



*"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 IMMINENCE OF THE END

## PUC Professor Calls for Its De-emphasis

The Campus Chronicle, student paper of Pacific Union College published an article by Dr. Terrence Trivett of the Biology Department on "The Second Coming." (Jan. 28, 1982) A subtitle asked - "Does imminence influence our behaviour?" In the article, Dr Trivett suggested - "that our continuing emphasis upon the imminent return of Jesus may be unwise, for it has the potential to ultimately threaten confidence in the promise of the Second Coming itself." He then listed three reasons why we might consider a de-emphasis of imminence:

- 1) "It is not clearly taught by the weight of Scripture."
- 2) "It undermines a philosophy of responsible Christian living."
- 3) "It threatens our credibility."

### The Weight of Scripture

As Jesus departed from the Temple precincts never more to return, the disciples showed Him "the building of the temple." To this He responded - "See ye not all of these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." (Matt. 24:1-2) Shocked and amazed, silence reigned among the twelve as they pondered what these words might mean. Finally, when resting in their spot of retirement on the Mount of Olives, four of

the disciples ventured to ask Jesus about the when and wherefores of His statement. "Tell us," they said, "when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and the end of the world." (24:3) To the disciples the Temple was the center of their religion - their hopes and aspirations were intertwined with its future. Its destruction, in their thinking, could only herald the end of the world. Jesus in His answer did not seek to clarify their thinking, but gave three major events as signs by which His followers might know where they were in the stream of time.

After stating general conditions that were to mark the balance of human history - "nation shall rise against nation" - "there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes" - Jesus directed them to a study of "Daniel the prophet." (Matt. 24: 7, 15) When the abomination of desolation should stand in the holy place - or as interpreted by Luke - "when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed by armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." (Luke 21:20) Here was the first major sign that should mark an imminent event, the destruction of the city and the temple. In the light of this, those who saw and recognized this sign were to "flee to the mountains." (21:21) Responsible Christian living at that point was to obey the command of Jesus and not involve themselves in social reforms or welfare programs.

Completing the outline of His prophecy, Jesus gave a parable of the fig tree concerning imminence and stated - "Verily,

I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away but my word shall not pass away." (Matt. 24:32-35) From this first major event in Jesus' prophecy, and the lesson of the fig tree, we can find a principle of interpretation and understanding in regard to the other two major signs Jesus gave.

In fulfillment of the words of Jesus, Roman armies - the forces of "the abomination of desolation" - under Cestius besieged the city of Jerusalem in AD 66. Here was the sign, but how were the Christians to flee? Josephus tells us that Cestius "retired from the city, without any reason in the world." (Wars of the Jews, bk II, chapt. xix) Opportunity was created for all who believed the prophecy of Jesus to flee the city. In a few short years - AD 70 - the Romans returned under Titus, conquered the city, and destroyed the temple. The generation which saw the first major sign, saw also its fulfillment. The fulfilled sign marked the imminence of what it foreshadowed.

#### "After the Tribulation of Those Days"

Following the fulfillment of the first major sign - the destruction of Jerusalem and its citizens "led captive into all nations" (Luke 21:24a) - Jesus declared there would be a period of tribulation "such as was not from the beginning of creation" to that time. (Mk. 13:19) Again the disciples' attention was directed to the book of Daniel where the prophecies describe the "little horn" of Chapter 7 making "war with the saints." The period of time - the tribulation of those days - is given as "a time and times, and a dividing of time" or 1260 prophetic days, which extended from 538 to 1798 AD. (Dan. 7:21, 25) Jesus declared that unless these days of persecution should be shortened, the elect would perish from the earth. (Mark 13:20) "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light." (ver. 24) Following the cessation of the terrible persecutions marked by "holy wars," the Inquisition, and the massacres of those who refused to bow in allegiance to Rome, but within the time period of Daniel, the Great Dark Day occurred on May 19, 1780.<sup>1</sup> This was to be followed by the falling of

the stars (Matt. 24:29) The great meteoric display of Nov. 13, 1833, marked the fulfillment of this prophecy of Jesus.<sup>2</sup>

To what do these major signs point? In all the synoptic Gospels, the verses following the enumeration of these signs in the heavens indicate "the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" for the express objective of gathering together "His elect" from all parts of the earth. (Mark 13:26-27; Matt. 24:30-31; Luke 21:27) However, a careful study of the prophet Daniel to whom Jesus referred the disciples, indicates another coming of "the Son of man" which prepares for the gathering together of the "elect." The Son of man is brought before the Ancient of Days in a judgment through which He receives a kingdom and by which vindication is obtained for the "saints of the most High." (Dan. 7:9-10; 13-14, 22) Thus these major signs point to the hour of God's judgment and the justification of the saints who by earthly powers had been accounted as enemies of established religion. This judgment began in 1844 in accordance with the prophecy of Daniel 8:14. Commenting on this period of time, the messenger of the Lord wrote:

While wholly unconscious of their condition and their peril, the church and the world were rapidly approaching the most solemn and momentous period of earth's history, - the period of the revelation of the Son of man. Already had the signs which Christ Himself had promised, - the sun clothed in darkness by day and the moon by night, - declared His coming near. (Spirit of Prophecy, IV, p. 195)<sup>3</sup>

Again, the generation that saw the specific signs - the sun darkened, and the falling of the stars - did not pass until the period to which they pointed, commenced.

#### A Period of Waiting

In connection with the answer Jesus gave to the disciples on the Mount of Olives, He spoke some parables and gave some illustrations. He told of the evil servant who would say - "My lord delayeth his coming." (Matt. 24:48) He told of the Ten Virgins, who "while the bridegroom tarried" slumbered and slept. (Matt. 25:5) He spoke of the man who traveling in a far country gave his goods to the charge of his servants. "After a long time the lord of

those servants" returned and asked for an accounting. (Matt. 25:19) The delay indicated in these verses has been experienced by the people who in response to the prophecy of Daniel 8:14, proclaimed the Judgment as having commenced in 1844. The fact that we are now 137 years removed from the beginning date, and the Judge has not given "judgment" to the saints nor have they received the expected kingdom, has produced tensions, schisms, and frustration within the body called into existence for the specific purpose of proclaiming the message - "The hour of His judgment is come." (Rev. 14:6-7)

There can be no doubt but that the credibility of the message is at stake as suggested by the PUC professor. However, is this a justifiable reason to abandon the imminence of the return of our Lord? It would be if the two major sign periods were all that Jesus gave. But He gave a third sign which marks the end.

#### The Final Sign Marks the Imminent Return of Our Lord

As Jesus was talking about the destruction which was to bring "wrath upon this people" - the Jewish people - His eye swept the future, and He declared - "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke 21:24b) As an event marked the close of probation for the Jewish nation - the stoning of Stephen - and heralded the coming wrath on the nation, just so an event connected with the same people would mark the close of His dealings with the Gentiles thus heralding His wrath upon all nations. The second event occurred in 1967, when the victorious Israeli armies once more took possession of the old city of Jerusalem."

The fulfillment of this prophecy leaves only one thing left. That is, for Heaven to bring a cessation of human history as we know it so that "the kingdoms of this world. . . become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ." (Rev. 11:15) We live today in the very imminence of that great transitional event when time shall give way to eternity. The end of all things is at hand. Responsible Christians living now - even as in the days of the first fulfilled sign - are to recognize fulfilled prophecy and act accordingly. Even as the generation which saw the first sign -

Jerusalem surrounded with armies - did not pass till the event foretold came to pass; and even as the generation who saw the sun darkened and the stars fall did not pass away till the period, which these signs in the heavens signaled, commenced; so likewise, we who are living in the full light of the final sign which Jesus gave - this generation shall not pass till all be fulfilled. Jesus indicated that heaven and earth could pass away, but His words would not pass away but would be fulfilled. Instead then of a de-emphasis, the hour to which we have come calls for a sharp emphasis of the imminence of the end!

#### A Brief Period of Time

The angel Gabriel told Daniel that "seventy weeks are determined upon thy people." (Dan. 9:24) This terminated in AD 34 when the blood of the first Christian martyr was shed by the Jewish hierarchy. (Acts 7:59-60; 8:1-4) But prior to this event, Jesus had declared to the Jews - "Behold your house is left unto you desolate." (Matt. 23:38) [It was this statement that set in motion the exchange between Jesus and His disciples which culminated in the giving of His great prophecy of the three major sign-events.] At the time of Jesus' death on the cross, the inner veil of the temple was rent signifying the end of the typical services, and the beginning of the heavenly mediation for the Sacrifice had been provided. Still, the Temple and the city of Jerusalem continued for another 36 years beyond the cut-off date of 34 AD. During this time the individual Jews were able to make a decision - would they ratify the decisions of the hierarchy in regard to the "Son of man," or would they repudiate that decision, and thus free themselves of the corporate guilt of the nation when judgment and wrath would fall upon it in AD 70? This was the message of the Holy Spirit through Peter on the Day of Pentecost. (Acts 2:22-23, 36)

Likewise, there is in this final sign of Jesus as recorded by Luke, a brief period of time. Luke uses the word, akri(s) (until) twenty times in his Gosepl, and in Acts. But in three different places, he combines this word with the relative, hou. One of these three references is the text - Luke 21:24. By noting its use in the other two places where Luke used the hou

with akri, we can see its significance in Luke 24. The first other use reads:

But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, until (akri hou) another king arose, which knew not Joseph. (Acts 7:17-18)

The genocide tactics against the Hebrew people did not begin upon the immediate ascension of the new king, as is evident from the record in Exodus. A brief period of time elapsed.

The final use by Luke reads:

And while (akri hou) the day was coming on, Paul besought them to take meat. (Acts 27:33)

It is obvious that the expression as used by Luke covered that brief but definable period between the first glimmer of light on the eastern horizon and the full light of day when the sun rises.

By applying the same force to the expression - akri hou - in Luke 21:24, we find that the fulfillment of "the times of the Gentiles" covers a short but definable period of time. The event which marked the beginning of this brief space is given by Jesus Himself - Jerusalem once more under Jewish control. That was in 1967. But how are we to locate the end of this period? I submit for your consideration the following facts of history and prophecy:

1) The power that shall figure largely in influencing the nations of earth to worship the beast which persecuted the people of God during the long period of tribulation foretold by Jesus is symbolized in "the revelation of Jesus Christ" - which but enlarges His prophetic outline - by the second beast of Revelation 13.

2) This power we have recognized to be Protestant America. While this power soon after the "healing of the deadly wound" in 1929, did make approaches toward Rome in the Roosevelt administration by the appointment of a personal envoy to the Vatican in 1937, it was not until 1979 that the handclasp was sealed between a Protestant President and the reigning Pontiff - and that in the White House, the symbolic home of the American people.

Following this national apostasy, America

suffered at the hands of Iran its most humiliating defeat in its history. Other events in the history of the Church to whom was committed the final message to the nations of earth confirm the dates of 1967 & 1979 for the period of the akris hou of Luke 21:24. In the words of the Lord to Ezekiel -

Evil on evil! says the Lord the Eternal - it is coming, the hour has come, the hour is striking, striking at you, the hour and the end! (Eze. 7:5-6, Moffatt)

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<sup>1</sup> "The Dark Day, May 19, 1780 - so called on account of a remarkable darkness on that day extending over all New England. In some places, persons could not see to read common print in the open air for several hours together. Birds sang their evening songs, disappeared, and became silent; fowls went to roost; cattle sought the barnyard; and candles were lighted in the houses. The obscuration began about ten o'clock in the morning, and continued till the middle of the next night, but with differences of degree and duration in different places. For several days previous, the wind had been variable, but chiefly from the southwest and the northeast. The true cause of this remarkable phenomenon is not known." (Noah Webster's Dictionary, 1869 edition; quoted in Source Book For Bible Students, 1922 edition, p. 133) To this key summary statement can be added many more testimonies of verification from diaries, newspapers, and even the poem, "Abraham Davenport" by John Greenleaf Whittier testifies to the event.

<sup>2</sup> "On the night of November 12-13, a tempest of falling stars broke over the earth. North America bore the brunt of its pelting. From the Gulf of Mexico to Halifax, until daylight with some difficulty put an end to the display, the sky was scored in every direction with shining tracks and illuminated with majestic fireballs." (History of Astronomy in the Nineteenth Century, p. 328; Quoted in Source Book, (op. cit., p. 176) See also pp. 175-181 for quotes from numerous authorities.

<sup>3</sup> "The period of the revelation of the Son of man." It is interesting to observe that the book of Daniel - the book to which Jesus referred the disciples as they sought meaning to the signs He delineated

- speaks of Jesus coming in judgment before the Ancient of Days, as "the Son of man." (Dan. 7:13) This appellation, as given in Daniel and to Ezekiel (3:17), was used by Christ to refer to Himself. (Matt. 16:13) To Him as the "Son of man" all judgment is committed into His hands. (John 5:22, 27) Thus at the beginning of this period the revelation of the Son of man is as One involved in the judgment before the Ancient of Days.

The signs of which Christ spoke marking the approach to this period are noted in Isaiah (13:9-12) as the signs that will mark the time when the Lord "will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir." Paul speaks of a time when there will be "the manifestation of the sons of God" - those "to be conformed to the image of His Son." (Rom. 8:19, 29-30) The image of Jesus is to be perfectly revealed in a group of people resultant from the final atonement performed by the Son of man as High Priest forever after the Order of Melchizedec.

The final revelation of this period of the Son of man is His coming in the clouds of heaven where every eye shall see Him to gather together His elect. (Matt. 24:30-31)

Our spiritual forefathers caught the vision of the significance of this ministry of the Son of man in the heavenly sanctuary at the beginning of the period. It is ours to perceive and grasp its meaning now at the end-time of that same period. Its imminence must be our emphasis!

"When the British withdrew from Palestine in 1948, and the Jews and Arabs fought for control of the state, the Jews managed to hold West Jerusalem and proclaimed it the capital of the new state of Israel.

"Yet, tantalizing, the Western Wall remained just beyond reach. [The Western Wall is a fragment of the western rampart of a platform on which the first Temple of Solomon and the second Temple of Herod stood.] Jordan annexed East Jerusalem as well as the West Bank of the River Jordan, a territory that surrounds the city on three sides. For 19 years, a no-man's-land separated the two sectors, and the Jordanians refused to allow the Jews to worship at the West Wall.

"When war came in 1967, Israel urged Jor-

dan's King Hussein to stay out of it, promising in return not to attack Jordan. But egged on by Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser and other Arabs, Hussein sent artillery shells crashing into West Jerusalem. Israeli soldiers counterattacked, and poured into the Walled City. Their religious fervor was such that many headed directly for the Western Wall, where they paused to pray. For the first time in 19 centuries, the wall was under Jewish control. In annexing East Jerusalem, the Israelis gave its Palestinian Arab inhabitants no say in the matter." (The Readers Digest, March, 1975, p. 132).

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[For further study of the subject - "The Times of the Gentiles" see Christ of the Revelation, by Dr. J. R. Zurcher, pp. 71-72. (Published by SPA); and The Times of the Gentiles Fulfilled, a monograph published by the Adventist Laymen's Foundation.

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## UNBELIEVABLE

A brother in Ohio wrote to the Editor of the Adventist Review requesting that the article by O. R. L. Crosier - "The Sanctuary" - be reprinted once again in the official Church organ. He enclosed a copy of the Crosier article. To this request, he received the following reply:

Dear Brother Zaharie:

Thank you for your interest in publishing the Crosier article in the REVIEW. Elder Wood appreciated hearing from you and wishes me to reply for him.

We are sorry to tell you that we do not plan to republish this article. The truth of the matter is that neither we nor Ellen White endorsed everything in this article, even though she recommended some concepts that it presented. We have in the past and shall in the future publish some articles giving the truth on the sanctuary question that will include the valid points made in the Crosier articles.

(This letter was dated, April 23, 1982, and signed by Elder Eugene F. Durand, Assistant to the Editor.)

Now what did Ellen G. White say about the Crosier article as it appeared in the Day-Star, Extra, February 7, 1846:

I believe the Sanctuary, to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days, is the New Jerusalem Temple, of which Christ is a minister. The Lord shew me in vision, more than one year ago, that Brother Crosier had the true light, on the cleansing of the Sanctuary, &c; and that it was His will, that Brother C. should write out the view which he gave us in the Day-Star, Extra, February 7, 1846. I feel fully authorized by the Lord, to recommend that Extra, to every saint. (A Word to the "Little Flock", p. 12)

The key sentence from this statement is - "Brother Crosier had the true light, on the cleansing of the Sanctuary, &c." It is readily admitted that the article in Day-Star, Extra, covered more than just the cleansing of the Sanctuary. It presented the ministry of both apartments of the sanctuary, and related the work of Christ to this ministry.

A careful observation of Ellen G. White's use of "&c" indicates that she covered the whole article as revealing "the true light." In the Universal Dictionary of the English Language, Vol. II, article, "et caetera" (1902 Edition), which is abbreviated as either "etc." or "&c.," the first meaning is "and the rest." While the use of language would indicate the emphasis was on the cleansing of the Sanctuary in the mind of Ellen G. White, it did not exclude the endorsement of the whole article, but rather included it.

In September, 1850, a 48-page Special edition of The Advent Review was published, and among the articles was the one by Crosier on "The Sanctuary." Into the copies of this edition still remaining in 1853, Elder James White tipped a leaf in which he commented - "The article on The Sanctuary, by O. R. L. Crosier, is excellent. The subject of the Sanctuary should be carefully examined, as it lies at the foundation of our faith and hope."

The present REVIEW editor refuses to reprint what its first editor did! That is, if we understand the use of the word, "we" by Elder Durand to include himself and Elder Kenneth Wood. However, if Elder Durand was using "we" in a collective

sense to include the thinking of the hierarchy of the Church since the Adventist Review is the official organ and voice of the Church, the scope of the refusal to reprint the Crosier article takes on much larger dimensions.

This wider aspect dare not be overlooked. The latest "Friendship Issue" of the Adventist Review has a page (11) devoted to "People who believe that. . ." followed by 14 points of faith to which a Seventh-day Adventist subscribes. One looks in vain for a single sentence in regard to the sanctuary, or the high priestly ministry of Christ. The statement is so worded that it is possible that Dr. Desmond Ford could subscribe to it. Is the sanctuary no longer one of the key doctrines of the Church? Is this why Dr Ford has not been disfellowshipped even though he has publicly denied the sanctuary teaching of the Church?

Do we have anything better to look forward to in the change of command in the editorial staff of the REVIEW? Durand suggests in his letter to Brother Zaharie that in the future "some articles giving the truth on the sanctuary question" will be published. But the evidence indicates that the new "editor elect," Dr. Wm. G. Johnson, has no more appreciation of the historic Adventist teaching on the Sanctuary than Dr. Ford. (See previous WWN, "Postscript II") When the Sanctuary truth is jettisoned as it was believed and understood by our spiritual forefathers, what is left of the Church?

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## TO KEEP THE RECORD STRAIGHT

With reports of religious freedom in Russia by Billy Graham and other church leaders, plus glowing reports of Adventist membership growth in Russia (Adventist Review, May 27, 1982, p. 15), one would be apt to conclude that continued request for support of the True and Free Seventh-day Adventists in Russia through prayer and petition is no longer needful. To place the whole picture in its true perspective, we shall recall for your thinking what appeared in La Sierra Today in 1979:

The actual schism in the Russian church

didn't take place until the meeting of the Fifth All-Union Congress on the Seventh-day Adventists, in 1924. The leaders of the main Russian Adventist church felt that, in order to bring others to salvation, Adventists must learn to integrate themselves into Soviet society. They issued a statement expressing their full support of the new government:

"We are convinced that God, in His providence, has disposed the heart of our unforgettable V. I. Lenin and his closest associates and given them wisdom in the capable organization of the only progressive government in the world. We delegates of the Fifth All-Union Congress of Seventh-day Adventists express to the government of the USSR. . . our gratitude and sincere support for all the freedoms it has won."

A separate group, led by G. Ostvald, took a position diametrically opposed to that of the organized church. They refused to accept what they called enforced state atheism, refused to register their congregations as required by Soviet law, and exist to this day illegally. The Reformed Adventists prohibited their children from joining state youth organizations such as the Young Communists, and refused military service. They absolutely would not work or attend school on Saturday. Both are required in the Soviet Union. (1979, Winter Issue)

Vladimir Shelkov who had been a Bible Worker for the regular church defected with Ostvald, and finally in 1949 became the Chairman of the True and Free Seventh-day Adventists in Russia. His death in a Russian prison camp in 1980 projected the youthful Rostislav Galetsky into the spot light as the probable successor to Shelkov. However, in July, 1980, Galetsky was arrested. Now a world campaign has been launched for this youthful man of God. The Adventist Laymen's Foundation has joined in this campaign.

We have received a request from an organization based in England for 1500 of our petitions for Elder Galetsky's release. The response of our readers have not come near than amount. We would like to urge

and to challenge our readers to match what these non-Adventist friends are doing in behalf of Elder Galetsky. Write today to the Foundation for information if you have not already done so.

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## NEW STAFF MEMBERS

The middle of May brought two new families to the Campus. Brother Larry Highsmith comes to assume the responsibility of Manager of Educational Projects for the Foundation. His experience and education equips him well for this work. He will supervise the elementary school program, plan for seminars, and supervise the production of study materials for concerned laymen who are meeting in homes searching for truth and light. He will also join me in answering the ever increasing volume of correspondence - so many of you will be hearing from him. His wife, Frances, a registered nurse, will join him in the letter writing. It seems like a renewal of old times, as Frances was in my Bible classes at Old Madison College.

Brother Harold Smith, and his wife Debra, also joined the campus program the middle of May. Brother Smith will assume the responsibility of the Agricultural program, while his wife will assist in stenographic needs. Young Todd joins his parents here, while Jason and Stephanie round out the Highsmith family. Already the boys are busy in work (and play) activities including the garden.

At the forthcoming Adventist Laymen's Annual Fellowship, you will be hearing from both of these brothers. This will be just one more reason why you should plan to attend.

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**Canadian Readers** - You may write direct to the Adventist Laymen's Foundation of Ontario, P. O. Box 117, Thorne, Ont. POH 2J0. If requests cannot be answered there, your letters will be forwarded to us here in the States. For the present all orders of tapes and publications must be in US currency and sent to the Lamar address.

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