



*"Watchman,
what of the night?"*

*The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye wil
enquire, enquire ye: return, come. Isaiah 21:11-12*

BOOKS OPENED IN HEAVEN

What Is the Basis for Judgment?

Presently, the book of Revelation is the basis of our Sabbath School lesson study here on the Campus. In studying the message to the Church of Sardis, we noted carefully the promise to him "that overcometh." It reads:

"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 I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." (Rev. 3:5)

This promise evoked some very interesting questions. Does the book of life contain only names? What about the record of our lives? The Bible does tell us that when "the judgment was set. . . the books were opened." (Dan. 7:10) The book of Revelation amplifies this concept of books as it reveals another judgment other than the one pictured in Daniel. Of this judgment - the Judgment of the Great White Throne - we read:

"I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." (Rev. 20:12)

Those who come up in the second resurrection are described as "dead." They have no life for they have cut themselves off

from the Source of life. Thus their names are not found in the book of life. Their judgment can be based only on the books of record. Even those within the Holy City had the record of their lives in those books. But something else had occurred in respect to them. They had responded in probationary time to the plea as given by Peter - "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the time of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." (Acts 3:19) It is either our record, or our names that will be blotted out, and the difference is Jesus! Why? "Because [God] hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised him from the dead." (Acts. 17:31)

We might ask further - Are these books of record kept as a balance sheet, and then computed? Does a negative balance mean simply that we have our names blotted out of the book of life? If the record should show a balance in our favor - the good deeds outweighing the bad deeds - does this insure that our names are retained in the Lamb's Book of Life?

To find an answer to these questions, we must turn to the sanctuary where the way of God is revealed. (Ps. 77:13) As we survey the daily ministrations, we see that the sinner's sins are mediated through the sin offerings. Only sins are recorded in the sanctuary. The prophet Jeremiah declared:

"The sin of Judah is written with a pen

of iron, and with a point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of their heart and upon the horns of your altars." (Jer. 17:1)

The only memorials ever placed within the sanctuary were objects representing the care and choice of God - a pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded. Nothing that man did was ever memorialized before the Lord in the sanctuary. No plaques lined the walls of the sacred enclosure, nor were anything in the Court telling of the gifts made by man; neither were the names of the greats in Israel and the record of their service displayed before God.

Yet Israel appeared before the Lord in the ministry of the High Priest. For he carried the names of Israel "upon his heart" and he carried them "upon his shoulders" before the Lord "for a memorial." The record is worth contemplating. It reads:

"And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel: and Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial. . . And thou shalt make the breastplate of judgment with cunning work; after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it; . . . And thou shalt set in it settings of stones. . . and the stones shall be with the twelve names of the children of Israel. . . And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial unto the Lord continually. . . And Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually." (Ex. 28: 12, 17, 21, 29-30)

In the ministry of the sanctuary for the individual another important lesson is taught. When a common person sinned, or a ruler, the blood was not brought into the sanctuary. The law of the sin offering was very definitive. It read:

"This is the law of the sin offering: In the place where the burnt offering is killed shall the sin offering be killed before the Lord: it is most holy. The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it: in the holy place shall it be eaten,

in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation." (Lev. 6:25-26; See also Lev. 4:22-35)

It dare not be overlooked that access and acceptance of the individual was through the mediation of the priest chosen and appointed by God. This was the type; thus also the antitype. Christ is our Sin Offering - our Substitute - and our High Priest. By Him, and Him alone, our names are either retained, or blotted out of the book of life. Well has it been written -

"We are not to be anxious about what Christ and God think of us, but what God thinks of Christ, our Substitute. Ye are accepted in the Beloved. The Lord shows, to the repenting, believing one, that Christ accepts the surrender of the soul, to be molded and fashioned after His own likeness." (SM, bk ii, pp. 32-33)

[This statement was made at the 1901 GC Session in connection with the testimony given by Ellen G. White against the Holy Flesh Movement. The whole context is well worth pondering for much what is being pawned off today as "righteousness" and the means of attaining "perfection" is nothing more than variations of the basic teachings of the men involved in the Holy Flesh Movement which plagued the Indiana Conference from 1899-1901]

In the experience of the condemned thief who was crucified with Christ, we find the only relationship that will carry us through the judgment wherein our names are retained in the Book of Life. He confessed - rebuking his companion in sin - We are here "justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this Man hath done nothing amiss." Then turning to Jesus, he said - "LORD, remember me, when thou comest in thy kingdom." (Luke 23:41-42) Only by heartfelt confession of our utter destitution, and our acceptance of the Lordship of Christ in our lives, do we have any hope in the Judgment. We cannot blot our sins, neither can we be covered by a "fig-leaf" apron of our own devising.

One responds - "But we must overcome!" And it is true that in each epistle of Jesus to the seven churches of Revelation, a promise is made to him "that overcometh."

However, we have prescribed our own course of activity by which we think that we can overcome. The book of Revelation tells us the only way we can truly overcome the wicked one and his wiles. "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death." (Rev. 12:11) Here is the Divine formula which the heart of the Laodicean Pharisee refuses to accept. Surely we who profess to believe and teach the message of the sanctuary service, must know that the first step back to the glory of God in the Most Holy Place was contingent upon the blood of the sin offering with all that it meant - meaning simply that the offerer confessed himself a sinner, unable to cover his transgressions. The reason we will not accept this simple fact is that we think so highly of our own works. But God thinks differently. Isaiah tells us plainly that "our righteousnesses" - not our unrighteous deeds - are filthy rags. (Isa. 64:6)

[One might profitably take time to check the meaning of the Hebrew word, translated as "filthy rags." It would tell us more vividly how Heaven does view our works.]

Jesus asked an interesting question of His disciples: "Which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'? But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink'? Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not." (Luke 17:7-9 NKJV) Now note carefully Jesus' comment: "So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'" (verse 10 NKJV)

Who has ever heard a modern Pharisee with all of his works of reform - diligently performed - confess himself to be an "unprofitable servant"? We are just not willing to accept Paul's proof text from the Scripture - "There is none righteous, no not one" - and he was addressing the self righteous Jewish Christian! (Rom. 3:10) But someone remarks - "Why don't

you get over into Romans 8? I have passed Romans 3 a long time ago in my experience." That may be true - and that may be just the trouble! If you and I are to be converted daily, then I must start with Romans 3 daily, for no man will recognize his true need each day, until he recognizes his own real condition each day!

The second phase of overcoming - by the divine blueprint of Revelation - is "by the word of their testimony." (12:11) Here is where another set of books come into the picture. Of these we read:

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not." (Mal. 3:16-18)

A moment of reflection should teach us much. These "jewels" do not reflect upon themselves - they "thought upon His name." They "serve" Him, not themselves - even though it could cost them their lives. Any reform - or work of our righteousness - which causes us to concentrate upon ourselves is self-serving. When we do those things by which we "feel" good in so doing whether right or wrong - such doing is based on the wrong motivation. Jesus said - "Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it." (Luke 17:33) This is speaking of the now present temporal life. But there are many who are seeking to "overcome" by this very means of doing works to preserve the present temporal existence.

When the rewards are noted in Heaven, the recipients themselves will be surprised. Their life on earth was not lived in anticipation of the reward. They did not structure their mode of living to project the fact that they "fasted twice a week." (Luke 18:12) They loved not their lives! Knowing their Saviour, and that in Him their eternal life was secure, they served selflessly without thought of reward.

They were willing to be even "obedient unto death" as set before them in the great Example. Being constantly "dead" in this life - their life is hid with Christ in God. (Col. 3:3) They do not come up in the second resurrection, because they died here. When Christ - Who is their life - appears, they appear with Him in glory. (Col. 3:4)

However, those who seek to project self here - either in self preservation or self indulgence - their works, all of them, are written down in the books. These come up in the second resurrection, and are declared, "dead." (Rev. 20:12) Evil deeds and the "filthy rags" of our righteousnesses, both are worthy only of the lake of fire. If our names are not found in the Lamb's Book of Life, we shall be consigned with our righteousnesses to that lake. This is the reward of all such works. (Rev. 20:15)

This brings us face to face with the crucial question - "What is the basis for the Judgment?" There is only one answer - Jesus Christ. And the supreme question - "How shall we face it?" Again there is only one answer - "In Him."

The multitude in the days of Jesus' earthly ministry, asked Him on one occasion - "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" To this question, Jesus replied - "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." (John 6:28-29) He proceeded to tell them that unless they ate of the "flesh of the Son of man" and drank "His blood," they had no life in them. They were "dead" - just as dead as they would be in the second resurrection. This insistence as to what constituted "the work of God" brought the ministry of Jesus to what is called "the crisis in Galilee." This same teaching causes a crisis whenever and wherever it is taught. Sensing that His own disciples rebelled at it, Jesus said to them - "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." (John 6:63)

To these disciples, the words of Jesus were - "Without Me, ye can do nothing." (John 15:5) Let us face it. That which we can do - constitutes our righteousnesses - even if it is the right thing to do. Let me illustrate. I am fully

persuaded that I should follow a vegetarian diet. Although raised on a meat diet as a child, I do not eat it now. I can do that. So does the Hindu, and so do many Spiritists. Does this place their names in the Book of Life? Again, there are many who have eaten meat - great men whose names are given in the 12th Chapter of Hebrews. Does this remove their names from the Book of Life? But when something is done through me and in me, which I cannot do, it is no longer I that do it, but Christ that dwelleth in me by His Spirit. "The Spirit breathes where it wills, and you hear that 'sound of gentle stillness,' but you cannot tell how it came, nor where it is leading - you only follow. This is the experience of every one who is born of the Spirit." (A free, interpretive translation of John 3:8)

Instead of seeking to project what Christ is like by our works of outward righteousness and show, even as the Pharisees of old, we yield ourselves - accepting His word - that we cannot do anything without Him. Then as in His life - He is the Example - "the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." (John 14:10) Such living becomes selfless service, not self-service. Their names are retained in the Book of Life, for they have no record of their own to put there. All that was done for them, in them, and by them - was His doing! This they realized. It was His blood that washed away their sins; in His power they testified; and their lives - the value of which can be seen only in the cross - could be sacrificed, even unto death. But their identity is preserved - their names are retained. Losing their life, they found it - even eternal life. And this is life eternal, said Jesus, that we might know the only true God, and He who was sent to give life unto men. (See John 17:3)

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"The effort to earn salvation by one's own works, inevitably leads men to pile up human exactions as a barrier against sin. For, seeing, that they fail to keep the law, they will devise rules and regulations of their own to force themselves to obey. All this turns the mind away from God to self. His loves dies out of the heart, and with it perishes love for their fellow-men."

OMISSIONS

Daniel Merezuk

Of interest to many will be the following information with which our Heavenly Instructor is blessing those who are diligently seeking for the truth. Photocopies of the complete letter written by Ellen G. White to brethren Butler and Haskell, from Basel, Switzerland, dated December 8, 1886, are now circulating in underground Adventist circles. The mutilated version of this letter appears in Selected Messages, bk. ii. (pp. 376-383, and a small paragraph on pp. 334-335) It is possible the only reason this letter made its way into Selected Messages is so a much abused quotation might find its way into the hands of those who wish to portray the misconception that the organization is "going through." (See page 380) Others, who have had their peaceful security threatened by one of God's messengers, will go to a knowledgeable leader, who will refer them, along with other quotations taken out of context, to this very page. The quotation reads - "The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall."

The fact is that from the beginning of this letter as quoted in Selected Messages (ii, p. 376) to the much abused quotation (p. 380), there are four major omissions. The most significant omission begins at the well known series of "dots" which appear at the end of the first paragraph on page 377. The last sentence of that paragraph is - "I think how this grieves Jesus." (No interrupting, misleading, suggestive sub-titles are found in Ellen G. White's letter.) The following three revealing omitted paragraphs read:

"I think of His great sorrow as He wept over Jerusalem, exclaiming, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not.' [Luke 13:34] God forbid that these words shall apply to those who have had great light and blessings. In the rejecting of Jerusalem it was because great privileges were abused which brought the denunciation upon all who lightly regarded

the great opportunities and precious light that were entrusted to their keeping. Privileges do not commend us to God, but they commend God to us. No people are saved because they have great light and special advantages, for these high and heavenly favors only increase their responsibility.

"The more and increased light God has given make the receiver more responsible. It does not place the receiver in any safer position unless the privileges are wisely improved, prized and used to advance God's glory. Christ said, 'Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.' [Matt. 11:21] ¹

"When Jerusalem was divorced ² from God it was because of her sins. She fell from an exalted height that Tyre and Sidon had never reached. And when an angel falls he becomes a fiend. The depths of our ruin is measured by the exalted light to which God has raised us in His great goodness and unspeakable mercy. Oh, what privileges are granted to us as a people! And if God spared not His people that He loved because they refused to walk in the light, how can He spare the people whom He has blessed with the light of heaven in having opened to them the most exalted truth ever entrusted to mortal man to give to the world?"

Another interesting omission occurs at the end of the second series of "dots" on page 379. The context indicates that Haskell and Butler had inquired "in regard to the course which should be pursued to secure the rights of the people to worship according to the dictates of our own conscience." [This, too, was omitted.] Her reply at the point of omission reads:

"All the policy in the world cannot save us from a terrible sifting, and all the efforts made with high authorities will not lift us from the scourging of God just because sin is cherished."

These omissions give a different, more specific tone than the mere broad "wrist-slapping" impression left by a casual reading of the letter as found in Selected Messages, bk. ii. The parallels drawn here between historical and spiritual

SHADOWS BEFORE

"Coming Events Cast Their Shadows Before"

Israel are indeed sobering, yet they were omitted. WHY? How, Testimonies Vol 8, pp. 247-251, made its way into print, only God knows! How do we explain the various changes and omissions to be found in Testimonies, Vol. 5, and The Great Controversy?

¹Compare Ellen G. White's use of this text with her use of the verses which follow - Matt. 11:22-23 - as found in the Review & Herald, August 1, 1893. The date indicates that the added light of the message brought by Elders Jones and Waggoner had been given. The Review article reads:

"Of those who boast of their light, and yet fail to walk in it, Christ says, 'But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum [Seventh-day Adventists, who have had great light], which art exalted unto heaven [in point of privilege], shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which had been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.'"

²The significance of the use of the word, "divorced" in connection with Jerusalem and spiritual Israel can be seen in a reference found in The Kress Collection, p. 153. It reads:

"When Christ saw in the Jewish people a people divorced from God, He saw also a professed Christian church united to the world and the Papacy. And as He stood upon Mount Olivet, weeping over Jerusalem till the sun sank behind the western hills, so He is watching over and pleading with sinners in these last moments of time. Soon He will say to the angels who are holding the four winds, 'Let the plagues loose; let darkness, destruction, and death come upon the transgressors of my law.' Will He be obliged to say to those who have had great light and knowledge, as He said to the Jews, 'O that thou hadst known, even thou in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace. But now they are hid from thine eyes.'?"

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"The message to the Laodicean church is applicable to our condition." (REH, July 23, 1889)

"The state of the Church represented by the foolish virgins, is also spoken of as the Laodicean state." (REH, August 19, 1890)

"One of the main topics discussed at the meeting of the National Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commission of the Roman Catholic Church in New Orleans, September 6-9, was SUNDAY. It was an in-depth study. The question addressed was: Do we keep Sunday or does Sunday keep us? The study began with a summary of the scholarly concensus on the origins of Sunday and some brief remarks on its subsequent history. This served to bring us some key images; the first day of the week, the eighth day, the day of the resurrection - the Lord's day. On the basis of these images, Sunday was sketched as a sacrament of the Christian life: an unmistakable temporal sign of the hidden reality of grace in the world. The observance of Sunday, the study declared, properly understood is a way of living.

"Dr Wyeth Willard, president of The Lord's League of New England, and the editor and executive director [Dr. James P. Wesberry] of the Lord's Day Alliance of the United States were in attendance as invited guests." (Sunday, Summer, 1983, p. 21)

The language is ominous: Sunday is declared to be a "sacrament" of the Christian life, and this must be understood in the light of the meaning of that term in Catholic teaching. Further, Sunday is conceived as a "sign" of grace in the world. The "observance of Sunday" is to be considered as "a way of living." New battle lines are taking shape. Over and above the issue of which twenty-four hours are to be observed as the Sabbath, comes the appeal that Sunday is a "sign" of grace, and in its observance is to be a "way" of living.

We must not forget the early Christians were known as the followers of "The Way." (See Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 24:14) They followed the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6) That way led to the Cross. Then should it be any surprise to find in a letter written by Ellen G. White in 1898 (Letter 126: 7BC:968), a question asked - "What is the seal of the living God, which is placed in the foreheads of His people?" She then gives an answer to her

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THE LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE BELIEVES:

- "that the Lord's day is the weekly festival of Christ's resurrection from the grave and that it should be kept joyfully, gladly, reverently and prayerfully by all of His followers as a day for worship, rest, religious instruction, human service and family culture in token of deepest love, loyalty, gratitude and faith.

"The Lord's Day Alliance aims to promote the fullest recognition of the divine purpose of the Lord's Day, to conserve this priceless heritage for all people and to secure the proper and conscientious observance of the day in the interest of those attainments in religion and morals upon which the stability and well-being of our nation depends.

"We set ourselves unreservedly and unapologetically to contend against the adverse influences arising both from business and pleasure which so strongly assert themselves and which threaten the integrity of this blessed day of rest and worship. . . .

"We believe that Sunday is a holy day, not a glorified holiday and that the whole day should be kept holy, not half of it." Sunday, Summer, 1983, pp. 4-5

own question. It is "a mark of redemption. The intelligent mind has seen the sign of the cross of Calvary in the Lord's adopted sons and daughters." The Sabbath as revealed to us by Him who is the truth, becomes a "sign" of a way of living, which involves the Cross. What greater "temporal sign" of "grace" could be conceived than the Sabbath "rest" in connection with the "rest" provided by Jesus for our sins. And this is the relationship in which the Sabbath is placed in the New Testament. (See Hebrews 4.) Thus we face two Christs, two ways, and two signs of those ways, one representing true grace, and the other a false grace.

As the tensions in the world mount, the appeal to "rest" both physically and spiritually will increase. One must never forget that the book - Divine Rest for Human Restlessness - by Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi, carries a "Foreword" by none other than the editor and executive director of the Lord's Day Alliance, Dr. James P. Wesberry. In this book, Dr. Bacchiocchi discusses the plucking of grain on the Sabbath, and Jesus' reply citing the example of David. He then writes - "It is human need and not position that takes prior claim over the law." (p. 157) Will the "need" for rest in our modern society finally be argued as a "prior claim" to the fact that the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God?

One professor at Andrews University in recommending Bacchiocchi's book wrote:

"This new book, which dialogs with virtually all the literature on the subject, is a must for those who are tired of dissertations on which day is the Sabbath and when to keep it but wish to move on to why and how of satisfying Sabbath observance." (Ibid., insert)

Can a satisfying way be realized separated from truth? Jesus is not only "the way," He is also "the truth."

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