Looking at the past, present and future of LAM, Inc.

DALE RATZLAFF

History
About a year ago I resigned from the pastorate of Christian Community Church so that I could devote more time to Life Assurance Ministries. My associate pastor, Tom Tomforde, took over the church, and it is doing well. Because of my experience and training, I feel God has uniquely called me to this aspect of ministry. There are many thousands—some estimate as many as a million—former Seventh-day Adventists. Many of these people are not involved in a healthy, Christ-centered church. They need help in working through the many doctrinal questions that all “formers” have before they can become spiritually free and well.

Prior to my resignation several people had indicated a willingness to help support LAM if we could form a non-profit corporation so their donations would be tax deductible. Therefore, I separated Life Assurance Ministries into two entities: LAM Publishers that oversees the book ministry of LAM, and LAM, Inc. which is a non-profit corporation with a 501(c)(3) designation from the IRS and controlled by a board of directors. Our initial plan was to send a simple, little newsletter to the approximately 3,000 names then on LAM’s mailing list. The goal was to encourage these people in their walk with Christ and help them “work through” Adventist issues. However, after seeing the first newsletter that I had ready, Richard Tinker suggested that he format it. Wow! What a difference! After the first issue was sent out, we received many requests from our readers to add names to our mailing list, and it soon ballooned to approximately 13,000.

The purpose of Proclamation is to minister primarily to former or inquiring Seventh-day Adventists as well as other transitional sabbatarian groups like the Worldwide Church of God. However, many of the names sent in to us are currently members of the SDA church. We have received hundreds of letters from those on our mailing list, including a number of SDA pastors and some administrators. Most—no all—have responded very positively to Proclamation.

Present
The expense of adding the additional names has been huge. In addition to the extra printing costs, we now send hundreds of Proclamations to other countries with mailing costs of from $2.30 each to $26.00 each. We also send numerous copies of Proclamation to Canada with postage costs of $1.10 each. Each month it appears we will not have enough money to print and send out the next issue. Several times key donors, without our request, but because God has led someone else to take a number of years to sell. We have not paid the contributing writers to Proclamation nor have we paid Richard Tinker, who does such an outstanding job designing each issue. We all, without exception, see our work as ministry.

Future
Some of you are supporting this ministry very liberally. We thank you for your liberality. We would ask all those receiving Proclamation to pray for this ministry. We have had so many answers to prayer that we know this ministry is God’s will. Many hundreds of people have written or called thanking us for helping them to place their faith in Christ alone, in His Word alone, and trusting us for helping them to place their faith in Christ alone, in His Word alone, and to trust His grace alone through faith!

We hope LAM, Inc. will be able to sponsor a “Former SDA Pastor’s Summit”—a weekend of meetings where each pastor could give his “story” and share his discoveries. Several have indicated a desire to do this. Tapes could be made of these presentations and these would be a powerful ministry tool.

We have several more former SDA pastors, and others as well, who want to contribute articles to Proclamation. We feel there are many more subjects that need to be developed. Please join us in prayer that we will make the good news of Christ simple, clear and central in all we do.

because God has led someone else to send in the funds!
To date no one has received any salary from LAM, Inc. with the exception that I did receive several thousand dollars from a donor to help print The Sabbath and The Lord’s Day. However, this did not go into my pocket, but into inventory that may take many years to sell. We have not paid the contributing writers to Proclamation nor have we paid Richard Tinker, who does such an outstanding job designing each issue. We all, without exception, see our work as ministry.

I pulled my Freightliner truck and trailer loaded with hay onto Tafoya’s truck scale, opened the door, climbed out of the cab and suddenly I was approached by two angry men wanting to fight. It was late in the afternoon when Big Gene and I pulled off the levy road by the Sacramento River a few miles East of Woodland, California, to get a load of alfalfa hay. Before we finished loading the 25 tons of hay we ran out of daylight, but by turning on the clearance lights we had enough light to stack the bails straight. When done, we tied down and started for Woodland where we were to weigh our load.

Big Gene was my capable helper and also a good helper!

Many of us have grown up with the continual admonition, “get ready, get ready get ready…”

Mission: To proclaim the good news of the new covenant gospel of grace in Christ and to combat the errors of liberalism 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 revealed.

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

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truth can stand the test of investigation

seasons greetings

As we approach another Christmas season our thoughts are directed back to the Christ event. While the world is full of anxiety, we can experience the peace that passes understanding.

Because of the birth, life, death and resurrection of Christ, we have been reconciled to God, and because of that all condemnation to whom are in Christ Jesus! As the world is running here and there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, and the gospel of grace in Christ is a lot more soul satisfying than the truth of the Gospel of Christ. The U.S. Virgin Islands is heavily gospel of grace in Christ rather than law and justice. Certainly “the good news of the new covenant gospel of grace in Christ” is a lot more soul satisfying than the errors of legalism and false religion, but each one has to find that out individually, but each one has to find that out individually and for no other reason, understand why we are no longer members of your church. Rather they choose to challenge and warn of the consequences of our position, particularly at our age when we should be strong in the faith. These people who have believed can enter his rest.” These people who have believed can enter his rest. “We declare our church as the true remnant church of the SDA denomination. The SDA saw the opportunity to declare their church as the true remnant church in the daily papers and declared all others as false. As a result over 2,000 were baptized into the SDA church. Brother, how can we share the good news effectively to the SDA followers and prevent them from being misguided by the truth by people like Finley?

Astounding admissions concerning EGW

Tens of thousands of people on the Internet have been sent an evaluation by Dr. Bacchiocchi of former SDA pastor Greg Taylor’s Manifesto. This we believe to be filled with twisted facts and character assassination. Greg decided not to answer the charges. However, I asked him to respond to me so I would know the facts of the matter. He has given me permission to post this. Find it at http://www.ratzaf.com/downloads. We always seek the truth! Truth can stand the test of investigation!

Proclamation!

As the world is running here and there seeking to destroy the evil of terrorism, we who have believed can enter His rest.

Proclamation!

There is no condemnation to whom are in Christ Jesus! As the world is running here and there seeking to destroy the evil of terrorism, we who have believed can enter His rest. “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.” John 16:33. It is our hope and prayer that every one of our readers will be drawn into a world for whom one day, I know, they will praise me, and I always wish I had not read them. I am glad I read them. I am glad Dr. Reiner’s view of the covenants as if it was presented in new names, changes of address or cancelations during this time, please re-send them. We apologize for this inconvenience. We now keep two mirror-image hard drives outside the computer that are backed up daily.

Covenant Understanding

Several SDAs, including one SDA pastor, have corresponded with me stating that the position of Greg Taylor’s Manifesto does not represent the Adventist position on the covenants. To clarify this I asked Dr. Bacchiocchi to write a three-page article which would specifically address the following: What is the old covenant? What are the signs of the old covenant? What is the new covenant? What are the signs of the new covenant? What is the difference between the covenants? Which covenant are Christians now under? However, he declined our invitation.

Response to Greg Taylor’s Manifesto

On October 20 we were hit with a nasty virus that completely destroyed our main hard drive, and it also wiped out the back up drive in the same computer. We had to revert to another backup outside the computer from September 20. Thankfully, we were able to rebuild all the data from hard copies; however, we did lose the names that were added, changed, or deleted from our mailing lists during this time. Therefore, if you sent in new names, changes of address or cancelations during this time, please re-send them. We apologize for this inconvenience. We now keep two mirror-image hard drives outside the computer that are backed up daily.

Disappointed with Dr. Reiner’s view as the SDA view.

I was disappointed that Proclamation presented Dr. Reiner’s view of the signs of the ancient covenants as if it was the SDA position. While there are variant views among Adventist on some aspects of the covenants, just as there are among Anglicans, Dr. Reiner’s concepts are much different from the general view for reconciled with the Bible and Dr. Reiner, it is not in your view either. For Dr. Reiner to state the Ten Commandments are not part of the “old covenant” is not the general Adventist position, nor is it yours, according to your response. We could go on with the discrepancies in Dr. Reiner’s article and the general SDA position, but that would be the battle of two warring camps of which a more representative source had been chosen for your publication. —From a SDA pastor.

Another excellent issue!

Thank you for another excellent issue of Proclamation! [We] enjoy this publication very much and look forward to each issue. Friends of ours, who also receive it, are equally impressed. You and your staff and the authors you select do a first class job for a quality publication.

I always get encouraged by reading it

Thank your for Proclamation! I always get encouraged by reading it. May [the] Lord bless you and give you strength for the work you are doing. I am praying for you and LAM.

You are a lost person according to the Bible

We hope and pray God will cause you to have a pure heart and change your terrible destruction of people who you are misleading in your magazine. God used to strike people down in the Old Testament and New when they withheld God’s money, etc. You are a lost person according to the Bible. Read Rev. 21, Rev. 22:14-18, Rev. 12:17, Isa. 66:23. Take us off your list!

A lot more soul satisfying

I particularly enjoyed reading your Editorial’s Comments page and your article on “Paul and the Afterlife in 2 Corinthians 5:1-9.” I related well to what you wrote and am thankful that you brought it to my and your readers’ attention. I have read this and other similar passages many times, and have never dared take them at face value before. They did not fit the conservative SDA conditionalist position on the afterlife, so I passed over them. I knew that there was a truth behind them, but I never really meant. The negative comments from some of your readers are always very hurtful offensive and rude and I always wish I had read them. I am glad that most comments are positive and supportive of your ministry. Just like most others who have left the SDA church, we find ourselves somewhat cut off from our former friends. The gap widens with them seeing your ministry’s position as the SDA church’s position. We have to try and find a way to reach these folk, and I believe your position is right. I think that half of the SDA church is heavily populated by Seventh-day Adventists, especially SF. Thomas.

Start a “former SDA Congregation”

Thank you for the Informer Pack that you sent in new names, changes of address or cancelations during this time…Initially, I plan to bring all of these materials, but each one has to find that out individually, under the conviction of the Holy Spirit.

Spoke so accurately of our own experience

College Moore Tinkers’ “How I discovered the Bible” was excellent, and spoke so accurately of our own experience. Along with your many, many supporters, we also pray for the success of your ministry with its unique message to those who have chosen to walk in grace rather than legalism.

What does that tell you?

I do not appreciate receiving your paper, and what it says about the church I work with. Do you have anything else to say except derogatory comments about the Adventist church? Just remember God has blessed this movement abundantly. What does that tell you? [We believe] Christians back to the truth of the Gospel.

Steer Bible believing Christians back to the truth of the Gospel

Several months back I was introduced to your book, Sabbath in Crisis. Your book has been instrumental here the U.S. Virgin Islands to steer Bible believing Christians back to the truth of the Gospel of Christ. The U.S. Virgin Islands is heavily populated by Seventh-day Adventists, especially SF. Thomas.

Thank you for helping me understand truth.

Dear Dale, After three years of research, study and prayer, my husband and I have requested our names be removed for the SDA membership. We truly enjoy reading the articles in Proclamation. They are so uplifting in contrast to the articles in the Adventist Review. Please use our gift to continue to send to the addresses currently on your mailing list.

Proclamation!

Truth can stand the test of investigation

As the world is running here and there seeking to destroy the evil of terrorism, we who have believed can enter His rest.

Proclamation!

Editors’ Comments

Proclamation!

LettErS to the editor

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As the world is running here and there seeking to destroy the evil of terrorism, we who have believed can enter His rest.
Dear "SDA Pastor,"

You take me harshly to task for my recent letter to the Editor, "Letter ‘through’ the editor". I would like to address some of the points you raised in your letter.

Firstly, I appreciate your attention to detail. However, I would like to clarify that I did not mean to imply that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the only church of Christ. I simply meant to express my concern about the division within the church and the importance of unity. My statement, "I am not your conscience. So I expect nothing of you, even if the very foundation of your SDA faith lacks support in 'sound arguments, that...will bear the closest and most searching scrutiny',' was not meant to dismiss the authority of Scripture or the Ellen White corpus. The tenor of your publication makes clear what your church believes... The featured speaker for this section of the meeting was a young man who was sharing his personal testi- meny. He enthusiastically told his story of the pain of his addictive life and his rebellion against God. Then with tears in his eyes he told of his conversion experience and His surrender to Jesus. I was moved to tears. I let out a spontane- nous "amen!" But to my surprise there were just a few more befuddled "amens" in that large crowd. I thought to myself that everyone must be sleepy after the big Sabbath meal. But what happened next came as a shock to me. The man continued to tell his story and told about a friend he had met who shared with him the Sabbath message. He told the congregation how he became convinced of the truth of this doctrine and he started keeping the Sabbath. Suddenly the congrega- tion erupted into hearty "amens" and even cheers. I remember thinking to myself that day, there is something wrong with this picture.

Thank you for the Sabbath! I wish my family and I the chance to trav- el, we love to visit churches. We enjoy observing how others do ministry within their local context. But one thing I have noticed recently that has been typical of our churches ever since my child- hood days is a prayer that starts something like this. "Dear Lord, Thank you for the Sabbath..." I have become increasingly aware of this and have conducted my own mental survey—unofficial of course. Perhaps one time out of ten I will hear at some point in the prayer..."Thank you for send- ing your Son Jesus...? Is there something wrong with this picture?"

More important than anything

Recently we had a couple of people from unchurched backgrounds who started attending our church. After some time of seeking and dis- covery they came to the point of surrender to Jesus Christ. What a celebration it was when these people who had formerly been so far from God made public their decision to follow Jesus in the waters of baptism! Shortly after their decisions there was a "Net" evangelism series, and we invit- ed them to attend as an opportunity to deepen their understanding of some of the doctrinal material. I asked each of them after the series was over what they would change if they could choose to do it over. What I heard hit me right between the eyes. Each of them individually mentioned the fact that there were one or two nights that focused on Jesus and the Gospel of grace, but most of it was on other things especially the Sabbath. One of them went so far as to say, "the last half of the series was almost all about the Sabbath. They seemed to hammer it in night after night. Why is this so much more important than everything else?"

I fumbled around a bit and explained that a lot of our listeners are from other churches with a Sunday tradition. "We spend a lot of time on..."

Letter to the Editor

Dear Colleen (Tinker), I enjoyed your front page article. It was well written, and made the challenge of transition from Adventism to the Christ-centered life quite realistic. Dear Colleen (Tinker), enjoyed your front page article. It was well written, and made the challenge of transition from Adventism to the Christ-centered life quite realistic. The whole magazine was excellent! Keep up the good work!...
that because it is a big issue for them.” But I went home that evening having faced the truth that our Sabbath distinctive is often emphasized to the virtual exclusion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Is something wrong with this picture?

Over the nearly 20 years I have spent in Adventist ministry, I have regularly taught classes to our people in a variety of settings on the subject of evangelism. What a tragedy! Yet my own informal unofficial survey, I have noticed that about a ten to one ratio emerges. When asked to defend the Sabbath doctrine, most good Adventists can put together a simple Bible study with a few texts as to why the Sabbath is important and viable. On the other hand these same people are far less likely to be able to explain the Gospel or give any textual support for how to lead a friend to Christ. Even more frightening, most of these cannot give a clear testimony as to their own conversion experience.

There is something wrong with this picture.

Parallels Judaism

I cannot help but think of the parallel emphasis in Judaism at the time of Jesus. No other institution was as important in Judaism. It was believed that the truth of the matter was common to every other religion. Then it was not the Sabbath doctrine, but the faith of the people that mattered. It was not the Sabbath doctrine but the faith of the people who needed to be saved. It was not the Sabbath doctrine but the faith of the people that Jesus was addressing in the parable of the talents.

Parallels Sabbath

If Israel were to keep two Sabbaths according to the Sabbath doctrine, most good Adventists can put together a simple Bible study with a few texts as to why the Sabbath is important and viable. If Jesus were to delay coming as the redemptive agent of it. Rabbi Simeon Ben Yochai said: “If Israel were to keep two Sabbaths according to the Sabbath doctrine, we will be regarded as a primary resting house for the people of the coming nations, in predestination of the roar- ing of the sea and the waves, fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in cloud power and great glory. (Now note how we are to live!) But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” Luke 21:25-28

Many of us have grown up with the continual admonition, “get ready, get ready get ready,” but we never experienced the assurance of being ready because we were trusting partly to Christ and partly to ourselves. Yet Jesus taught that we could be ready. “You too, be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect.” Luke 12:40. Therefore, our present duty is first to continue to live for Christ in whatever place we find ourselves and not withdraw in fear. Let our witness be a live free from fear and full of assurance. Second, let us live as if the Antichrist is near. 第三，让我们面对这些困难和不确定时间因为“Big Gene”是我们的，和我们为垒战的！

James and Mosaic Ritual Laws

It appears that Jesus always let the moral and ethical considerations of a given situation dictate his actions regardless of whether or not his actions were a violation of the Mosaic Ritual Law. Not only that, but it evident that on certain occasions Jesus actually went out of his way to violate some of these ritual laws. Why did He do this? There are several good reasons. Many of the ritual laws in some way dealt with sin. Jesus was sinless; therefore, some of these laws did not apply to Him. Various Mosaic Ritual Laws were shadows of grace and pointed forward to the life, death and resurrection of Christ and the Salvation purchased for us. Therefore, in many of the controversies regarding Christ’s observance of ritual laws, and specifically the Sabbath laws, as recorded in the Gospels, His goal was to move the people away from the ritual laws to Himself. Now that He had come, the shadows of grace which were useful in pre-Christ days, actually kept the Jews from accepting their Messiah. We, too, must be careful not to let the shadows of Christ keep us from accepting the risen Son and the free, unmerited, grace of God!
Big Gene and the present crisis

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

could see by the lights that a car was coming down the levy road. However, I did not want to stop to let the car go by because I would have had to stop on the steepest part of the hill—something no trucker wants to do. So I kept going and the car, which had plenty of time, stopped for me. After we gained our speed and came to a straight section of the road, I expected the car to pass. However, instead of passing, he pulled just a little to the left and shined his high lights into my mirror. He kept this up during our ten mile ride into Woodland. “Just some crazy driver.” I thought.

When we got to the scale we had a routine we always followed. The driver would get out of the truck and go into the scalehouse and give the weighmaster the needed information so he could make the weight certificate. The helper—we called him the “swamper”—would take the “cheater bar” and impress the tires to make sure they were all properly inflated. Our cheater bar was made from a hard, steel axle shaft and was a little over two feet long. Big Gene took the cheater bar and began thumping the tires on the passenger side of the truck. I climbed out of the cab and was getting ready to go into the scalehouse when I noticed the car which had been following us drove into the scalehouse yard. Now I could see it was an old pickup and it stopped by the side of our trailer. Just then two angry men jumped out and came up to me, ready to fight. “What’s the idea of pulling out in front of us?” they demanded. I was in the prime of my life, but I was never a fighter, nor was I about to start a fighting career that night with these two husky, angry men. There were lots of lights around the scalehouse, but the weighmaster could not see what was going on because the truckload of hay had hid his vision, so he was of no help to me. As Big Gene rounded the back of the truck he immediately took in the scene and stealthily crept up behind the men. With steel cheater bar in his raised and outstretched right hand, he came to my side and said, “You guys want something?” The large muscles of Big Gene’s arms and chest glistened in the lights—A picture etched deep in my memory I will never forget. There was a moment of intense silence as the two men comprehended the situation. Then, without a word, they quickly turned, jumped in their old pickup, and drove away never to be encountered again.

Keep the Main Thing the main thing

Recently I spent a few days on a spiritual retreat. I was alone with God and nature for the entire time. In the stillness and quietness of that place reading the Word, praying and journaling, the message that kept coming to me was my own need to know the Lord far more than I do. I must fall in love with Jesus and walk with him as long as I am on this earth. Then I must lift up Jesus. I must focus on Jesus. I must tell those whom God has trusted to my care how to truly find relationship with Jesus. I see churches that are thriving, caring communities extending the grace they have received to their neighbors and friends. I imagine worship services that are filled with praise and worship because of real life change through Christ and the power of His Spirit; the church of Acts 2:42-47 realized in our generation. I see our communities gathering around and asking us how they too can be saved and enter into such a loving community. Then, I imagine people asking us to teach them everything we know about Jesus and the truths of his word. Is this an impossible dream? No, not at all. Jesus promises it if we lift Him up, and make the Main thing, the main thing.

Greg and His wife Paula served the Foster church for 8 years. They have two sons, Jordan, 11, and Matthew, 8. They pray for them as they seek new ministry opportunities to proclaim the gospel of God’s grace.

Endnotes
3 1John 5:18 (NIV)
5 1John 13:22 (NIV)
7 1 Cor 2:2 (NIV)

Praying For You

Carolyn and I recently attended a Praying For You’ training session on Relational Prayer Witnessing. We felt it was excellent! The concept is simple, Biblical and it works. Choose from one to three people you want to see come to Christ. Call them and ask, “Is there anything in your life that I might pray for this week?” Pray daily for this need. Include in your prayer (1) that Satan be bound from their lives; (2) that God would create in them a spiritual hunger; (3) that they would respond to the gospel of Christ; and (4) that God would save them by His sovereign grace. Then call them about once each week and ask them how things are going and how you can pray for them the coming week. For more information see: www.prayingforyou.org.
Cleansing the Heavenly Sanctuary

Proclamation!

DECEMBER 2001

Part THREE

Seventh-day Adventism’s dogma of an investigative cleansing of either the typical or the antitypical sanctuary.

What Ellen White Claims

Ellen White expresses her belief and its importance through her teachings.

“...I am not ashamed of the gospel...” Romans 1:16, NIV

FormerAdventist.com is a website dedicated to helping those struggling with Adventism to find truth, fellowship, and prayer support.

The context makes it quite clear that a comparison is being drawn between the earthly and the heavenly sanctuaries, specifically in terms of their dedication before employment. There is no hint in either the text or the type that the sanctuary long in use, being cleansed of the accumulated sins of God’s people. In fact, the reference to remission (forgiveness), 22b, is virtually a parenthesis on record in the sanctuary until the final atonement; so in the type the blood of Christ, the sins of all the truly penitent will be blotted from the books of heaven. Thus the sanctuary will be cleansed, from the record of sin. In the type, this great work of atonement, or blotting out of sins, was represented 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.

Ellen White also offers this spectacular portrait of what she thinks happened in heaven in 1844:

“...I saw the Father rise from the throne, and in a flaming chariot go into the holy of holies within the veil, and sit down. Then Jesus rose from the throne...”

This is a reference to the Shekinah glory dwelling above the ark of the covenant before 1844 in the heavenly Holy Place, even though the Shekinah glory dwelt above the ark within the Most Holy Place of the earthly tabernacle. Lev. 16:2

That is, she appears to view God’s throne... Then a cloudy chariot, with wheels like flaming fire, surrounded by angels, came to where Jesus was. He stepped into the chariot and was borne to the holiest, where the Father was. I just came across this website today, I couldn’t have found it at a better time. I was recovering from a lot of guilt that I didn’t go to church for a few years because I was suffering from so much grief that I had a church with someone who could be of help to me: I have just started discovering stuff, and I need to move on from here to more studies. It is possible to send me a link to start a good Bible study with my family? I have been downloading stories from their website, and I am intruiged and encouraged to know that others have gone through what we are now experiencing. We are still a long way off—only discovered all of this about 3 months ago.”

FormerAdventist.com

A website for former Adventists by LAM, Inc. board members Richard and Colleen Tinker

We have dedicated this site to one cause: lifting Jesus up. Every day we pray for the Holy Spirit to be present. We ask God to bless each person who visits the site with truth, support, peace, and assurance. We praise God for his faithfulness to us and for his promise to complete the work he begins in us. (Philippians 1:6)

“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes...” Romans 1:16, NIV

Following are examples of email sent to the webmaster at formeradventist.com. Pray for these seekers of truth.
covenant righteousness deals with heart issues, not rituals. Some argue over which way to bap- 
tize: forward, backward, three times, in the name of Jesus. We could even extend it to the form of baptism: immersion or sprinkling or immersion. Some argue over which way to baptize: forward, backward, three times, in the name of Jesus. In the old covenant the law was written on stone tablets and the new covenant is written in the hearts of those who believe. See Hosea 10:16. In the old covenant there was a written record of sins, but in the new covenant, sins are not recorded. There are no records of sins in the new covenant. See Lev. 16:19–25. The old covenant had written laws, but the new covenant is based on faith. See Phil. 3:6.
What the Word of God States

Where Christ Went in Returning to his Father

Our first quest is the location of God’s throne. However, the humility and wisdom of Solomon are crucial prerequisites to analysis: “The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!” 1 Ki. 8:27. Moreover, God’s throne can be mobile, Ezk. 1. Regardless, whatever its reality, Scripture often speaks of God’s throne in terms of the heavenly temple, as in Ps. 11:4; Rev. 16:17. Specifically, he is “enthroned between the cherubim;” a manifest reference to the earthly type in Ex. 25:22. In stark contrast, nowhere does it hint that his throne is within the veil. Likewise, if the earthly sanctuary does teach us anything, it confirms that, whatever may be the heavenly reality of its Most Holy Place, there and there alone is the throne of him whom sinful humanity cannot approach without a Mediator. Beyond quibble, it follows that, when the resurrected Christ ascended to heaven, he returned to that “Most Holy Place.” For the NT repeatedly states that, “after he had provided purification for sins,” Josephus speaks of God’s throne in terms of the heavenly sanctuary. In fact, it is specifically as our High Priest that Christ “sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven?” in fact, it is specifically as our High Priest that Christ “sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, and... serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man,” Heb. 8:1. There he is “interceding for us,” Ro. 8:34. And there “he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool,” Heb. 10:13.

Even if Christ’s sitting down is read as inaugurating his high-priestly service in whatever pass- age in such references is just as sterile as a Sunday- ice in such references is just as sterile as a Sunday-

Righteousness Beyond the Law—New Testament Agreement

Some have defined righteousness as “perfect obedience to the law.” This may be true for old covenant righteousness, but it falls far below that presented in the new covenant. Note how the follow- ing New Testament references associate law and righteousness.

But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, Rom. 3:21. For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified. Rom. 4:13-14. What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith; but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law Rom. 9:30:31. For not knowing about God’s righteousness and seeking to establish an heavenly throne of the Most Holy Place. In heaven?'

Beyond quibble, it follows that, when the resurrected Christ ascended to heaven, he returned to that “Most Holy Place.” For the NT repeatedly states that, “after he had provided purification for sins,” Josephus speaks of God’s throne in terms of the heavenly sanctuary. In fact, it is specifically as our High Priest that Christ “sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, and... serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man,” Heb. 8:1. There he is “interceding for us,” Rom. 8:34. And there “he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool,” Heb. 10:13.

Even if Christ’s sitting down is read as inaugurating his high-priestly service in whatever passage in such references is just as sterile as a Sunday-ice in such references is just as sterile as a Sunday-

Spiritual Illusions

When I was a seminary student I worked nights at the YMCA in Benton Harbor, Mich. About mid-night one cold winter night, I was crossing the street with the manager of the YMCA. We came to an intersection where the facing light was red. There were no cars in sight in any direction. However, a good law keeper, stood there waiting for the light to turn green. Suddenly, I realized my friend was walking into the red light. He said to me, “You are still under law. I am under grace.” While his statement may not fully apply, neverthe- less it was instructive. The law of red and green lights was designed to prevent accidents. However, in our case there was no chance to get hit by a passing car as none was in sight. It was therefore appropriate to ignore it completely. But now Christ is the end of the law for two little girls; however, don’t put your 16 year old boy under the same law! Rather, as soon as he is old enough, teach the principle of “safety first!” That principle will serve him well the rest of his life no matter what the circumstances.

I believe this is why we consider the old covenant laws. They are holy, just and good for the conditions and people to whom they were given. Now, however, life in the Spirit moves us to live beyond the letter of the law to follow the principles taught by Christ and written on our heart by the Holy Spirit. We are no longer chil- dren; we are sons and daughters of God.

Biblical Teaching

But before faith came, we were kept in cus- tody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 14. What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith; but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. Rom. 9:30:31. For not knowing about God’s righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. Rom. 10:3:4. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.” Gal. 2:21.

We are no longer children, we are sons and daughters of God.

We are no longer children, we are sons and daughters of God.
Angry, insulting talk are sins that when committed bring guilt worthy of fiery hell. In Matt. 5:27, 28 Jesus does the same thing with the seventh commandment. He modifies and expands the act of adultery to include even the look and thought of lust.

Jesus modified and expanded the moral laws of the Old Testament

I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brothers, ‘You good-for-noth-
ing,’ shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be guilty before God.

Here Jesus refers to the sixth commandment. This is not an exact quote because ‘shall be guilty to the court’ is not in the Septuagint. He modifies and expands the act of adultery to include even the look and thought of lust. In Matt. 5:27, 28 Jesus does the same thing with the seventh commandment. He modifies and expands the act of adultery to include even the look and thought of lust.

By itself, is never numbered in the Septuagint, appears above all in 9, with hardly hint that, in its

inner curtain of the earthly temple the moment he died. In fact, the noun ἡσυχαστήριον appears outside the epistle to the Hebrews when the syn-

optic Gospels report this detail, and then entirely alone, however, one clear, almost passing, refer-

ence hardly excuses me from evaluating by far the paramount evidence in the Book of Hebrews, the protracted, specific comparison between the earthly and heavenly sanctuary in the O.T. Scripture yet is appropriate and was true in Jewish law. Note how Jesus modifies and expands this moral law by

However, one clear, almost passing, refer-

The serious student of typology in the Book of Hebrews is warned from the very start that there is no point-by-point likeness between the type, Jesus our High Priest, and the antitype, the earthly priests, even their high-priestly head. The latter, like Aaron, 5:4, were Levites, 7:5; the former is “a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.” 5:6–10 of the tribe of Judah, 7:13f. The latter were both sinful, 5:24 and mortal, 7:23; the former is both sin-

less, 26–28, and immortal, 3, 16f, 21f. But above all, the earthly priests’ constant round of daily and yearly sacrifices is a continual ritual solution to the sin problem. In stark contrast, Christ’s once-for-all “self-sacrifice” is the all-sufficient solution.40

Christ’s service follows his entry into heaven as a rite of ascension, 10:7–12. The latter is described quite uniquely as “a tent… the first… called the Holy Place [τὰ ἁγιά], NRSV. Such specific expressions have their

There are many statements in the law that show a distinct

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the look and thought of lust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

While Scripture does not say, “hate your enemy,” we should not be too quick to condemn the Jewish leaders for teaching this, for it could be implied from other portions of the law. There are many statements in the law that show a distinct

in the moral and ethical nature of how an Israelite was to treat a fellow Israelite compared to how he was to treat a foreigner. For example, you shall not charge interest to your country-

You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.” But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is the foot-

Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, ‘You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.’ ‘But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is the foot-

Many statements in the law show a distinct

Jesus modified and expanded the moral laws of the Old Testament
singular to both its Holy Place, as in Ex. 26:33, and its Most Holy Place, as in Lev. 4:2. However, some 30 relevant times, it refers to the full skënê, as in Ex. 30:13; 36:3; Lev. 4:6; Nu. 3:31. Nu. 4:16 even equates the two skënê and the hagion.

Unqualified, hagio(s) also means the full sanctuary some 15 relevant times, as in Ex. 36:1, 8; Lev. 10:4; 19:30; Nu. 3:28; 8:19. There are no clear cases of it denoting why the Holy or the Most Holy Place. So no careful exegete will appeal to the Septuagint to claim that ta hagio(s) denotes heavens Most Holy Place. If the Septuagint most moves him, he will opt for the full temple. If the apostles voice in Heb. 9:2 speaks loudest to him, his vote will go to what passes there for some heavenly temple.

However, an astute exegete will suspend all judgment till the apostle is through. Having sketched the OT Holy and Most Holy Places, he turns to their services. The first, used day after day, is still called the first tent, 8, while the second, used only once a year, is still called the second tent, 7.

It is crucial to our appreciation of Christ’s High-priestly ministry, then, to grasp the spiritual intent of the earthly services surveyed in 8-10. The chief question is, What does the apostle mean by ta hagio(s) and first skënê in 8:2? Clearly, ta hagio(s) must be the heavenly temple, but in what form? Leaving the crucial, broader context of the whole of the chapter aside for now, this depends upon whether he still means by the first skënê in 8 what he obviously means in 2 and 6. If the immediate context is decisive, we are told that the Holy Place of the OT sanctuary depicted the temporary, deficient services of the first covenant, the subject which launches this entire chapter, 1, while its Most Holy Place equates the whole heavenly temple.

The inference is clear enough, then, that at 9:8-10 the apostle is about to expand on his covenant theme that the obsolescence of the old, with its total sanctuary, opened the way into the real hagio(s), the complete complex of the heavenly sanctuary in 1:28 he describes the place where Christ has entered to serve since his exaltation as the greater and more perfect skënê, 11, to hagio(s), 12, and heaven itself, 24. In such company, the transition its inference again is that ta hagio(s) equates with the entire heavenly sanctuary not merely some Holy Place or even Most Holy Place of that holy entity. However, our learned author further clarifies his inspired message with this very forceful contrast, not comparison, between the earthly high priest, 7, and our ethereal High Priest, 11f. 14. So paramount is this stark contrast in his polemic, in fact, that he both revisits and amplifies it close by 4:27 (see below).

This verse could be correctly translated, “He was continually destroying the Sabbath.”

The statement, “Thou declared all foods clean,” is in the best manuscripts and therefore, should not be treated as some late scribal insertion. This teaching is in direct contradiction to the food laws in Lev. 11 but in harmony with new covenant understanding.

We now turn to the well-known incident of the healing at the pool of Bethesda in John 5. Jesus sees a man who has been a cripple for 38 years lying on his pallet. There is no indication in the record that this was an emergency. Jesus instructs the man to pick up his pallet and walk. This happened on Sabbath, and the Jews immediately accused Jesus of breaking the Sabbath.

For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath. But He answered them, “My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.” (Jn. 5:16-17)

“Was doing,” in the sentence above, is in the imperfect continuous tense in Greek and could be translated “was perpetually persecuting.” If the actions of Jesus were within the biblical Sabbath law and he was supporting obedience to the law, we would expect Jesus to explain to the Jews why his actions were within Sabbath law. However, His answer is shocking. “My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.” John now records the following loaded sentence.

For this reason the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God. (Jn. 5:18)

Again, “was breaking” is in the continuous tense in Greek. The root word used here for “breaking” is the same for “desecrating” and is often translated that way. This verse could be correctly translated, “He was continually destroying the Sabbath.”

While there are many more examples we could examine, we can now make some general conclusions.

1. Jesus always let the moral considerations of a given situation dictate his actions weather or not his actions were in violation of Rabbinical or even biblical ritual law.

2. At times it seems that Jesus purposely went out of His way to violate ritual law. He would often heal by a word of command when a touch would have been appropriate. Yet when a touch would make Him ritually unclean, He often chose to heal in that manner. Again, He could heal by a word, yet the Sabbath he chose to heal by “making mud” and telling a man to “pick up his pallet and walk.” When confronted by the Jews regarding his questionable Sabbath keeping His answer was, “My Father is working until now and I Myself am working.”

Some of our readers may feel very confused at this point. Please continue to read, because what now appears confusing will become crystal clear very soon!

Earthly High Priest

The high priest entered the second skënê = ta hagio(s) once a year with the blood of goats and calves, which he offered for himself and for the sins of the people.

Heavenly High Priest

Christ as High Priest entered ta hagio(s) once for all by his own blood. He offered himself unblemished.

Christ and Moral Laws of the Mosaic Code

What was Christ’s attitude to the moral laws in the Mosaic Code? Probably the best examples are found in His Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5. Space limitations permit only a few examples.

“You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘You shall not commit murder’ and ‘Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.’ But...
Proclamation!

For one...

In Luke's account we read, “he took her by...” At this point some...

...2001 DECEMBER...

If Jesus could heal by a word of command, why did He choose to heal this unclean leper with a touch? Why did Jesus sternly warn this man to say...

...Consider the following:

...Note the following:

...4.

...This explains Mark 1:45;

...He needs absolutely no books of...

...In brief, the author of the Book of Hebrews has...

...But what of 1 Pet. 4:17? Ellen White may be cit-

...There is no room for any future period of scouring heaven's records, let alone...

...Blotting out Sin

...Is Ellen White correct, though, that Scripture times sin’s blotting out just before Christ returns?...
Almost as obscure are two accounts of open judgment books, Dan. 7:10, Rev. 20:12. The dilemma for Seventh-day Adventism’s dogma of a pre-Advent judgment is that only the wicked are judged each time. Yet it insists that the pre-Advent judgment involves none of the wicked who have never believed.

In Dan. 7:11, 21f, 26 it is the fourth beast and the Little Horn who are damned. Nor does a “judgment in favor of the saints” 22 imply their scrutiny. They are “judged” alone in that indicting the beast and Little Horn ends their persecution, allowing them to enter God’s Eternal Kingdom. Indeed, Satan does not persecute his own! In Rev. 20:11-15 contrary to Ellen White’s timing, the judgment opens after the millennium, before which all of the righteous have received their rewards.

The only remaining quest is the Book of Life’s role. This is a manifest record of the names of all who profess faith in Christ and/or his Father.24 saliently, the only time Scripture speaks of blotting anything from it, it is a name.25 Yet equally saliently, nowhere is the timing revealed. So, once more Ellen White’s claim that this is done systematically in a pre-Advent judgment outpaces Scripture.

Conversely, God’s blotting out sin never relates to books, let alone to any pre-Advent judgment. Rather, sins are blotted out as soon as they are forgiven26 and cast far away from the genuinely penitent.27 What, though, of Acts 3:19? This is a tragic yet instructive case of Ellen White seeing no further than her KJV even though it is mistranslated at this point! Even the NKJV puts it: “Repent... and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send Jesus Christ.”

The manifest timing once more is that sins are blot- ted out completely as soon as they are forgiven. We are not informed here or elsewhere in Scripture precisely what Peter meant by the times of refreshing, but this consequence of blotting out does not influence its timing. So Ellen White has quite missed the point here. In fact, no systematic blotting out of sins following a judgment is at all necessary. God “forgets” our sins as soon as they are forgiven, Heb. 8:12, 10:17.1 That is, Seventh-day Adventism’s crucial dogma of a pre-Advent judgment begun in 1844 has no foundation.

And a candid inspection of the first and second parts of the “building” exposes its lack of walls or partitions. The final distinct analysis, in which we treat the highly emotive verses at the heart of this passage, requires no systematic blotting out of sins. Rather, sins are blotted out as soon as they are forgiven, so that times of refreshing, but this consequence of blotting out does not influence its timing. So Ellen White has quite missed the point here. In fact, no systematic blotting out of sins following a judgment is at all necessary. God “forgets” our sins as soon as they are forgiven, Heb. 8:12, 10:17.1 That is, Seventh-day Adventism’s crucial dogma of a pre-Advent judgment begun in 1844 has no foundation.

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And a candid inspection of the first and second parts of the “building” exposes its lack of walls or partitions. The final distinct analysis, in which we treat the highly emotive verses at the heart of the birth of the Seventh-day Adventist movement, awaits our equally careful attention. —Daniel 8:14.

Conclusion

Ellen White has scarcely served her Church well with her repeated assertions that there is a two-apartment, heaven-earth temple, the prototype of the OT sanctuary. Worse, she is totally astray in her consequent sectarian dogma that, to his intercessory ministry in the ethereal Holy Place since the Cross, our High Priest added a new ministry in 1844, one of pre-Advent judgment in the heavenly Most Holy Place. Rather, Christ returned to his Father’s throne, in his heavenly tabernacle that is all Most Holy Place. There is no heavenly Holy Place! Moses was shown only a scale model of the earthly structure he was to erect. And the typology of the Book of Hebrews operates repeatedly in terms of stark contrasts, not close comparisons, between the heavenly type and the earthy antitype. However, even if there are two “apartments” in God’s heavenly tabernacle, the completely overwheming evidence is that Christ ascended immediately to its Most Holy Place. In fact, any mere Holy Place in heaven is so irrelevant in the entire Book of Hebrews that it may as well not exist.

The final nail in the coffin of the dogma of a pre-Advent judgment in 1844, at least in the Book of Hebrews, is that it permits no time for it. Christ is about to return to its pristine recipients! So Ellen White has quite missed the point here. In fact, no systematic blotting out of sins following a judgment is at all necessary. God “forgets” our sins as soon as they are forgiven, Heb. 8:12, 10:17.1 That is, Seventh-day Adventism’s crucial dogma of a pre-Advent judgment begun in 1844 has no foundation.

And a candid inspection of the first and second parts of the “building” exposes its lack of walls or partitions. The final distinct analysis, in which we treat the highly emotive verses at the heart of the birth of the Seventh-day Adventist movement, awaits our equally careful attention. —Daniel 8:14.
Receiving God's Rest in Christ

Dr. Verle Streifling

"Come unto Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest...and you will find rest for your souls."

In Matthew 11:28-30, Jesus gave His people a marvelous offer—His rest for their souls. Yet, He extended this to "all who labor and are heavy laden,"universalizing it for all at any time, who are striving with their works and burdens. So while in its context the offer was initially for Israel, yet it was certainly for the Gentiles too. Isaiah foretold Christ's rest for all,"And in that day shall there be a Root of Jesse...for the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His rest shall be glorious" (11:10-11).

Yet Paul expounds the reason why the Messiah had now made this offer and why it had not been received long before, in Heb 3:7 to 4:12; "Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: 'Today if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tested Me, proved Me and saw My works forty years. Therefore I was angry with that generation...So I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter My rest.' "

When was this "day of trial" in the wilderness? Paul quoted Psalm 95:7-11. The cross-reference says this refers to Exodus 17:2-7, when they chided God and He gave water from the Rock. He had promulgated His presence, His power and protection, in Exodus 3, 4. With miracles, signs and wonders He freed them from Egyptian slavery, plundering the Egyptians. He vanquished Pharaoh's army at the Red Sea, purified the waters of Mara, gave shade at Elim and manna and quail to eat. Yet for all of this, in their hardness of hearts, being unwilling to believe or trust Him, they rebelled against the wilderness, so God swore, "They shall not enter into My rest!"

Yet He spoke of another day when His people would enter His rest, reminding them by David, and later, Isaiah, that Messiah will come and "His rest will be glorious!"

What God's Rest IS NOT

What was God's Rest that they failed to receive? Was it Sabbath keeping? No. We see this many ways. First, Ex 17 was after Ex 16 when God gave Israel the Sabbath. So they already had the Sabbath keeping? No. We see this many ways. First, Ex 17 was after Ex 16 when God gave Israel the Sabbath. So they already had the Sabbath...and the Sabbath were neither the real temple, nor the real rest He wanted for them. Israel sabbatized for 1500 years, yet without receiving His Rest, until Christ offered it, in Matt 11. While Heb 4:4 says on the seventh day "God Rested"...yet the Greek word “katapausis” (ceased) is used, rather than “sabbato" or "sabbatus" (sabbatize), and it is contextually defined in 4:10 as “God ceased from His (work).” Yet the Hebrew Gen 2:2+3 in the Septuagint, also with katapausis (ceased), not sabbatized. The Hebrew MT has shavath (ceased) rather than shabbath (sabbatize), saying "God ceased from all He had created and made" (Young's Literal Translation, Living Bible).

Some writers say that since "sabbatization" appears in Heb 4:9, then God's rest is sabbatizing, which is "left behind" for the people of God. 4:9. To this, Dr. Ford's Daniel 8:14...relates an exchange of letters in 1957 between F. C. Clifford, then president of Australian SDA, and F. D. Nichol regarding the galleys for their Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary. Clifford was distressed that the commentary didn't support their sanctuary teaching very well. Nichol confirmed this with advice to stay out of Hebrews when trying to show their sanctuarian and investigative judgment doctrines. In closing he also noted regarding Heb 4:9 "if you will look again at the galleys, you will note that we do not believe that Hebrews 4:9 presents a valid argument for the Sabbath. I am sure some folks will grieve over this, and perhaps argue we have weakened the Sabbath doctrine...We simply believe Hebrews is not the place to try to establish the Sabbath Doctrine.”

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Their comments regarding Heb 4:9 are lengthy (vol VII p 421-423), stating if Joshua didn't lead Israel into spiritual rest would be no reason for Christians to observe the Sabbath; and to declare that what remains for the people of God is the weekly Sabbath. Yet, while this is a well-meaning attempt to keep Christian Sabbath observance within the confines of the New Testament, it is simply a false doctrine. It is no more Scriptural than trying to observe the 10 Commandments. The Ten Commandments are repeated verbatim in the New Testament, as there was no need to write them out from memory as there was in the Old Testament. And while the Ten Commandments are repeated verbatim in the New Testament, they are repeated verbatim in the Old Testament (cf Matt 19:18+19; Mk 10:19; Eph 6:2-3; Col 3:16-17).

In closing this study we're faced with some heart-searching questions to be answered in fear of missing out on God's Rest. We simply believe Hebrews is not the place to try to establish the Sabbath Doctrine."

While Sabbatarian erroneously claim that Rome changed the Decalogue and the Sabbath, yet it really was Jews before Christ who first changed the command...
Jesus has figuratively applied 'sabbath resting' to our souls, as the Spiritual Rest. In this He has shown that the Sabbath was a shadow which was to be fulfilled in receiving His (God's) rest (katapausis). Thus Paul says, in Romans 6:22, “As in the body you put to death the desires of the body by feeding them to death. And when you live in the Spirit you do not live for yourself, but for Christ who died and rose again for you.” So Jesus offered His Rest, but using “anapauso” instead of OT “sabbath resting”.

Thus, when we believe in Christ, to enter His rest, we must put our trust in Him alone for our bridge to God.

What God’s Rest Includes

First, when we believe in Christ, He is our Mediator and we obtain forgiveness and righteousness.

Second, Christ is our all-sufficient sacrifice and we enter into His Divine Rest, “the rest he entered into”.

Third, Christ is our Helper and we find rest from our burdens.

Fourth, Christ is our Advocate and we enter into His Divine Peace.

Fifth, Christ is our Judge and we enter into His Divine Justice.

Sixth, Christ is our King and we enter into His Divine Majesty.

Seventh, Christ is our Master and we enter into His Divine Authority.

Eighth, Christ is our Guide and we enter into His Divine Wisdom.

Ninth, Christ is our Shepherd and we enter into His Divine Protection.

Tenth, Christ is our Friend and we enter into His Divine Love.

Eleventh, Christ is our Physician and we enter into His Divine Healing.

Twelfth, Christ is our Comforter and we enter into His Divine Comfort.

Conclusion

In conclusion, when we believe in Christ, we enter into His Divine Rest, which is the fullness of Deity in bodily form. We enter into His Divine Rest, which is the true rest of faith (Thoughts from the Mount of Blessings 1). Accordingly, the promise and invitation to enter into God’s spiritual rest remains valid (6:5, 9). When we believe in Christ, to enter His rest, we must put our trust in Him alone for our bridge to God. As in the body you put to death the desires of the body by feeding them to death. And when you live in the Spirit you do not live for yourself, but for Christ who died and rose again for you.” So Jesus offered His Rest, but using “anapauso” instead of OT “sabbath resting”.

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Proclamation!

COMMANDMENT WHICH FORBIDS THE WORSHIP OF ALL STRANGE GODS

Herein, the Jews upheld the Catholic and Lutheran view there was, and it was Origen who introduced a new view to the Eastern Church, while saying there was the previous view. And as his telling the previous view existed, it is congruous with the writing of Clement, and his division, based on the Hebraic text and LXX! The reader may see the decalogue as in the MT, for in the Hebrew language, the first two commandments are in the Neo-Hebrew (NIV Triglott), which shows the LXX in Exodus concurs with Deuteronomy, giving the command against coveting neighbor’s wife, as in the MT. In Deut 5:21 the commandment has given a more elevated moral sense: the wife is considered first, and separately, followed by a prohibition against the desiring of another’s property. The use of two separate verbs to achieve this separation, naturally lends to an apparent increase in the number of commandments. So two separate verbs make these two separate commands. Why weren’t we told? The Catholic Commentary adds more: The intrinsic reasons in favor of Deuteronomy and two precepts of desire are still stronger. As two acts of adultery and theft are forbidden in two separate precepts, and as adultery precedes theft in all texts, versions and New Testament allusions, so we expect the two corresponding desires to be mentioned in the same order and to be forbidden in two distinct precepts. The passage of Exodus moreover contains further evidence of textual corruption in the omission of “his field” found in Deuteronomy and Papryus Násix and required by parallelism of pairs house and fields. The case of the first precept is very different. Only images of “strange gods” were prohibited, as appears not only from the words “Thou shalt not adore them” but from the words “hath made them” (Ex 20:5a, Deut 5:7) but also from the cherubim (Ex 25:18) and the brazen serpent (Num 21:8) which Yehwah ordered to be made, and from the moulage decorations of the Jewish synagogues in the early Christian period as excava tions abundantly attest. There is question therefore not of a separate commandment which forbids the worship of all images but an application of the precept forbidding worship of strange gods. The Latin division of the commandments is thus more likely to be original. From God’s perspective, both temporal and theological points, there are many reasons to hold the Catholic mode of dividing the precepts original: 1. The MT divides it thus, with spaces between every commandment. 2. It also has double accentuation marks using the Heb “setuma” or “phetuca” dividing the precepts. 3. In Deuteronomy, all precepts after “do not murder” are connected with the Hebrew copula “and.” This divides “do not covet your neighbor’s wife” from “do not desire your neighbor’s goods.”

Proclamation!

So it’s not a separate precept. Thus both Rabbinical and modern Jews considered the command against strange gods and forbidding images as two parts of a one and same command, as in the MT, Herein, the Jews upheld the Catholic and Lutheran mode of division. But their point of separation was they held the two commands against coveting as only one, to keep the total of 10. (because of having 2012 as a separate command), while the Catholics and Lutherans saw and kept these as two distinct commandments. The church saw man’s wife as a free moral agent, and thus could not be a part of his chattel as appeared from the Jew’s mode of reckoning, for God gave these in two precepts as in the MT, Nash Papyri and the LXX.

Lutheran History. p.225 concur the decalogue was divided these 3 ways, Kiel & Delisch call it two, but show it was also these 3 ways. So desperate for truth we turn to the Catholic Commentary on the Holy Scriptures which tells us: Origen, who introduced this (Orthodox & Reformed) view, attests to the previous existence of a different view in which two precepts forbidding evil desires were recognized, and one and the same precept forbade the worship of images and of strange gods. (p. 218)

There is Question Therefore Not of a Separate Commandment Which Forbids the Worship of All Images But an Application of the Precept Forbidding Worship of Strange Gods.

Church, while saying there was the previous view. And as his telling the previous view existed, it is congruous with the writing of Clement, and his division, based on the Hebraic text and LXX! The reader may see the decalogue as in the MT, for in the Hebrew language, the first two commandments are in the Neo-Hebrew (NIV Triglott), which shows the LXX in Exodus concurs with Deuteronomy, giving the command against coveting neighbor’s wife, as in the MT. In Deut 5:21 the commandment has given a more elevated moral sense: the wife is considered first, and separately, followed by a prohibition against the desiring of another’s property. The use of two separate verbs to achieve this separation, naturally lends to an apparent increase in the number of commandments. So two separate verbs make these two separate commands. Why weren’t we told? The Catholic Commentary adds more: The intrinsic reasons in favor of Deuteronomy and two precepts of desire are still stronger. As two acts of adultery and theft are forbidden in two separate precepts, and as adultery precedes theft in all texts, versions and New Testament allusions, so we expect the two corresponding desires to be mentioned in the same order and to be forbidden in two distinct precepts. The passage of Exodus moreover contains further evidence of textual corruption in the omission of “his field” found in Deuteronomy and Papryus Nåšix and required by parallelism of pairs house and fields. The case of the first precept is very different. Only images of “strange gods” were prohibited, as appears not only from the words “Thou shalt not adore them” but from the words “hath made them” (Ex 20:5a, Deut 5:7) but also from the cherubim (Ex 25:18) and the brazen serpent (Num 21:8) which Yehwah ordered to be made, and from the moulage decorations of the Jewish synagogues in the early Christian period as excavations abundantly attest. There is question therefore not of a separate commandment which forbids the worship of all images but an application of the precept forbidding worship of strange gods. The Latin division of the commandments is thus more likely to be original. From God’s perspective, both temporal and theological points, there are many reasons to hold the Catholic mode of dividing the precepts original: 1. The MT divides it thus, with spaces between every commandment. 2. It also has double accentuation marks using the Heb “setuma” or “phetuca” dividing the precepts. 3. In Deuteronomy, all precepts after “do not murder” are connected with the Hebrew copula “and.” This divides “do not covet your neighbor’s wife” from “do not desire your neighbor’s goods.”

Proclamation!

God’s true Temple, Worship, and Rest

This brings us back to God’s indictment on Israel in Isa 66:1, “Where is the house you’ll build Me, and where is the place of My rest?” Quoting this to the Jews in Acts 7, Stephen told them, “God desires genuine substance worship! So as a true believer, in true worship, we’re told, “You are the temple of God and the Spirit of God dwells in you.” (1 Cor 3:16). In the ritual sanctuary the Holy Spirit came down to dwell in shiklah glory on the mercy seat of the Holy of Holies, but only once a year! Now He continually dwells in man’s spirit, which is “the temple of God, as He has said "I will dwell in them” (2 Cor 6:16). In Galatians, Paul exHORTS “We are the true circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh”; and in 1Cor 14:1 ‘I will sing in the Spirit...’ I will pray in the Spirit... I will bless God in the Spirit ;” and in Heb 13 “Let us offer to God the sacrifice of praise continually...” giving thanks to His name; so the true sacrifices to God are also spiritual sacrifices!

David foresaw these things also; in the Psalms “Let us worship at His footstool. Arise O Lord to Your rest... Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness, and let Your saints shout aloud for You for which God responds “This is My resting place forever, here will I dwell for I have desired it...” I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints will shout aloud for joy!” Indeed, beloved, we are His priests as His royal priesthood, His holy nation, His people, the faithful, His spiritual people called to “proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light!” God’s true temple is not a building, but man’s spirit—A Spiritual temple. His true worship is not rituals but “worship in the Spirit” or Spirit-led worship. His true sacrifices are not things, but Spiritual Sacrifices as of praise, a contrite spirit, etc. And His true rest is not a ‘sabbath keeping’ but the Spiritual Rest for our Souls that Jesus freely gives us, when we’ve put our complete faith and trust entirely in Him and all the Spiritual blessings He alone provides us, as our only mediator to God (1 Tim 2:5).

Just as He offered Israel His power, His provision, His protection and His presence if they would only place their total trust in Him alone, He has offered the same for us. If we will place our total trust in Him and all He has done for us. He provides more than everything we need, to be completely saved and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, that we lack nothing to meet the gaze of the Great Law Giver—God Himself! The Scripture says, “If you confess Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved... Whoever puts his trust IN HIM, will not be put to shame!” (Rom 10:9-15).

Have you, beloved reader, put your total trust in Christ, and in Him alone, that you too can experience His Rest for your soul? Isaiah promised, “unto Him shall the Gentiles seek, and His Rest shall be glorious!”

Proclamation!

God’s true temple is not a building, but man’s spirit—a spiritual temple..
It’s sad that many today have gone to excesses in denouncing the Catholic church. This is especially true in the way many as the SDAs call her the “Beast” of Revelation; the “man of sin” of Thessalonians and “Little Horn” of Daniel 7, charging her with changing God’s Law as in Dan 7:25: “Says Daniel, of the Little Horn, the Papacy, Ye shall think to change times and the law. And Paul styled the same power the ‘man of sin’, who was to exalt himself above God…The Papacy has attempted to change the Law of God. The second commandment forbidding image worship has been dropped from the law…But papists urge, as

...if Rome joins the prohibition of images to the first, holding them as one command, then I may not rightly charge her with “taking away” from God’s Word.

a reason for omitting the second commandment, that it is unnecessary, being included in the first, and that they are giving the law exactly as God designed it to be understood.” (Great Controversy, 1887 ed. p.446, Ellen G. White)

Prophecy has declared that the Papacy was to ‘think to change times and laws’. Rome preserves to expunge from the law of God the second commandment forbidding worship of images, thus, she is leaving the Gentiles, who do not have the OT, with the seven commands, but including vs 2 that SDAs omit, though they divide v.17 into two… (“they” is Catholics and Lutherans, supported by the Masoretic Text) Surprised! While Mrs. White and some Protestants bewail Rome for how she divides the commands, yet she’s not alone, and she follows the Masoretic Hebrew Text. Did any SDA scholars read the MT? If so, why didn’t they tell us this? Jamieson, etc., adds some interesting points as well:

1. The Jews themselves divided the decalogue differently by making Ex 20:2 to be a separate precept! Yet this goes by unmentioned at all, for with this as another command, then by Protestant reckoning there’s 11 commands! So, why decry Rome for how she divides them, when nothing’s said about the Jews making vs. 2 a separate command?

2. Catholics and Lutherans follow Augustine’s division. This implies before him, no one followed the Hebrew text in dividing these precepts. Jamieson, etc., aren’t alone in affirming this. Yet, when refuting a heretic, St. Augustine shows he found prohibition against images was in the first command, and that taking God’s name in vain was in the second. If necessity these tables are aligned, the OT, is any of the ten commands omitted?

Still some say Rome had no right to change the order or numbering of the precepts, so the first two become one, and the tenth is divided. Jamieson, Fausset & Brown’s commentary says these should have done more home work before shouting, for here we read:

by the Masoretic Text, the first commandment extends from v.2 to v.6; the second is expressed in v.7; and in order to make up the required number “they divide v.17 into two…” (“they” is Catholics and Lutherans, supported by the Masoretic Text) says Daniel, of the Little Horn, the Papacy, “You shall not have strange gods before me; thou shalt not make to thyself any graven thing to worship.”

The Baltimore Catechism #4 by Rev. Thomas Kinkead cites the whole of vs.2-6 as the first command, as does the Popular Catholic Catechism by John A. Hardon, S.J. without one word omitted from their catechisms, forbidding worship of gods, and to divide the tenth commandment, in order to preserve the number.” (Ibid 56-57) Here she virtually echoes Utah Smoth, Adam Clark, (p.403), and Matthew Henry’s Commentary.

Objectively Evaluating These Allegations

Yet, if Rome joins the prohibition of images to the first, holding them as one command, then I may not rightly charge her with ‘taking away’ from God’s Word. The Roman Catholic Church and the Decalogue...

...Clement of Alexandria, states that the first command is against idolatry, the second respects ‘the power of God which is His name’ and the third word ‘concerns the seventh-day of rest’!

Several Jewish writers—Talmud, Targum, Jonathan, and Maimonides—regard this verse (Ex 20:2) as forming a distinct precept. The Roman Catholic Church and the Lutherans, after the example of St. Augustine, divide the commandments into duties pertaining to God, comprised of the first three, and those relating to man, contained in the remaining seven. In their view, which is supported

There’s another interesting word from Augustine in Vol. VII, p.65: “And so do men live in opposition to the three and seven, that ‘Psaltry of ten strings!’ Th’ commandments O God, Most High are most sweet!” This, 80 years after Constantinople shows the Catholic Bishops loved God’s commandments. They didn’t hate them, trying to hammer them to bits! Augustine didn’t begin dividing them into ‘three and seven’. Instead, he boldly stated taking God’s name in vain violated the second precept—even when dealing with heretics! But 200 years before him, Clement of Alexandria, states that the first command is against idolatry; the second respects ‘the power of God which is His name’ and the third word ‘concerns the seventh-day of rest’! But, here we see the translator played havoc with the text, giving Clement’s word ‘rites’ as ‘fourth’ to shift the reader to the Protestant division! (Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol.2, p.512). So Clement’s commentary shows how the Decalogue was divided in his day, long before Augustine—even a century before Origen! Still the Jerome Biblical Commentary has other significant points to make.

1. re. the ninth and tenth commandments (coveting your neighbor’s wife; and his goods); in Exodus the neighbors are mentioned first, while in Deuteronomy the precept about his wife is first. But the Naah Pappay of the second century BC, harmonizes Ex 20 with Deut 5 for in this most eclectic papyrus Ex 20 has ‘your neighbor’s wife before his goods, showing this to be the original order. And here we must notice that the Septuagint, (LXX) reflecting the more ancient Hebrew texts from before the Naah Pappay, supports this harmonization, with his wife before his goods.

2. The decalogue was divided 3 ways: a “in accordance with rabbinical tradition, the modern Jews divide them thus: the first, 20:2; the second 20:3-6; and the third through the tenth 20:7-17.” b. “Following Philo, Josephus, and the Greek Fathers, the Modern Greek and Reformed churches divide them thus: the first, 20:2-3; the second, 20:4-6; third 20:7; the fourth 20:8-11; and the against thee, for the second commandment is ‘thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain’…” (Nicene Fathers, vol. 1, p.216; series 1). And, “for to worship God One is also enjoined on us. ‘Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain’ is also enjoined on us which is the second commandment.” (Ibid, vol VII, p.24)

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“Says Daniel, of the Little Horn, the Papacy; He shall think to change times and the law. And Paul styled the same power the ‘man of sin’, who was to exalt himself above God… The Papacy has attempted to change the Law of God. The second commandment forbidding image worship has been dropped from the law... But papists urge, as

...if Rome joins the prohibition of images to the first, holding them as one command, then I may not rightly charge her with ‘taking away’ from God’s Word. a reason for omitting the second commandment, that it is unnecessary, being included in the first, and that they are giving the law exactly as God designed it to be understood.” (Great Controversy, 1886 ed. p. 446, Ellen G. White)

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Objectively Evaluating These Allegations

Yet, if Rome joins the prohibition of images to the first, holding them as one command, then I may not rightly charge her with ‘taking away’ from God’s Word. Rather I must prove she omits this prohibitive in all her Bibles, catechisms and books of devotion, to rightly thus charge her. But the truth is Rome does tell her people not to worship images of false gods, whether these gods are idols, money, science or popularity, as in the New Saint Joseph Baltimore Catechism, p.106. Under the “First commandment of God” they show it forbids worship of images. So too in their Catechism for Catholic Parish schools, p.34 (quoted below), and their Baltimore Catechisms #2 and #3: “The Ten Commandments of God... 179. Which are the Ten Commandments? 1. I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before me; thou shalt not make to thyself any graven thing to be worshipped.”

The Baltimore Catechism #4 by Rev. Thomas Kinkead cites the whole of vs 2-6 as the first commandment, as does the Popular Catholic Catechism by John A. Hardon, S.J. without one word omitted from the verses forbidding false gods and adoring images, but including vs 2 that SDAs omit, though part of the first precept, showing the commands are for Israel. Moreover, in none of Rome’s Bibles having the OT, is any part of the ten commandments omitted!

Still some say Rome had no right to change the order or numbering of the precepts, so the first two become one, and the tenth is divided. Jamieson, Fausset & Brown’s commentary shows these should have done more home work before shouting, for here we read:

Several Jewish writers—Talmud, Targum, Jonathan, and Masorim—regard this verse (Ex 20:2) as forming a distinct precept. The Roman Catholic Church and the Lutherans, after the exam- ple of St. Augustine divide the commandments into duties pertaining to God, comprised of the first three, and those relating to man, contained in the remaining seven. In their view, which is supported by the Masoretic Text, the first commandment extends from v.2 to v.6; the second is expressed in v.7; and in order to make up the required number “they divide v.17 into two...” (“they” is Catholics and Lutherans, supported by the Masoretic Text). Surprise! While Mrs. White and some Protestants bewail Rome for how she divides the commandments, yet she’s not alone, and she follows the Masoretic Hebrew Text. Did any SDA scholars read the MT? If so, why didn’t they tell us this? Jamieson, etc., adds some interesting points as well:

1. The Jews themselves divided the decalogue differently by making Ex 20:2 to be a separate precept! Yet this goes by unmentioned at all, for with this as another command, then by Protestant reckoning there’s 11 commandments! So, why decry Rome for how she divides them, when nothing’s said about the Jews making vs 2 a separate command? 2. Catholics and Lutherans follow Augustine’s division. This implies before him, no one fol- lowed the Hebrew text in dividing these pre- cepts. Jamieson, etc., aren’t alone in affirming this. Yet, when refuting a heretic, St. Augustine showed he found prohibition against images was in the first command, and that taking God’s name in vain was the second precept! “Of necessity these tables are against idolatry; the second respects ‘the power of God which is His name’ and the Third Word ‘concerns the Seventh-day of rest’!”

...Clement of Alexandria, states that the first command is against idolatry; the second respects ‘the power of God which is His name’ and the third word ‘concerns the Seventh-day of rest’!

There’s another interesting word from Augustine in Vol. VIII, p.656: “And so do men live in opposition to the three and seven, that ‘Psaltery of ten strings’ Thy commandments O God, Most High are most sweet!” This, 80 years after Constantine, shows the Catholic Bishops loved God’s com- mands. They didn’t hate them, trying to hammer them to bits! Augustine didn’t begin dividing them into ‘three and seven’. Instead, he boldly stated taking God’s name in vain violated the sec- ond precept—even when dealing with heretics!

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2. The decalogue was divided 3 ways: a “In accordance with rabbinical tradition, the modern Jews divide them thus: the first, 20:2; the second 20:3-6; and the third through the tenth 20:17-17.” b. “Following Philo, Josephus, and the Greek Fathers, the Modern Greek and Reformed churches divide them thus: the first, 20:2-3; the second, 20:4-6; third 20:7; the fourth 20:8-11; and the fifth through the tenth, 20:12-17.” c. “In the tradition of the Latin Fathers, Roman Catholics and Lutherans divide them thus: the first, 20:2-6; the second, 20:7; the third, 20:8-11; the fourth through eighth, 20:12-16; the ninth, 20:17 a; the tenth, 20:17 b.”

Clearly Ex 20:2 merely introduces to the deca- logue as a whole and the first precept in particular
so it’s not a separate precept. Thus both Rabbinical and modern Jews considered the command against strange gods and forbidding images as two parts of a one and same command, as in the MT, Herein, the Jews upheld the Catholic and Lutheran mode of division. But their point of separation was they held the two commands against coveting as only one, to keep the total of 10, (because of having 202 as a separate command) while the Catholics and Lutherans saw and kept these as two distinct commands. The church saw man’s wife as a free moral agent, and thus could not be a part of his chattel as appeared from the Jew’s mode of reckoning, for God gave these in two precepts as in the MT, Nash Papyri and the LXX. The Lutheran Commentary, p.225 concur the decalogue was divided these 3 ways, Kiel & Delischz call it two, but show it was also these 3 ways. So desperate for truth we turn to the Catholic Commentary on the Holy Scriptures which tells us: Origen, who introduced this (Orthodox & Reformed) view, attests to the previous existence of a different view in which two precepts forbidding evil desires were recognized, and one and the same precept forbade the worship of images and of strange gods. (p. 218)

There is question therefore not of a separate commandment which forbids the worship of all images but an application of the precept forbidding worship of strange gods.

Church, while saying there was the previous view. And his telling of the previous view existed, is congruous with the writing of Clement, and his division, based on the Hebrew text and LXX!

The reader may see the decalogue as in the MT, for example, in the Interlinear Bible by Green & the NIVTrigott, which shows the LXX in Exodus concurs with Deuteronomy, giving the command against coveting neighbor’s wife as the 9th, and his gods as the 10th as Nash Papyri shows. But the LXX reflects Ancient Hebrew ms supporting the Catholic and Lutheran division of the decalogue So to hangare with them, indirect God who gave it so! The Catholic Encyclopedia adds reasons for following the Deuteronomical order (vol V, p.5). Re. the 9th and 10th precepts we read: In Exodus a man’s wife is ranked with his servants and his animals as part of his “house” i.e., his possessions. Deut 5:21 the commandment has a more elevated moral sense: the wife is considered first, and separately, followed by a prohibition against the desiring of another’s property. The use of the singular “his” to separate the wife, naturally leads to an apparent increase in the number of commandments. So two separate verbs make these two separate commands. Why weren’t we told:
The Catholic Commentary adds more: The intrinsic reasons in favor of Deuteronomy and two precepts of desire are still stronger. As two acts of adultery and theft are forbidden in two separate precepts, and as adultery precedes theft in all texts, versions and New Testament allusions, so we expect the two corresponding desires to be mentioned in the same order and to be forbidden in two distinct precepts. The passage of Exodus moreover contains further evidence of textual corruption in the omission of “his field” found in Deuteronomy and Papyrus Nash and required by parallelism of pair house and field. The case of the first precept is very different. Only images of “strange gods” were prohibited, as appears not only from the words “Thou shalt not add unto the Lord God his name” (Ex 20:5a Deut 5:7) but also from the cherubim (Ex 25:18) and the brazen serpent (Num 21:8) in which “Ye worshiped it (serpent) and cried to me” (Ex 25:18) (31:6) (Num 21:8) (Ex 25:18) (31:6)

There is question therefore not of a separate commandment which forbids the worship of all images but an application of the precept forbidding worship of strange gods. The Latin division of the commandments is thus more likely to be original.

From the MT, Luke 17:3–10 is congruous and theological points, there are many reasons to hold the Catholic mode of dividing the precepts original:

1. The MT divides it thus, with spaces between:

2. It also has double accentuation marks using the Heb “setuma” or “phetuca” dividing the precepts.

3. In Deuteronomy, all precepts after “do not murder” are connected with the Hebrew copula “and”/This divides do not covet your neighbor’s wealth from “do not desire your neighbor’s goods.”

God’s TRUE Temple, Worship, and Rest

This brings us back to God’s indictment on Israel in Isa 66:1, “Where is the house you’ll build Me, and where is the place of My rest?” Quoting this to the Jews in Acts 7, Stephen told them, “God does not dwell in temples made with hands.” “What is Your Temple? Jesus revealed this to the Samaritan woman in John 4 when she asked “Where is the right place to worship God?” He answered “The hour now is, when the true worshippers will worship God in spirit and in truth…God is spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth (Gk, ‘arioth’)” (vs 23+24). Here He ended all the OT externals of worship, pointing out that true, genuine, and real worship must come from within man’s spirit. The old age prophecy of when, where, how, were all of the past, for God wants reality worship from the heart, in lieu of the ritual worship as only lip service which also Isaiah and Jesus deplored; “They honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me.” Mere shadow worship is inadequate—God desires genuine substance worship!

So as not to add unto the Lord, we cannot claim we are true worship, we’re told, “You are the temple of God and the Spirit of God dwells in you.” (1 Cor 3:16). In the ritual sanctuary the Holy Spirit came down to dwell in shekinah glory on the mercy seat of the Holy of Holies, but only once a year! Now He continually dwells in man’s spirit, which is “the temple of God, as He has said “I will dwell in them” (2 Cor 6:16). In Galatians, Paul exhorts “We are the true circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh” and in 1Cor 14:1 ‘I will sing in the Spirit… I will pray in the Spirit… I will bless God in the Spirit’; and in Heb 13 “Let us offer to God the sacrifice of praise continually...giving thanks to His name”; so the true sacrifices to God are also spiritual sacrifices!

David foresees these things also in the Psalms “Let us worship at His footstool, Arise O Lord to Your rest...Let Your priests be clothed with righteouessness, and let Your saints shout aloud for joy!...” which God responds “This is My resting place forever, here will I dwell for I have desired it... I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints will shout aloud for joy!” Indeed, beloved, we are His priests as our Great High Priest and our Royal High Priesthood; we are His special people called to “proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light!”

God’s true temple is not a building, but man’s spirit—a spiritual temple. His true worship is not rituals but worship in the Spirit or Spirit-led worship. His true sacrifices are not things, but Spiritual Sacrifices as of praise, a contrite spirit, etc. And His true rest is not a ‘sabbath keeping’ but the Spiritual Rest for our Souls that Jesus freely gives us, when we’ve put our complete faith and trust entirely in Him and all the Spiritual blessings. He alone provides us, as our only mediator to God (1 Tim 2:5).

Just as He offered Israel His power, His provision, His protection and His presence if they would only place their total trust in Him alone, He has offered the same for us, if we will place our total trust in Him and all He has done for us. He provides more than everything we need, to be completely saved and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, that we lack nothing to meet the gaze of the Great Law Giver—God Himself! The Scripture says, “If you confess Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved... Whoever puts his trust IN Him, will not be put to shame!” (Rom 10:9-13).

Have you, beloved reader, put your total trust in Christ, and in Him alone, that you too can experience His Rest for your soul? Isaiah promised, “unto Him shall the Gentiles seek, and His Rest shall be glorious!”

Proclamation!

Proclamation!

Proclamation!
When we believe in Christ, to enter His rest, we must put our trust in Him alone for our bridge to God.

Jesus has figuratively applied ‘sabbath resting’ to our souls, as the Spiritual Rest. In this He has shown that the Sabbath was a shadow which was to be fulfilled in receiving His (God's) rest (Ktupaios). Thus Paul says, ‘So Jesus offered His Rest, but using “anapauo” also used for OT “sabbath resting” (LXX), and Paul exHORTS “Let us labor to enter His rest, lest we fall after the same unbelief! Adding “We who have believed, relied on and trusted in (Christ) do enter His rest” (4:3 Amplified), for “He who has entered into His rest, has ceased from works, even as God did from His” (4:10). Here the SDA Commentary adds “has ceased from works (for salvation) as God did from His (at creation)!” In using “anapauo” of OT Sabbath resting.

What God’s Rest Includes

Thus, when we believe in Christ, to enter His rest, we must put our trust in Him alone for our cleansing from all sin. 1 Jn 1:7 says “the blood of Christ keeps on cleansing us from all sin” and Col 2:13 “(God) has made us alive together with Him (Christ) having forgiven all our trespasses.” When we believe in Christ, to enter His rest, we must put our trust in Him alone for our bridge to God. In Eph 2:18 we read “For through Him we have access… to the Father” and 3:12 “…we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.” Believing in Christ, to enter His rest we must trust Him alone for our Peace with God, as Eph 2:14 says, “He Himself is our peace” and Rom 5:1 “having been justified by faith have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” When we believe in Christ, to enter His rest, we must put our trust in Him alone for our righteousness, as Rom 4:3-6 says, “but who he does not work… his faith is accounted for righteousness” And 10:4 “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to all who believe in Him!” As 4:22-25 illustrates this “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness…” this was written for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him.”

So too, believing in Christ, to enter His rest, we must rely on Him alone for our justification. In Rom 4:25 “Christ was delivered up for our sins, and raised for our justification…” If you are being justified by faith, we have peace with God.”

And, believing in Christ, to enter His rest, we must rely wholly in Him for our holiness, as we read “…so He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before God!” (2 Ths 3:13); again, “having been set free from sin… you have your fruit to holiness” (Rom 6:22); and again “but for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness” (Heb 2:10).

Believing in Christ, to enter His rest, we must trust Him alone for our saving and sustaining faith. Eph 2:8 saying by grace you have been saved through faith, adds “and that (faith) is of ourselves, it is the Gift of God.” When Paul said “I am crucified with Christ” he adds, “the life I now live I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Gal 2:20). In Rom 3:22 he says, “the righteousness of God is which through the faith of Jesus Christ… on all who believe”; and vs 26 “that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has the faith of Jesus.”In these texts the Greek text is in the possessive case of (Jesus) rather than locative (in Jesus).

This was so well illustrated that stormy night on Galilee when Jesus invited Peter to walk with him on the water. When Peter’s faith failed and he began sinking, Christ caught him, and Jesus’ faith carried Peter back into the boat. But John completes the story, that though the disciples had turned into the third watch of the night they weren’t yet half way across the sea. But once Jesus entered the boat, they immediately reached shore! Jesus faith superseeded all their works of that night—in a moment of time! So too for us our faith is perfect in its weakness, and it exceeds our works by infinite measure!

When we believe in Christ, to enter His rest, we must depend on Him alone for our eternal life. Gal 3:3-4 reads “When Christ, Who is our life shall appear, you will also appear with Him in glory.” Peter and John declared “You Jews slew Him who is the Prince of Life!” now returns to the Greek ‘Akrasy’ meaning ‘source’ of eternal life. And in John 3:16 “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Believing in Christ, to enter His rest, we must trust in Christ alone for our perfection. After saying Christ is the fullness of Deity in bodily form, Paul adds “and you are complete in Him” (Col 2:9-10); and in 4:12 “…that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God for us we are justified by faith / believing / apart from works!

The statements in the Catholic Commentary regarding textual corruptions in Exodus are Evidently True.

4. The Nazarites support Deuteronomy having the neighbor’s wife first.
5. The LXX also supports the MT in this as well as having it thus in Exodus.
6. Otherwise, it is Deuteronomy’s Catholic Commentary. Holy Scriptures:
   a. Adultery and theft are separate commands, so then coveting the wife and his goods must also be distinct.
   b. Parallelism of pairs shows “field” omitted from Exodus, so it’s corrupted
   c. “The Lord” (Ex 20:11) is inconsistent with “Jehovah your God” throughout the Decalogue.
7. Threat and promise of Ex 20:13-6 combines strange gods and images in one command.

4. Ex 20:11 is a third person interpolation from 3:17 that God speaks in first person (I, me, etc.) throughout the decalogue.
5. The reasons and threats of the first command are 1st person, but 20:11 is 3rd.
6. The reason of the Sabbath command in Deuteronomy is in consonant with their cultures use of Sunday for keeping Egypt and entering the promised land.
7. Also words of Deut 5:14b-15 are in consonant with Ex 20:2 proving they should be in Ex 20:11 instead of what is there today.
8. Moses himself states the words of Exodus 20:11 were not part of the original Sabbath command as he spoke it from Sinai to Moses 5:22, immediately after reciting the ten commands, he unequivocally states, “These are the words the Lord spoke to all your assembly… he added NO MORE. And he placed them on two tables of stone and gave them to me.” So, Ex 20:11 was not on the stones!

SDAs also acknowledge such later additions or interpolations in the Pentateuch, as seen in their Sabbath School Quarterly, 3rd Qtr, 1985, p.7, where they cite such examples as the account of Moses’ return from Babylonian captivity. Ex 20:11 being a part of the original Sabbath command can never eliminates from this precept the idea that it contained “the Seal of God”. As well as that verse teaches the Sabbath was an ordinance of creation. At the same time, Deut 5:12:15 being original, means this wasn’t just a “special reason for Israel” to observe the sabbath as Bible Readings for the Home promotes (p.310, 1963 ed). But Bible Readings’ spin off from Deut 5:12:15 shows no other Biblical or Scriptural basis for a Sabbath. They taught “Since Egyptian bondage is illustrative of the bondage of sin, everyone who has been delivered from sin may regard himself as having the same reason for keeping the Sabbath…” (p.dbl). Their inconsistency is they’ve spiritualized the reason for the Sabbath, but not physical rest as spiritual rest on the “day of deliverance” — Sunday, when Christ rose from the dead!
Their July 2001. Canadian Adventist Messenger p.2 notes that the Catholic Encyclical “Dei Domini” of 1998 (on the internet by that title), gives a Bible basis for celebrating Sunday, the Lord’s Day, which includes Deut 5:12-15 pointing out that “If you keep Sunday as the Lord’s Day, then you are celebrating the deliverance Jesus gives from the slavery of sin.” The article asks “How does one respond to such logic for Sunday keeping?” Any rebutt that’s given will also negate Bible Readings! Yet Messenger tries to evade this by referring the reader to Ex 20 where God spoke the Ten Commandments… the only declaration by God! As shown in this article, Deut 5:12-15 was God’s original declaration, foliating their effort to evade Deut 5, and the other Bible bases for observing the Lord’s Day in the “One Day”!

While Sabbatarians erroneously claim that Rome changed the Decalogue and the Sabbath, yet it real-

ly was Jews before Christ who first changed the command, by eliminating Deut 5:12-15 and adding Gen 2:2-3 to Ex 31:17 to the text of Ex 20:11-16. But, no one one sees about this changing the Sabbath pre-
cept, while there arises such a howling when Rome holds the decalogue as originally given By God. So Luther began this, following NT Precedent! SDAs acknowledge about the commandments in the NT. In their SS Quarterly, 3rd Qtr, 1972, they say “Only three of the ten commandments are repeated verbatim in the New Testament: the sixth, seventh, and eighth...” (p.48) Canright showed that 109 times the nine moral commands of the decalogue were alluded to in the NT. As only three of the nine are repeated verbatim, we see it’s normative for NT Christians to use simplified quotes of these precepts without being charged for “taking away from God’s Word”. If someone is so changed it must first be the NT writers—even the Holy Spirit who inspired them, who would be the first in line for indictment! SDAs Bible Readings p.324, 63 condemns Rome abbreviating the precepts in their Convert’s Catechism. Below, we see the NT precedent for these: 1. (Matt 12:30; 1 Jn 5:21); 2. (Matt 6:5-8; 33- 37); 3. (Tim 6:1); 3. Sabbath (repeatted. Col 2:14- 16); 4. (Eph 6:1-2); 5. (James 2:11; 6:1 James); 6. (1 Thes 4:10); 7. (Eph 4:28); 8. (Col 3:9; James 3:14); 9. (Matt 5:28; Rom 7:7; 13:9); 10. (Lk 12:15; 2 Cor 9:5; Rom 13:19)

To prove Rome is the “beast”, seventh day sects allege the Pope wears a name on his vesture and “VIC ARILUS FILII DEI”, which in Roman numerals is mitre,”VIC ARILUS FILII DEI”, which in Roman numerals adds up to 4:11: “Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial”...

Sabbath, (repudiated. Col 2:14-15)  omitted ceremonial elements (the word “Sabbath” and ceremonial commands of the 3rd commandment), the mention of iconolaty (1st command), and the threat attached to the 2nd commandment, and made other changes (eg in the 10th commandment, Ex 20:17, De 5:21) and in placing the part that He used at the close of the commandments Ex 20:16-6, Dt 5:9-10.

So Luther began this, following NT Precedent! SDAs acknowledge about the commandments in the NT. In their SS Quarterly, 3rd Qtr, 1972, they say “Only three of the ten commandments are repeated verbatim in the New Testament: the sixth, seventh, and eighth...” (p.48) Canright showed that 109 times the nine moral commands of the decalogue were alluded to in the NT. As only three of the nine are repeated verbatim, we see it’s normative for NT Christians to use simplified quotes of these precepts without being charged for “taking away from God’s Word”. If someone is so changed it must first be the NT writers—even the Holy Spirit who inspired them, who would be the first in line for indictment! SDAs Bible Readings p.324, 63 condemns Rome abbreviating the precepts in their Convert’s Catechism. Below, we see the NT precedent for these: 1. (Matt 12:30; 1 Jn 5:21); 2. (Matt 6:5-8; 33- 37); 3. (Tim 6:1); 3. Sabbath (repeatted. Col 2:14- 16); 4. (Eph 6:1-2); 5. (James 2:11; 6:1 James); 6. (1 Thes 4:10); 7. (Eph 4:28); 8. (Col 3:9; James 3:14); 9. (Matt 5:28; Rom 7:7; 13:9); 10. (Lk 12:15; 2 Cor 9:5; Rom 13:19)

To prove Rome is the “beast”, seventh day sects allege the Pope wears a name on his vesture and “VIC ARILUS FILII DEI”, which in Roman numerals adds up to 4:11: “Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial”...
Almost as obscure are two accounts of open judgment books, Dan. 7:10, Rev. 20:12. The dilemma for Seventh-day Adventism's dogma of a pre-Advent judgment is that only the wicked are judged each time. Yet it insists that the pre-Advent judgment involves none of the wicked who have never believed.

In Dan. 7:11, 21f, 26 it is the fourth beast and the Little Horn who are damned. Nor does a "judgment in favor of the saints" 22 imply their scrutiny. They are "judged" alone in that indicting the beast and Little Horn ends their persecution, allowing them to enter God's Eternal Kingdom. Indeed, Satan does not persecute his own! In Rev. 20:11-15 contrary to Ellen White's timing, the judgment opens after the millennium, before which all of the righteous have received their rewards.

The only remaining quest is the Book of Life's role. This is a manifest record of the names of all who profess faith in Christ and/or his Father;23 saliently, the only time Scripture speaks of blotting anything from it, it is a name.24 Yet equally saliently, nowhere is the timing revealed. So, once more Ellen White's claim that this is done systematically in a pre-Advent judgment outpaces Scripture.

Conversely, God's blotting out sin never relates to books, let alone to any pre-Advent judgment. Rather, sins are blotted out as soon as they are forgiven25 and cast far away from the genuinely penitent.26 What, though, of Acts 3:19? This is a tragic yet instructive case of Ellen White seeing no further than her KJV even though it is mistranslated at this point! Even the NKJV puts it: "Repent... and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out..." That is, no systematic blotting out of sins following a judgment is at all necessary. God "forgets" our sins as soon as they are forgiven, Heb. 8:12, 10:17. That is, Seventh-day Adventism's crucial dogma of a pre-Advent judgment begun in 1844 has no foundation.

A candid inspection of the first and second parts of the "building" exposes its lack of walls or partitions. The final distinct analysis, in which we treat the highly emotive verses at the heart of the birth of the Seventh-day Adventist movement, awaits our equally careful attention.—Daniel 8:14.

Conclusion

Ellen White has scarcely served her Church well with her repeated assertions that there is a two-apartment, heavenly temple, the prototype of the OT sanctuary. Worse, she is totally astray in her consequent sectarian dogma that, to his intercessory ministry in the ethereal Holy Place since the Cross, our High Priest added a new ministry in 1844, one of pre-Advent judgment in the heavenly Most Holy Place. Rather, Christ returned to his Father's throne, in his heavenly tabernacle that is all Most Holy Place. There is no heavenly Holy Place! Moses was shown only a scale model of the earthly structure he was to erect. And the typology of the Book of Hebrews operates repeatedly in terms of stark contrasts, not close comparisons, between the heavenly type and the earthly antitype. However, even if there are two "apartments" in God's heavenly tabernacle, the completely overwhelming evidence is that Christ ascended immediately to its Most Holy Place. In fact, any mere Holy Place in heaven is so irrelevant in the entire Book of Hebrews that it may as well not exist.

The final nail in the coffin of the dogma of a pre-Advent judgment in 1844, at least in the Book of Hebrews, is that it permits no time for it. Christ is about to return to its pristine recipients! So Ellen White has quite missed the point here. In fact, no systematic blotting out of sins following a judgment is at all necessary. God "forgets" our sins as soon as they are forgiven, Heb. 8:12, 10:17. That is, Seventh-day Adventism's crucial dogma of a pre-Advent judgment begun in 1844 has no foundation. And a candid inspection of the first and second parts of the "building" exposes its lack of walls or partitions. The final distinct analysis, in which we treat the highly emotive verses at the heart of the birth of the Seventh-day Adventist movement, awaits our equally careful attention.—Daniel 8:14.
And a leper came to Jesus, beseeching Him and falling on his knees before Him, saying, “If You are willing, You can make me clean.” Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched the leper, and said to him, “Be cleansed.” Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed. And He sternly warned him and immediately sent him away, and He said to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.” Mk. 1:40-44

If Jesus could heal by a word of command, why did He choose to heal this unclean leper with a touch? Why did Jesus sternly warn this man to say nothing to anyone about this healing? The answer was obvious to the original readers of Mark’s gospel because the unclean leper was no ordinary leper.

When they arrived at the home, Jesus said, “Why make a commotion and weep? The child has not died, but is asleep.” And they began laughing at him. Then Jesus took only three of his closest and oldest friends and went into the room where the girl was. Taking the child by the hand, He said to her, “Talitha kum!” (which translated means, “Little girl, I say to you, get up”) Immediately the girl got up and began to walk, for she was twelve years old. And immediately they were completely astounded. And He gave them strict orders that no one should know about this…Mk. 5:41-43

Again, we note that Jesus took the girl by the hand; and the Gospel writer, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, chose to record this fact. We see nearly the same instruction given to the parents as to the leper; “And He gave them strict orders that no one should know about this,” Mk. 5:41.

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If Jesus could heal by a word of command why did He choose to heal this unclean leper with a touch? who knew the law and its interpretation. By touch- ing this leper, Jesus made Himself unclean. While there is no specific biblical law stating that someone touching a leper becomes ritually unclean, it is nev- ertheless, clearly assumed in the passage below. As for the leper who has the infection, his clothes shall be torn, and the hair of his head shall be uncovered, and he shall cover his mus- tache and cry, “Unclean! Unclean!” He shall remain unclean all the days during which he has the infection; he is unclean. He shall live alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp. Lev. 13:45-46

This explains Mark 1:45; But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the news around, to such an extent that Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city, but stayed out in unpopulated areas; and they were coming to Him from everywhere. It is evident that the reason Jesus was forced to say out in unpopulated areas was that He was considered unclean because of His contact with the leper.

For the next example of Christ’s relationship to ritual law we turn to the episode of the healing of Jairus’s daughter in Mark 5:21-43. Jesus is approached by a synagogue official who implored Christ to come and heal his daughter who was “at the point of death.” As Jesus and the crowd that followed Him were on their way, a ritu- ally unclean woman touched Him, and to which Jesus responded, “Do not be afraid any longer, only believe.” When they arrived at the home, Jesus said, “Why make a commotion and weep? The child has not died, but is asleep.” And they began laughing at him. Then Jesus took only three of his closest and oldest friends and went into the room where the girl was. Taking the child by the hand, He said to her, “Talitha kum!” (which translated means, “Little girl, I say to you, get up”) Immediately the girl got up and began to walk, for she was twelve years old. And immediately they were completely astounded. And He gave them strict orders that no one should know about this…Mk. 5:41-43

By touching the corpse of a person shall be unclean for seven days. That one shall purify himself from uncleanness with the water on the third day and on the seventh day, and then he will be clean; but if he does not puri- fy himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not be clean. Anyone who touches a corpse, the body of a man who has died, and does not purify himself, defiles the tabernacle of the Lord, and that person shall be cut off from Israel. Because the water for impurity was not sprinkled on him, he shall be unclean; his uncleanness is still on him. Num. 19:11-13

According to this biblical law, Jesus made him- self unclean by touching the dead girl. Further, according to this law; “He defiled the tabernacle of the Lord” and should have been “cut off from Israel.”

Some will argue that the girl was not really dead because Jesus said, “She is not dead, but sleeping.” However, this is the same term Jesus used when he described Lazarus who clearly was dead. In Luke’s account we read, “he took her by
an astute exegete will suspend all judgment till the apostle is through. Having sketched the OT Holy and Most Holy Places, he turns to their services. The first, used day after day, is still called the first tent, it, while the second, used only once a year, is still called the second tent.

It is crucial to our appreciation of Christ’s High-priestly ministry, then, to grasp the spiritual intent of the earthly services surveyed in 8:10. The chief question is, What does the apostle mean by ta hagia and first skene in 8:27? Clearly, ta hagia is the heavenly temple, but in what form? Leaving the crucial, broader context of the entire chapter aside for now, this depends upon whether he means by the first skene in 8 what he obviously means in 2 and 6:6 if the immediate context is decisive, we are told that the Holy Place of the OT sanctuary depicted the temporary, deficient services of the first covenant, the subject which launches this entire chapter, 1, while its Most Holy Place depicted the services of ta hagia in heaven under the new covenant, 15. It should be appreciated, however, that the topic of covenant contr- trolling this chapter’s entire discussion is broached in 7:22, discussed from 8:6 to 10:18, and referred to in 10:29, 12:24 and 13:20. Therefore, the apostle’s intent in this entire discussion with both skene and ta hagia bears heavily upon his meaning in 9:8.

Simply stated, skene is applied with no numeral to the entire OT sanctuary in 8:5, 9:21, 13:10. It is equally applied with no numeral to heaven’s sanctuary in 8:2 and 9:11. Quite possibly, then, the apostle glides from an atypical spatial nuance of first in 9:2, to a temporal sense in 8:2. If so, he returns here to the meaning that ta hagia has when he first utilizes it in 8:2. As noted, he here applies it to heaven’s whole temple. In light of his choosing the adjective true in 8:2 and 9:24, as well as repeating the former’s sentiment, not by man, in made with hands in the latter (compare 9:11), in 9:24 hagia applies to the total OT sanctuary. So here hagia, implicit in true, means the whole heavenly temple.

The inference is clear enough, then, that at 9:8-10 the apostle is about to expand on his covenant theme that the obsolescence of the old, with its total sanctuary ritual, opened the way into the real hagia, the complete complex of the heavenly sanctuary in 11:28, he describes the place where Christ has entered to serve since his exaltation as the greater and more perfect skene, 11, to hagia, 12, and heaven itself, 24. In such company, the transition in inference again is to hagia equates with the entire heavenly sanctuary not merely some Holy Place or even Most Holy Place of that holy entity.

However, our learned author further clarifies his inspired message with this very forceful contrast, not comparison, between the earthly high priest, 7, and our heavenly High Priest, 11f. 14. So paramount is this stark contrast in his polemic, in fact, that he both revisits and amplifies it close by a few words.

This verse could be correctly translated, “He was continually destroying the Sabbath.”

The statement, “Thus he declared all foods clean,” is in the best manuscripts and therefore, should not be treated as some late scribal insertion. This teaching is in direct contradiction to the food laws in Lev. 11 but in harmony with new covenant understanding.5

We now turn to the well-known incident of the healing at the pool of Bethesda in John 5. Jesus sees a man who has been a cripple for 38 years lying on his pallet. There is no indication in the record that this was an emergency. Jesus instructed the man to pick up his pallet and walk. This happened on Sabbath, and the Jews immediately accused Jesus of breaking the Sabbath. For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath. But He answered them, “My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.” Jn. 5:16-17

“Was doing,” in the sentence above, is in the imperfect continuous tense in Greek and could be translated, “was always committing.” If the actions of Jesus were within the biblical Sabbath law and he was supporting obedience to the law, we would expect Jesus to explain to the Jews why his actions were within Sabbath law. However, His answer is shocking, “My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.” John now records the following loaded sentence.

For this reason the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God. Jn. 5:18

Again, “was breaking” is in the continuous tense in Greek. The root word used here for “breaking” is the same for “desecrating” and is often translated that way. This verse could be correctly translated, “He was continually destroying the Sabbath.”

While there are many more examples we could examine, we can now make some general conclusions.

1. Jesus always let the moral considerations of a given situation dictate his actions weather or not his actions were in violation of Rabbinical or even biblical ritual law.

2. At times it seems that Jesus purposely went out of His way to violate ritual law. He would often heal by a word of command when a touch would have been appropriate. Yet when a touch would make Him ritually uncleans, He often chose to violate that manner. Again, He could heal by a word, yet on the Sabbath he chose to heal by “making mud” and telling a man to pick up his pallet and walk. When confronted by the Jews regarding his questionable Sabbath keeping His answer was, “My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.”

Some of our readers may feel very confused at this point. Please continue to read, because what now appears confusing will become crystal clear very soon!

Christ and Moral Laws of the Mosaic Code

What was Christ’s attitude to the moral laws in the Mosaic Code? Probably the best example is found in His Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5. Space limitations permit only a few examples.

You have heard that the ancients were told, “You shall not commit murder; and whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.” But...
I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, ‘You good-for-noth- ing,’ shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be guilty before the court and go into the fiery hell.” Mt. 5:21-22

Here Jesus refers to the sixth commandment. This is not an exact quote because “shall be guilty to the court” is not in the T. C. H. He modifies and expands this moral law by showing that the evil passions of anger and vengeance and insulting talk are sins that when committed bring guilt worthy of fiery hell.

In Matt. 5:27, 28 Jesus does the same thing with the seventh commandment. Here he modifies and expands the act of adultery to include even the look and thought of lust. Of special interest is Matt. 5:33-37 where Jesus refers to the law of vows found in Num. 30:2; Deut. 23:21-23. I list this in the “moral law” section because making a vow (promise) to God is certainly a moral act and should be seen as an expansion of “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor” which, by itself, is a very narrow law.

“Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, ‘You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.’ “But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. “But let your statement be, Yes, yes; or No, no; anything beyond these is evil. Mt. 5:33-37

Granted, the Jews of Jesus’ day were abusing vows; however, a careful reading of the above statement compared with the Old Testament law indicates that Jesus is condemning something permitted, even approved, in the Law. But how did he change it? He modified it and expanded it in such a way that it would correct the abuse the Jews were making of vows which were within the letter of the Mosaic Code. In Matt. 5:34–48 Jesus said, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ “But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. “For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? “If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? “Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

While Scripture does not say, “hate your enemy,” we should not be too quick to condemn the Jewish leaders for teaching this, for it could be implied from other portions of the law. There are many statements in the law that show a distinction in the moral and ethical nature of how an Israelite was to treat a fellow Israelite compared to how he was to treat a foreigner. For example, you shall not charge interest to your countrymen on money, food, or anything that may pass from your hand. You may charge interest to a foreigner; but to your countrymen you shall not charge interest... Deut. 23:19, 20

Therefore, when Jesus speaks about loving our enemies the制定 will modify and expand the moral law beyond ethnic boundaries to include (foreign) enemies who persecute us! It may be of interest to many of our readers how Ellen White interpreted this verse (loving our neighbors) as she was “shown by God” in vision. See http://www.ratzlaf.com/downloads.htm.

While there are many other examples that could be given, we can now make a generalized summary of Christ’s attitude toward the moral laws in the Mosaic Code.

1. Jesus modified and expanded the moral laws of the Old Testament, raising their moral and ethical considerations beyond that of the written law.

2. Jesus modified and expanded the moral laws of the Old Testament, raising them beyond laws for Israel alone to ethical and moral principles for every nation, tongue, and people.

3. Jesus modified and expanded the scope of the moral laws of the Old Testament, moving them beyond laws for Israel alone to ethical and moral principles for every nation, tongue, and people.

inner curtain of the heavenly temple the moment he died. In fact, the noun ἀντιστοιχία appears outside the epistle to the Hebrews when the synoptic Gospels report this detail, and then entirely alone! However, one can almost pass over, reference hardly excuses me from evaluating by far the paramount evidence in the Book of Hebrews, the protracted, specific comparison between the earthly and heavenly sanctuary in the O. T. Scripture yet is appropriate and was true in Jewish law. Note how Jesus modifies and expands this moral law by showing that his change it? He modified and expanded it in such a way that it would be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

A Priest Forever in the Order of Melchizedek

The serious student of typology in the Book of Hebrews is warned from the very start that there is no by-point-by likeness between the type, Jesus our High Priest, and the antitype, the earthly priests, even their high-priestly head. The latter, like Aaron, 5:4, were Levites, 7:5; the former is “a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.” 5:6 42 the tribe of Judah, 7:13. The latter were both sinful, 5:2 and mortal, 7:3; the former is both sinless, 26, 28, and immortal, 3, 16, 21, 24f. But above all, the earthly priests’ constant round of daily and yearly sacrifices to atone for the nation’s sin was not needed. “Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

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2. Jesus modified and expanded the moral laws of the Old Testament, raising them beyond laws for Israel alone to ethical and moral principles for every nation, tongue, and people.
What the Word of God States

Where Christ Went in Returning to His Father

Our first quest is the location of God's throne. However, the humility and wisdom of Solomon are crucial prerequisites to analysis: “The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!” 1 K. 8:27. Moreover, God’s throne can be mobile, Ezk. 1. Regardless, whatever its reality, Scripture often speaks of God’s throne in terms of the heavenly temple, as in Ps. 114:4; Rev. 16:17. Specifically, he is “enthroned between the cherubim”: a manifest reference to the earthly type in Ex. 25:22. In stark contrast, nowhere does it hint that his throne is ever within any Holy Place of his temple above. Likewise, if the earthly sanctuary does teach us anything, it confirms that, whatever may be the heavenly reality of its Most Holy Place, there and there alone is the throne of him whom sinful humanity cannot approach without a Mediator. Beyond quibble, it follows that, when the resurrected Christ ascended to heaven, he returned to that “Most Holy Place”: For the NT repeatedly states that, “after he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven”!2 It is no surprise, then, that the vast majority of commentators conclude that the apostle has heaven’s inner sanctuary, not some mere Holy Place, likewise in mind in his close citation assuring his flock that “Jesus... has entered on our behalf”, Heb. 6:20. Seventh-day Adventism’s apologist G. W. Rice could not dissent more, and his objections are certainly well worth assessing. However, here I will not burden my lay readers with more than a selection of the higher points of my detailed critique, which I relegated to a distant Technical Excursus, where those who wish may ignore it completely.

Above all, the adverb noster, used here as a preposition, is very rare, even in the Septuagint. It appears a meager six times, “most often with katapetasma,” the noun for cur- tain. In striking contrast, the preposition en, which easily offers the identical sense within, occurs around 2,000 times! Can there be even the slightest doubt, then, that the apostle is here employing the idea of Scripture, that with more than a selection of the higher points of his detailed critique, which I relegated to a distant Technical Excursus, where those who wish may ignore it completely.

Nor does the fact that the curtain here has no numeral, unlike 9:3, introduce any doubt. For the curtain is likewise unnumbered in 10:20. There the extremely striking metaphor of Christ’s sacrificial body as a curtain before to honor is best understood in terms of the tearing in two of the veil itself. This is aptly christened by the Hebrew noun katapetasma, especially when it is not used as a preposition anywhere else in the entire NT! None at all! They would most certainly have grasped that the veil was referring to solemnly and truly, merely some Holy Place, of the heavenly sanctuary.

There is only one sure answer. They would have recognized them as a specific OT quotation from the Septuagint. Beyond quibble, it follows that, when the resurrected Christ ascended to heaven, he returned to that “Most Holy Place” For the NT repeatedly states that, “after he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven,” and serves as a clear reference to the heavenly tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man. Heb. 8:1f. There he is “interceding for us”, Ro. 8:34. And there “he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool,” Heb. 10:13. Even if Christ’s sitting down is read as inaugura- tion, as when a delegate is seated at a confer- ence, nothing here even remotely hints that he did anything other than return to heaven to com- mence his high-priestly service in whatever pass- es for its Most Holy Place. In fact, Seventh-day Adventism’s efforts to read some Holy-place serv- ice in such references is just as sterile as a Sunday-keeper quoting Acts 20:7;1 Cor. 16:2 or Rev. 11:10 against regular worship on the seventh-day Sabbath. But if no means does the decisive evidence end here. Heb. 6:19 assures us that our hope “enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered... having become a high priest forever!”1 NASB. The decisive phrase within the veil makes patent reference to the heavenly sanctuary. But which curtain does the author have in mind, the outer or the inner? The most credible answer comes in answering another: How would the initial recipi- ents of this epistle have grasped these words? There is only one sure answer. They would have recognized them as a specific OT quotation from the Septuagint.

Righteousness Beyond the Law—New Testament Agreement

Some have defined righteousness as “perfect obedience to the law.” This may be true for old covenant righteousness, but it falls far below that presented in the new covenant. Note how the following New Testament references associate law and righteousness.

But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, Rom. 3:21. For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; Rom. 4:13-14. What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith; but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. Rom. 9:30-31. For not knowing about God’s righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. Rom. 10:3-4. “Do not nullify the grace of God, if for righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needless!” Gal. 2:21. You have for the light to turn green. Suddenly, I realized my friend was walking into the red light. He said to me, “You are still under law. I am under grace.” While his statement may not fully apply, nevertheless, I think it instructive. The law of red and green lights was designed to prevent accidents. However, in our case there was no chance to get hit by a passing car as none was in sight. It was therefore appropriate for me to read the traffic light as long as it did not violate the principle of safety— as long as no legalistic cops were watching! The other day I was at the busy post office get- ting LAM’s mail. A mother was there with two small girls. As they approached the parking lot she said, “Now you must take Mommy’s hand as there are many cars here.” What a good law for two little girls; however, don’t put your 16 year old boy under the same law! Rather, as soon as he is old enough, teach the principle of “safety first!” That principle will serve him well the rest of his life no matter what the circumstances. I believe this is why we should consider the old covenant laws. They are holy, just and good for the conditions and people to whom they were given. Now, however, life in the Spirit moves us to live beyond the letter of the law to follow the principles taught by Christ and written on our heart by the Holy Spirit. We are no longer chil- dren; we are sons and daughters of God.

Biblical Teaching

But before faith came, we were kept in cus- tody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. Gal. 3:23-26. But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elements, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? You observe days and months and seasons and years. I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored in vain. Gal 4:9-11

Righteousness Beyond the Law—Moral vs. Ritual

New covenant Christians must be diligent here. It is human nature to give moral significance. We are no longer children, we are sons and daughters of God.
Proclamation!

She then continues: and that Again, the most important however, the new covenant motive is differ-

ent. Our sanctified living is not done from the motive of trying to be good enough to be accept-

ed. Rather, it springs from the fact of acceptance! We live like sons and daughters of God because that is who we are! Our goal is to live like the kind of person we now are in Christ!

The second consideration we must understand is that new covenant righteousness is found only in Christ! We look to Him and Him alone as our Representative and Substitute! If we are Christ’s then we, with the Apostle Paul may say, More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, Phil. 3:8-9

Hopefully, we have answered the questions regarding the “righteousness of the law” for the sincere seekers of truth. We believe that the New Testament teaches that the law came to a func-
tional end with Christ. Now we have moral and ethical principles above and beyond that of the law. We have life in the Spirit that empowers us to follow after the example of Christ. We can by faith claim Christ’s righteousness which far surpasses the righteousness of the law. Yes, we can enter true rest in Christ, the rest that remains for those who believe.

Endnotes

1See Reggie, The Sabbath and the Lord’s Day, p. 51-61 for the bib-
sical support for this statement.

2See Mark 1:25.

3See Lev. 15:19-25.

4John 11:11.

5Acts 10, 11, 14:14.

6See Alan Watson, Jesus and the Law [University of Georgia Press, 1996] for many more examples.


8Not the stress on “working in” John 5:17, 9:3-6.

9See Matt. 28:18-20.

10Rev. 24:5-6.

11As a pastor I have always baptized by immersion as I think this is the biblical model and the ordinances of Ellen G. White. There are many who instruct others to “keep the Sabbath” when there are few—probably no one—who have kept it according to the biblical law, let alone Ellen White’s numerous laws regarding Sabbath keep-
ing. However, the new covenant motive is differ-

understanding its heavenly reality, she may have a huge problem here, unless God moved from the Most Holy Place to the Holy Place before 1844. Even her statement in Isa. 6:1-7 Isaiah viewed God’s glory enthroned in the temple’s Most Holy Place is of little help in clarifying where she thought his throne was before Calvary; for she clearly identifies this temple as both the earthly11 and the heavenly.12 At very least, then, the clear inference is that she thought God moved from the Most Holy Place to the Holy Place of his sanctuary as soon as Christ rose and returned to his home in heaven. Ellen White also has much more to say about Christ’s actual work in heaven’s Most Holy Place: In the typical service only those who had come before God with confession and repen-
tance, and whose souls, through the blood of the sin offering, were transferred to the sanctuary had a part in the service of the Day of Atonement. So in the great day of final atone-
ment, by the propitiation through Christ Jesus, “is forgiven….”[Isaiah 53:11], even I am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins,” Isaiah 43:25. Said Jesus: “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.” “Whosoever… shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.” Revelation 2:10. At very least, then, the clear inference is that she thought God moved from the Most Holy Place to the Holy Place before 1844 in the heavenly Most Holy Place, even though the Shekinah glory dwelt above the ark within the Most Holy Place of the earthly tabernacle.

Names are accepted, names rejected. When any have sins remaining upon the books of record, unrepentant of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the book of life; and the record of their good deeds will be erased from the book of God’s remembrance. The Lord declared to Moses: “Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book.” Exodus 32:33. And says the prophet Ezekiel: “When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and com-
mitteth iniquity,…. [sic] all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned.” Ezekiel 18:24.

All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life. The Lord declared by the prophet Isaiah: “I will open my mouth in parable, I will utter things hidden, from of old….” Isaiah 53:8. Even I am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins,” Isaiah 43:25. Said Jesus: “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.” “Whosoever… shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.” Revelation 2:10. At very least, then, the clear inference is that she thought God moved from the Most Holy Place to the Holy Place before 1844 in the heavenly Most Holy Place, even though the Shekinah glory dwelt above the ark within the Most Holy Place of the earthly tabernacle.

[Ellen White] appears to view God’s throne before 1844 in the heavenly Holy Place, even though the Shekinah glory dwelt above the ark within the Most Holy Place of the earthly tabernacle.

2001

SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER 2001

Proclamation!

New-covenant Christians have a much higher model to pattern after than the old covenant law.
SEPTEMBER –

DECEMBER

FormerAdventist.com

A website for former Adventists by
LAM, Inc. board members Richard and Colleen Tinker

We have dedicated this site to one cause: lifting Jesus up. Every day we pray for the Holy Spirit to be present. We ask God to bless each person who visits the site with truth, support, peace, and assurance. We praise God for his faithfulness to us and for his promise to complete the work he begins in us. (Philippians 1:6)

“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes…” (Romans 1:16, NIV)

Following are examples of email sent to the webmaster at formeradventist.com. Pray for these seekers of truth.

FormerAdventist Fellowship

Many former Adventists have found this group of Former Adventist Fellowship is dedicated to helping those struggling to leave the Adventist church. They vary from deeply personal biblical research of several who discovered the reality of the New Covenant. Email to the webmaster tells how the stories provide insight to those who are seeking to understand Adventism and affirmation to those who are struggling to leave. Also available on the site are the weekly Bible studies we are currently studying, and the studies on our website will be complete in just a few weeks since we post the studies as we progress through the book. Following Hebrews we will begin to study 2 Corinthians.

Sixth-day Adventists’ dogma of an investigative Cleansing the Heavenly Sanctuary

Dr. Fred Mazaferri

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Big Gene and the present crisis  

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

could see by the lights that a car was coming down the levy road. However, I did not want to stop to let the car go by because to do so I would have had to stop on the steepest part of the hill—I kept going and the car, which had plenty of time, stopped for me. After we gained our speed and came to a straight section of the road, I expected the car to pass. However, instead of passing, he pulled just a little to the left and shined his high lights into my mirror. He kept this up during our ten mile ride into Woodward. “Just some crazy driver,” I thought.

When we got to the scale we had a routine we always followed. The driver would get out of the truck and go into the scalehouse and give the weighmaster the needed information so he could make the weight certificate. The helper—we called him the “swapper”—would take the “cheater bar” and check the tires to make sure they were all properly inflated. Our cheater bar was made from a hard, steel axle shaft and was a little over two feet long. Big Gene took the cheater bar and began thumping the tires on the passenger side of the truck. I climbed out of the cab and was getting ready to go into the scalehouse when I noticed the car which had been following us drove into the scalehouse yard. Now I could see it was an old pickup and it stopped by the side of our trailer. Just then two angry men jumped out and came up to me, ready to fight. “What’s the idea of pulling out in front of us?” they demanded. I was in the prime of my life, but I was never a fighter, nor was I about to start a fighting career that night with these two husky, angry men. There were lots of lights around the scalehouse, but the weighmaster could not see what was going on because the truck was in hilly terrain. Then, I was of no help to me. As Big Gene round-

backed the truck he immediately took in the scene and stealthily crept up behind the man. With steel cheater bar in his raised and outstretched right hand, he came to my side and said, “You guys want something?” The large muscles of Big Gene’s arms and chest glistened in the lights—A picture etched deep in my memory I will never forget. There was a moment of intense silence as the two men comprehended the situation. Then, without a word, they quickly turned, jumped in their old pickup, and drove away never to be encountered again. Today, our country faces terrorist ene-

mies bent on our destruction. We are also told that our real enemy—the devil—goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. Perhaps these two enemies are closely allied as terrorists. Satan seems to have the same goal of destroying as many people, even inno-

cent people, as possible.

The question that comes to us is, “How do we live in these times?” Should we run to the hills for our own safety? Or should all men to myself.” We must make Jesus Christ and Him Crucified the heart and soul of all we teach and model. We must train our people in the essentials of salvation and then teach them how to take others to the foot of the cross. This is where all the power for life change is found. Of all professing Christians, Seventh-day Adventists should be foremost in uplifting Christ before the world; the proclamation of the third angels messages calls for presentation of the Sabbath truth. This truth, with the others included in the mes-

sage is to be proclaimed; but the great center of attraction, Christ, must not be left out. It is at the cross of Christ that mercy and truth meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other. The sinner must be led to look to Calvary: with the simple faith of a little child…”

Keep the Main Thing the main thing

Recently I spent a few days on a spiritual retreat. I was alone with God and nature for the entire time. In the stillness and quietness of that place reading the Word, praying and journaling, the message that kept coming to me was my own need to know the Lord far more than I do. I must fall in love with Jesus and walk with him as I have done for a long time. Then I must lift up Jesus. I must focus on Jesus. I must tell those whom God has trusted to my care how to truly find relation-

ship with Jesus. I came away from that retreat with my personal marching orders, much like Paul’s, “For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” In other words I am to keep the Main Thing the main thing. I must then trust that the Holy Spirit will do His job of guiding His people into all truth. He will bring conviction of sin. He will change hearts.

I want to challenge my partners in ministry. I believe this is from the Lord. Let us intentionally lift up Jesus. Teach the Gospel faithfully. Let us examine and reexamine our ministry focus. Let us diligently, carefully, and prayerfully analyze our methods and our presentations so we truly communicate what is most important. God is faithful. When we put His Son truly in the center, the fruit will come! In my mind’s eye, I imagine a day when Adventists are known for their love for Jesus rather than primarily their Sabbath observance or eating practices. I like to visualize a trained laity that is armed with a clear understanding of Grace and a personal testimony of a saving rela-

tionship with Jesus. I see the Holy Spirit as the thriv-

ing, caring communities extending the grace they have received to their neighbors and friends. I imagine worship services that are filled with praise and worship because of real life change through Christ and the power of His Spirit; the church of Acts 2:42-47 realized in our generation. I see our communities gathering around and asking us how they too can be saved and enter into such a loving community. Then, I imagine people asking us to teach them every-

thing we know about Jesus and the truths of His word. Is this an impossible dream? No, not at all. Jesus promises it if we lift Him up, and make the Main thing, the main thing.

Greg and His wife Paula served the Foster church for 8 years. They have two sons, Jordan, 11, and Matthew, 8. Pray for them as they seek new ministry opportunities to proclaim the gospel of God’s grace.

Endnotes

1 Samuele Bacchiocchi, The Sabbath under Crossfire, (Biblical Perspectives) 1994, p.133.
2 John 13:22 (NIV)
5 I Cor. 2:2 (NIV)

Praying For You

Caroly and I recently attended a “Praying For You” training session on Relational Prayer Witnessing. We felt it was excellent! The concept is simple, Biblical and it works. Choose from one to three people you want to see come to Christ. Call them and ask,”Is there anything in your life that I might pray for this week?” Pray daily for this need. Include in your prayer (1) that Satan be bound from their lives; (2) that God would create in them a spiritual hunger; (3) that they would respond to the gospel of Christ; and (4) that God would save them by His sovereign grace. Then call them about once each week and ask them how things are going and how you can pray for them the coming week. For more infor-

mation see: www.prayingforyou.org.
one of the primary reasons for their rejection of Jesus as the Messiah. It had taken the place of Christ in their thinking and practice. The Sabbath had been given as an illustration of grace, but it had instead become the antithesis of grace. The rest that had pointed forward to the rest of redemption, had become an end in itself. In that sense the Sabbath had become for them an Antichrist. What a tragedy! So today, the Sabbath provides beautiful symbolic of spiritual rest in Christ, but it is not rest in Christ and in and of itself. It is a wonderful illustration of salvation by faith, but it is not salvation by faith. It is a glorious picture of the Gospel, but it is not the Gospel. Even though it is one of the pillars of our doctrinal belief system, it is not the foundation. Jesus is the foundation, the chief cornerstone.

While virtually none of us would ever think of putting the Sabbath before or in place of Christ, we must face the reality that at the grass roots level many of our people have gotten the wrong picture. Therefore it is our responsibility as pastors, educators, evangelists, and administrators, to intentionally resist anything that might cause us to communicate or perpetuate the wrong message. The fact of the matter is that many of our people are clear on the Sabbath doctrine and other distinctions, and fuzzy on the gospel. Therefore we must redouble our efforts to keep the Main Thing, the main thing.

Sabbath emphasis

For example when the name Seventh-day Adventist is spoken or read, the first words are about the Sabbath. I know that we chose the name to clearly distinguish ourselves from other Adventists. The name has served us well. But I know when people ask me what denomination I represent and I tell them, the first question they ask me is about the Seventh-day part of it. I have seldom been asked about the Adventist part. If I am not careful I can get into a little Bible study on the Sabbath in the scriptures and miss the opportunity to talk about Jesus and His literal sabbath return. I can afford to lose the chance in the distinctive to talk about the main thing.

The same is true with our evangelism. Because of the distinctive nature of our Sabbath understanding, we tend to spend far more time on it and much less time on the Gospel proportionately. We must somehow change this emphasis. Jesus said, “But I, when I am lifted up… will draw we stay and work for the salvation of others, even in the dangerous and wicked cities? Many are fearful of the possible events looming on the horizon, wondering how to evaluate what is going on. Meditating on my experience with Big Gene and the truths of Scripture has led me to two main conclusions regarding the current events. First, we must remain engaged in life and continue in our every-day jobs, unless God directs otherwise. We are to live for Him every day no matter where we are or what we are doing. The parable of the talents teaches us that we are to stay engaged in life and commerce. Jesus commended the servant who was occupied in business, not the one who withdrew for fear and hid his talent. In these dangerous times, we may find ourselves in harm’s way, as did the New York Fire Fighters. But let us, like them, think more of the salvation of others than of saving our own physical life. Let us each be found doing our duty when Christ comes.

Second, we are not to fight the enemy directly, but our job is to stay close to our “Big Gene”—our Lord and Master who can fight the enemy for us. Herein lies our safety: “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.” Psalm 23:4 That night Big Gene did not have a sheep’s rod, but for the occasion, nothing was more comforting to me than to see that steel cheater bar in Big Gene’s out-stretched right hand! “It is at times like these that our faith is tested. Do we really trust Christ? We say we trust him for the next life, but how can we do that unless we trust Him in this life? When we know the truth of the gospel we are set free—free from condemnation and guilt, free from the fear of death, free from the fear of life and what it may bring, free to serve in newness of life and free to live “life in the Spirit.”

Paul learned this as he faced hardship and suffering. Listening to his words, “For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, which overpowering us so that we despaired even of life; indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raised the dead who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us, He on whom we have set our hope. And He will yet deliver us.” 2 Cor. 1:8-10 “But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:37-39

Yes, “There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.” (Now note how we are to live) But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” Luke 21:25-28

Many of us have grown up with the continual admonition, “get ready, get ready get ready,” but we never experienced the assurance of being ready because we were trusting partly to Christ and partly to ourselves. Yet Jesus taught that we could be ready. “You too, be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect.” Luke 12:40 Therefore, our present duty is first to continue to live for Christ in whatever place we may find ourselves and not withdraw in fear. Let our witness be a life free from fear and full of assurance. Second, let us lift up our voices and let the world know that we face these difficult and uncertain times because our “Big Gene” is by our side, and He will win the battle!
Proclamation!
Proclamation!
Proclamation!

Dear “SDA Pastor,”

You take me harshly to task for my efforts to have more freedom to receive the Sabbath, the three angel’s messages, and the state of the dead, became symbols of identity . . . Adventists still cling to these points of identity . . . I am not conscious of nothing, even if the very foundation of your 1844 god pulls support in “sound arguments” that . . . will bear the closest and most searching scrutiny . . . But if your stance obviously passes the Bureen Test, Acts 17:11, I make this solemn pledge before thousands of readers I will settle down with some competent Bible teacher to work through this doctrine, so crucial to the raison d’être of the SDA Church, with a view, should there be no genu- in e doctrinal obstacles, to baptism. Either way, my offer gives you the opportunity to demonstrate the veracity of your vigorous objections and the sincerity of your profession of allegiance to both sacred Scripture and Ellen White’s writings.—Fred Mazzaferr i

Hard questions

Dale, I have a few questions: If one had enough faith would he have to pray? Does a little child have to plead with his parent to feed and support him? As one’s faith grows so should the prayer of one’s change: If man had not sinned would we know about God’s grace and mercy? Was it necessary for God to contain the animal kingdom in the Garden of Eden? If there was no food where were we not needed? Will the most fortunate be the happiest even with less reward?

Praying for spiritual wisdom

I have been praying for God for a long time for the spiritual wisdom of knowing the Lord’s will in how I should view the Big 11, as a Christian, living by grace through faith in the Son of God. I have had some difficulty receiving the visions of Ellen White that add to the word of God. I have had questions in my spirit about her claims of the Sanctuary teaching in 1844. I accept the first true vision, in Daniel, that takes us to Christ and seems to be perfect. The investigative judgment has some doubts that raise questions. We preach that righteousness is by grace through faith and then we turn right around and say we have turned the whole law or we will be out of here. I have stopped down from serving as an Elder in my church in . . . to have more freedom to receive from the Holy Spirit some answers to these ques- tions that have been troubling me . . .

The Devil loves to try to shake the confidence of believers

Harold G. Gladson’s article entitled “Re- thinking Life After Death” [May/June, 2001] inter- resting and informative, yet somewhat troubling. I found a good deal of study. He is correct in saying that “the differentiating teachings, such as the Sabbath, the three angel’s messages, and the state of the dead, became symbols of identity . . . Adventists still cling to these points of identity . . . It is true that “soul sleep” is one of the SDA’s thorny factors” which, along with the Sabbath, was borrowed from other Christians. It is also correct that the intermediate state is not always clearly defined in Scripture. It is only made clear in Christ. He must be our emphasis, and so He, Christ will draw all men who hear his voice unto him, and into his “one fold” . . . What troubles me somewhat about Gladson’s review of the Scriptural and historical evidence relative to the whole subject of the intermediate state is that he does not seem to clearly differentiate between merely earthly traditional and cultural beliefs on the one hand, and inspired heavenly teachings from all historical, intellectually held beliefs and the teachings and example of Christ. He appears to give tradition and inspiration equal billing, while he preaches directly contrary to Christ’s teach- ings and example. On this subject Gladson seems confused himself, and he projects not clarity but confusion to others. Naturalism and Supernaturalism are indiscriminately given con- sideration without clear distinction, and the effect is distortion, doubt, and perplexity rather than trust, faith, and hope. Christ spoke with authority, not as the Scribes and Pharisees, because he knew the Scriptures, and the power of which he told them they did not know. . . . Thankful Gladson’s article ends on a tri- umphant note. It is not dependent on having all the answers. It depends on Christ, who said, I am the resurrection and the life . . .

Spoke to a packed crowd of 600

You might be interested to know that I spoke to a packed crowd of 600 here in Goroka on the Sabbath vs. Sunday and some of the erroneous teachings and example. Last night on the campus of the University of Goroka I did the same thing again, as there is cur- rently a tremendous amount of interest and con- fusion on these things. Your books have proven invaluable to me as I have studied and prepared . . .

Devil’s spirit behind your efforts.

The reference to the Sabbath dean makes clear what spirit is behind your efforts. The Devil loves to try to shake the confidence of believers. He failed with Jesus and by His grace it will fail with me.

Made the Christ-centered life quite realistic.

Dear Colleen (Tinker), I enjoyed your front page article. It was well written, and made the challenge of transition from Adventism to the Christ-centered life quite realistic. The whole magazine was excellent! Keep up the good work!

Thank you for the Sabbath.

We and my family and I have the chance to trav- el, I love to visit churches. I enjoy observing how others do ministry within their local context. But one thing I have noticed recently that has been typical of our churches ever since my child- hood days is a prayer that starts something like this. “Dear Lord, Thank you for the Sabbath….” I have become increasingly aware of this and have conducted my own mental survey—unofficial of course. Perhaps one time out of ten will I hear at some point in the prayer “…Thank you for sending your Son Jesus…?” Is there something wrong with this picture?

More important than anything

Recently we had a couple of people from unchurched backgrounds who started attending our church. After some time of seeking and dis- covery they came to the point of surrender to Jesus Christ. What a celebration it was when these people who had formerly been so far from God made public their decision to follow Jesus in the waters of baptism! Shortly after their decision there was a “fist” evangelism series, and we invit- ed them to attend as an opportunity to deepen their understanding of some of the doctrinal material. I asked each of them after the series was over what they had learned. . . .

“I’ll let you know when I hear it right between the eyes. Each of them individually mentioned the fact that there were one or two nights that focused on Jesus and the Gospel of grace, but most of it was on other things especially the Sabbath. One of them went so far as to say, ‘the last half of the series was almost all about the Sabbath. They seemed to hammer it in night after night. Why is this so much more important than everything else?’”

Fumbled around a bit and explained that a lot of our listeners are from other churches who are following a Sunday tradition. “We spend a lot of time on
The Good News!

But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.” Luke 2:10-14

Seasons greetings

As we approach another Christmas season our thoughts are directed back to the Christ event. While the world is full of activity, we can experience the peace that passes understanding. Because of the birth, life, death and resurrection of Christ, we have been reconciled to God, and there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus! As the world is running here and there seeking to destroy the evil of terrorism, we who believe have an answer.

Covenant Understanding

Several SDAs, including one SDA pastor, have corresponded with me stating that the position of Dr. Reiner in the last Proclamation does not represent the Adventist position on the covenants. To clarify this I asked Dr. Bachiochi to write a three-page article which would specifically address the following: What is the old covenant? What are the signs of the old covenant? What is the new covenant? What are the signs of the new covenant? What is the difference between the covenants? Which covenant are Christians now under? However, he declined our invitation.

Response to Greg Taylor's Manifesto

Tens of thousands of people on the Internet have been sent an evaluation by Dr. Bachiochi of former SDA pastor Greg Taylor’s Manifesto. This we believe to be filled with twisted facts and character assassination. Greg decided not to answer the charges. However, I asked him to respond to me so I would know the facts of the matter. He has given me permission to post this. Find it at http://www.ratzlaf.com/downloads. We always seek the truth! Truth can stand the test of investigation!

Disappointed with Dr. Reiner’s view as the SDA view.

I was disappointed that Proclamation presented Dr. Reiner’s view of the covenants as the SDA position. While there are variant views among Adventists on some aspects of the covenants, just as there are among theologians, Dr. Reiner’s concepts are much different from the general view for reasons that I believe is based on what the law has not yet been written in our hearts is quite contrary to the Adventist’s position, and based on what Dr. Reiner, it is not your view either. For Dr. Reiner to state the Ten Commandments are not part of the “old covenant” is not the general Adventist position, nor is it yours, according to your response. We could go on with the discrepancies in Dr. Reiner’s article and the generic position. We have had a more representative source had been chosen for your publication.—From a SDA pastor.

Another excellent issue!

Thank you for another excellent issue of Proclamation! We enjoy this publication very much and look forward to each issue. Friends of ours, who also receive it, are equally impressed. You and your staff and the authors you select do a first class job for a quality publication.

I always get encouraged by reading it

Thank your for Proclamation! I always get encouraged by reading it. May [the] Lord bless you and give you success in your work for the work you are doing. I am praying for you and LAM.

You are a lost person according to the Bible

We hope and pray God will cause you to have a pure heart and change your terrible destruction of people who you are misleading in your magazine. God used to strike people down in the Old Testament and NW when they withheld God’s money, etc. You are a lost person according to the Bible. Read Rev. 21, Rev. 22:14-18, Rev. 12:17, Isa. 66:23. Take us off your list.

A lot more soul satisfying

I particularly appreciate reading your Editor’s Comments page and your article on “Paul and the Afterlife” in 2nd Corinthians 5:1-9. I related well to what you wrote and am thankful that you brought it to my and your readers’ attention. I have read this and other similar passages many times, and have never dared take them at face value before. They did not fit the conservative SDA conditionalist position on the afterlife, so I passed over western theology and had a closer look at the context. What I read was really meaningful. The negative comments from some of your readers are always very hurtful offensive and rude and always wish I had read them. I glad that most comments are positive and supportive of your ministry. Just like most others who have left the SDA church, we find ourselves somewhat cut off from our former friends. The gap widens with time. I hope you will continue to write and study Scripture and books by a host of other Christian authors, for yourselves, without having some conservative party line SDA theologian interpreting for them. Members of our family, our own siblings, are reluctant to read anything that you publish and printed by an SDA church-owned and governed publishing company. We know because we have sent them copies of books we have read in the hopes they will read them, and if for no other reason, understand why we are no longer members of their church. Rather than choose to challenge and warn of the consequences of our position, particularly at our age when we should be strong in the faith. Certainly “the good news of the new covenant gospel of grace in Christ” is a lot more soul satisfying than the errors of legalism and false religion, but each one has to find that out individually, under the conviction of the Holy Spirit.

Spoke so accurately of our own experience

Colleen Moores Tinkers “How I discovered the SDA” was excellent; and spoke so accurately of our own experience. Along with your many, many supporters, we also pray for the success of your unique ministry with its unique mission to those who have chosen to walk in grace rather than legalism.

What does that tell you?

I do not appreciate receiving your paper, and what it says about the church I work with. Do you have anything else to say except derogatory comments about the Adventist Church? Just remember God has blessed this movement abundantly. What does that tell you?

Steer Bible believing Christians back to the truth of the Gospel

Several months back I was introduced to your book, Sabbath in Crisis. Your book has been instru- mental here the U.S. Virgin Islands to steer Bible believing Christians back to the truth of the Gospel of Christ. The U.S. Virgin Islands is heavily populated by Seventh-day Adventists, especially St. Thomas.

Start a “Former SDA Congregation”

Thank you for the Informer Pack that you sent… I have been a SDA worker since 1958 but each one has to find that out individually, under the conviction of the Holy Spirit.

Thank you for helping me understand truth.

Dear Dale, After three years of research, study and prayer, my husband and I have requested our names to be removed for the SDA membership. We truly enjoy reading the articles in Proclamation. They are so uplifting in contrast to the articles in the Adventist Review…Please use our gift to continue to send the addresses currently on your mailing list.
Looking at the past, present and future of LAM, Inc.

DALE RATZLAFF

History
About a year ago I resigned from the pastorate of Christian Community Church so that I could devote more time to Life Assurance Ministries. My associate pastor, Tom Tomforde, took over the church, and it is doing well. Because of my experience and training, I feel God has uniquely called me to this aspect of ministry. There are many thousands—some estimate as many as a million—former Seventh-day Adventists. Many of these people are not involved in a healthy, Christ-centered church. They need help in working through the many doctrinal questions that all “formers” have before they can become spiritually free and well.

Prior to my resignation several people had indicated a willingness to help support LAM if we could form a non-profit corporation so their donations would be tax deductible. Therefore, I separated Life Assurance Ministries into two entities: LAM Publishers that oversees the book ministry of LAM, and LAM, Inc. which is a non-profit corporation with a 501(c)(3) designation from the IRS and controlled by a board of directors. Our initial plan was to send a simple, little newsletter to all “formers” have before they can become spiritually free and well.

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Present
The expense of adding the additional names has been huge. In addition to the extra printing costs, we now send hundreds of Proclamations to other countries with mailing costs of from $2.30 each to $6.00 each. We also send numerous copies of Proclamation to Canada with postage costs of $1.10 each. Each month it appears that we will not have enough money to print and send out the next issue. Several times key donors, without our request, but in answer to our prayers, have helped meet our expenses with large donations of six to ten thousand dollars. If you are receiving your Proclamation free, it is because God has led someone else to send in the funds!

To date no one has received any salary from LAM, Inc. with the exception that I did receive several thousand dollars from a donor to help print The Sabbath and The Lord’s Day. However, this did not go into my pocket, but into inventory that may take a number of years to sell. We have not paid the contributing writers to Proclamation nor have we paid Richard Tinker, who does such an outstanding job designing each issue. We all, without exception, see our work as ministry.

Future
Some of you are supporting this ministry very liberally. We thank you for your liberality. We would ask all those receiving Proclamation to pray for this ministry. We have had so many answers to prayer that we know this ministry is God’s will! Many hundreds of people have written or called thanking us for helping them to place their faith in Christ alone, in His Word alone, and to trust His grace alone through faith!

We hope LAM, Inc. will be able to sponsor a “Former SDA Pastor’s Summit”—a weekend of meetings where each pastor could give his “story” and share his discoveries. Several have indicated a desire to do this. Tapes could be made of these presentations and these would be a powerful ministry tool.

We have several more former SDA pastors, and others as well, who want to contribute articles to Proclamation. We feel there are many more subjects that need to be developed. Please join us in prayer that we will make the good news of Christ simple, clear and central in all we do.

Many of us have grown up with the continual admonition, “get ready, get ready get ready…”

RIVER A few miles East of Woodland, California, to get a load of alfalfa hay. Before we finished loading the 25 tons of hay we ran out of daylight, but by turning on the clearance lights we had enough light to stack the bails straight. When done, we tied down and started for Woodland where we were to weigh our load.

Big Gene was my capable helper and also driver truck for me on occasion. His real name was Gene Williams, but everyone called him Big Gene. Yes, he was big and black. He must have weighed about 250 lbs., and at night about all you could see was the white of his eyes. He claimed to be able to put 400 lbs. over his head, and I believed him. He used to like to show off his strength, especially if there was anyone around to impress. I saw him take a three-wire bail of alfalfa hay weighing between 120 and 130 lbs. and, standing on the ground next to the truck, throw it on the top layer of bails on a nearly loaded truck. He would stand with his back to the truck, pull one end of the bail up to his waist, then with both hay hooks he would snap the bail up over his head, and with a mighty push from his arms the bail went up to the top. I also saw him lift with one hand a 10 x 22 truck tire mounted on a steel rim and put in into the back of a pickup. Yes, Big Gene was big, black and strong. He was a good helper!

The air was still and hot that night when we finished loading and Big Gene was going short- less. We drove through the hay field toward the levy road that was considerably higher than the field. The little narrow road that went from the field to the top of the levy was very steep. So I put the truck in the lowest gear and started crawling up toward the narrow, two-lane road on the top of the levy. Just before we reached the top we...