Latest News on “A Theologian’s Journey”

A Theologian’s Journey from Seventh-day Adventism to Mainstream Christianity, by Jerry Gladson, Ph.D. is now, at last, in stock. This is a must-read eye opener! Dr. Gladson was an SDA theologian, professor and pastor serving an important role at the central core of Adventist scholarship for many years. Drawing from his meticulously kept journals, Dr. Gladson describes events at the center of the recent crisis in Adventism. Dr. Gladson has done something few other scholars have been able to do. He has combined careful, detailed research with a gripping, narrative style of writing. The reader is forced to crawl under the skin of Dr. Gladson, see through his eyes and feel the trauma of having to choose between career and conscience. One cannot put the book down until finished.

This book, more than any other book published to date, uncovers the hidden, toxic, core of Adventism. This book will powerfully affect those who read it. You will hurt with Dr. Gladson and rejoice with him at what he calls, “God’s crazy grace.”

To order, contact LAM Publications at 800-355-7073 or their new web site at www.ratzlaf.com.

SDA’s Samuele Bacchiocchi insists Heb 4:9 says we must keep the Sabbath, when the context speaks of God’s rest (katapausis). This is a must-read eye opener! Dr. Jerry Gladson, Ph.D. is now, at last, in stock. This is a must-read eye opener! Dr. Gladson was an SDA theologian, professor and pastor serving an important role at the central core of Adventist scholarship for many years. Drawing from his meticulously kept journals, Dr. Gladson describes events at the center of the recent crisis in Adventism. Dr. Gladson has done something few other scholars have been able to do. He has combined careful, detailed research with a gripping, narrative style of writing. The reader is forced to crawl under the skin of Dr. Gladson, see through his eyes and feel the trauma of having to choose between career and conscience. One cannot put the book down until finished.

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3. Biblical Hook: Some use one verse, on which to hang an entire doctrine or justify an unorthodox practice. The Mormons use James 1:5 to test if the Book of Mormon is true by seeking the burning in your bosom as evidence. They practice subscriptional baptism for the dead on grounds of one verse in 1 Cor 15 which doesn’t support the practice, but questions its validity!

4. Ignoring Immediate Context: Like ignoring ‘road construction’ signs, this speaks of translating a word, verse, or passage different from the demands of the context. SDA’s Samuele Bacchiocchi insists Heb 4:9 says we must keep the Sabbath, when the context speaks of God’s rest (katapausis). Also SDAs use Dan 8:14 for their 1844 ‘Sanctuary Teaching’—ignoring the context interpreting the vision, where ‘evenings-mornings’ speaks of sacrifices—not days (Heb yom). Their Dr. Ray Cottrell listed 17 anomalies in their teaching violating the text of Daniel, at their San Diego Forum, in 1997.

5. Collapsing contexts, speaking of uses of text to interpret another, when they’re mutually unrelated. The JW’s use 1 Cor 1:24 to interpret Prov 8:22 by making Jesus ‘wisdom’, while they should use Heb 1:10–11 to show He’s the ‘Jehovah-Creator’ of Prov 8. SDAs use the Jew’s Sabbath of Ex 20:10 to exegete the Christian’s ‘Lord’s day’ of Rev 1:10; (Kunoskos Hemera) coined 1500 years after Exodus!

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Life Assurance Ministries (LAM), Inc.

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Mission: To proclaim the good news of the new covenant gospel of grace in Christ and to combat the errors of legalism and false religion.

Motto: Truth needs no other foundation than honest investigation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and a willingness to follow truth when it is received.

Message: “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God; not of works, that no one should boast.” Ephesians 2:8,9
**Hermeneutics is to Bible interpretation as a recipe is to gourmet cooking.**

W e have all heard the story—probably apocryphal—of the person desperately seeking divine guidance. Looking sanctimoniously up to heaven, as the story goes, he let the Bible “fall open” then placed his finger on the page where God was to communicate his special will. There he read, “And...[Judas he went and hanged himself.]” Wondering what this could mean, he sought a further clarification. This time the Bible opened at, “Go and do likewise.” Now he was really worried. Seeking better guidance—God for better advice—should he for the should be confirmation?—the third episode led him to, “What you do, do quickly.” We snicker at the possibilities of anyone being so foolish as to seek God’s will in this way. However, could it be that many of us have interpreted the Bible in equally careless ways?

This issue of Proclamation is primarily dedicated to hermeneutics, a topic of tremendous importance to all Christians, especially former or inquiring Seventh-day Adventists. Hermeneutics is to Bible interpretation as a recipe is to gourmet cooking. Good cookbooks do not insure a tasty, even eatable, dish. In the same way good Bible texts thrown together haphazardly do not insure a correct interpretation. The importance of hermeneutics cannot be overemphasized. Perhaps another illustration will help. We just installed Windows 2000 Professional on our computers. When we were using Windows 98, our computers were “crashing” several times a day, always at the most inappropriate time when we had not “saved” in the last several minutes. To test W2K’s strength I decided to see how many programs I could run at the same time without it “locking up.” At fifteen I gave up, as it was not yet automatic. To test W2K’s speed I decided to see how many times a day, always at the most inappropriate time when we had not “saved” in the last several minutes.

A correct understanding of basic hermeneutics is fundamental for recovering Adventists. Many of us grew up using the “proof-text” method. While proof texts do have some value when used carefully, it is so easy to put together a string of Bible texts that teach something more than, or different from, what any of the texts say when read in their individual contexts. Doing so—to go back to our illustration—can crash your system, lock it up with guilt, bring frustration, anxiety and waste a lot of precious time. Having the right hermeneutic, however, will free one up—and like Windows 2000 Professional (thanks Bill!) and provide a stable platform upon which to build a workable theology and life. Hermeneutics is both science and art. It is a science because it is guided by rules within a system; and it is an art because the application of the rules is by skill, and not by mechanical imitation. Two former Seventh-day Adventists have consented to join me in teaching on this vital subject. Dr. Verle Strelling will share common errors of interpretation, which he calls “Fender Benders.” His short, crisp laws with accompanying illustrations will make these hermeneutical mistakes come to life. Dr. Strelling was a third generation SDA, graduated from CUC and after years of extensive Bible study he left the SDA church, was ordained in 1984 by the Evangelical Church Alliance, earned a Th.M. in 1988 and a Ph.D. in Theology in 1996. He taught in Bible College, served in missions and has written literature for winning cults to Christ. Australian scholars, Dr. Fred Mazzaferrri left a successful professional career in telecommunications to study theology. He received a Ph.D. in NT theology in 1986, from Scotland’s Aberdeen University. His specialty is the Book of Revelation, and his dissertation has been published. Like Dr. Strelling, Dr. Mazzaferrri is interested helping sectarian Christians make transitions to Christ-centered Christianity. Fred maintains a keen interest in the sciences, especially mathematics and cosmology, and finds relaxation in breeding native flora. He is married, with three adult sons. Dr. Mazzaferrri’s carefully written essay examines the very foundation stone of Adventism and at the same time, serves as an excellent illustration of good, technical, scholarly hermeneutics. In my short article, “Context, Context, Context,” I will discuss the basic fundamental of hermeneutics in a less technical way.

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Hermeneutics is to Bible interpretation as a recipe is to gourmet cooking.

Will You Join Us in This Ministry?

We want to thank those who contributed funds to support this ministry. Without you we could not continue. You should have received a donation receipt in the mail and you will also receive one just after the end of the year showing the total donations for the year.

As we said in the last Proclamation!, this is a faith ministry and is supported only by the contributions of you, the readers. Several things need to be made clear. No one is making any money on this ministry. I have not taken anything for my work. Richard Tinker, who formats this journal, has not received anything for his many hours of skilled computer work nor any others on our board. Also, we have not paid anyone to write for Proclamation!. Several former SDA theologians have expressed an interest in becoming contributing writers. I hope we will soon be able to pay all those who are serving on our board. The laborer is worthy of his wage. We have chosen to publish a quality journal and that is expensive. We believe we are doing God’s will and we believe the funds will come in. We printed 3000 issues of Proclamation! last time, and since then we have received literally thousands of new names which you have sent in. We were not able to increase the amount of copies printed, however. If you believe in this ministry, or if you want to continue to receive Proclamation!, why not partner with anyone? If everyone would just send in a little as you are able, it would be enough. We know that many cannot help financially, and for one reason or another, many will not. We believe someone will want to send in large amounts to make up the difference. In any event, we wish to continue to offer Proclamation! free of charge to anyone who requests it and to the names you send in. We want to exalt Christ and his gracious work in all we do. Mail donations to: Life Assurance Ministries, Inc. PO Box 15187, Glendale AZ 85318. Thank you for your support and prayers.

—Dale Ratzlaff
I believe the doctrines are biblical and true and when Jesus comes back we will see who is right and who is wrong.

Please remove my name from your mailing list. I am not a former Adventist but a current one and I know the Lord led me to the Seventh-day Adventist church in answer to my prayer to lead me to the church that preached the truth. I believe the doctrines are biblical and true and when Jesus comes back we will see who is right and who is wrong.

In the meantime, you are being used by a different spirit to accuse the brethren (especially Sister White) and still operating... Keep those of us who are still trying to spread the gospel of grace and assurance that the writer is not employed in the SDA church and that the writer believes without any other concerns. Occasionally, when it is evident that the writer is not employed in the SDA church and the writer is not employed in the SDA church, I have chosen to make it a policy not to include initials or any other information which might be used to identify the writer. We want Proclamation to be a place where people can be free to say what they feel and believe and live as the Holy Spirit leads. Occasionally, when it is evident that the writer is not employed in the SDA church and that the writer would like appropriate information included, we will do that.

Thank you for sending me your new journal. I appreciate your Mission, Motto and Message. I am so glad to be out of Adventism after a lifetime of fear and legalism that I appreciate your efforts in helping others escape. I have been an evangelical Episcopalian for four years now; these years have been the best of my life. Your Sabbath in Crisis book helped me make the final break. Blessings to you for your dedicated work. The Lord will surely continue to bless you as you proclaim your good news.

Dear Dale & Carolyn, First of all, thank you so much for sending me the books... I just received the Proclamation in the mail. I read every bit of it. I appreciated most the book on the Sabbath. I have been able to understand and have no problem with the doctrinal error and the EGW issue, but the Sabbath has always been hard for me to understand and get away from, even with a fairly good previous understanding of the Covenant issue through my own study. I think that because the day to day life of an SDA incorporates the Sabbath, it becomes more of one’s cultural heritage than the other issues. It is more part of who we are and whom we have been growing up. So it is like getting into the fact that I have German or French in me! Hard to do it... the other... I last year, when we did Romans, (taking 32 weeks and only a few verses each week), I became absolutely convinced of all the issues you bring forward. I think the Sabbath day was finally put to rest, however, your book is helping me to solidify my thoughts and defend my position to those who ask, I grieve for my parents because they will not even look at the issues and study for themselves. I am so glad I feel free... I think the thing that I am sad about the most is the fact that for some reason, growing up SDA, I have never looked at the issues and study for myself. The protrack... My prayer is that the Holy Spirit will guide you and that you will be set from the spirit that controls you to work so hard to destroy the faith.

Thanks so much for sending me the first issue of your Proclamation! I really enjoyed the article on the faith of Abraham and how Paul used the illustrations to emphasize righteousness by faith. You’ve opened a whole new avenue of thought for me on the subject... do read your appeal for new Former Adventist fellowship groups and I’d like to offer my time and services in starting one in the Fresno area... I have already received permission from one of the pastors to hold the meetings at the church. In fact, the pastor is eager to participate if needed. There is also another former Adventist at E Free who is willing to help start the group. I would be happy to talk with you further about this exciting opportunity to reach out to former Adventists in the heart of the Central California Conference. I feel that the Lord has been calling me to do this for some time now, and your newsletter served to reinforce this feeling. I know first hand how difficult it is to release the bonds of legalism and false teaching (I was 3rd generation SDA), and no one was there to guide me through the doubts and the anxiety. If it’s the Lord’s will, I would like to be that guide for those who are earnestly seeking the truth.

Any of Miller’s fifteen proofs could be used illustrations of the violation of this first principle of hermeneutics. It appears he completely ignored the context. Here is his proof number ten.

Any Miller’s fifteen proofs could be used as illustrations of the violation of this first principle of hermeneutics. It appears he completely ignored the context. The first and most important rule of hermeneutics is to consider the context. Few are aware of the massive and appalling misuse of this fundamental principle of interpretation by the founders of Adventism. William Miller’s Bible study methods and conclusions received the glowing and comprehensive endorsement of Ellen G. White. Of his chart which listed his fifteen “proofs” of the second coming she said, “I have seen that the 1843 chart was directed by the hand of the Lord, and that it should not be altered; that the figures were as He wanted them.”

Any of Miller’s fifteen proofs could be used as illustrations of the violation of this first principle of hermeneutics. It appears he completely ignored the context. Here is his proof number ten.

TEN: (second coming of Christ in 1843) can also be proved by the words of Christ, Lk. 13:12. “He and said unto them, Go ye and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be per-
What about the command “let them sit upon the Sabbath day?” Some who left the Worldwide Church of God and some independent Adventist groups not only observe the weekly Sabbath, but also the yearly sabbath feasts. Upon what basis does one accept certain OT laws and reject others? One must have some foundational reason, some hermeneutical principle to guide. I believe that principle is Christ-centered New Testament interpretation and application. The NT must interpret the OT.

The third dimension of context is to know the particular book in which the passage occurs. One should read through the book to discover the theme of the book, purpose of the author and try to discover the historical situation to which the author was writing. For example, there are certain writers today who seek to muddy the clear message of Galatians. I have had many people ask me about Paul’s so-called “difficult statements” in Galatians. I have suggested to a number of people that they will find the answer to their questions if they read Galatians in its entirety once a day for thirty days. Everyone I know who has done this has found his or her answer. Studying this book, as a whole, brings new life-long insights, especially when studied in its context.

I have suggested to a number of people that they will find the answer themselves if they read Galatians in its entirety once a day for thirty days. whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, (indicating a clear, complete, unclouded revelation) and upholds all things by the word of His power.” Hebrews 1:1-3

These verses show that the revelation of God in Christ recorded in the New Testament surpasses that given in the Old Testament. While the OT has only shadows and types, one does not go to the shadow and type to define reality. Rather, from the perspective of the New Testament center, Jesus Christ, one is able to look back at the shadows and types and see pattern and purpose in what before often appeared random and unclear. It is here that many have erred. They have not made a distinction between the Testaments. Often they have no lucid reason for accepting and enforcing certain OT regulations and ignoring others. Adventists, for example, apart from Old Testament laws for their seven-day Sabbath keeping. Yet in their Sabbath keeping, few—probably none—follow all the Old Testament Sabbath laws even though Ellen White said they should. What about the command “let no man go out of his pace on the seventh day” (Exod. 20:8-11), the command not to bake or boil on the Sabbath (Lev. 25:33) or “You shall not kindle a fire in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day?” Some who left the Worldwide Church of God and some independent Adventist groups not only observe the weekly Sabbath, but also the yearly sabbath feasts. Upon what basis does one accept certain OT laws and reject others? One must have some foundational reason, some hermeneutical principle to guide. I believe that principle is Christ-centered New Testament interpretation and application. The NT must interpret the OT.

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hold we'll have New Moons and Sabbaths in the New Heaven and New Earth. But these feasts, with their blood sacrifices were ended by Christ, and in Heaven 'time shall be no more' for there is no night, and neither is a new moon for the Lord God Almighty is its light. Likewise forwarding the Old Covenant priests, or dietary laws, or Jewish feasts, or Abrahamic Circumcision, all err in this account!

26. Exegeting the English instead of Original Languages: William Millar, endorsed by Ellen White's visions took the days of Dan 8:14 to be 24-hr days (Heb 'yom') instead of even-ting morning sacrifices (Heb 'morn-bearer').Thus he erred by using a

SDAs 'parsec' Lk 1:1–4 from the Living Bible to show the Bible came by copying sources, and deny it was God-breathed.

28. Restricted Definition(s) of Original Words:

27. Exegeting Paraphrases. is worse yet, because of additions or changes to the text! SDA's 'parsec' Lk 1:1-4 from the Living Bible to show the Bible came by copying sources, and deny it was God-breathed. They emphasize 'biographies of Christ,' 'source material' and 'pass this summary' all added into the Living Bible, but which aren't in the Greek text! And it changes 'Another' from above, that shows from where Luke received his perfect understanding to 'from the first to the very last' (not in the text).

28. Restricted Definition(s) of Original Words: Like a driver keeping his car in first gear on the free-way, cults will only take one of several uses or mean-ings of a Greek or Hebrew word. The Emphatic Diglott used by JW's does this often, so Dr. F. Bruce calls it a 'stiff wooden' translation. To illustrate, it uses 'immersion' everywhere 'baptize' appears, so 'baptize with the Holy Spirit' is 'immerse' while God said "I will pur-ify my Spirit" when defining how He'd 'baptize' believers, in Joel, Acts, etc.

29. Ignoring Rules of Grammar: Even as we must follow the rules of the road when driving, Bible teachers should know some basic grammar to rightly exegete the Bible. Christadelphians ignore the deponent verb, to have Jesus as 'the Word made flesh' and deny His pre-existence. JW's ignore Gran-ville Sharpes rule at Titus 2:13 and other places since it shows Jesus is 'our Great God and Savior,' as do the Mormons at Rev 1:6 to make God a Father! Many ignore the rule of concord, calling God or Christ or the Spirit 'which' instead of 'Who.' JW's also ignore Calwell's rule at John 1:1c.

30. Abusing Greek Grammar: Like saying the 'speed limit' signs are only for truckers, this speaks of twisting a rule of Grammar as the JWs do to turn "The Word was God (by nature)" into "a God." But more reprehensible is Dr. John McArthur's doing the same in The Truth about Tongues, at 1 Cor 14:14; 'He who prays in a tongue... prays to a God' to teach praying in tongues is praying to demons! Here, McArthur studied Greek and knows this is gramma-tically wrong, and would refute a JW at John 1:1c. George Watkins a Foursquare minister, in Women in Today's Church takes a present tense to mean 'I do not presently allow a woman to teach' to show in the future it will be allowed, but not presently!

31. Reversing Order of Biblical Hermeneutics: Like using your 'year-view mirror' for freeway driving, some use the OT to define the New, instead of the New (as God's greatest revelation) to define the Old. Some use the 'Sabbath' to define 'the Lord's day,' and others use Gen 2:8 KJV to hold man's body is his soul, and his spirit is merely his 'breath.' But many NT references define the soul or spirit as the 'inner man' that reasons, loves, has form and speaks with God. In Matt 10:28 Jesus showed the body can be destroyed, but not the soul; and Abraham, Isaac, etc., are among the living—not dead!

32. Appeal to Questionable Authorities: Like using an outdated road map this speaks of using authorities whose work can be shown inadequate, as the JWs using the Emphatic Diglott an Interlinear, to prove the Word was a 'god,' while even the Christadelphians (as Benjamin Wilson was) reject it there. SDAs use Ellen White as authority, though admitting serious errors in her books and she reinterprets the Bible. The JWs use Greber's spiri-tualist New Testament as a guide for Jn 1:1; Heb 1:8; and other references where Jesus is God, or received worship! Their New World Translation was made by questionable authorities: a secret committee of 6 and Freddie Franz, having final say, couldn't read Hebrew.

33. Value Judgments to Question Authorities: As drivers who only follow the speed limits they like, many refuse to accept qualified scholarship in Bible Exegesis for some personal reason. A JW makes appeal to Vine's Expository Dictionary to prove Jesus apocalyptic writings filled with uncertain symbols and images, to find the fundamentals of faith and doctrine. Rather, all important truths should find their foundation in didactic, contextual teaching, such as found in the epistles. Contrary to this, Adventism's foundation was built upon uncertain apocalyptic passages, often taken out of con-text—thus, the current dilemma.

So what is the bottom line? Two things: First, when seeking truth, study the Bible contextually the way it was written and the way it should be interpreted. Study book by book, chapter by chapter, paragraph by paragraph and text by text. Note its style or genre. Remember, all important truths are founded on contextual study. When a church seeks to indoctrinate you into his or her "special truths" and in doing so has to skip all over the Bible, reading a text here and quoting a text there, stop them. Force them to read the context and find out if the context of a given text clearly supports what they are trying to prove from the text. Chances are that if they cannot show clearly their 'truths' in contextual study their 'truths' are not true, or at most, are of minor significance. We should be as careful in our interpretation of the Scriptures as the Hebrew scribes were in copying it.

2 Ellen G. White, Early Writings, p. 74.
4 I list this proof because of its brevity.
5 Ibid, p. 224.
6 Ellen G. White, Early Writings, p. 236.
7 Ibid.
9 Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 296.
10 Ex. 16:29
11 Ex. 16:23
12 Ex. 35:1,3
13 Dr. Cottrell has made several presentations on this subject, cassette tapes of which are available from the San Diego Adventist Forum at PO Box 3148, La Mesa, CA 91944-3148.

We can get you a Seventh-day Adventist— they don't have an eternal hell!
Seventh-day Adventism’s dogma of an investigative
A brief evaluation

BY DR. FRED MAZZAFERRI

Seventh-day Adventism gleaned its prime dogma through a review of William Miller’s faulty forecast based on Dan. 8:14. Dr. Mazzaferrri demonstrates that the SDA church may never have lost its way if it had not forced both Lev. 16 and the epistle to the Hebrews into its foolish mold.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has long enjoyed the respect of many enlightened Christians as an organization making a good contribution to Christ’s global cause. Then why does it stand so far apart, even claiming to be God’s sole authentic church in the whole world, with a unique message to deliver to every last human inhabitant before Christ can return in glory to gather his elect?1

The seventh-day Sabbath is not an issue as some other confessions like the Seventh Day Baptists believe that God’s people can render their prayers acceptable. However, the observance of the Sabbath remains a major dogma in Seventh-day Adventism. Here we find the 2300 days, which is endorsed by respected, conservative Bible scholars like John Stott in Great Britain and Clark Pinnock in the United States of America. What really sets it largely apart is its unique teaching about the completion of a new phase of its High Priestly ministry in 1844, moving from the Holy Place to the Most Holy Place of heaven’s sanctuary.2 The record books were opened, we hear, so that the suitability of every person who has ever lived could be thought to be from God, and he a true prophet and that the SDA do with Dan 8:14, to establish their own view.3

These prophecies centered on Daniel 8 and 9 are the most critical for Seventh-day Adventists. Here we find the 2300 days, the sanctuary, and its cleansing. These prophecies focused the message of William Miller and the pioneers of our movement, and they are still vital for understanding our times.4

It was through the study of Daniel 8:14 as a point of departure that Adventism came into existence as a historical movement, developed its doctrinal identity, and identified its mission. We are confronted here with a foundational and vital aspect of Adventist thought.5 However, that is certainly not where we should begin our assessment of Ellen White’s treatment of this doctrine. First on the list is the foundation, if any, of this prime denominational ‘building.’6

Blood within the tabernacle—what Ellen White claims

The crucial question that should be considered before that of cleansing God’s sanctuary is, when and how is it defined by individual sins?7

In naming Ellen G. White with Jeremiah, Daniel, etc., SDAs try to place her above Bible scrutiny, as a true prophet of God.8

repeatedly used ‘serpents’ to speak of Satan and his followers. Paul’s experience of Acts 28:5, 6 didn’t relate to Mk 16, but was a miraculous event! 17. Virtue by Association, means implying the qualities of K. Q. Br or since they are associated together as cast away a demolition derby is assumed as already a virtual wreck, though still run- ning! In naming Ellen G. White with Jeremiah, Daniel, etc., SDAs try to place her above Bible scrutiny, as a true prophet of God. Joseph Smith wrote the Book of Mormon in Old England, laying it with some Bible verses to make it sound as Scripture, so it will be thought to be from God, and he a true prophet. But any claimed ‘prophet’ must meet the Bible tests of a true prophet of God as all predictions in God’s name coming to pass, their writings neither contradict the Bible or themselves, etc. We could as well name White Ellen with Joseph Smith, Charles T. Russell, Jean Dixon and other false prophets.

18. Ignoring Alternate Explanations: JW’s ignore Dan 4:5 as it explains its own prophecy, as SDA do with Dan 8:14, to establish their own view. Mormons make themselves Kneel of Isaiah 29:1–4 to show their Book of Mormon has a familiar spirit, and is thus inspired! (but alas!—not of God!) 19. Obvious Fallacy: This involves using words as ‘obviously’ or ‘doubtless’ or ‘beyon… dispute’ or ‘clearly’ or didn’t you know that…. or ‘certainly’, etc., instead of Bible proof, because there is none! JW’s reason “Since the Word was with God, then obviously he can’t be the God he was with, so He’s not God.” The SDAs affirm that the identification of America as the ‘2-horned beast’ of Revelation is beyond dispute (see Great Controversy). Is it? Why don’t all others agree? They gave no evidence! 20. Esoteric Interpretation: This is giving a new or reinterpretation to Bible passages through an ‘inspired’ prophet. This is one identification of a Cultic system. For the JW’s it’s the Watchtower Society, while for the SDAs it’s Ellen G. White’s writings (selectively citing her symphonies) that established the ‘pillars of their faith’. They claim her a ‘canonical’ and ‘infallible’ and ‘authoritative’ reinter- preted of the Bible. “It’s Christ, through this agency, who gives us the real meaning…”

21. Supplementing Biblical Authority: Like someone pulling a travel trailer and a boat behind their car, this is adding the writings of a prophet to the Bible. The Watchtower used to say ‘If you study the Bible by itself, without the aid of Studies in the Scriptures, you’ll go into darkness within 2 years!’ The Mormons add all the writings of all their prophets to the Scriptures, as do the SDAs with Ellen G. White’s writings, holding her interpretations over and above the historical-grammatical exegesis.

22. Rejecting Biblical Authority: Like ignoring all the ‘rules of the road’ because I don’t like them or they’re inconvenient, some take their prophet, or reason or any authority they like and do what the JWs reject, ‘because it’s not logical!’ Liberals reject Jesus’ miracles, because ‘they’re not believable’, and the Inspiration of the Bible, because they wisely believe the Bible is inspired. That’s the same sort of logic that they won’t believe that God really exists!

23. World-View Confusion, speaks of unique teaching centered theology, not Christ’s cross-cen- tered theology. The Christian’s view of the Bible cen- ters on Christ’s death, burial and resurrection. But SDAs center their ‘faith’ or ‘truth’ on some event at Comorah, or in 1844, or 1914, or Arabia, or Korea, etc., instead of Christ! 24. Misuse of Ellipses: This is taking parts of a verse or passage, but omitting words in the middle affecting its contextual meaning. SDAs leap from Acts 18:4 to 11 to show Paul in the synagogues for 78 Sabbaths, but the context shows he taught at Justis’ house for 1+ years. Similarly they jump from Jes 2:8a to vs 10 to show the Perfect law of liberty is the Decalogue, but 8b says ‘The love your neighbor’. Catholic literature quotes Galatians “…God sent forth His Son born of a woman…” to redeem those under the law” to imply Mary as co-redeemer, but Paul said “…born under the law, to redeem those…” 25. Not accounting for Analogy of Scripture: This is teaching which is contrary to God’s plan of the ages, or dispensations, sometimes called the covenants in ‘salvation history’. For example, SDAs...
Avoiding Biblical Fender Benders

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

6. Overspecification, means ‘talking’ more out of a word or verse than it really says, like a pedes-
trian who takes ‘Don’t Walk’ to mean ‘Run’! The JW’s affirm ‘Jesus said not to pray to Himself, see Matt
4:4! But the verse says we must worship only Jehovah God. He didn’t deny being God, or to
be prayed to. Instead He said ‘ask Me’in Jn 14:14 (Gk. text) which they omit in their New World
Translation.

7. Word Play: This means performing ‘tricks’ with the words, combining the etymological meanings of
a word to give its definition, or using a similar sound in another word to prove its relationship. We often
hear Atonement means at-one-ment (with God); but it really means a covering for sins. Some hold
the Sabbath came from Babylonian ‘Wphasptu’ since these sound similar, but they’re unrelated.

8. Confused definition of terms, refers to apply-
ing a different meaning to a word than required by the
context. SDAs apply the redemptive use of sancti-
fy’ in Ex 31:13, but God is speaking of setting Israel
in the tent. SDAs say Dan 11:42 to their ‘presence of Jesus in 1914’. SDAs use Dan 8:14 for their 1844 return of Christ, or
investigative judgment. They use Rev 13:3–5 to
teach 1260 years of Papal supremacy from 538 to
1798 A.D. By confusing every way, and they reverse the order for the ‘deadly wound’ and
the ‘time to continue’ as they appear in Rev 13.

10. Term Swapping, speaks of trading terms from
one place to another, or using a different term from
the original, with a different meaning, since the rest of his state-
ment would disprove your position, as those using
Hyssop’s ‘Two Babylons’ to show all pagans had ‘tri-
tics’, to prove the Trinity is ‘pagan’, while Hyssop con-
tains no pagan ingredients. But did they worship the True True
Jehovah God, so clearly revealed in Genesis? Proving
pagans had perverted the True God!

11. Figurative Falacy: Mistaking literal language for
Figurative, or visa versa. Liberals say Gen 1–11 is
‘myth or parables’ since there’s figures of speech in
the text. However, 6 times Moses says ‘This is the
History of ...’ showing it is history! ‘We cry person-
fication against He; Him, His’ used for the Holy Spirit,
and to deny His Person of Deity. Acts 5:3–4:13:1:2; Heb 10:1–11, which uses ‘rags’ for the
Sabbath, amends the political use.

12. Speculative Reading of Predictive Prophecy,
is a different reading and interpreting a Bible prophecy from what it calls for. JW’s use
Daniel 4 to launch their ‘presence of Jesus in 1914’, and
SDAs use Dan 8:14 for their 1844 return of Christ, or
investigative judgment. They use Rev 13:3–5 to
teach 1260 years of Papal supremacy from 538 to
1798 A.D. By confusing every way, and they reverse the order for the ‘deadly wound’ and
the ‘time to continue’ as they appear in Rev 13.

13. Saying But Not... is switching in its subsequent uses in the
verse than it really says, like a pedes-
trian who takes ‘Don’t Walk’ to mean ‘Run’! The JW’s affirm ‘Jesus said not to pray to Himself, see Matt
4:4! But the verse says we must worship only Jehovah God. He didn’t deny being God, or to
be prayed to. Instead He said ‘ask Me’in Jn 14:14 (Gk. text) which they omit in their New World
Translation.

14. (b). Selective Citing of Scripture:
is picking only certain Scriptures for a doctrine, since ‘All
Scripture’ (2 Tim 3:15, 16) would show the in-
consistencies. Does not read the entire prophetic sequences, since there is none! For example, it now speaks of a ‘moral law’ or a ‘ceremonial law’ that are ‘two laws’ which SDAs affirm. Many claim the ‘deca-
logue is the foundation of God’s government’, but
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That is, why must it be cleansed from their pollu-
tion at all? Looking back first to his earthly sanc-
tuary, one of Ellen White’s fuller answers to this question is:

The most important part of the daily minis-
tration was the service performed in behalf of indi-
viduals. The repentant sinner brought his offer-
ing to the door of the tabernacle, and, placing his
hand upon the victim’s head, confessed his sins, thus in figure transferring them from himself to
the innocent sacrifice. By his own hand the ani-
mal was then slain, and the blood was carried into
the holy place and sprinkled before the veil, behind which was the ark con-
taining the law that the sinner had transgressed. By this ceremony the sin was, through the blood,
sprayed in figure to the sanctuary. In some cases the blood was not taken into the holy
place, but it really means a covering for sins. Some hold
the Sabbath came from Babylonian ‘Wphasptu’ since these sound similar, but they’re unrelated.

As Christ at His ascension appeared in the
presence of God to plead His blood in behalf of
penitent believers, so the priest in the daily min-
istration sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice in
the holy place in the sanctuary before the blood of
Christ, while it was to release the repentant sinner
from the condemnation of the law, was not
to cancel the sin; it would stand on record in
the sanctuary until the final atonement; so in the
type the blood of the sin offering removed the
sin from the penitent, but it rested in the sanctu-
ary until the Day of Atonement.

In the great day of final award, the dead are
to be ‘judged out of those things which were writ-
ten in the books, according to their works.’
Rev 20:12 Then by virtue of the atoning
blood of Christ, the sins of all the truly penitent
will be blotted from the books of heaven. Thus
the sanctuary will be freed, or cleansed, from the
record of sin. In the type, this great work of
atonement, or blotting out of sins, was represent-
ed by the services of the Day of Atonement—the
cleansing of the earthly sanctuary, which was
accomplished by the removal by virtue of the
blood of the sin offering, of the sins by which it
had been polluted.4

Ellen White now turns to the scapegoat, which
does not concern us here. A long section follows,
utilizing typology to justify her belief that, like the
everlasting, heavenly sanctuary has two apartments.
She draws from this a doctrine of Christ’s two-
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Ellen White here cites Lev. 16:16, then 21f, which
treats the fate of the scapegoat. She then
draws out the “important truths concerning
the atonement” taught by these solemn ceremonies:

In the sin offerings presented during the year,
a substitute had been accepted in the sinner’s
stead; but the blood of the victim had not made full
atonement for the sin. It had only provided a means
by which the sin was transferred into the
sanctuary. By the offering of blood, the sinner
acknowledged the authority of the law, con-
fessed the guilt of his transgression, and
expressed his faith in Him who was to take away
the sin of the world, but he was not entirely
released from the condemnation of the law. On
the Day of Atonement the holy priest, having
taken an offering for the congregation, went into
the most holy place with the blood and placed it
upon the mercy seat, above the tables of the
law. Thus the claims of the law, which
demanded the life of the sinner, were satisfied.4
The Priest and his Consumption of Portion of the Sacrifice

How does Ellen White's sectarian teaching compare with the sacred Word? Actually, an editorial note in the Appendix of her Patriarchs and Prophets all but concedes that she is quite astray here.

When a sin offering was presented for a priest or for the whole congregation, the blood was carried into the holy place and sprinkled before the veil and placed upon the horns of the golden altar. The fat was consumed upon the altar of burnt offering in the court, but the body of the victim was burned without the camp. See Leviticus 4:1–21.

When, however, the offering was for a ruler or for one of the people, the blood was not taken into the holy place, but the flesh was to be eaten by the priest. Leviticus 6:26. See also Leviticus 4:22–35.10

This clarification can scarcely be faulted. Lev.4 details the offerings for the sins of a priest, 3–12, communal sins, 13–21, sins of a leader, 22–26, and sins of individuals, 27–35. Two cases alone, sins of a priest or of the whole community when the blood was taken inside the sanctuary, as Ellen White states, to be sprinkled in front of the inner curtain and put upon the horns of the altar of incense, 6f, 17e. The rest of the blood was poured out at the base of the external altar of burnt offering, 7f, 18t. Yet in the case of individuals whom alone she specially discusses, “the priest is to take some of the blood…and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar” (Lev. 17:11). That is, this blood never entered the sanctuary, so an individual's sins never defined it.

How, then, could any priest possibly make atonement for sin by eating the flesh of any sacrificial animal after its blood had been completely drained at the altar?

How does Ellen White present any persuasive case for her claim that a priest's eating the flesh of a sacrifice was any part of the process of atonement. For one thing, such food, ranging from flesh, Lev. 6:24–30, 7:1–6, to bread or grain, Lev. 6:14–18; 24:5–9; Nu. 18:18–19, was the regular food, not only for the priests themselves—including those ineligible for sanctuary service through physical defects, Lev. 21:16–23—but also for their families, 6:29; 7:6, 10:12–15, and even some of their slaves, 22:11. Nowhere here is there even the slightest hint that the eating itself had any cultic (ritual) import whatever. For another, the priests' effecting atonement through sacrifice is men¬ tioned repeatedly. But even where the service is detailed, as in Lev. 1:4; 22:26–27; 33–35; 5:7–10; 9:7–24, eating is never cited. Why not, if it con¬ tributes to the atonement which is the very point of every reference? For yet another, God himself specifically affirms that “It is the blood that makes atonement” (Lev. 17:11b). So the consumption of blood was totally taboo, 10–14. How, then, could any priest possibly make atonement for sin by eating the flesh of any sacrificial animal after its blood had been completely drained at the altar?

Regardless, first sight Lev.10:17 still seems to support Ellen White’s case, above all because of the import of the verb n_s_’ and its object, the noun w_w_ _w_ which it used here. Time and again they have the sense bear the guilt, ineptitude/con¬ sequence, as in Gen. 4:13; Lev. 5:1; 7:18; 17:16; 19:8; 20:17, 19; Nu. 5:3; 14:34; 30:15; Ex. 14:10; 44:10, 12. This obtains even in a vicarious sense, as when Ezekiel, 4:4–6, or the scapegoat, Lev. 16:22, “bear” the ineptitudes of the people, or when God forges a genuinely contrite sinner, as in Ex. 34:7; Nu. 14:18; Ps. 32:5; 65:2; Isa. 32:34; Hos. 14:2; Mic. 7:18. However, the use of this verb in Lev. 10:17 is no proof that a priest bore the sin by eating his portion of a sacrifice. For one thing, simply by being a High Priest, Aaron was to “bear” his people’s sins, Ex. 28:38. And this duty fell upon every priest, Nu. 18:1. Yet nowhere is there even the slightest hint that eating their portion of the sacrifice was in any way crucial in this vicari¬ ous duty. In fact, God gives the priests the entire sacrifice “to make atonement for yourselves on the altar” (Lev. 17:11, not by eating any of it. Maybe this is why though no blood enters the sanctuary from the sin offering mentioned in the weeks, as the ancient high priest had done on the altar of burnt offering. But, the Leviticus 6:26. See also Leviticus 4:22–35.10. This clarification can scarcely be faulted. Lev.4 details the offerings for the sins of a priest, 3–12, communal sins, 13–21, sins of a leader, 22–26, and sins of individuals, 27–35. Two cases alone, sins of a priest or of the whole community when the blood was taken inside the sanctuary, as Ellen White states, to be sprinkled in front of the inner curtain and put upon the horns of the altar of incense, 6f, 17e. The rest of the blood was poured out at the base of the external altar of burnt offering, 7f, 18t. Yet in the case of individuals whom alone she specially discusses, “the priest is to take some of the blood…and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar” (Lev. 17:11). That is, this blood never entered the sanctuary, so an individual's sins never defined it.

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5:7–10, the priest is not directed to eat any portion of this sacrificial bird.

For another, though Moses was angry with Aaron’s sons for burning the sacrificial goat instead of eating it, nothing clarifies that his concern was that the efficacy of the atonement ceremony itself had been compromised. I fact, when Aaron clarified that he had assumed that being uprooted at the sight of his sons’ death was an exceptional circumstance, 19, “Moses…was satisfied”111.

There is no pathway then, into the sanctuary for pollution from any individual’s sin. So Seventh-day Adventism appears to have no theological basis whatever for its distinctive dogma of cleansing heaven’s sanctuary, polluted day by day by individual sinners. Yet a final decision is unwise until the Day of Atonement rituals are fully comprehended. Here the primary passage is Lev. 16, of course.

The Two Altars

I broad perspective, Ellen White’s case can still survive if the altar cleansed by blood, 18f., is the altar of burnt offering outside the sanctuary proper, as most commentators state, where the blood of a sacrifice for individual sins remained. But if it is the altar of incense within the Holy Place, her case has no Bible basis whatever. So it is crucial be quite clear about both the differences between these altars and the precise details of the High Priest’s duties on the climactic Day of Atonement.

Several different altar features all in the history of the Children of Israel and the patriarchs. All that concerns this study, though, are the two distinct altars associated with the wilderness sanctuary. A number of subtle variances exclude even Solomon’s and Ezekiel’s theoretical, post-exilic temples.12

First was the great bronze altar of burnt offering immediately before the altar of incense for pollution from any individual’s sin. So Seventh-day Adventism appears to have no theological basis whatever for its distinctive dogma of cleans-
The Day of Atonement Ritual

What, precisely, did the High Priest do during the climactic Day of Atonement? The first Hebrew noun of interest is q.d.s, which makes manifest reference in Lev. 16.22 to the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary complex. This is so since it is “behind the curtain in front of the atonement cover on the ark.’’ This noun recurs in 3, 16, 17, 20, 23, 27, 33. It is also used in 4,32 for the sanctity of the High Priest’s attire. These apart, consistency implies that reference throughout this chapter is always to the inner sanctuary complex the High Priest is entering. This traction gains strength when it is observed that the sanctuary building itself is described throughout the chapter by the pair of nouns ‘‘ohel mô’ed (literally, tent of assembly), 7, 16, 17, 23, 33. This specificity does not invite the slightest notion that on occasions the noun which denote the almost completely forbidden Most Holy Place is employed in its stead, thus creating confusion.

Secondly, the various verbs of motion which describe the High Priest’s movements are of assistance in following him as he relates to the sanctuary complex. The fiest is bô, with the sense enter in 2, 3, 17, 23 [twice], and the similar nuance carry in 12, 15, 23. In 17 alone are we not immediately confident that we comprehend precisely which part of the sanctuary complex the High Priest is entering. The second verb, with the complementary sense emerge is y.s., 17, 18, 24. But only in 24 is it immediately certain which part of the complex he exits, for sacrifice was made in its courtyard alone.

The prime question for this study, in brief, is this: For which altar was atonement made, 18f? Was it the altar of incense, 12, or that of burnt offering, 25? The most popular choice by far among commentators is the latter, even though it depends on the sure suppression that in 17 it is the sanctuary building, not just its Most Holy Place, which the High Priest enters then leaves. The Hebrew text certainly permits that reading in isolation. However, there are other pressing considerations.

For another, mention of the altar before the LORD 12, certainly suggests at least the possibility if not the probable that it is the very same altar before the LORD of 18, especially as the Hebrew text is virtually identical in both cases, while the bronze altar is never so denoted elsewhere. For another, twice over we have a survey of the day’s solemn rituals as they relate to the sanctuary complex itself, atoning for “the Most Holy Place, (…) the Tent of Meeting and the altar’’ 20, 23. By no means does this repetition hint that any salient feature of this aspect of atonement is excluded. Nor does it invite the notion that the one sprinkling of blood in the Most Holy Place atoned as well for the Tent of Meeting. The manifest meaning is that there were three distinct, sequential ceremonies.

The crucial question then becomes, Where does the ritual detailed in Ex. 30:10 fit?

This interpretation is not only certain which altar is in view in Lev 16:18–19. The distinction between “tent of Meeting” and “the altar” in vs 20 and 33 may suggest that the altar in view is that of the burnt offering in front of the sanctuary. It should be noted, however, that Lev. 4:37, 18 where the “sin offering” is brought in the daily service the only altar that is sprinkled is the “altar which is in the tent of meeting before the LORD.” Thus the “altar which is before the Lord” in Lev 16:18 can be understood as an abbreviation of the “altar which is in the tent of meeting before the LORD,” i.e., the altar within the sanctuary. In Ex. 30:10 the altar of incense is said to be cleansed on the day of atonement.

It may be opined that this ceremony featuring the altar of incense is implied in the atonement of the Tent of Meeting. However, this conjecture survives no close scrutiny. For one thing, it is hardly conceivable that the detail of the solemn edict of Ex. 30:10 would be relegated t a mere inference when the lesser, bronze altar baskis in repite detail. For another, the Hebrew text clearly indicates that the ceremony for the atonement of the Most Holy Place was repeated precisely in atoning for the Tent of Meeting per se “He is to do the same for the Tent of Meeting.” That is, the entire Tent of Meeting as an entity was cleansed by sprinkling the sacrificial blood of both the bull and the goat the second time in its Most Holy Place. There is no compelling cause whatever, then, to include the bronze altar in the ritual of cleansing on the annual, climactic Day of Atonement.

Yet the question remains, Why ignore it? W. H. Shea, another prominent apologist for Seventh-day Adventism’s distinctive doctrine, offers us food for very careful thought in drawing instructive parallels between the corporate sin offerings of Lev. 4 and 16:

The corporate nature of these sin offerings should be compared and emphasized. The four categories of sin offerings (not two) are listed in Leviticus 4. The first two involved the priest and the entire congregation; the latter two involved the individual… The manner in which the rites for the last two classes was conducted was also different. Thus the sin offering for the priest or for the whole congregation is emphasized by the parallels with the Day of Atonement blood rites. The Day of Atonement was not the time for dealing with individual sin (although… forgiveness was available through the morning and evening sacrifices). In a sense that opportunity had come and gone during the cutilc year. Now, on the Day of Atonement, it was time to deal with all the sins of the children of Israel as a corporate activity.

The Ritual in Summary

The flow of the day’s ceremonies may therefore be summarized as follows:

- The High Priest brings a young bull for his own sin offering and a ram for his own burnt offering to the courtyard of the sanctuary, Lev. 16:3;
- He bathes in water, then dons sacred linen attire, 4;
- His people provide two male goats and a ram for their sin and burnt offerings respectively, 5;
- He offers the bull for his sin offering, 6, 11;
- He casts lots over the goats at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, one for the Lord and one as the scapegoat, 7f;
- He sacrifices the rest goat as the people’s sin offering but preserves the other alive, 9f;
- He enters the Most Holy Place with the bull’s blood, shielded from the atonement cover of the ark with incense activated by a censer of coals from the golden altar, 12f;
- With his finger he sprinkles the bull’s blood about the ark, 14;
- He duplicates this sprinkling with the slaughtered11 goat’s blood, thus atoning for the Most Holy Place, made necessary by the people’s sins, 15f;
- This complete ceremony is repeated within the Most Holy Place to atone for the Tent of Meeting itself, 16b, which must be otherwise empty of people at the time, 17;
- He exits from the Most Holy Place and, with a mixture of the bulls and goat’s blood, he sprinkles the altar of incense to cleanse it of the nation’s sinfulness, 18f,20
The crucial question then becomes, Where does the ritual detailed in Ex. 30:10 fit? recur in 3, 16, 17, 20, 23, 27, 33. It is also used in 4,32 for the sanctity of the High Priest’s attire.

This conviction gains strength when it is observed that the sanctuary building itself is described throughout the chapter by the pair of nouns ‘šéh el mó’ed (literally, tent of assembly), 7, 16, 17, 20, 33. This specificity does not invite the lightest notion that on occasions the noun which denote the almost completely forbidden Most Holy Place is employed in its stead, thus creating confusion.

The sacrifice for each burnt offering was a ram—one for the High Priest, 13, and one for the people, 5. But only the blood of the bull, mixed with that of the goat, provided atonement for the altar itself, 18f. It is interesting to note here that, while Seventh-day Adventism naturally stands with the altar of incense in its ritual of cleansing on the annual, climactic Day of Atonement.

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Lord, Lev. 4:7, 16; 16:12. In contrast, nowhere is it certain that the bronze altar is so designated. The significance of this phrase in Lev. 16:18 will be considered shortly, in its very instructive context.

The Day of Atonement Ritual

What, precisely, did the High Priest do during the climactic Day of Atonement? The first Hebrew noun of interest is q.d., which makes manifest reference in Lev. 16:20 to the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary complex. This is so since it is “behind the curtain in front of the atonement cover on the ark.” This noun recurring in 3, 16, 17, 20, 23, 27, 33.

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This apart, consistency implies that reference throughout this chapter is always to the inner room of Lev. 16:3, where the total complex including the courtyard, appears to be in mind because the sacrificial animals were all slaughtered there, at the bronze altar.

The crucial question then becomes, Where does the ritual detailed in Ex. 30:10 fit? recur in 3, 16, 17, 20, 23, 27, 33. It is also used in 4,32 for the sanctity of the High Priest’s attire.

This conviction gains strength when it is observed that the sanctuary building itself is described throughout the chapter by the pair of nouns ‘šéh el mó’ed (literally, tent of assembly), 7, 16, 17, 20, 33. This specificity does not invite the lightest notion that on occasions the noun which denote the almost completely forbidden Most Holy Place is employed in its stead, thus creating confusion.

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• He emerges from the Tent to transfer the total burden of national sinfulness to the live goat, 20f.;
• He re-enters the Tent, sheds the sacred linen garb, bathes and re-robes in his regular clothes, 23f.;
• He leaves the Tent for the final time to further atone for himself and his people in turn by sacrificing the ram for his own burnt offering and the one for the people’s, 24a;
• Finally, he burns the fat of the sin offering on the bronze altar, 25a;
• The scapegoat is released as an atonement into the desert, 10, 21f., 26;
• The bodies of the sin-offering bull and goat are burned outside the camp, 27.

Conclusion

Ellen White is emphatic that day by day, the sins of individuals polluted both the earthly sanctuary and its heavenly reality, though thus far we have considered in detail no more than the former.

Scripture makes it quite clear, in stark contrast, that the blood of the sacrifice for the sins of individuals never entered the sanctuary building itself.

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which it can be said that the pollution of individual sins was cleansed at that time.

It follows that here we have another major theological error within the writings of Ellen White. The manifest inference is that, quite apart from the veracity of its interpretation of Dan. 8:14, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has no biblical basis, at least in the earthly sanctuary, for its dogma of a protracted review of the heavenly records of every believer, one by one, before Christ returns.

1 For a convenient summary including historical developments of the teaching see D.F. Neufeld, ed., INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT: Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia (Washington, 1976), 169ff–673b.
2 T. Blaison, Justification and Judgment (DARCOM 3, 339–388), seeks to remove all suspicion of fabrication by works from the doctrine of judgment. Cf. fn. 5.
3 Neufeld, art. cit., 673a.
4 Fundamental belief no. 17: ‘her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth’; stress supplied. In fact this invites quite a striking elevation of her authority at the expense of Scripture! Prior to 1980, her life and ministry merely displayed ‘the gift of the Spirit of prophecy’ (while God’s Word was the Church’s ‘all-sufficient revelation of His will and . . . the only unerring rule of faith and practice’). Even since that epochal year it has been merely ‘the infallible revelation of His will . . . the authoritative revealer of doctrines’. The exclusiveness has been emphasized in Ellen White’s specific interests.
5 A. M. Rodriguez, Daniel 8, 9: The Sanctuary and Its Cleansing, supplement, RECORD 15th February, 1997. He also endeavours to paint the investigative judgment in lofty, positive terms, 14f.
6 Ibid., 14a, stress supplied.
7 Ps 35f. The unusual refers to a pointer to a note in the Appendix, to be considered shortly. All stress is supplied here and in the following group of quotations. Cf. GC 418–422. At this point GC 419 adds: ‘The blood was also to be sprinkled upon the altar of incense that was before the veil.’ All abbreviations are standard throughout.
8 Ps 31f.
9 Ibid., 32f.
10 Ibid., 761, referring to the text at 354.
11 E.g., Ex. 40:13–27 describes the altar of burnt offering and its dedication ritual in considerable detail. The material is not specified, and it is far larger than Moses’ bronze altar. Within the Holy Place was to be a wooden altar, 41:22, far larger than its incense altar. But no ritual is described. In fact, the key word incense is absent.
15 Ibid., 696f.
17 ‘Literary Form and Theological Function in Leviticus,’ DARCOM 3, 158, all stress supplied. However, my accepting this insight does not imply that I also accept all the parallels he suggests in support.
18 I broad perspective, Ellen White’s case can still survive if the altar cleansed by blood, 18f., is the altar of burnt offering outside the sanctuary proper, as most commentators state, where the blood of a sacrifice for individual sins remained. But if it is the altar of incense within the Holy Place, her case has no biblical validity. So it is crucially clear about both the differences between these altars and the precise details of the High Priest’s duties on the climactic Day of Atonement. Several different altar features all in the history of the Children of Israel and the patriarchs. All that concerns this study, though, are the two distinct altars associated with the wilderness sanctuary. A number of subtle variances exclude even Solomon’s and Ezekiel’s theoretical, post-exilic temples.
19 First was the great bronze altar of burnt offering in the sanctuary’s courtyard. Measuring five by five by three cubits, with a projection at each corner, it was elaborately equipped, Ex. 27:1–8; 38:1–7. It perpetual fire, Lev. 6:8–13, received the evening and morning burnt offerings, 29:38–43; Nu. 28:1–8, the special Sabbath offering, Nu. 28:9f., specific atonement offerings (different Hebrew nouns for burnt, guilt and sin offerings), Lev. 1: 4–11; 6–13; 6:24–7:10; 9, grain offerings, Lev. 2; 6:14–18, and fellowship offerings, Lev. 3:7–11. Its special role on the Day of Atonement will be considered shortly. Its special rôle on the Day of Atonement will be considered shortly. Certainly the altar of incense, at very least, is implied by the gold in comparison with the bronze. But above all, the sweet incense that ascended from it before the inner sanctuary of the sanctuary symbolized the prayers of the faithful, Ps. 141:2 (compare Rev. 5:8; 8:3f.). That is, the bronze altar focused on the external features of the ritual of dealing with the perpetual problem of human sinfulness, while the gold altar focused on its internal features. As Micah the prophet reminded his rebellious nation, Mic. 6:6–8,12 in pointed personal style:

With what shall I come before the LORD and bow down before the exalted God?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?
Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil?
Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

In short: “Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices a much in a obby the … LORD! To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams,” 1 Sam. 15:22.

A final distinctive detail is that the golden altar is also designated at times as the one before the Holy Place, right before the curtain before the most Holy Place. Measuring just one by one by two cubit, with horn on each corner, Ex. 30:1–6; 37:25–28, a specially prepared, fine-ground, fragrant incense, 30:34–38, was to be burnt on it every morning and evening, 7f. No burnt, grain or drink offerings were allowed. However, it did receive some of the blood of the sin offering for any priest, Lev. 4:7, or for the entire nation, 16. Its special contribution to the solemn ceremonies of the Day of Atonement will shortly be considered separately. Which of these was most important?

But if it is the altar of incense within the Holy Place, her case has no Bible basis whatever.
What does the Word of God States—Blood for Individual Sins

How does Ellen White's sectarian teaching compare with the sacred Word? Actually, an editorial note in the Appendix of her Patriarchs and Prophets all but concedes that she is quite astray here.

When a sin offering was presented for a priest or for the whole congregation, the blood was carried into the holy place and sprinkled before the veil and upon the horns of the golden altar. The fat was consumed upon the altar of burnt offering in the court, but the body of the victim was burned without the camp. See Leviticus 4:1–21.

When, however, the offering was a ruler or for one of the people, the blood was not taken into the holy place, but the flesh was to be eaten by the priest. Leviticus 6:6–26. See also Leviticus 4:22–35.

This clarification can scarcely be faulted. Lev. 4 details the offerings for the sins of a priest, 3–12, communal sins, 13–21, sins of a leader, 22–26, and sins of individuals, 27–35. Two cases alone, sins of a priest or of the whole community, were taken inside the sanctuary, as Ellen White states, to be sprinkled in front of the inner curtain.

The Priest and his Consumption of Portion of the Sacrifice

Nor does Ellen White present any persuasive case for her claim that a priest's eating the flesh of a sacrifice was any part of the process of atonement. For one thing, such food, ranging from flesh, Lev. 6:24–30, 7:1–6, to bread or grain, Lev. 6:14–18; 24:5–9; Nu. 18:18–19, was the regular food, not only for the priests themselves—including those ineligible for sanctuary service through physical defects, Lev. 21:16–23—but also for their families, 6:26; 7:6; 10:12–15, and even some of their slaves, 22:11. Nowhere here is there even the slightest hint that the eating itself had any cultic [ritual] import whatever. For another, the priests' effecting atonement through sacrifice is mentioned repeatedly. But even where the service is detailed, as in Lev. 1; 4:22–26, 27–35; 5:7–10; 9:7–24, eating is never cited. Why not, if it contributes to the atonement which is the very point of every reference? For yet another, God himself specifically affirms that "It is the blood that makes atonement." Lev. 17:11b. So the consumption of blood was totally taboo, 10–14. How, then, could any priest possibly make atonement for sin by eating the flesh of any sacrificial animal after its blood had been completely drained at the altar?

Regardles, first sight Lev.10:17 still seems to support Ellen White's case, above all because of the import of the verb _n_n_ and its object, the noun _w_n, which it used here. Time and again they have the sense bear the guilt. inequality/consequence, as in Gen. 4:13; Lev. 5:1; 7:18; 17:16; 19:2; 30:17, 19; Nu. 5:31; 14:34; 30:15; Eze. 14:10; 44:10, 12. This obtains even in a vicarious sense, as when Ezekiel, 4:4–6, or the scapegoat, Lev. 16:22, bears the iniquities of the people, or when God forgives a genuinely contrite sinner, as in Ex. 34:7; Nu. 14:18; Ps. 32:5, 62; Isa. 32:32; Hos. 14:2; Nu. 7:10. However, the use of both these in Adavntism, and support and pray for each other as they share their common journey out of the church and find security in Christ and in his body.

Contacts through the forum website have yielded Christian fellowship and support for many people who felt isolated and uncertain. Many who participate on the forum say they feel for the first time that they aren't alone. It is a safe place in which to ask questions, tell their stories, offer support, and grow. One couple in North Carolina found the website and read it late at night for several months. They began to understand the problems they sensed in the Adventist doctrines, and when they moved to California a few months later, they were able to join the weekly group in Redlands.

Another couple found the website as they surfed the internet. They had been far from the church and far from the Lord. When they found FormerAdventist.com, they had just experienced conversion about six months before. They also began driving to the weekly Bible study in Redlands, and they are growing in Christ.

One man was in crisis because his questions about Adventism's marriage. Not sure he could trust the church and not sure he could trust his own doubts about it, he was desperate for help. Late one afternoon he was reading the website, in an impulse born of desperation he got in the car and drove 30 miles to the local church which hosts weekly FAF meetings. He spent an hour talking to the pastor who put him in touch with the former Adventists in his congregation. Today he is vibrant in his new experience with Christ, and he is sharing the gospel with his children.

The miracle of the website is that the Holy Spirit is present there, even in cyberspace! God is sovereign, and in his wisdom and love he brings people to the website who need the information and the encouragement they find there.

God also brings people to the weekly Bible study who need friendship and spiritual growth. “We praise God for the people who come and for the growth we see in them,” says Richard Tinker. “Former Adventist Fellowship is the most vivid example I’ve ever seen of the body of Christ in action.”

How, then, could any priest possibly make atonement for sin by eating the flesh of any sacrificial animal after its blood had been completely drained at the altar? and put upon the horns of the altar of incense, 6f, 17e. The rest of the blood was poured out at the base of the external altar of burnt offering, 7b, 18b.

Yet in the case of individuals whom alone she specially discusses, “the priest is to take some of the blood… and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar.” 30. That is, this blood never entered the sanctuary, so an individual’s sins never defined it.
Avoiding Biblical Fender Benders

6. Overspecification, means ‘nailing’ more out of a word or verse than it really says, like a pedes-
trian who takes ‘Don’t Walk’ to mean ‘Run!’ The NW’s affirm ‘Jesus said not to pray to Himself, see Matt
4:4’ but the verse says we must worship only Jehovah. He didn’t deny being God, or to be prayed to. Instead He
said ‘ask Me’ in Jn 14:14 (Gk. text) which they omit in their New World Translation.

7. Word Play: This means performing ‘tricks’ with words, as combining the etymological meanings of a word to give its definition, or using a similar sound in another word to prove its relationship. We often hear Atonement means at-one-ment (with God), but it really means a covering for sins. Some hold the Sabbath came from Babylonian ‘whapsput’ since these sound similar, but they’re unrelated.

8. Confused definition of terms, refers to applying a different meaning to a word than required by
the context. SDA apply the redemptive use of sancti-

9. 9. Equivocation, speaks of changing the mean-
ing of the same word, within the same context. This
is close to 6 above, but here the meaning of the same word is switched in its subsequent uses in the
same context, as in ‘Rivers have banks and banks have money, so ...’ The NW’s Bible at Jn 1:1 says ‘the Word was God’! So we ask ‘Is He a true God, or a False god? And how many gods are there?’

10. Term Swapping, speaks of trading terms from one place to another, or using a different term from
the context. SDA change ‘Kurios’ (Lord) to ‘Herr’ for ‘Herrn to kuu’nus’ (the day of the Lord). NWs tell us that ‘Honor is the word for ‘see’ Rev 17:1, but it’s really ‘Optional’ (Finished Mystery, p.14, Rutherford; Studies in the Scriptures, vol 2 p. 138, C.T. Russell).

11. Figurative Falacy: Mistaking literal language for figurative, or visa versa. Liberals say Gen 1–11 is
‘myths’ or ‘parables’ since there’s figures of speech in the text. However, 6 times Moses says ‘This is the
History of ...’ showing it is history! ‘Ws cry ‘person-
fication’ against ‘He, Him, His’ used for the Holy Spirit, to deny ‘Hes a Person of Deity. Acts 3:13-4:12; Heb 1:1-11, both sound similar, but they’re unrelated.

12. Speculative Reading of Predictive Prophecy, is a different reading and interpretation of a Bible prophecy from what it calls for. NWs use Daniel 4 to launch their ‘presence of Jesus in 1914’. SDA use Dan 8:14 for their 1844 return of Christ, or investigative judgment. They use Rev 13:3–5 to teach 1260 years of Papal supremacy from 538 to 1798 AD, by choosing every prophecy in every way, and they reverse the order for the ‘deadly wound’ and the ‘time to continue’ as they appear in Rev 13:3 and 14:21.

13. Saying but Not Citing: Like those who make up their own rules for the road; this is claiming the Bible says something, but giving no reference, since there is none! For example, it now speaks of a ‘moral law’ or a ‘ceremonial law’ that there are ‘two laws’, which SDA’s affirm. Many claim the ‘deca-
logue is the foundation of God’s government, but
Mt 22:34–40 and Mk 12:28–34 show Love is.

14. (a) A Selective citing of Scripture: is picking only certain Scriptures for a doctrine, since ‘All Scripture’ (2 Tim 3:15, 16) would show the doctrine false. Many cults use 1Cor 15:55–57 to show ‘hades’ is the grave, instead of ‘Hell’ as seen from its other uses! Some misrepresent the other uses from this!

14. (b). Selective Citing of Authority: This is par-
tially quoting an authority, since the rest of his state-
ment would disprove your position, as those using
Hyssop’s Two Babylons to say all pagans had ‘trini-
ty’, to prove the Trinity is ‘pagan’, while Hyssop con-
tinues, ‘but did they worship the True Triune Jehovah God, so clearly revealed in Genesis’? proving
pagans had perverted the True God!

15. Redefining terms: Speaks of giving a differ-
ent definition to a Bible or Theological term than
the Bible’s own definition. Some define ‘born again’ as ‘reconversion’ or ‘reinauguration’ instead of regeneration
of one’s spirit by the Holy Spirit. Others say ‘you
don’t have a soul, you are a soul’, whereas Gen 2:7 lit.

...it nowhere speaks of a ‘moral law’ or a ‘ceremonial law’ or that there are ‘two laws’, which SDAs affirm.

judgment through Ellen White’s eyes:

That is, why must it be cleansed from their pollu-
tion at all? Looking back first to his earthly sanc-
tuary, one of Ellen White’s fuller answers to this question is:

The most important part of the daily minis-
tration was the service performed in behalf of indi-
viduals. The repentant sinner brought his offer-
ing to the door of the tabernacle, and, placing his
hand upon the victim’s head, confessed his sins, thus in figure transferring them from himself to
the innocent sacrifice. By his own hand the ani-
mal was then slain, and the blood was carried into
the holy place and sprinkled before the veil, behind which was the ark con-
taining the law that the sinner had transgressed. By this ceremony the sin was, through the blood,
transferred in figure to the sanctuary. In some cases the blood was not taken into the holy
place, (lastesic sic) but the flesh was then to be eaten by the priest, as Moses directed the sons of
Aaron, saying, ‘God hath given it you to bear the
iniquity of the congregation.” Leviticus 10:17. Both ceremonies alike symbolized the transfer of the sin burden to the sanctuary.

...the sins of Israel being thus transferred to the
sanctuary, the holy places were defiled, and a special work became necessary for the removal
of the sins. God commanded that an atonement be made for each of the sacred apartments, as
for the altar, ‘to cleanse it, and hallow it from
the uncleanness of the children of Israel.” Leviticus 16:19.

Once a year, on the great Day of Atonement, the priest entered the most holy place for the cleansing of the sanctuary. The work there per-
formed completed the yearly round of minis-
tration.

On the Day of Atonement two kids of the goats were brought to the door of the taberna-
acle, and lots were cast upon them, ‘one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat.” The goat upon which the first lot fell was to be slain
as a sin offering for the people. And the priest was to bring his blood within the veil, and spir-
kle it upon the mercy seat ...”

Ellen White here cites Lev. 16:16, then 21f, which treats the fate of the scapegoat. She then draws out the “important truths concerning the atonement” taught by these solemn ceremonies:

In the sin offerings presented during the year, a substitute had been accepted in the sinner’s

...in a recent pamphlet to
world-wide mem-
bers, it boldly claims that, of all
the Bible’s fore-
casts, those cen-
tering on Daniel 8
and 9 are the
most critical for
Seventh-day
Adventists.

In the great day of final award, the dead are to be “judged out of those things which were written
in the books, according to their works.” Revelation 20:12.” Then by virtue of the atoning blood of Christ, the sins of all the truly penitent will be blotted from the books of heaven. Thus
the sanctuary will be freed, or cleansed, from the record of sin. In the type, this great work of atonement, or blotting out of sins, was represent-
ed by the services of the Day of Atonement—the
cleansing of the earthly sanctuary, which was accomplished by the removal by virtue of the
blood of the sin offering, of the sins by which it had been polluted.”
Seventh-day Adventism's dogma of an investigative A brief evaluation

BY DR. FRED MAAZEFERRI

Seventh-day Adventism gleaned its prime dogma through a review of William Miller's faulty forecast based on Dan. 8:14. Dr. Mazzeferrari demonstates that the SDA church may never have lost its way if it had not forced both Lev. 16 and the epistle to the Hebrews into its foolish mold.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has long enjoyed the respect of many enlightened Christians as an organization making a good contribution to Christ's global cause. Then why does it stand so far apart, even claiming to be God's sole authentic church in the whole word, with a unique message to deliver to every last human inhabitant before Christ can return in glory to gather his elect? The seventh-day Sabbath is not an issue as some other confessions like the Seventh Day Baptists respect it, too. Nor is the oblieste of the state of the dead, we are told. Rather, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is shown, by individual sinners? Like ignoring it over and above the Bible aspect of Adventism gleaned its prime dogma through Miller's faulty forecast have lost its way if it strates that the SDA church may never... did not relate to Mk 16, but was a miraculous event! 17. Virtue by Association, means implying the qualities of K of B since they associated together as ony car brought into a demolition derby is assumed as already a virtual wreck, though still run-ning! In naming Ellen White with Jeremiah, Daniel, etc., SDAs try to place her above Bible scrutiny, as a true prophet of God. Joseph Smith wrote the Book of Mormon in Old England, lacing it with some Bible verses to make it sound as Scripture, so it will be thought to be from God, and he a true prophet. But any claimed 'prophet' must meet the Biblical criteria for themselves being the only 'inspired' prophet. 21. Supplementing Biblical Authority: Like someone pulling a travel trailer and a boat behind their car, its adding the writings of a 'prophet' to the Bible. The Watchtower used to say "If you study the Bible by itself, without the aid of Studies in the Scriptures, you'll go into darkness within 2 years!" The Mormons add all the writings of all their prophets to the Scriptures, as do the SDAs with Ellen White's writings, holding her interpretations over and above the historical-grammatical evers. 22. Rejecting Biblical Authority: Like ignoring all the 'rules of the road' because I don't like them or they're inconvenient, some take their prophet, or reason by analogy, ignoring what the Bible clearly says do the JWs who reject Hell, because 'it's not logical!' Liberals reject Jesus' miracles, because 'they're not believable', and the Inspiration of the Bible, because they 'warily believe in pre-existent spirits'. 23. World-View Confusion, speaks of unique teaching centered theology, not Christ's cross-cen-tered theology. The Christian's view of the Bible cen-ters on Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Muslims center their faith or 'truth' on some event at Comorah, or in 1444, or 1914, or Arabia, or Korea, etc., instead of Christ! 24. Misuse of Ellipses: This is taking parts of a verse or passage, but omitting words in the middle affecting its contextual meaning. SDAs leap from Acts 18:14 to 18:16 to show that the Lord didn't come in 78 Sabbaths, but the context shows he taught at Justo' house for 1 years. Similarly they jump from Jes 2:8a to vs. 10 to show the Perfect law of liberty is the Decalogue, but it is also an 'apostasy'. Catholic literature quotes Galatians ‘…God sent forth His Son born of a woman…to redeem those under the law' to imply Mary as co-redemptron, but Paul said ‘…born under the law, to redeem those…' 25. Not accounting for Analogy of Scripture: This is teaching which is contrary to God's plan of the ages, or dispensations, sometimes called the covenants in 'salvation history'. For example, SDAs...
hold we’ll have New Moons and Sabbaths in the New Heaven and New Earth. But these feasts, with their blood sacrifices were ended by Christ, and in Heaven ‘time shall be no more’ for there is no night, and neither sun nor moon for the Lord God Almighty is its light. Likewise following the Old Covenant priests, or dietary laws, or Jewish feasts, or Abrahamic Circumcision, all in this context!

26. Exegeting the English instead of Original Languages: William Millar, endorsed by Ellen White’s visions took the days of Dan 8:14 to be 24-hr days (Heb ‘yom’) instead of evening-morning sacrifices (Heb ‘mob-boger’), thus he erred by using a ‘year-day’ principle, and the 2300 years to 1844 fails! In the same way, Mormons trip over Rev 1:6 ‘…to God and His Father’ teaching this proves God also has a Father so we have to beget gods to infinity! The Greek says ‘to His Jesus’ God and Father.’

27. Exegeting Paraphrases. is worse yet, because of additions or changes to the text! SDA’s ‘parole’ Lk 1:1–4 from the Living Bible to show the Bible came by copying sources, and deny it was God-breathed.

31. Reversing Order of Biblical Hermeneutics: Like using your ‘year-view mirror’ for freeway driving, some use the OT to define the New, instead of the New (as God’s greatest revelation) to define the Old. Some use the ‘Sabbath’ to define the Lord’s day, and others use Gen 2:8 KJV to hold man’s body is his temple, which turns a rule of Grammar, as the JWs do to turn ‘speed limit’ signs are only for truckers, this speaks of forwarding the Old Testament as a guide for Jn 1:1; Heb 1:8; Rev 1:6.”

apocalyptic writings filled with uncertain symbols and images, to find the fundamentals of faith and doctrine. Rather, all important truths should find their foundation in didactic, contextual teaching, such as found in the epistles. Contrary to this, Adventism’s foundation was built upon uncertain apocalyptic passages, often taken out of context—thus, the current dilemma. So what is the bottom line? Two things: First, when seeking truth, study the Bible contextually the way it was written and the way it should be interpreted. Study book by book, chapter by chapter, paragraph by paragraph and text by text. Note its style or genre. Remember, all important truths are founded on contextual study. Second: someone seeks to indoctrinate you into his or her ‘special truths’ and in doing so has to skip all over the Bible, reading a text here and quoting a text there, stop them. Force them to read the context and find out if the context of a given text clearly supports what they are trying to prove from the text. Chances are if they cannot show clearly their ‘truths’ in contextual study, their ‘truths’ are not true, or at most, are of minor significance. We should be as careful in our interpretation of the Scriptures as the Hebrew scribes were in copying it.

SDAs ‘parole’ Lk 1:1–4 from the Living Bible to show the Bible came by copying sources, and deny it was God-breathed.

We can get you a Seventh-day Adventist—they don’t have an eternal hell!
Proclamation!

I have suggested to a number of people that they will find the answer themselves if they read Galatians in its entirety once a day for thirty days.

whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, (indicating a clear, complete, unclouded revelation) and upholds all things by the word of His power. Hebrews 1:1-3

These verses show that the revelation of God in Christ recorded in the New Testament surpasses that given in the Old Testament. While the OT has many truths and types, one does not go to the shadowy and type to define reality. Rather, from the perspective of the New Testament center, Jesus Christ, one is able to look back at the shadows and types and see patterns and purpose in what before often appeared random and unclear. It is here that many have erred. They have not made a distinction between the Scriptures. Often they have no lucid reason for accepting and enforcing certain OT regulations and ignoring others. Adventists, for example, appeal to Old Testament types or laws for their seventh-day Sabbath keeping. Yet in their Sabbath keeping, few—probably none—follow all the Old Testament Sabbath laws even though Ellen White said they should. What about the command “let no man go out of his pace on the seventh day,” the command not to bake or boil on the Sabbath, or “You shall not kindle a fire in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day?” Some who left the Worldwide Church of God and some independent Adventist groups not only observe the weekly Sabbath, but also the yearly sabbath feasts. Upon what basis does one accept certain OT laws and reject others? One must have some foundational reason, some hermeneutical principle to guide. I believe that principle is Christ-centered New Testament interpretation and application. The NT must interpret the OT.

The third dimension of context is to know the particular book in which the passage occurs. One should read through the book to discover the theme of the book, purpose of the author and try to discover the historical situation to which the author was writing. For example, there are certain writers today who seek to muddy the clear message of Galatians. I have had many people ask me about Paul’s so-called “difficult statements” in Galatians. I have suggested to a number of people that they will find the answer themselves if they read Galatians in its entirety once a day for thirty days. Everyone I know who has done this has found his or her answer. Studying this book, as a whole, and not by a single verse, or verses, can help in understanding the difficult texts. If you have questions on a few verses, try reading the book as a whole and see what happens!

The fourth dimension of context is to consider the immediate context. Carefully read the paragraph before and the paragraph after the text in question. If Miller and the early Adventists had followed only this one rule of interpretation, the SDA church would not be in the dilemma it now faces. Hundreds of SDA pastors and scholars have concluded after diligent study that Daniel 8:14 when studied in its context does not support Adventist sanctuary theology. As Adventist scholar, Dr. Raymond Cottrell, who has given years of study to this subject, stated: “The SDA Church has reasoned that the Adventist interpretation or the context of Daniel 8:14, they can’t have both.” One sees, then, that theology turns on hermeneutics.

There are other dimensions of context to consider such as style or genre. Is the passage poetry, history, didactic teaching, prophecy or apocalyptic imagery? Of these, good hermeneutics has a priority. For example, one does (should) not go to the word of His power. Hebrews 1:1-3

Tolerance in the church—a sign of hope!

Recently I have had conversations with several employed Seventh-day Adventist pastors who have shared, confidentially, that they no longer believe a number of the “special truths” of Adventism. They do not believe in the 1844 sanctuary doctrine, they do not believe that the Seventh-day Adventist church is the remnant church of Bible prophecy, they do not believe that Ellen white is a “continuing and authoritative source of truth.” They do not believe that the Sabbath is the seal of God nor that Sunday keeping is, or will become, the mark of the beast. The fact that these pastors can remain within the SDA church is a sign of hope that change is coming. However, not all experience this kind of tolerance. Some, are facing opposition, having to study in secret and feel they are in the process of studying their way out”—like hundreds have done before them. Adventist leaders face difficult challenges. How can Adventist leadership admit doctrinal error after so many years of claiming doctrinal purity? Let us pray that God will guide Adventist leaders who face difficult decisions.
Editor’s note: because many of the people who write to LAM Inc. are employed within the SDA church, I have chosen to make a policy to not include initials or any other information which could be used to identify the writer. We want Proclamation to be a place where people can be free to say what they feel and believe, without knowing if any one will read it. Occasionally, when it is evident that the writer is not employed in the SDA church and would like appropriate information included, we will do that.

Thank you for sending me your new journal. I appreciate your Mission, Motto and Message. I am so glad to be out of Adventism after a lifetime of fear and legalism that I appreciate your efforts in helping others escape. I have been an evangelical Episcopalian for four years now, these years have been the best of my life. Your Sabbath in Crisis book helped me make the final break. Blessings to you for your dedicated work. The Lord will surely continue to bless you as you proclaim your good news.

Dear Dale & Carolyn, First of all, thank you so much for sending me the books…I just received the Proclamation in the mail… I read every bit of it. I appreciated most the book on the Sabbath. I have been able to understand and have no problem with the doctrinal error and the EGW issue, but the Sabbath has always been hard for me to understand and get away from, even with a fairly good previous understanding of the Covenant issue through my own study. I think that because the day to day life of an SDA incorporates the Sabbath, it becomes more of ones cultural heritage than the other issues. It is more part of who we are and whom we have been growing up. So it is like getting rid of the fact that I have German or French in me! Hard to do…! Last year, when we did Romans, (taking 32 weeks and only a few verses each week), I became absolutely convinced of all the issues you bring forward. I think the Sabbath day was finally put to rest, however, your book is helping me to solidify my thoughts and defend my position to those who ask, I grieve for my parents because they will not even look at the issues and study for themselves. I am so glad I feel free…! I think the thing that I am sad about the most is the fact that for some reason, growing up SDA, I missed the most important thing: Who Christ really was. We were so caught up in rules. When I think about it, I feel like I was like the Children of Israel. I was given the Word of God, I had parents who did their best to instill Godly values, family, church, etc., but I missed the most important thing: Who Christ really was. I knew and believed in Him, I understood what He had done for me and accepted Him into my life. But I did not really KNOW HIM in a way that I could apply His life to mine and live out that hath part in the first resurrection of such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

This time began the great dragon,” Rev. 12:9. “And there appeared another wonder in heaven, and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.”

This government will draw after him one third part of the time, which wicked men have power in the earth, viz. 6000 years, and the 70thousand, the year of Christ will take possession and reign with his saints, in perfect bliss. This dragon power began its power over the souls within the league was made with him, B.C. 158, and will end in B.C. 1842. Then the third day will begin 1843.”

If your head is spinning trying to follow Miller logic, it should be! Note that nearly every text is lifted from its context. This is the hermeneutic upon which Adventism was founded. Ellen White herself often abused the biblical context. After the 1843 disappointment and “the mistake was explained” she said that the prophetic periods that pointed to 1843 now pointed to 1844—still endless!”. Then she said, “Light from the Word of God shone upon their position, and they discovered a tarrying time—though it the vision was not fulfilled”. Here, Ellen White quotes Habakkuk 2:3 and applies Habakkuk’s vision to the vision of Daniel, specifically Daniel 8:14 and the time between the first disappointment of 1843 and 1844. The problem is, however, that the context of Habakkuk’s vision deals with the coming invasion of the Assyrians and has nothing to do with Daniel 8:14, 1843, 1844 or to the disappointment of Adventists faced at the failure of their prophecies.

Before interpreting a given text, one should consider all the dimensions of context. “The first dimension of context of any verse is the entire Bible. This is what is meant by Scripture interprets Scripture.” This dimension alone, however, without—out the other aspects of context can lead to

Context, From this day life of an SDA incorporates the Sabbath, it becomes more of ones cultural heritage than the other issues. It is more part of who we are and whom we have been growing up. So it is like getting rid of the fact that I have German or French in me! Hard to do…! Last year, when we did Romans, (taking 32 weeks and only a few verses each week), I became absolutely convinced of all the issues you bring forward. I think the Sabbath day was finally put to rest, however, your book is helping me to solidify my thoughts and defend my position to those who ask, I grieve for my parents because they will not even look at the issues and study for themselves. I am so glad I feel free…! I think the thing that I am sad about the most is the fact that for some reason, growing up SDA, I missed the most important thing: Who Christ really was. We were so caught up in rules. When I think about it, I feel like I was like the Children of Israel. I was given the Word of God, I had parents who did their best to instill Godly values, family, church, etc., but I missed the most important thing: Who Christ really was. I knew and believed in Him, I understood what He had done for me and accepted Him into my life. But I did not really KNOW HIM in a way that I could apply His life to mine and live out the first and most important rule of hermeneutics is to consider the context. Few are aware of the massive and appalling misuse of this fundamental principle of interpretation by the founders of Adventism. William Miller’s Bible study methods and conclusions received the growing and comprehensive endorsement of Ellen G. White. Of his chart which listed his fifteen “proofs” of the second coming she said, “I have seen that the 1843 chart is drawn supported by the hand of the Lord, and that it should not be altered; that the figures were as He wanted them.”

Any of Miller’s fifteen proofs could be used as illustrations of the violation of this first principle of hermeneutics. It appears he completely ignored the context. Here is his proof number ten.

Any Millers fifteen proofs could be used as illustrations of the violation of this first principle of hermeneutics. It appears he completely ignored the context.
Hermeneutics

W e have all heard the story—probably apocryphal—of the person desperately seeking divine guidance. Looking sanctimoniously up to heaven, as the story goes, he let the Bible “fall open” then placed his finger on the page where God was to communicate his special will. There he read, “And... Judy... went and hanged himself.” Wondering what this could mean, he sought a further clarification. This time the Bible opened at, “Go and do likewise!” Now he was really worried. Seeking better guidance, God for better or for worse, should be the one to decide. And that many of us have interpreted the Bible in equally careless ways.

This issue of Proclamation is primarily dedicated to hermeneutics, a topic of tremendous importance to all Christians, especially former or inquiring Seventh-day Adventists. Hermeneutics is to Bible interpretation as a recipe is to gourmet cooking. Good ingredients alone do not insure a tasty, even delicious, dish. In the same way good Bible texts thrown together haphazardly do not insure a correct interpretation. The importance of hermeneutics cannot be over emphasized. Perhaps another illustration will help. We just installed Windows 2000 Professional on our computers. When we were using Windows 98, our computers were “crashing” several times a day, always at the most inappropriate time when we had not “saved” in the last several minutes. To test W2K’s strategy I decided to see how many programs I could run at the same time without it “locking up.” At fifteen I gave up, as it was not yet even slowing down! What does this have to do with hermeneutics? Much. As an operating system to a computer so hermeneutics is to the person seeking a truth. As a poor operating system like Windows 98 (sorry Bill) can really mess up your files, in the same way a poor set of interpretive principles can sure mess up one’s theology and life. All aberrant religious convictions have one thing in common: poor hermeneutics. William Miller, for example, may have been a very sincere man, but his hermeneutics, upon which Adventism was founded, were a disaster.

Good ingredients alone do not insure a tasty, even delicious, dish. In the same way good Bible texts thrown together haphazardly do not insure a correct interpretation. The importance of hermeneutics cannot be over emphasized. Perhaps another illustration will help. We just installed Windows 2000 Professional on our computers. When we were using Windows 98, our computers were “crashing” several times a day, always at the most inappropriate time when we had not “saved” in the last several minutes. To test W2K’s strategy I decided to see how many programs I could run at the same time without it “locking up.” At fifteen I gave up, as it was not yet even slowing down! What does this have to do with hermeneutics? Much. As an operating system to a computer so hermeneutics is to the person seeking a truth. As a poor operating system like Windows 98 (sorry Bill) can really mess up your files, in the same way a poor set of interpretive principles can sure mess up one’s theology and life. All aberrant religious convictions have one thing in common: poor hermeneutics. William Miller, for example, may have been a very sincere man, but his hermeneutics, upon which Adventism was founded, were a disaster.

A correct understanding of basic hermeneutics is fundamental for recovering Adventists. Many of us grew up using the “proof-text” method. While proof texts do have some value when used carefully, it is so easy to put together a string of Bible texts that teach something more than, or different from, what any of the texts says when read in their individual contexts. Doing so—to go back to our illustration—can crash your system, lock it up with guilt, bring frustration, anxiety and waste a lot of precious time. Having the right hermeneutic, however, will free one up and like Windows 2000 Professional (thanks Bill) and provide a stable platform upon which to build a workable theology and life.

Hermeneutics is both science and art. It is a science because it is guided by rules within a system; and it is an art because the application of the rules is by skill, and not by mechanical imitation. Two former Seventh-day Adventists have consented to join me in teaching on this vital subject. Dr. Verle Strelling will share common errors of interpretation, which he calls “Fender Benders.” His short, crisp laws with accompanying illustrations will make these hermeneutical mistakes come to life. Dr. Strelling was a third generation SDA, graduated from CUC, and after years of extensive Bible study he left the SDA church, was ordained in 1984 by the Evangelical Church Alliance, earned a Th.M. in 1988 and a Ph.D. in Theology in 1996. He taught in Bible College, served in ministry and has written literature for winning souls to Christ.

Australian scholar, Dr. Fred Mazzaferri left a successful professional career in telecommunications to study theology. He received a Ph.D. in NT theology in 1986, from Scotland’s Aberdeen University. His specialty is the Book of Revelation, and his dissertation has been published. Like Dr. Strelling, Dr. Mazzaferri is interested helping sectarian Christians make transitions to Christ-centered Christianity. Fred maintains a keen interest in the sciences, especially mathematics and cosmology, and finds relaxation in breeding native flora. He is married, with three adult sons. Dr. Mazzaferri’s carefully written essay examines the very foundation stone of Adventism and at the same time serves as an excellent illustration of good, technical, scholarly hermeneutics.

In my short article, “Context, Context, Context,” I will discuss the basic fundamental of hermeneutics in a less technical way.

His will through His power & not my own, and receive the covenant blessings His grace gives me to be a witness for Him. Israel was like that, they carried the Law & the Prophets, they knew the prophecies concerning their Messiah, but they missed the person He was. I am most sad about that, and I am sad because I see it in my parents, as good people as they are, I think they miss the greatest blessings because they are so wrapped up in trying to keep SDA laws... I will pray for your ministry and have sent a check in the mail. Keep in touch.

Thank you so much for the recent Life Assurance Ministries Publication. After attending Bible studies with friends, questioning Adventism, we, through the guiding of the Holy Spirit, discovered truth in Paul’s writings. After 23 years of error, I am no longer under bondage, but am free in Christ.

After 40 year in the SDA church, academy and college included, I am now beginning to see clearly, your correct pastor D., it has taken me about 2 years of study to cut the “cord” mentally with the SDA church. And also, as referenced in the news letter, I felt a plethora of emotions as I left the circle. Most, I can deal with. Others are tougher. Family ties cause the most concern. My own family members have stated they know that heaven is not only for the SDAs, but will be held accountable and not allowed in because I know what the “truth” is and yet refuse to follow. What I know is what I was raised with, which does not make it the truth. What I know is that I was taught to question this (and now I know why). During my “departure” over the last 2 years, I have felt a loss, the reason for which I could not exactly put my finger on. I believe it must have been the loss of that system which I was raised in—a feeling of being let down by that system. Having recently found a “truth” that is helping me better understand the word grace and all that it implies, I am having a great time. I am free of the works based theology that I could never keep up with. Now I find, I never had to. The gift is there for the taking, Pastor D, thanks for allowing yourself to be used and leading those of us who need your insight. I will support your efforts because I know there are others like myself. Pray for my family. I want them to know how great this is. THIS is Christianity. Its good stuff!

Will you join us in this ministry?

Proclamation!

We want to thank those who contributed funds to support this ministry. Without you we could not continue. You should have received a donation receipt in the mail and you will also receive one just after the end of the year showing the total donations for the year. As we said in the last Proclamation!, this is a faith ministry and is supported only by the contributions of you, the readers. Several things need to be made clear. No one is making any money on this ministry. I have not taken anything for my work. Richard Tinker, who formats this journal, has not received anything for his many hours of skilled computer work and neither have any others on our board. Also, we have not paid anyone to write for Proclamation!. Several former SDA theologians have expressed an interest in becoming contributing writers. I hope we will soon be able to pay all those who write for us an honorarium! I want you to know you are making a difference. The laborer is worthy of his wage. We have chosen to publish a quality journal and that is expensive. We believe we are doing God’s will and we keep the funds will come in. We printed 3000 issues of Proclamation last time, and since then we have received literally thousands of new names which you have sent in. We were not able to increase the amount of copies printed, however. If you believe in this ministry, or if you want to continue to receive Proclamation!, why not partner with everyone? If everyone would just send in a little as you are able, it would be enough. We know that many cannot help financially, and for one reason or another, many will not. We believe some will want to send in large amounts to make up the difference. In any event, we wish to continue to offer Proclamation! free of charge to anyone who requests it and to the names you send in. We want to exalt Christ and his gracious work in all we do. Mail donations to Life Assurance Ministries, Inc. PO Box 11587, Glendale AZ 85318. Thanks for your support and prayers.

—Dale Ratzlaff


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Resources to help you know and grow

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Ellen White’s “Furnace of Affliction” in the pre-advent times of trouble—a brief appraisal by Fred Mazzaferri, Ph.D.

This can be downloaded from our web site at LifeAssuranceMinistries.org and opened and read using Adobe Reader® available from the Adobe web site.

For those who do not have access to the internet, you may request this to be mailed. Send a self-address stamped No. 10 envelope to Life Assurance Ministries, PO Box 11587, Glendale, AZ 85318.

Ellen White's "Furnace of Affliction" in the Pre-Advent Times of Trouble
A Brief Appraisal

Fred Mazzaferri, Ph.D.

Life Assurance Ministries, Inc.
PO Box 11587
Glendale, AZ 85318.

For books on issues relevant to former SDAs contact Life Assurance Ministries:
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Latest News on “A Theologian’s Journey”

A Theologian’s Journey from Seventh-day Adventism to Mainstream Christianity, by Jerry Gladson, Ph.D. is now, at last, in stock. This is a must-read eye opener! Dr. Gladson was an SDA theologian, professor and pastor serving an important role at the central core of Adventist scholarship for many years.

Drawing from his meticulously kept journals, Dr. Gladson describes events at the center of the recent crisis in Adventism. Dr. Gladson has done something few other scholars have been able to do. He has combined careful, detailed research with a gripping, narrative style of writing. The reader is forced to crawl under the skin of Dr. Gladson, see through his eyes and feel the trauma of having to choose between career and conscience. One cannot put the book down until finished.

This book, more than any other book published to date, uncovers the hidden, toxic, core of Adventism. This book will powerfully affect those who read it. You will hurt with Dr. Gladson and rejoice with him at what he calls, “God’s crazy grace.”

To order, contact LAM Publications at 800-355-7073 or their new web site at www.LifeAssuranceMinistries.com.

A Theologian’s Journey
By Jerry Gladson

SDA’s Samuele Bacchiocchi insists Heb 4:9 says we must keep the Sabbath, when the context speaks of God’s rest (katapausis).

SDA’s Samuele Bacchiocchi insists Heb 4:9 says we must keep the Sabbath, when the context speaks of God’s rest (katapausis).

For Paul said, “Knowledge will vanish away”. But Paul said, “Knowledge will vanish away”.

Avoiding Bible Fender Benders

DR. VERLE STREIFLING

First we’ll review some 35 methods of Scripture Twisting™ commonly used to pervert the truth; then, in the next issue of Proclamation, we’ll review numerous logical fallacies used in interpreting the Bible, which also perverts God’s truth.

1. Inaccurate Quotation: Like reading the road sign “Slow Men at Work” as “Slow Men At Work,” this speaks of not quoting the Bible in the way it’s written, to shade its meaning, or change it entirely. This writer’s had Jehovah’s Witnesses read 1 Cor 13:8 to say “Healing will vanish away” to show why they don’t pray for the sick, contrary to James 5:14–16.

2. Twisted Translation: Like interpreting ‘60 Km/h’ as ‘miles per hour,’ this speaks of deliberately mistranslating the Bible to support one’s doctrinal views. The JW’s use Dan 8:14 for their 1844 ‘Sanctuary Teaching’ ignoring the context interpreting the vision, where ‘evenings-mornings’ speaks of sacrifices—not days (Heb yom). Their Dr. Ray Cottrell listed 17 anomalies in their teaching violating the text of Daniel, at their San Diego Forum, in 1997.

5. Collapsing contexts, speaking of one text to interpret another, when they’re mutually unrelated. The JW’s use ‘1 Cor 1:24 to interpret Prov 1:22 by making Jesus’ wisdom’ while they should use Heb 1:18–19 to show He’s the Jehovah Creator’ of Prov 8. SDA’s use the Jew’s Sabbath of Ex 20:10 to exegete the Christian’s ‘Lord’s day’ of Rev 1:10, (Kunoskos Hemera) coined 1500 years after Exodus!

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3. Context, context, context

6. Seventh-day Adventism’s dogma of an investigative judgment through Ellen White’s eyes—a brief evaluation

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Life Assurance Ministries (LAM), Inc

Mission: To proclaim the good news of the new covenant gospel of grace in Christ and to combat the errors of legalism and false religion.

Motto: Truth needs no other foundation than honest investigation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and a willingness to follow truth when it is received.

Message: “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God; not of works, that no one should boast.” Ephesians 2:8,9