

# "Watchman, what of the night?"

XXXV - 9(02)

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

Eze. 7:6 (Moffat)

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### *Editor's Preface*

The hope of the Christian is the fulfillment of the promise of Jesus to the Eleven, just prior to His crucifixion, that He would come again and they would be with Him where He was. It is called the "Blessed Hope." The bond of attachment which developed between Him and His followers was such that they longed for that fellowship to be restored quickly. This is echoed in the Epistles and letters of the New Testament. Even Paul, whose contacts with the risen Lord were minimal compared to the other Eleven, proclaimed with enthusiasm the return of Jesus, so much so, that he had to write a second letter to inform the believers in Thessalonica that certain things must take place before Jesus would return. John's last communication with Jesus are the final words of the New Testament. The promise is reiterated - "Surely, I come quickly" - and the longing of the beloved disciple's heart is voiced - "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

All time is covered in three dimensions - past, present, and future. The past is called history. We may be students of history and enjoy reading about past events. The depth of our reaction might include a mental decision of what we think we would have done had we been there. The Jewish leaders of Christ's day believed that they would not have done what their fore fathers did to the prophets, but they committed a more heinous crime because they would not face honestly their present. By not doing so, they sealed their future. We face the same problem today. Prophecies being fulfilled before our very eyes - yes in our own life time - we seek to relegate to the past, or say they have not yet been fulfilled. And — tragically, we are sealing our own future.

One of the last two brief articles in this issue reveals a bogus letter which has been panned off on Adventists who, instead of facing the present, have outlined in their minds how the future has to be. It may well be, but let us deal with the present honestly and accurately, then we will be ready for the future, whatever it may be, and however it will come. We have difficulty with "present truth." See quotation, pp. 5, also found in Counsels Writers and Editors, pp. 23-25.



## Is the Coming of Jesus, Off Schedule?

Not only does Dr. Raymond Cottrell hold that the Adventist "Sanctuary Doctrine" is a liability to the faith, but the very essence of Adventism itself, the return of Jesus a second time, is open to question. He wrote in his paper prepared for the San Diego Adventist Forum (See previous issue of WWN):

**There is not the slightest suggestion or hint anywhere in the Old or the New Testament that Jesus' return would be postponed more or less indefinitely beyond Bible times. The Bible evidence is all explicitly to the contrary. The Bible itself knows *nothing whatever* about the historicist interpretation of its prophecies, a concept that is gratuitously imposed upon them. (*The Sanctuary Doctrine – Asset or Liability?*, p. 30; emphasis his)**

Cottrell maintains that when the disciples asked Jesus about "the destruction of the Temple, to which He had just referred, the 'sign' of His promised return and 'the end of the age' was, 'When you see the desolating sacrilege standing in the holy place spoken of by Daniel . . . know that He is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things [specifically including His coming in the clouds of heaven to gather His elect] have taken place." (*ibid.*, p. 29). By checking the reference in Matthew, to which the footnote refers, the ellipsis marks a jump from Matt. 24:15 to Matt. 24:33, a break of 17 verses! Can such exegesis be justified? No!

At issue here are two things: 1) The New Testament emphasis on the soon return of Jesus, and 2) The meaning of what Jesus meant by, "This generation shall not pass away until all these things be fulfilled."

There can be no question, Jesus did promise the disciples just prior to His crucifixion that He would come again. The sole condition was: "If I go . . . I will come again" (John 14:3). He did go, and as He went two angels reiterated the promise: "This same Jesus . . . shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). But He has not come, yet in the Book of Revelation, Jesus plainly declared, "Behold, I come quickly" (22:12) and his final words to John were, "Surely I come quickly" (22:20).

The first Christians believed - and hoped - it would be in their lifetime. Paul proclaimed the return of Jesus so

vividly that many of the church he raised up in Thessalonica were troubled over what to them seemed like a delay. He had to follow his first letter with a second in which he wrote plainly:

**Now I beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither in spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. (II Thess. 2:1-2).**

Paul then stated that certain things needed to transpire before Jesus would or could return a second time. The return of Jesus would be preceded by "a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition" (v. 3). The brief summary given by Paul to the Church in Thessalonica, was enlarged in the visions given to John on Patmos. The controversy between good and evil which Jesus capitalized with the Cross was to continue until He would return as King of kings, and Lord of lords. (Rev. 19:11-16). At issue, is the method of interpretation to be used in understanding "the things which must shortly come to pass" as revealed to John on Patmos.

In other words, if history is truly the response to the voice of prophecy, the historicist methodology is to be used, which Cottrell abhors. Or is some other format to be imposed upon what God has declared would be? From whose perspective and viewpoint is the "revelation" given? In the very first "unveiling" of Jesus Christ to John, He declared of Himself:

**"I am he that liveth, and was dead: and behold, I am alive forevermore, . . . and have the keys. . ." (1:18).**

What is Jesus saying? He is "alive forevermore." No longer is He operating in the time frame of earth. He died in time, but lives forevermore in eternity. When He stated to John, "I come quickly," it was from His perspective. Man can only watch the unfolding of events as prophesied, to perceive how "soon" from the perspective of time. And the methodology which permits this approach is the historicist.

We still have the second question to consider. What did Jesus mean when He responded to the inquiring disciples about the end time, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all these things be fulfilled"? And He confirmed it as it were with an "oath" - "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:34-35). The other synoptic gospels - Mark and Luke - state the same thing, placing it seemingly as a summary on the whole as if one generation alone is

involved, and that generation being theirs to whom Jesus was speaking. This cannot be for the context, in which the first major sign Jesus gave was placed, clearly points to another event and not His second coming.

We need to remember that the question asked by the disciples was two-fold: 1) "These things" referring to the destruction of Jerusalem; and 2) "The sign of Thy coming and the end of the world." (Matt. 24:3). The sign Jesus gave regarding "the abomination of desolation" is clearly focused as an answer to the first part of the two-fold question that was asked. After stating the "sign" Jesus adds, "Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains" (24:15-16).

This was to be followed by a period of "great tribulation" which unless shortened "there should no flesh be saved" (24:21-22). But time would continue on - "Immediately after the tribulation of those days" there were to be major celestial signs, and then the return of "the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (24:29-30). There is no way that a single generation - let alone the generation represented by the twelve disciples before Him - could experience all that Jesus defined would take place between that hour and His return again a second time. How are we to understand what Jesus meant?

Consider the first question asked by the disciples - the destruction of the temple. To this question, Jesus gave the specific sign of "the abomination of desolation" standing in the holy place. There was a brief time lapse between the sign and the overthrow of Jerusalem. Luke, taking the sign out of the prophetic symbolism used in Mark and Matthew, stated, "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the destruction thereof is nigh." (21:20). This occurred in 66 AD, and in 70 AD, the same Roman armies returned and took the city. The question of "generation" can be answered from this prophecy and events. Did the "generation" which saw the sign, live to see what that sign predicated, fulfilled? The answer is "Yes!"

During His eschatological discourse Jesus gave other specific signs - signs to be in the sun, moon and stars, as well as the "times of the nations" being fulfilled. Can the axiom established in the fulfilment of the first sign be applied to each major sign Jesus gave? In other words: *The "generation" which sees the specific sign, does not pass away until the event to which that sign points is fulfilled, or begins to be fulfilled.*

After giving the counsel as how to relate to the fulfilment of the first sign - "the abomination of desolation . . .

standing where it ought not" (Mk 13:14) - Jesus declared: "Then shall be great tribulation" (Matt. 24:21). This tribulation was to be numbered in "days." Before relating the next set of signs in the heavens, Jesus stated, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days" (24:29). Having established His answer to their questions in the book of Daniel the prophet (24:15), Jesus continues to refer to the book. "Days" and "the Abomination of Desolation" are connected. What is designated, "the Abomination of Desolation" in Daniel 8, is in Daniel 7, "the little horn" who would "wear out the saints of the Most" for "a time and times, and a dividing of times" (v. 25), or 1260 days. (See Rev. 11:3 & 12:6).

Further, "the transgression of desolation" is involved in the question asked in Dan. 8:13, and the answer given in verse 14 involves "evenings and mornings" ("many days" - 8:26).

One problem remains. How do we harmonize Luke's reporting of Jesus' answer to the disciples questions with Matthew and Mark?

The idea that Jesus taught that He would return to the generation compassed in the life span of the Twelve who sat before Him that night on Olivet was not original with Cottrell. In the *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* [11/1-2 (2000), pp. 295-306] Dr. John T. Baldwin on the staff of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, discusses the question. Citing the positions of the English theologian, Matthew Tyndall, and the German theologian, Herman S. Reimarus of Hamburg, Baldwin notes the challenge these men made to the integrity of Jesus over the "generation" statement. Reimarus went so far as to call the promise of Jesus' return a "clear falsity."

In his answer to justify Jesus promise, Baldwin restructures a "harmony" of the synoptic Gospels seeking to bring Luke 21 into line with Matthew 24 and Mark 13. This ultimately leads to a mixing of the literal words of Jesus and His symbolic revelations given in vision to John on Patmos. You cannot put "apples and oranges" together and call them one fruit.

It is difficult to determine whether Baldwin is challenging Cottrell's position, or whether he is seeking to negate the application of the prophecy, found only in Luke, to this present time. Perhaps both, like "killing two birds with one stone."

Baldwin sets forth his premise that —

**The Olivet Discourse as presented in Matthew 24, in which Jesus outlines the signs of His second coming**

in some detail, needs to be augmented with crucial information from the parallel account given in Luke 21. An initial important task is to compare the listing of the major signs as presented in each chapter which show, at first reading, an important omission in Luke's list as compared with that as given by Matthew and Mark. (p. 298).

He then lists the major signs as given in Matthew and Mark: 1) The destruction of earthly Jerusalem, 2) A period of tribulation, 3) Signs in the sun and moon, and 4) The powers of heaven are shaken. Baldwin observes: "In striking contrast to the four signs listed in Matthew and Mark, Luke apparently presents only three distinct, sequential signs which are to transpire before the coming of the Son of man. ... The apparent missing sign in Luke's account is the second sign given by Matthew and Mark, namely, the period of tribulation sign." He then asks the question - "Is the tribulation sign truly missing in Luke's account?" In the answer given, Baldwin seeks to define the Jerusalem of Luke 21:20 as the literal city destroyed in 70 AD, and the Jerusalem of verse 24 as the Heavenly Jerusalem. He then concludes that the "tribulation" period stated in Matthew and Mark is "the times of the Gentiles" as given in Luke.

The first problem is that there is no evidence within the text - Luke 21:20-24 - that Jesus shifted meanings for "Jerusalem" from the earthly to the heavenly. To so conclude is merely an assumption. It would contribute to a clearer understanding of Luke 21:24 if the word, εθνῶν were consistently translated "nations" as sense so requires in its first use in the verse. The verse would then read:

**And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations (εθνῶν); and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the nations (εθνῶν- genitive), until the times of the nations (εθνῶν) be fulfilled.**

This translates this verse consistent with the verse which follows - "upon earth distress of nations (εθνῶν)" [ver. 25]. Further, Luke discusses the destruction of Jerusalem prior to the Olivet discourse which finds no parallel in either Matthew or Mark. In recording the words of Jesus, he uses the word, καιρος - the "time of thy visitation" meaning probationary time (Luke 19:41-44). Now in Luke 21:24, he chooses the same word, and applies it to the "nations." The probation for the Jewish nation as the chosen people of God ended in 34 AD; the "times of the nations" would end when Jerusalem was restored to the control of a Jewish state. Dr. J. R. Zurcher

has well stated it. He wrote in his book, *Christ of the Revelation*:

**I believe that the times of the Gentiles began in 34 AD when the prophetic seventy weeks that God set aside for the people of Israel ended. The baptism of the first "heathens" - the Ethiopian eunuch and the centurion Cornelius - as well as the conversion of Paul as the apostle to the Gentiles mark the beginning of these new times when the gospel would be preached to the nations. And if I have understood the prediction of Jesus properly, this time will be "fulfilled" when Jerusalem will cease "to be trodden down of the Gentiles." The fact that since 1967 Gentiles no longer occupied Jerusalem means, therefore, that we are now living at the end of "the times of the Gentiles." (p. 72).**

The text by which Baldwin seeks to equate the prophecy of Jesus concerning "the times of the Gentiles" in Luke with the "tribulation" period noted in the other two Synoptics is Revelation 11:1-2. It reads:

**And there was given me a reed like a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.**

This is symbolic language and connects with other symbolic language in the book of Revelation. "The temple of God" and "the forty two months" connect it with the "beast" of Revelation 13 who opens "his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven" (13:5-6). There is no question but that this association of texts places them parallel with the "tribulation" period as noted in both Matthew and Mark. The missing link is the justification of equating "Jerusalem" in Luke 21:24 with the "holy city" of Revelation 11:2. The "holy city" in Revelation is defined as "the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven" (21:2).

There is no question that the "abomination of desolation" in Daniel "cast down the truth to the ground, and it practised, and prospered" (8:12). This does connect the prophetic description of Revelation 11, and words in "Daniel the prophet" with the "days" of tribulation, Jesus spoke about on Olivet. However, it is equally beyond question, that there is no evidence to recognize the

"Jerusalem" in Luke 21:20, as the literal city, and the "Jerusalem" of Luke 21:24 as "the holy city" in Heaven.

By recognizing the obvious in what Jesus said, and applying the axiom confirmed by the first sign that Jesus gave in regard to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, Luke's unique difference from Matthew and Mark, speaks to us today. When Luke listed the sign which would mark the answer to the first part of the twofold question asked by the disciples, he quotes Jesus as saying, "*When ye shall see. . . then know the desolation is nigh*" (v. 20). He again uses this same phraseology, when prefacing the statement, "This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled." Let us follow through progressively Luke's report of the words of Jesus. Follow carefully with your Bibles open to these verses (20-33). Noting "the days of vengeance" that would befall Jerusalem with the scattering of those who survived as captives "into all nations," Jesus is quoted as saying that "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the nations until the times of the nations be fulfilled" (v. 24). [We shall translate the one word, εθνῶν, used in verses 24 and 25 four times, as "nations." The KJV translates the word twice as "nations" and twice as "Gentiles."]

After covering the events involving the city of Jerusalem, Luke briefly notes that there "shall be" signs in the sun, moon, and stars without giving any details as found in both Matthew and Mark, then quickly returns to "the nations" - "upon earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the seas and the waves roaring" (v. 25). Here "symbolism" is used, borrowed from the book of Daniel - "the four winds of heaven strove upon the great sea" (7:2). Then follows a series of designations - "those things," "these things" - all connected with "upon earth." Observe carefully:

Verse 26 - "Men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking as *those things* which are coming on the earth."

Verse 28 - "And when *these things* begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

A parable from the fig tree is given, and then the admonition: "So likewise ye, when ye see *these things* come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand" (v. 31). Why?

"Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled." (v. 32).

From Luke's analysis of what Jesus said on the Mount of Olives, a connection can be drawn between the sign of the close of the probation of the nations - Jerusalem returned

to the control of Israel, and the "generation" that would not pass away till all be fulfilled.

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**In the twenty-first chapter of Luke Christ foretold what was to come upon Jerusalem, and with it He connected the scenes which were to take place in the history of the world just prior to the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Mark the words: "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."**

**This is a warning to those who claim to be Christians. Those who have had light upon the important testing truths for this time, and yet are not making ready for the Son of man, are not taking heed. ...**

**Only by being clothed with the robe of Christ's righteousness can we escape the judgments coming upon the earth. Let all remember that these words were among the last that Christ gave His disciples. If this instruction were often repeated in our papers and publications, and less space were taken for matter which is not one hundredth part so important, it would be more appropriate. In these sacred, solemn warnings the danger signal is lifted. It is this instruction that the church members and the people of the world need; for it is present truth. (Letter 20, 1901)**

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## A National Day of Rest?

Via Fax and Postal Service, we received copies of an "Action Alert" dated March 26, 2002, allegedly written by

a "Pastor Mike Brown" on behalf of the Christian Coalition of America. It read as follows:

Dear Representatives,

The moral fabric of America is wearing thin. We must not go back to B. A. U. (Business As Usual). The terrorists attack on America September 11, 2001 sent a wake up call to many of us.

We not only need a day of prayer and unity but many of us here at Christian Coalition believe it is time to legislate a National Day of Rest. As Dr. James Dobson reminds us, families need time for rest and worship. The United Mine Workers (U.M.W.) of America support this agenda also.

"Christopher Columbus has given an inspiring example of respect for the Sanctity of Sunday under the most trying circumstances. It illustrates the Spirit of unfaltering trust in God."

Destroy the Sanctity of Sunday and you throw civilization back into the darkness and mire of Pagan materialism — The observance of Sunday is essential to the welfare of the Nation.

We must make this part of our legislative agenda in 2002 and increase our trust in God to protect our Nation. See you in Washington D.C. in October.

Thank you and "God Bless America,"  
Pastor Mike Brown,  
National Church Liaison.

\*The Faith of Millions, pg. 404

While preparing this issue of WVN, I received a copy of the following E-Mail from a reader in Tennessee who had made inquiry concerning the above letter, direct to the Christian Coalition of America. The response read in full:

Dear Jack, [Walker]

Thank you for writing Christian Coalition of America. Please find below Pastor Mike Brown's statement re: National Day of Rest.

A document that has been widely circulated over the past several months implicating Christian Coalition of America's endorsement of a National Day of Rest is fraudulent. Michael A. Browa, who serves as

Christian Coalition of America's National Church Liaison and whose name is forged on the document stated, "Christian Coalition of America has no legislative agenda sent from my office advocating this issue. It is fraud." Brown added, "Any information concerning the source of this document would be greatly appreciated. You may contact me at (202) 479-6900 Ext. 104."

Best regards,

Robert Deason  
Christian Coalition of America

In seeking the identity of the author of the bogus letter, there is a footnoting in the letter that does not conform to the usual method. The asterisk (\*) is placed at the beginning of the quotation rather than at the end. Another mark can be considered. The writer uses an abbreviation when none is required. He alludes to the United Mine Works of America, and places the initials "(U.M.W.)," not at the end of their name, but in the midst of it. There is no reason for this use. Further, the second sentence has some initials and then an explanation of their meaning. Both are redundant. It would also need to be considered as to why such a letter would want to be written. Did the author of the bogus letter want to see a "National Sunday Law" promoted? Then the question would need to be asked, What profit would accrue to him by forging such a letter?

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A Further Word on:

## ***The Liberal Illusion***

When the Southern Publishing Association was still in existence and publishing *The Watchman Magazine* as an evangelistic journal, the editorial staff sent to the workers in the Southern and Southwestern Union Conferences, a four page "Jottings for Your Notebook." These jottings contained quotations from recognized and reliable sources on topics which could be used in evangelism. Many of the quotations cited evidences of the increasing power of Rome in world politics as well as Rome's objectives.

One such "jotting" was the quotation from *The Liberal Illusion* which read:

When the time comes and men realize that the social edifice must be rebuilt according to eternal standards, be it tomorrow, or be it centuries from now, the Catholics will arrange things to suit said standards. ... They will make obligatory the religious observance of Sunday on behalf of the whole of society and for its own good, revoking the permit for free-thinkers and Jews to celebrate, *incognito*, Monday or Saturday on their own account. Those whom this may annoy, will have to put up with the annoyance. Respect will not be refused to the Creator nor repose denied to the creature simply for the sake of humoring certain maniacs, whose phrenetic condition causes them stupidly and insolently to block the will of the whole people. (p. 63).

At the time, I tried to obtain a copy of the book, but was unsuccessful. When, however, the Foundation Library acquired the library of the late B. T. Anderson, and his collection of materials from C. E. Holmes, a paperback copy of *The Liberal Illusion* was discovered with Holmes name in it. It was misplaced in the filing of the books and documents; but happily, it was only temporarily lost. In that interval of time, we wrote to the National Catholic Welfare Conference, since they were listed as the publishers of the English translation from the French, asking if they still had a copy available. To our amazement, they professed to have no knowledge of the book or any involvement in the publication of the English translation from the French, yet the front cover admitted to all these facts. Our copy even indicated that it was a "Second Printing." and the translator was a Professor of Philosophy at the Catholic University of America. A copyright dated 1939 was held by the Catholic Welfare Conference. The question still remains, Why the denial of even a knowledge of the book?

The author, Louis Veillot, was born in Boynes, France, on October 13, 1813. While in Rome in 1838, he dedicated himself to what was called "a holy cause" of defending "the Holy City and the Temple of God." His was the "apostolate of the pen which was to merit him the title of 'Lay Father of the Church' from Leo XIII; 'Model of

them who fight for sacred causes' from Pius X; and from Jules Le Maitre the epithet, 'le grand catholique'" (Biographical Foreword).

The translator, Dr. George Barry O'Toole, in his preface wrote that in selecting Veillot's *L'illusion liberale*, for translation he was guided by what seemed to him to be "a great need for our time." He stated that the Encyclical of Leo XIII, *Libertas praestantissimum naturae opus* (May 20, 1888), "placed the seal of papal approval . . . upon the contents of Louis Veillot's *The Liberal Illusion*." Then he quoted at length from the Encyclical on Catholic "liberty," concluding, "It is clear, then, that no Catholic may *positively and unconditionally* approve of the policy of separation of Church and State." (p. 10; emphasis his). He had quoted Leo XIII as calling the separation of Church and State a "fatal theory."

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As offered in WVN XXXV - 6(02), any one desiring a photo-copy of the cover of the book, *Liberal Illusion*, and page 63 quoted above, may send a self addressed stamped #10 envelope to the Foundation office, and we will post back the same. Please mark your envelope, "Liberal Illusion" in the bottom left hand corner.

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"A nation may loose its liberties in a day, and not miss them in a century" - *Montesquieu*

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Editor, Publications &amp; Research

Elder Wm. H. Grotheer

Regional Contacts:

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

Canada - P. O. Box 117, Thorne, ON POH 2J0

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

FAX - (479) 292-3745; Regular Calls - (479) 292-3721