

"Watchman, what of the night?"

"The hour has come, the hour is striking, and striking at you,
the hour and the end!"

Exe. 7:6 (Moffatt)

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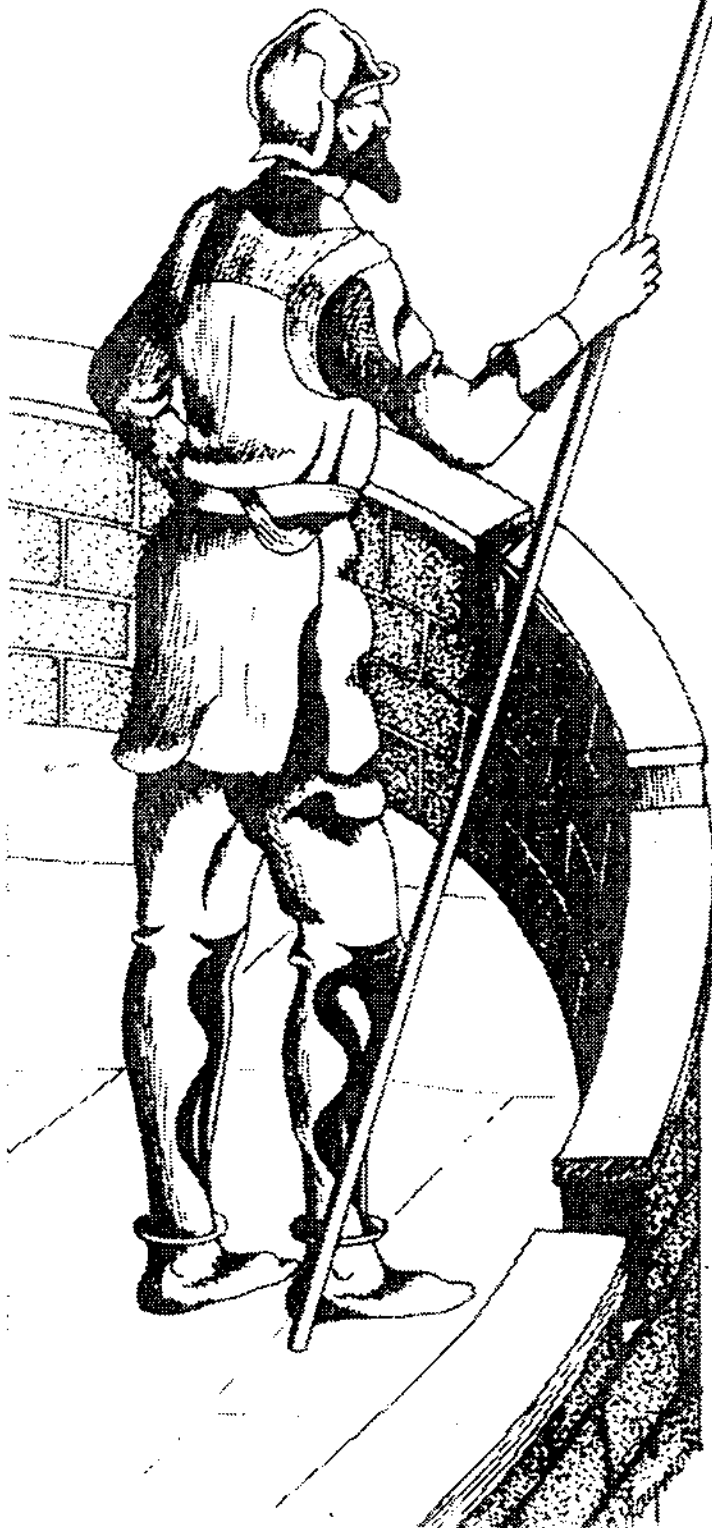
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Editor's Preface

In this issue we conclude our analysis of the book by Dr. George Knight, *A Search for Identity*. (I presume some of our readers will say when reading this last sentence, "It's about time") In retrospect, we again review some of the theological tension from 1950 to the present for two reasons: 1) Knight reviews the theological tension in Adventism during this period from a view point that serves as a justification for the status quo; while we who have lived through this tension from its very beginning see the same history from an entirely different viewpoint. 2) There are those who profess to be voices in "historic" Adventism who ignore the beginnings of the crisis in the SDA-Evangelical Conferences and begin their recitation with Dr. Desmond Ford's attack on the Sanctuary teaching in 1979. These seem not to understand that Ford was "merely a chicken come home to roost," and that he would have had no impact on Adventism had the compromises of 1955-1956 not occurred.

The positions some of these "voices" project in their attack on Ford's teaching resonates a finality which fails to consider that "the truth is an advancing truth, and we must walk in the increasing light." Each one of us would do well to ponder and apply the parting counsel John Robinson gave to the separatists as they embarked from Holland for the New World. (See page 4) It is inexcusable to take the position "that all of our positions of Scripture are without error. The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people, is not proof that our ideas are infallible. Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation." Every gem of truth will shine more brightly with even a little polishing.



In Retrospect

From the first issue of this year to the July issue of WWN we have critiqued the book by Dr. George R. Knight, *A Search for Identity*. In his final brief chapter asking, "What Does All This Mean?" he indicates that he "has presented the history of Adventist theology as a progressive search for identity" (p. 198). There is no question that Adventist theology has not been static during its history; however, to claim that there has been a progressive advance in truth to the present Statement of Fundamental Beliefs is open to serious question. There may be what appears to be an advanced understanding of truth, when it is only an advance after one has veered from the truth. Thus it would be apostasy.

Two historians could write the history of Adventist theology from 1950 to the present and arrive at two different conclusions: 1) That the Church followed increasing light which was brought to it through Evangelical contacts; or 2) That the Church by its compromises with the Evangelicals apostatized from the truth. Knight, after admitting to the lies told the Evangelical conferees (p. 165) as well as the deception in the publication of the book, *Questions on Doctrine* (p. 169), still opted for conclusion Number 1. Progression in truth is not paved with an asphalt of lies and deception.

Knight suggests, following the lead of another church researcher, that truth has more than one side. I may not understand all truth, but I dare not place myself in a position that what I don't understand is another side of truth. Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, and I have never found any record of Him talking out of both sides of His mouth. His gospel is: white is white; and black is black, and there are no gray areas. He went to the cross because there could be no compromise of truth. Those who overcome by the blood of the Lamb will likewise bear an uncompromising testimony, and love "not their lives unto the death" (Rev. 12:11).

Let us illustrate: Through the various periods into which Knight chose to divide Adventist theological history, the question of what nature Christ took upon Himself in entering humanity was an issue. It was held by some that He took the nature of Adam before the Fall, and by many that he took the nature of Adam after the Fall. These positions are not two facets of the same truth. They are poles apart! The compro-

mise position of the Anglican divine, Henry Melvill, which was declared to be "the orthodox" position is in "the gray area." This is the current position of the Church. (See *Seventh-day Adventists Believe...* pp. 47, 57) It is true that I do not know *how* God could become man, but I accept the Biblical pronouncement that "the Word was made flesh" (John 1:14) Neither can I explain fully the fact that He who was "made...to be sin for us" did no sin; but I accept the Biblical record that He who came "in the likeness of sinful flesh,...condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3).

During the decade prior to the 1952 Bible Conference, there is evidence of a change toward a concept of the incarnation which differed from that which was formulated in the Statements of Belief from 1872 to 1914. The first statement in 1872 declared Christ "took on Him the nature of Abraham for the redemption of the fallen race" (II). This concept was in all published statements till 1914. The next statement, placed in the 1931 *Yearbook*, read - "While retaining His divine nature, He took upon Himself the nature of the human family." In 1949, the standard Adventist work, *Bible Readings for the Home Circle* was altered and no longer reflected the original teaching on the Incarnation. In 1952 a book by the editor of the *Review & Herald*, official organ of the Church, expressed Adventist belief of the Incarnation similar to the Melvill position which was cited in 1988 in *Seventh-day Adventists Believe...* as the "orthodox" position. (See F. D. Nichol, *Answers to Objections*, p. 393. The editor was also a member of the planning committee of the 1952 Bible Conference which excluded any presentation of the doctrine)

The doctrine of the Atonement which was completely compromised by the Adventist conferees at the 1955-1956 SDA-Evangelical Conference was discussed at the 1952 Bible Conference. H. L. Rudy, a vice president of the General Conference was assigned the topic, "The Mediatorial Ministry of Jesus Christ." He plainly stated: -

The message concerning the mediatorial ministry of Christ is God's answer to the apostasy of the last days. It is the heart of Christianity. It is to keep and inspire God's people in the great and final conflict between truth and error, righteousness and sin. (Our Firm Foundation, II, p. 11).

If this concept had motivated the Adventist conferees three years later, what a different history could have been written. But it wasn't. Instead of seeing it as an answer to apostasy, and as "the heart of Christianity,"

it was rejected, and the apostate position adopted.

Rudy continued:

The cross cannot be separated from the life and teaching that preceded it and of which it was the crown. Neither can the cross be separated from his subsequent ministry at the right hand of God in the temple in heaven. (p. 23)

At the beginning of the investigative judgment in 1844, Christ was seen to enter into a new phase of His mediatorial ministry. ... Christ entered the most holy to perform the work of atonement. ... Now, another portion of His mediatorial work had to be taken up, this time in the most holy. (p. 65)

There is no way that one can relate the position of the Church as voiced by Elder Rudy at the 1952 Bible Conference, and the stance taken in the book, *Questions on Doctrine* as evidence of the dynamic character of present truth. Compare the above statements by Elder Rudy with the statements found in *Questions on Doctrine* as noted in the previous issue of WWN, p. 5, col. 1. The compromised position, as published in the book, is apostasy pure and simple. It was forced on the Church, and nothing, and no one, was allowed to stand in its way.

This is not saying that in regard to the teachings on the atonement, both the sacrificial atonement on the Cross, and the final atonement in the Heavenly Sanctuary, there are not lessons still to learn as well as many, many, to unlearn. This approach was not taken at the Bible Conference of 1952 as it should have been; however, a claim is made by Froom that during the years from 1930 to 1935, "a group of leaders at the General Conference headquarters" began Sabbath afternoon meetings "for intimate Bible study followed by informal round-table exchange." While no minutes were kept, "copious notes...were taken by some individuals" (*Movement of Destiny*, p. 429). It was "a search for identity" left unnoted by Knight. The question remains, what did these studies focus on, and what influence did they exert? Were these informal studies related to the altering of the Incarnation teaching in the 1940s? Evidently little study was done in the area of the atonement and the vulnerability of the Adventist understanding was revealed in the confrontation with the Evangelicals.

When T. E. Unruh, who chaired the SDA-Evangelical Conferences, became president of the Indiana Confer-

ence where I was doing evangelism, it was inevitable that there would be a confrontation. There was. At the first campmeeting after his assumption of the presidency, the primary guest speaker was R. Allan Anderson. The controversy raised by Anderson resulted in a called meeting of all the workers to discuss the questions raised. This session followed an evening meeting and lasted till 1 a.m. The last text that Anderson threw at me was Hebrews 9:11-12: Jesus "entered in once into the holy place having obtained eternal redemption for us" (KJV). If language means anything, this verse in the KJV is saying that prior to Christ's entry into the High Priesthood of the order of Melchisedec, He obtained "eternal redemption for us." Thus the atonement would be completed on the cross. However, the ARV reads - "He entered once for all into the Holy Place...*thus securing* an eternal redemption." There is a difference, and this difference is supported by the Greek text, but that I had not studied in reference to this verse. At this point Unruh closed the session, even though Anderson protested that he was willing to go all night if necessary.

Some interesting sidelights later surfaced. The minister who sat directly behind me at the night session had opened to the verses in Hebrews in the ARV which he was using. He remained quiet, saying not a word, and did not pass up to me his Bible so that I could use it. Later he was elevated to a Union presidency. A few years after, I met R. Allan Anderson in the book store at Loma Linda. We visited briefly, and he told me that this text - Heb. 9:11-12 - was the text thrown at the Adventist conferees by the Evangelicals which caused their capitulation. As in my case at the night session, the Adventist conferees had not done their home work as they ought to have. I did not rest until I found the answer for the difference between the KJV and ARV, which in these verses, the Greek text gives support to the ARV.

Are there still "many lessons to learn" as well as "many, many to unlearn"? The answer is yes. Consider the concept of the judgment before the Ancient of days (Dan. 7:9-10). Standard perception of this judgment has pictured Jesus as High Priest standing now for over one hundred and fifty years before the heavenly Ark of the Covenant in an investigation of the records to see who will make up His kingdom. Further our perception has been circumscribed by the size of the type of the earthly most holy place - a ten cubit cube. The revelation in this vision given to Daniel has a Heavenly Most Holy Place large enough to accommodate the Angelic host. Read those verses again. Does this lesson to which we must re-adjust

our thinking, negate a judgment before the Ancient of days in 1844? No!

The typical ministry in the earthly sanctuary, which served "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things" (Heb. 8:5), clearly indicates a movement on the part of the High Priest from the most holy to the court itself where the atonement is completed (see Lev. 16). The prophecy in Daniel indicates that "the Son of man" (7:13) is not brought before the Ancient of days to receive His kingdom until certain "great words" are spoken by the "little horn" (v. 11). Have we factored this into our understanding of the sanctuary truth? No, not to my knowledge. To do so, would it destroy that truth? Absolutely not. It would broaden our perception. True it would cause some serious study, some unlearning, yes; but also some in-depth learning.

The prophetic portrayal in Daniel 7 is the Ancient of days sitting on a "throne of judgment" - "the judgment was set." In the book of Hebrews, Christ as High Priest is pictured as ministering at "the throne of grace" (4:14-16). He is also stated to have been seated "on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (1:3). To change ministration from a "throne of grace" to a "throne of judgment" requires a movement, and this is pictured in both Daniel (7:9) and Revelation. In Revelation, the scene of the Throne moves from the symbolism found in the first apartment of the earthly type (4:2,5), to the symbolism found in the second apartment (11:19;15:5, 8). In this movement, we can read the changing objectives of God as the problem of sin is being resolved. While the authority of God was firmly established by the Cross (Rev. 12:10), the original design of God in the creation of man was not realized, except in Him who stabilized the Throne of the Universe (Eph. 1:18-20; 2:4-6). But it will be realized! This divine objective has not been factored into our concepts of the "investigative judgment" and will not be until we are willing to rethink our understanding of Daniel 7:9-10. We still have things to learn and many, many to unlearn.

There is a sector of the community of Adventism who perceive of themselves as "historic" Adventists. These have put a "period" to their theological thinking. While this sector profess great reverence for the Writings, they refuse to heed the counsel given, which clearly advised - "The truth is an advancing truth, and we must walk in the increasing light" (*R&H*, March 25, 1890) But to heed this counsel, they could no longer call themselves, "historic" Adventists. They

would have to reveal what they have learned, and the many, many things they have unlearned. This they cannot do because they have not taken a single step forward "in the increasing light" which has come from the study of God's word.

These "historic" Adventists would do well to note another time in Protestant history when the Puritans were "first constrained to separate from the English Church." These "joined themselves together by a solemn covenant, as the Lord's free people, 'to walk together in all His ways made known or to be made known to them.'" Commenting on this covenant, the "messenger of the Lord" wrote - "Here was the true spirit of reform, the vital principle of Protestantism" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 291). It would do each one much good, if they would take time to read and heed the message given to these separatists by their pastor, John Robinson, as they departed for the New World. (*ibid.*, p. 292).

Two points need to be especially noted from Robinson's farewell message: 1) He said, "I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the reformed churches, who are come to a period in religion, and will go at present no farther than the instruments of the reformation." And 2) "Withal, take heed, I beseech you, what you receive for truth, and compare it and weigh it with other scriptures of truth before you accept it." Here is the challenge to advance with the dynamic nature of "present truth," but also the brakes to keep one from the danger of fanaticism, or deception.

Knight in his book, *A Search for Identity*, started off well by enunciating the "dynamic nature" of truth, but then got off base by seeking to interpret the events from 1950 to the present as evidence of continued advancement in that truth. And this for two reasons: 1) He did inadequate research and thus did not bring to light all the data known to exist for this period, and other related documents which led up to the events of the 1950s. And 2) He did not accept what the evidence he did consider was saying about the so-called advancement. His bias against Andreasen, whose teachings he admitted impacted heavily on twentieth century Adventist theology, was the same as his antipathy toward A. T. Jones that surfaced in his previous work, *From 1888 to Apostasy*. This is not writing history objectively, but rather history written with an agenda with a view of justifying the status quo.

An Illustration

The advancing light of truth must meet certain criteria. It must harmonize with past truth. Truth does not set aside truth. But to make a valid determination, that which may be perceived as truth must be freed from error that has become a part of it. In other words, all truth must be pure and unadulterated, both the past and the present. To arrive at this point requires prayer and study, study that will let the Word of God speak for, and interpret, itself.

In the concluding discussion of Dr. Knight's book, *A Search for Identity*, we noted in illustrating a point, a key text in Adventism, Daniel 7:9-10. Let us note these same verses again for an illustration of the criteria suggested in the paragraph above. They read:

I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like a fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set and the books were opened.

All of the two verses are but preliminary to the final pronouncement - "The judgment was set and the books were opened." First, the judgment: From the context it indicates that this judgment precedes "the Son of man" receiving His kingdom (7:13-14). Jesus himself declared that "when the Son of man shall come in His glory,...then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory" (Matt. 25:31). This judgment must then be a pre-Advent judgment. This is further attested by His own comment in Revelation 22:12 - "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with Me, to give to every man as his work shall be." This indicates that a determinate review had been made prior to His return.

Now to the books: In the book of Daniel, there is no reference to a fact that they were ever closed. If we should assume that the books were at some point closed, that would be an assumption, and an assumption is not truth. There is evidence, however, that they are again to be opened before the Ancient of days, when seated on "a great white throne" (Rev. 20:11). "The books were opened" (v. 12); and a judgment is associated with this opening also - "the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." There is no indication in the text in either Daniel or Revela-

tion that anything has been altered or blotted out in these books of record. All the text states is that "another book was opened, which is the book of life." In Daniel, this book is likewise noted: there is deliverance "for every one that shall be found written in the book" (12:1).

To this picture must be added a promise of Jesus in a message to the Church of Sardis: "He that overcometh... I will not blot out his name out of the book of life" (3:5). Further this book is called "the book of life of the Lamb" (13:8). At this point our study could veer toward the significance of the "Lamb" in connection with this book; but we shall pass by this momentarily. There is developed in the Scriptures noted, a contrast between the one book, and the many books. One contains only names, the others a record of "works." When those who are judged out of the books stand before the Ancient of days seated on the great white throne, they are noted as "the dead" (Rev. 20:12). They have no life in them. As noted by John, "ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (1 John 3:15). Only those whose names are in the book of life, have life, and the source of that life is the Lamb "as it had been slain" in "the midst of the throne" (Rev. 5:6). This gives meaning to other Scriptures. Consider:

This is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life (1 John 5:11-12).

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3:3-4).

In the Scriptures noted, the only suggested "blotting out" is in regard to the Book of Life" which belongs to the Son of God. It is as Jesus declared - "The Father ... hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22). We do well to ponder the words of Jesus which followed this pronouncement:

He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him who sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment (Gr. κρισις); but is passed from death unto life (v. 24).

This now brings us to some questions and considerations. To be saved, I must have a relationship with Jesus Christ. My record in the "books" is no different than any other person's record except, perhaps, in degree, which could mean, either worse or better. For it

is written, "There is none righteous, no, not one. ... There is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10, 12). My hope is not in an examination and/or investigation of "the books," for then it would be hopeless. My hope can be built on nothing else but Jesus' blood and righteousness - "the Lamb as it had been slain." It needs to be realized that it is in name only that I am listed in the Lamb's Book of Life. There is no resume recorded there of my deeds of valour in conflict with the enemy of all righteousness. There are no summations of all the good things I have done, for in doing such, I was but doing "that which was (my) duty to do" (Luke 17:10).

This then leaves us with the question as to why the books were opened when the judgment was set. We must consider also why the first picture in the prophecy of Daniel 7:9-10 is the convocation of the Angelic host in the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary? This should cause us to broaden our perception of the type inasmuch as the size of the typical Most Holy cannot compare with the revealed size of the antitypical Heavenly. Here is where the "dynamic nature of present truth" should enter the picture. There should be no jettisoning of the sanctuary truth, but there should be a careful restudy of the whole in the light of Biblical revelation.

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A Much Needed Review

There is no question but that the first Seventh-day Adventists had been a part of the Millerite Movement of the 1830s and 40s. Their prophetic perceptions were derived from that Movement. These need to be reviewed. Why? Consider:

The Millerites believed that Jesus was going to return to earth in 1844, concurring finally on the date October 22. This meant that all prophecies which foretold things that were to occur prior to the Second Advent had to find fulfilment in time prior to October 22, 1844. The Three Angels' Messages of Revelation 14:6-14 was one such prophecy. Therefore, the Millerites perceived of themselves as proclaiming that "the hour of His judgment is come" (14:6), and interpreted it as meaning the coming of Christ in judgment to cleanse this earth. They understood the Second Angel's Message - "Babylon is fallen" - as referring to the Protestant bodies who rejected the coming of Christ in 1844. These interpretations were carried over into Adventist prophetic thinking without making

the adjustment for the error of such interpretation due to the misunderstanding of the meaning of what was to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 day prophetic period. One of the first corrections was made after the disappointment by Crosier who set forth with Biblical documentation that the "sanctuary" of Daniel 8:14 was not this earth, but the Heavenly Sanctuary. If this "true light" had been applied across the board, a different perception of the Three Angels' Messages would have followed.

A closer study of the Biblical text would have revealed that in the first two messages the tense of the verbs used are in the Greek aorist or past tense, often translated by the English perfect - "is come." Thus the sounding of this angel's message would coincide with the time of the judgment by announcing its commencement. The second part followed, but the memorial day of Creation was never accepted by Miller. It is the rejection of the Sanctuary truth and the Sabbath which has caused Babylon's fall.

When we come to the Third Message in the Greek text it is in the present tense - "if any man is worshipping the beast and his image, and is receiving a mark in his forehead, or his hand" (14:9). Not only is it stated in the present tense, but it is the "now" time of that tense when it can be said, the "image" has been formed, and therefore, can be worshipped. The giving of the Third Angel's Message must coincide with the fulfilment of Revelation 13:14-15. It is a bit ridiculous to preach against the worship of the image if one doesn't know what the image really is. How can one warn against its worship if it has not been set up? You can read the text in Revelation 14:9 and warn that something "trying" is coming, but you cannot give the message as indicated by the text until it takes place, and becomes the "now" time of the prophecy.

We do well in seeking to find the meaning of the fulfilment of Revelation 13:14-15. The close connection between the "beast" and the "image" cannot be overlooked (The word "his" in the KJV is supplied; the text reads simply, "an image.") There is a contrast within these angelic messages. The first is a call to "worship Him who made;" the third is a warning of the consequences of the worship of a power arrayed against God. To give this warning is going to require a spiritual preparation not seen today, nor echoed among those making profession of believing in "historic Adventism." When will this occur? Only when we decide we need to honestly review our perception of truth to conform it to the Word of God. #

Let's Talk It Over

It has been some time since we talked over some of the material which we have discussed in the essays in WWN. However, this time in discussing the judgment committed "unto the Son," we omitted a verse that defined a Biblical "why." Let's talk this verse over a bit. But first let us place it in its full context:

For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: **that** (Gr. *ὅτι* - in order that) **all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him.** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (Gr. *κρισις* - judgment); but is passed from death unto life (John 5:22-23).

The judgment committed to the Son involves more than just passing sentence, or investigating records. The appointment is a sign of recognized equality. As the Father is to be honored, so likewise the Son; and to dishonor the Son is to dishonor also the Father. This leaves the neo-antiTrinitarians in a very unenviable position. To place the Son in a secondary position is to dishonor God Himself. Paul indicates that because of the condescension, "God hath highly exalted" (Jesus) and given Him a name above every other name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. . . and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11).

Another aspect of what Jesus stated to which little thought has been given is the fact that the one who "heareth His word, and believer on Him who sent Him" has everlasting life, and does "not come into judgment but is passed from death unto life." To bring harmony between what Jesus said, and how the Judgment scene of Daniel 7:9-10 has been taught, will require an in-depth review. Those whose names are in the Lamb's book of life, and those who must face the record of their life's deeds, face a judgment in two different ways. One is passed from death unto life through the Son, for "he that hath the Son hath life" (I John 5:12). But he who faces the judgment of the Great White Throne is "dead" not having life. He must face the record of his life which He cannot do and live.

All of this brings us face to face with the fact that we must restudy carefully how we have viewed the judgment of Daniel 7:10. There are questions we can ask, and for which we must find more complete answers. Does the judgment scene of Daniel 7:10 coincide with the First Angel's Message? The answer is, yes. Could the judgment then be understood to be as the Greek text reads - "is come the hour of the judgment of Him"? If such an answer should prove to be valid, what then is the significance of the gathering of the whole Angelic host at the beginning of the judgment? Indeed, we have many lessons to learn, and many, many to unlearn. It is well stated that "the truth is an advancing truth, and we must walk in the increasing light."

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Those who think they will never have to give up a cherished view, never have an occasion to change an opinion, will be disappointed. As long as we hold to our own ideas and opinions with determined persistency, we cannot have the unity for which Christ prayed. (R&H, July 26, 1892)

There is no excuse for anyone to take the position that there is no more truth to be revealed, and that all our expositions of Scripture are without error. The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people, is not proof that our ideas are infallible. Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation. (R&H, Dec. 20, 1892)

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Editor, Publications & Research

Elder Wm. H. Grotheer

Regional Contacts:

Australia - P. O. Box 5023, Wodonga Plaza, VIC 3690

Canada - P. O. Box 117, Thorne, ON POH 2JO

The Caribbean - P. O. Box GM 537, Castries, St. Lucia

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800-4-LAYMEN (800-452-9636)

FAX - (501) 292-3745; Regular Calls - (501) 292-3721