to what had taken place as a result of these conferences. Disturbed by what I was reading in *The Ministry*, I wrote a letter to Elder H. L. Rudy, a vice president of the General Conference and presenter at the 1952 Bible Conference. It stated in part:

In the recent issue of *The Ministry* there are three articles on which I have spent much time. One I have re-read parts of it at least three times. These articles are entitled: - "Adventism's New Milestone," "God With Us," and "The Incarnation and the Son of Man." I also observed that there were at least three verses of Scripture missing in discussing the subject of the nature of Christ in humanity. These three verses I checked, as far as I am able with my library, in the original Greek. Here is what I found on these words in the verses indicated:

Romans 8:3 - "In the likeness of sinful flesh."

"Likeness" - ὁμοιωμα - "Frequently (a resemblance) such as amounts well-nigh to 'equality or identity.'" Example cited was Romans 8:3. Thayer's *Lexicon*, p. 445.

"Flesh" - σαρξ - "when used either expressly or tacitly opposite to the spirit, has an ethical sense and denotes mere human nature, the earthly

nature of man apart from divine influence, and therefore prone to sin, and opposed to God; accordingly it includes whatever in the soul is weak, low, debased, tending to ungodliness and vice." Then the positions of Luther and Melancthon are cited (*ibid.*, p. 571).

Hebrews 2:17 – "in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren."

Hebrews 2:18 – "in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted." . . .

Now I am well aware of the fact that Jesus did not sin, that at no time, and in no wise did He yield to sin. But what did He receive from His mother, Mary, for He was the seed of David according to human descent? In *The Ministry* (April, p. 34) stress is laid on the fact that Jesus was 'the seed of the woman' not of man. Now if, and this is what is disturbing, Jesus did not inherit through Mary on His human side all that we inherit by human nature, then what kind of a nature did Mary have, and how far is this from the Immaculate Conception doctrine of Catholicism? (Letter dated, April 8, 1957).

To this letter I received a reply stating:

I merely want to acknowledge the receipt of your letter now and let you know that we are giving study to it, and it may be that either one of the other brethren or I will be writing to you again regarding the questions you raise. Perhaps you know that we have a group of men here in the General Conference office who are giving much of their time to the study of just such questions as you raise. We do appreciate the fact that our ministers in the field feel free to write us about these things (Letter dated April 12, 1957).

No further word was ever received. In a few months the book, *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine (QonD)* was published.

Prior to this exchange of correspondence, which marked my own awakening, much had transpired that set the stage for the years of turmoil and conflict which has marked the history of the Church in the last half century. In the previous issue of WWN we noted the position taken, and counsel given by F. D. Nichol in his revised edition of *Answers to Objections* (pp. 5-6). The 1952 edition carried a foreword by W. H. Branson which gave a "heartly approval" to the book (p. 24). Yet, in 1953, following the Bible

Conference, Branson's book, *Drama of the Ages*, was published. What he wrote on the incarnation fails to tally with Nichol's statement, nor does Branson heed Nichol's note of counsel. Branson wrote:

It was man's flesh and blood that Jesus partook. He became a member of the human race. He became just like men ...

(Hebrews 2:14-18 ARV quoted)

This, then was real humanity. It was not the nature of angels that He assumed, but that of Abraham. He was "in all things made like unto His brethren." He became one of them. He was subject to temptation; He knew the pangs of suffering, and was not a stranger to man's common woes ...

(Hebrews 4:15 ARV quoted)

In order for Christ to understand the weakness of human nature, He had to experience it. In order for Him to be sympathetic with men in their trials, He also had to be tried. He must suffer hunger, weariness, disappointment, sorrow, and persecution. He must tread the same paths, live under the same circumstances, and die the same death. Therefore He became bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. His incarnation was in actual humanity (pp. 84-85).

A few pages later in discussing the doctrine of the immaculate conception, Branson reasoned:

The Catholic doctrine of the "immaculate conception is that Mary, the mother of our Lord, was preserved from original sin. If this be true, then Jesus did not partake of man's sinful nature. This belief cuts off the lower rungs of the ladder, and leaves man without a Saviour who can be touched with the feelings of men's infirmities, and who can sympathize with them in their temptations and sufferings. By this teaching Jesus is made out to be altogether and wholly divine. Thus the ladder does not reach to earth where men are (pp. 88-89).

From this incident in our church history questions arise in the minds of researcher and reader alike. Why did the president of the General Conference place the endorsement of the Church upon a book that taught differently than he himself believed? Or did he himself not read the manuscript carefully enough to note this difference, and trusted to a man's *position* in the

Church - editor of its official journal - to state the teaching of the Church correctly and in its historical context? Or does this shed further light as to why the doctrine of the Incarnation was not a topic at the 1952 Bible Conference?

Events began in 1955 involving the doctrine of the Incarnation, and which prefaced the SDA-Evangelical Conferences. In the January 1955 issue of *Our Hope*, the editor, Dr. E. Schuyler English, who was also chairman of the Revision Committee for the Scofield Reference Bible, stated in an editorial note that the Seventh-day Adventist Church "disparages the Person and work of Christ." He referred to the Adventist teaching that Christ in His humanity "partook of our sinful, fallen nature." English's position was that Christ's conception in His incarnation was overshadowed by the Holy Spirit so that He did not partake of the fallen sinful nature of other men.

Dr. Leroy E. Froom entered into correspondence with Dr. English and assured him that his position on the incarnation was "precisely what we likewise believe," and that the old Colcord minority view "notes" in *Bible Readings* (See *WWN*, 6(05), pp. 6-7) "contending for an inherent sinful, fallen nature for Christ had years before been expunged of its error" (*Movement of Destiny*, pp. 469-470).

Closely following the exchange with English came the fateful conferences between some of the church leaders in Washington and Barnhouse and Martin. The incident that precipitated these conferences is chronicled by Froom. T. E. Unruh, then president of the East Pennsylvania Conference of the Church, listened to a series of radio broadcasts by Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse on the book of Romans. Unruh wrote to Barnhouse "commending him on the biblical soundness and spiritual helpfulness of his presentations over the airways on Righteousness by Faith" (*ibid.* p.477). Here was fulfilled the warning which had been given to the Church five years previously by the missionary brethren from Africa "that Satan's final effort to deceive and allure us would be an attempt to infatuate us with Babylon's understanding of the 'doctrine' or 'tenet' of 'justification and righteousness by

faith'" (1888 *Re-Examined*, as printed in *A Warning and its Reception*, p. 165).

It is altogether possible that Elder T. E. Unruh did not know about the manuscript which had been written by Elders R. J. Wieland and D. K. Short when he first made contact with Barnhouse. The Defence Literature Committee of the General Conference, chaired by W. E. Read, had declared against this manuscript in 1951. Thus in 1955, it was still under interdict. However, Read was involved in the Barnhouse-Martin conferences and he should have seen the relationship between the warning given and the events transpiring if an honest and in depth evaluation had been given to the manuscript by the committee he chaired. Thus, the Church must share its responsibility in the results which followed a rejection of a clear cut warning. This does not leave Unruh in the clear. He should have known the antinomian sentiments of the Evangelicals, and the counsel of Isaiah 8:20 - "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is *no* light in them." It is impossible for an antinomian to present righteousness by faith in the perspective of Romans 3:31. How then can one commend such presentations, and think of them as the genuine message? How dark becomes one's light when we call darkness light, and light darkness?

During the eighteen conferences that took place between Adventist representatives and Barnhouse, and Martin, with their Evangelical colleagues in 1955-1956, the Adventist teaching on the Incarnation was discussed. The answer the Adventists gave the Evangelicals was revealed in one of their publications. When the subject of Christ's incarnation was introduced, the Adventist conferees assured their counterparts that "the majority of the denomination had always held [the humanity assumed by Christ] to be sinless, holy, perfect despite the fact that certain of their writers have occasionally gotten into print with contrary views completely repugnant to the Church at large. The Adventist representatives explained further to Mr. Martin "that they had among their number certain members of their 'lunatic fringe' even as there are similar wild-eyed irresponsibles

in every field of fundamental Christianity" (*Eternity*, Sept., 1956, p. 6). The impression was left that it was these irresponsible lunatics in the Church who had written that Christ accepted the fallen nature of man when He became the Son of man.

While these conferences were in progress and understandings were being reached for simultaneous publications by the Evangelicals and the Church, the ministry of the Church was being propagandized through *The Ministry* to accept the changes in doctrine which the leadership had already declared to Barnhouse and Martin to be our fundamental position. This included the nature of the humanity which Christ accepted in the Incarnation.

In the September (1956) issue of *The Ministry* eight pages were devoted to quotations from the Writings on "Christ's nature during the Incarnation." One section was captioned - "Took Sinless Nature of Adam Before the Fall." An editorial in the same issue called attention to this compilation, and asked the ministry of the Church "to carefully and prayerfully study these illuminating paragraphs." The editor, and head of the Ministerial Department of the General Conference, R. Allan Anderson, rationalized further on the inspired sources writing:

In only three or four places in all these inspired counsels have we found such expressions as "fallen nature" and "sinful nature." But these are strongly counterbalanced and clearly explained by many other statements that reveal the thought of the writer [Ellen G. White]. Christ did indeed partake of our nature, our *human* nature with all its physical limitations, but not our carnal nature with its lustful corruptions. When He entered the human family it was after the race had been greatly weakened by degeneracy. For thousands of years mankind had been physically deteriorating. Compared with Adam and his immediate posterity, humanity, when God appeared in human flesh, was stunted in stature, longevity, and vitality ("Human, Not Carnal," p. 13).

Included in this editorial was a comment on the statement in *Bible Readings*. Anderson wrote:

Many years ago a statement appeared in *Bible Readings for the Home Circle* (1915, edition)

which declared that Christ came "in sinful flesh." Just how this expression slipped into the book is difficult to know. It has been quoted many times by critics, and all around the world, as being typical of Adventist Christology (*ibid.*, p. 14).

It becomes increasingly clear that the men who espoused the "new" doctrine of the incarnation read into the expression - "fallen, sinful nature" - not only the tendencies to sin, but also the "corruptions" resultant from sinning. Thus they failed to do what the messenger of the Lord, our earlier brethren, and writers of the Sabbath School lessons of past decades did, that is, differentiate between inherited tendencies and cultivated habits to sin. By confusing the issue, they have been able to make the historic teaching of the Church look like error, and thus rob of its power, the original doctrine of truth in regard to the incarnation of Christ. In fact, the clear statements in *The Desire of Ages* are mitigated by the same devious device. Anderson stated:

A hasty reading of two or three statements from *The Desire of Ages* without repeated counterbalancing statements found in so many other places has led some to conclude our official position to be, that Christ, during the incarnation, partook of our corrupt, carnal nature, and therefore was no different from any other human being (*ibid.*, p. 12).

A summary statement from the Writings drew the contrast distinctly. It read - "Jesus was sinless and had no dread of the *consequences of sin*. With this *exception* His condition was as [ours]" (*Our High Calling*, p. 59).

How were the "three or four places" in the inspired Writings that used the terms, "fallen nature" and "sinful nature" in referring to the humanity which the Son of God assumed in the incarnation to be explained? In the April (1957) issue of *The Ministry*, Elder W. E. Read wrote an article on "The Incarnation and the Son of Man." In this article he stated what has become the key word of the "new" theology in regard to the Incarnation. He stated:

Christ was tempted in all points as we are, - This is a wonderful, comforting thought. But let us ever remember that although it is true, it is also true that He was "without sin" (Heb. 4:15). His

being tempted, however, did not contaminate the Son of God. He bore our weaknesses, our temptations, *vicariously*, in the same way He bore our iniquities (p. 26).

In the same issue of *The Ministry*, another editorial appeared from the pen of R. Allan Anderson. In this editorial he commented:

When the incarnate God broke into human history and became one with the race, it is our understanding that He possessed the sinlessness of the nature with which Adam was created in Eden. The environment in which Jesus lived, however, was tragically different from that which Adam knew before the Fall (*ibid.* p. 34).

Thus by 1957, the doctrine in regard to the nature of the humanity that Christ assumed in the incarnation paralleled the teaching of the Holy Flesh men of Indiana as understood by the leadership in Battle Creek from their contacts at camp meetings in Indiana. In 1900 S. N. Haskell, returning from a Camp Meeting in Muncie, Indiana, wrote to Ellen G. White in Australia that "their point of theology" was: "Christ took Adam's nature before he fell; so He took humanity as it was in the garden of Eden, and thus humanity was holy" (Letter dated, Sept. 25, 1900).

R. S. Donnell, president of the Indiana Conference, held, that "Christ's body represented a body redeemed from its fallen spiritual nature, but not from its fallen, or deteriorated physical nature. It was a body redeemed from sin, and with that body Christ clothed His divinity" ("The Nature of Christ and Man," p. 4).

S. S. Davis, founder of the Movement, in answer to a question proposed by I. H. Hankins, successor to Donnell, asking, "Is every child born into the world naturally inclined to evil?" replied, "Yes, unless preserved from the law of heredity in conception by the power of the Holy Ghost" (Letter dated, March 15, 1903 from Elora, Indiana.).

All of these three positions either stated by the men who led the Holy Flesh Movement or attested to by those who came in direct confrontation with the Movement have now been confessed by those who were in contact

with Evangelicals as being the Adventist position. One of these teachings is also positioned as an "alternate" concept to the historic teaching of the Church and is being promoted by certain "independent" ministries stating that Christ came into humanity, "born, born again."

The climax to the conferences between representatives of the Adventist Church and the Evangelicals headed by Barnhouse and Martin was the publication of the book, *Questions on Doctrine*. The book carried an introduction by an unnamed editorial committee which emphasized:

- 1) "The writers, counsellors, and editors who produced the answers to these questions have labored conscientiously to state accurately the beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventists."
- 2) "The answers in this volume are an expansion of doctrinal positions contained in that [1931] official statement of Fundamental Beliefs."
- 3) "This volume can be viewed as truly representative of the faith and beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church" (pp. 8-9).

(To Be Continued)

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To Better Understand the "Religious Right"

Those who are viewing the American scene and sense the fulfilling of the final prophecies concerning "the beast and his image," no doubt wonder at times, just what is taking place. There is a name and different words being used than the ones which were used previously. The overall teaching is called "Christian Reconstructionism." The author of the concepts is the late Rousas John Rushdooney. At the time of his death in 2001, the *Daily Oklahoman* eulogized him as "a man of rare grace ... a scholar with a pastor's heart ... (whose) care extended to not only fellow protestants, but also to Catholic friends influenced by his integrity" (March 10, 2001).

In 1973, Rushdooney published his magnum opus, a 800-page tome patterned after Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* and titled, *The Institutes of Biblical Law*. He is an adamant opponent of the First Amendment to the Constitution. In his *Institutes* he gives an indication why he believes that the American system of a pluralistic democracy is heresy. He wrote - "In the name of toleration, the believer is asked to associate on a common level with the atheist, the pervert, the criminal, and the adherents of other religions" (p. 294).

If Rushdooney and his disciples had their way, democracy would be abolished and a Christian theocracy would be established. He wrote, "The only true order is founded on Biblical Law. All law is religious in nature, and every non-Biblical law-order represents an anti-Christian religion" (p. 113). He also made it clear that he expects that force will be necessary to impose such an order, "Every law-order is in a state of war against the enemies of that order, and all law is a form of warfare" (93).

At its root, Reconstructionism is a militant Biblicism. In many ways, it is a revival of the holy war theology of the Hebrew Bible under the guise of Christianity. The chief difference is that Reconstructionists believe they have a mandate to claim more than the land of Palestine, they believe they are commanded to conquer the entire world and exercise "dominion" over all its peoples. That is why Reconstructionism is also known as "dominion theology."...

The laws that Reconstructionists want to enforce are those of ancient Israel... . Stripped to its barest essentials, here is their blueprint for America. Their ultimate goal is to make the U.S. Constitution conform to a strict, literal interpretation of Biblical law. To do this requires a series of legal and social reforms that will move society toward their goal, among these is "to make the ten commandments the law of the land" as well as "require capital punishment for all of ancient Israel's capital offences including apostasy,... Sabbath-breaking, sodomy, and witchcraft." (Excerpts from a presentation by Dr. Bruce Prescott at an Interfaith Alliance forum on Religious Extremism, April 11, 2002)