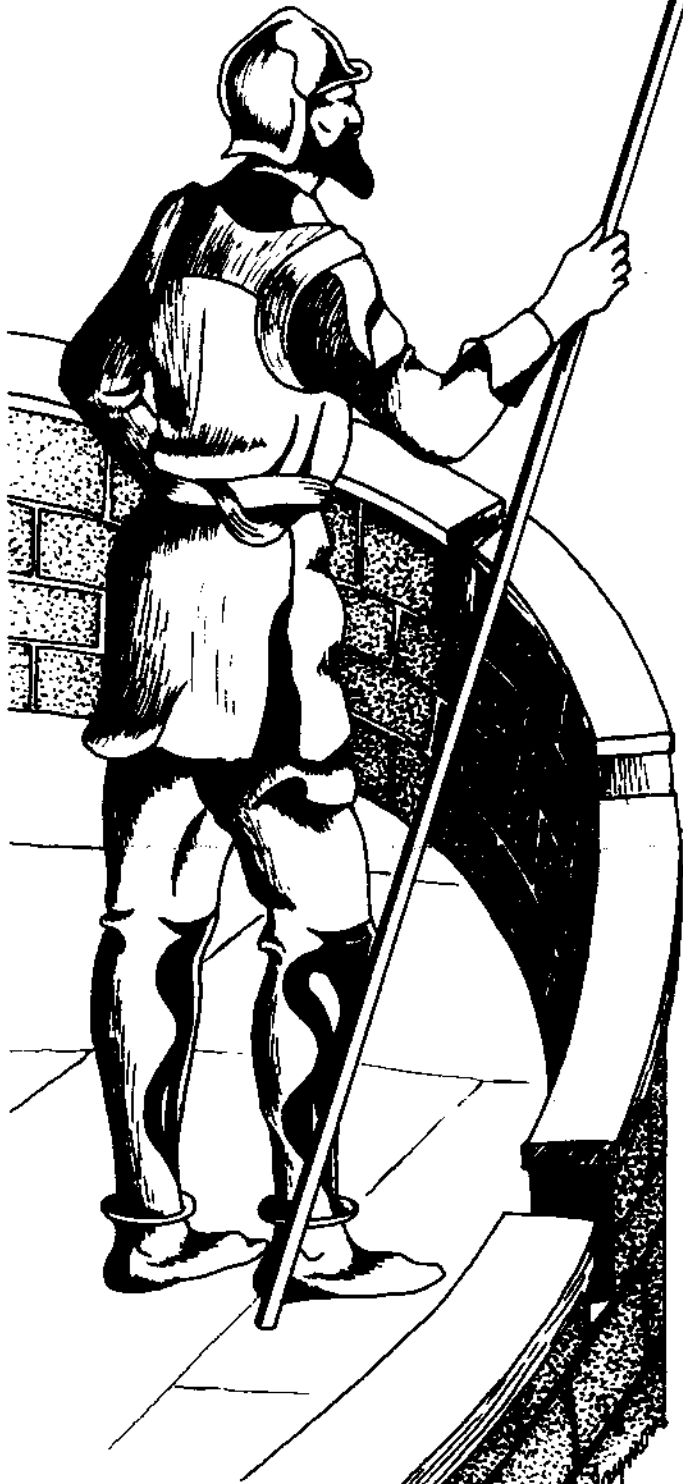


*"Watchman,  
what of the night?"*

"BEHOLD, THE BRIDEGROOM!  
Come out to meet Him."

(Matt 25:6 RSV)



## ARE YOU A SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST?

When the first Statement of Beliefs was formulated in 1872, it was titled - "A Declaration of the Fundamental Principles Taught and Practiced by the Seventh-day Adventists." An extended preface explained why it was thought necessary to formulate such a statement. However, these pioneers of the Adventist faith wanted it to be "distinctly understood that [they had] no articles of faith, creed, or discipline, aside from the Bible." Neither were these Fundamental Principles "put forth... as having any authority with our people, nor was it designed to secure uniformity among them as a system of faith, but is a brief statement of what is, and has been, with great unanimity, held by them." But this did mean in 1872, that if you adhered to these Fundamental Principles you were a Seventh-day Adventist in belief and practice.

There was a distinct reason for giving this summary as to what was "with great unanimity" believed by Seventh-day Adventists in 1872. The preface continued:

As Seventh-day Adventists we desire simply that our position shall be understood; and we are the more solicitous for this because there are many who call themselves Adventists who hold views with which we can have no sympathy, some of which, we think, are subversive to the plainest and most important principles as set forth in the Word of God." (See Manuscript - Key Doctrinal Comparisons, p. 15)

Ironically, this same concept could have pre-faced the 27 Statements of Fundamental Beliefs as voted at Dallas, Texas, in 1980, a century later. For today, from the viewpoint of the hierarchy, there are "many" who call themselves "Adventists" with whom they have no sympathy, and further, many of these "many" do hold and teach contrary to a plain "Thus saith the Lord" both in doctrine and in life style. But today, there is a notable difference from 1872. The two statements - the

To Page 7, Column 1

# AN EXCHANGE

with

## DR. DESMOND FORD

In the November, 1988 issue of Spectrum, Dr. Desmond Ford wrote a letter to the Editors on Adventist Doctrine. To this letter, we responded with "A Letter to the Editor." (See page 3) Our letter was sent to Dr. Ford for his response. He replied in a letter dated December 21, 1988. (See page 5) Our response followed on the 29th (See page 6) There has been no further exchange to date.

We reproduce below Dr. Ford's letter to Spectrum (Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 60-61)

### Desmond Ford on Adventist Doctrine

**T**o the Editors: Among the various signs that Adventists are church members because of social and cultural reasons, rather than ideological convictions, is the lessened interest in church doctrines. Recently *Seventh-day Adventists Believe—A Biblical Exposition of Fundamental Doctrines* has appeared, and its circulation is being promoted by financial inducement. What remains to be seen is how many will be stirred by the volume to emphatic disagreement or endorsement.

I rejoice that the editors of the book have had the courage to set forth the long-controverted teaching of the sinlessness of Christ's human nature, but I mourn to see the same trite, oft-repeated arguments used to support a heavenly sanctuary with two distinct rooms, and Christ as coming to the Father in 1844 to do a work of investigative judgment upon all professed believers in order that celestial beings might be edified (see pages 313-331). Is the denomination resolved to learn nothing in these areas? Must we hold to erroneous traditions whatever the cost? Why do we pretend to the laity that our scholars hold certain positions, which in fact they have repudiated long since?

In this book (p. 330), Dr. Arthur Ferch is cited as supporting the traditional date of 457 B.C. for the commencement of the 2,300 "days." Yet, while in Australia in March of this year, I found that many conservatives there had been angered by an article by Dr. Ferch in the *South Pacific Record*. This article admitted that dogmatism on the

initial date for the 70 weeks was impossible. Of course, if 457 B.C. is rickety so is 1844. This inference was perceived by many of the laity there.

Just as bad in the recent book is the shocking assertion that modern translators did not know what they were doing when they translated *ta hagia* as the Most Holy Place or equivalent (see page 327). Adventist scholars, for the most part, have long agreed with the translators. In the Heritage Room of Andrews University you may read Dr. R. Loasby's class lectures on the book of Hebrews. In his own handwriting we find these words alongside Hebrews 9:4ff. "This surely foreshadowed the nonexistence in heaven of a holy place in any sanctuary." Then in his typed notes we have the following: "The Holy Place was the scene of man's approach to God, but the Holy of Holies was a type of the presence of Jesus in the heavens. Any approximation of the first sanctuary and its services cannot be taken into heaven. Cf. verse 9."

Another well-known Adventist scholar has pointed out that when Hebrews 9:7 is compared with 9:25; 13:11; 9:11, 12, it is undeniable that the equivalent of "into the second" in the first reference is "into the holiest" in the later references. In other words, *ta hagia* is used repeatedly in Hebrews for the heavenly equivalent of the earthly second apartment or Most Holy Place.

In pre-Glacier View meetings with the committee appointed by the church, I pointed out that *ta hagia* was reached by priestly passing "through the veil" (see Heb. 10:19, 20). All scholars expert in this area admit that the veil referred to is the second (see Heb. 6:19, 20 which uses the technical phrase "within the veil" borrowed from the LXX). Typical of the responses I obtained in those days was the comment by one committee member that I had employed a dangling participle in my argument! This type of superficial circumvention of the real issues was sadly typical. Oh, that some Churchills might rise up within the SDA community saying, as he did on such an occasion, "This is the sort of nonsense up with which I shall not put!"

On pages 174-176 of the published edition of my Glacier View manuscript are listed 22 assumptions implicit in the traditional investigative judgment doctrine. Nothing in the new book being promoted by the General Conference even acknowledges the spider-web consistency of the Adventist doctrinal structure at this point. When I suggested that none of these 22 assumptions can be scripturally demonstrated as true, the only response I received that was worth considering was the suggestion that I lessen their number in the manuscript before it was sent out.

If perchance my gloomy hint that not many in the church really care whether its doctrines are true is ill-founded, may I make two offers? One—Dr. Walter Martin and I, over national radio, have, on more than one occasion, invited representatives of the General Conference to discuss these matters on the air (at no cost to the GC). The offer remains. Two—if any would like a copy of the Glacier View manuscript to study, I would be happy to send copies free while they last. Write to me, care of Good News Unlimited, 11710 Education Street, Auburn, CA 95603-2499.

# "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*

Dec. 7, 1988

Editor  
Spectrum  
Takoma Park, MD 20912

Dear Sir;

In the most recent issue of Spectrum (Vol. 19, #2), Dr. Desmond Ford makes certain observations regarding the meaning of ta hagia in the book of Hebrews. (See pp. 60-61) He would translate this Greek plural of hagios as meaning the Most Holy Place. In various versions it has been translated in different ways. There are certain facts that one needs to consider before drawing a presumptive conclusion such as Dr. Ford has done. Paul in Hebrews uses, for every reference to the Old Testament, the LXX. (I make no apology for noting Paul as the author of the book, when such well known figures in New Testament textual criticism, as the Alands, observe that "the early Church assumed Hebrews to be Pauline." (The Text of the New Testament, p. 49) I accept the assumption of the early Church regardless who might have been the amanuensis.) Furthermore, the LXX "was the Bible of the Greek-speaking world in the times of Christ and the apostles... The early Christian church all about the Mediterranean Sea adopted it. By its words they proved that Jesus was the promised Messiah..." (The Ancestry of Our English Bible, p. 72) How ta hagia is used in the sanctuary references of the LXX must be taken into consideration in understanding how it is defined in the book of Hebrews.

The first use of ta hagia in its plural form in the book is in Chapter 8:2. Shall it be translated "holy things," or as done in the KJV, "sanctuary"? In the LXX, hagia, is used both ways. (See Ex. 29:30; 40:9; Lev. 5:15) Thus this verse could read that Christ was "a minister of holy things and of the true tabernacle;" or Christ was "a minister of the sanctuary even the true tabernacle." Either way, ta hagia does not mean, "most holy place." Then coming to Heb. 9:1, one finds the singular form, to hagon, which is translated consistently in the versions as "the sanctuary." The LXX in Lev. 16, uses this singular form exclusively in referring to the most holy place. Simply stated, the use of hagios, whether singular or plural; as an adjective or a substantive, in the LXX gives a mixed picture in usage. The emphasis in Hebrews 9 and 10 is the ministry of Christ in the ta hagia.

In Hebrews 9:2-3, the words, as Paul would use them, are defined. The first apartment is called Hagia. The second apartment is called Hagia Hagion. After noting this second apartment and the things in it, it is clearly stated - "of which we cannot now speak particularly." (9:5) Following this, not once do the words, Hagia Hagion, appear; but Hagia is used five more times in discussing the ministry of Christ in the Heavenly Sanctuary. (9:8, 24, 25; 10:19; 13:11) This leaves but one possible conclusion - ta hagia refers to the holy place.

Editor, Spectrum - 2

A possible allusion to the Most Holy Place ministry is Heb. 10:25, where it speaks of "the day approaching." The Jews referred to the Day of Atonement - the day when services were performed in the Most Holy Place as Yoma, The Day.

Dr. Ford implies that the reference to the work of the High Priest in the typical second apartment as noted in Heb. 9:7, finds a parallel in 9:25, and thus ta hagia means the Most Holy Place. However, the language is different. In 9:7, it reads, "once each year" (hapax tou eniautou) - the very language of Exodus 30:10 in the LXX. Heb. 9:25 reads "every year" (kat' eniauton) which conveys the idea of "during the year" in the Greek. It should be kept in mind that sin offerings requiring that the blood be taken into the sanctuary during the year were ministered by the high priest, not the common priests. See Lev. 4:5-7, 16-18. The picture that emerges from the context, from the comparison with the LXX, and from the sanctuary ritual indicates that ta hagia as used in Heb. 9 and onward refers to a ministry in the first apartment of the Heavenly Sanctuary.

Dr. Ford gives as his educational philosophy in a "debatable field" that "half of what I told you is wrong, but I don't know which half." Jesus, the teacher sent from God, stated to Nicodemus - "We speak that which we do know." (John 3:11) If Dr. Ford had taken Jesus as his **example**, as well as **substitute**, his contribution might have been corrective in areas of Adventist sanctuary teaching rather than destructive of the truth committed in sacred trust to the Advent Movement.

Respectfully,



Wm. H. Grotheer, Editor

P. O. Box 789  
Lamar, AR 72846

Spectrum from p. 2

No sensible person looks for infallibility in the doctrinal structure of any church. That would be impossible. At the close of a series of more than 100 hours of instruction in one debatable field, I once told my students: "Half of what I have told you is wrong, but I don't know which half." Teachers and church leaders at best are only one-eyed leaders of the blind. I repeat, sensible Christians do not expect infallibility of their leaders, but they do expect honesty. To repeat trite, oft-refuted traditions as truth, when we know better, is just not honest. And to invite Heaven's benediction on such a project may be to invite Heaven's wrath.

Desmond Ford, President  
Good News Unlimited  
Auburn, California

## 1989 ANNUAL FELLOWSHIP

August 7 - 12

Two Seminars planned:

**The Book of Acts**

Its Message for the End Time

**Revelation 13**

What Is Still To Be Fulfilled?

Write now for details and attendance request forms. When our capacity is filled, then only cancellations will supply openings for accommodations.



# Good News

U N L I M I T E D

We preach Christ—  
crucified,  
risen,  
coming again

Dec 21 88

Dear Brother Grotheer,

Thank you for your letter kindly forwarded to me by Spectrum. Inasmuch as I have received about forty letters in response to mine this must be brief.

Yours was the only letter questioning TA HAGIA. You have bravely denied the conclusions of greek exegetes for twenty centuries. All scholars outside of Adventism have recognized that Heb 9 in dealing with the high priest's special entrance with blood annually ( in contrast to once for all) is referring to the Day of Atonement. It is not discussing those rare offerings you refer to when the high priest sinned or the entire congregation. The context of Heb 9:25 is clearly the offering once for all on Calvary which cleansed the heavenly sanctuary-- v 23 ff. (Pardon the typo's here-its as cold morning). If you know of any scholars who take your position on Heb 9:25 I would be glad to know of them---scholars without adventist bias.

Your other points are dealt with in the Glacier View ms which we are happy to send you. Wishing you God's richest blessing as you continue your study of His holy Word,

yours in Him

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. L. Ford". The signature is written in a cursive style and is located below the typed name.



# "Watchman, what of the night?"

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

Dec. 29, 1988

Dr. Desmond Ford  
11710 Education St.  
Auburn, CA 95603

Dear Dr. Ford:

Your letter dated December 21, is no answer to the letter which was sent to the Editor of Spectrum. Time does not make error truth, neither do numbers constitute rightness. What does the text state, and what does it mean by what it says?

Clearly the writer, whether author or amanuensis, used different language in describing the work of the High Priest annually in Heb. 9:7 - hapax tou eniautou - from the language used in comparing the Heavenly ministry of Jesus in Hebrews 9:25 - kat' eniauton. These two phrases have different meanings. Show me from the Word of God alone, and from linguistic evidence that these mean the same. To seek to substitute "greek exegetes for twenty centuries" for what the text reads is no different than Seventh-day Adventists seeking to substitute Ellen G. White in place of the Scriptures. In each instance it is something else in place of the Bible.

Further, when defining the use of Hagia, the one writing stated it meant the "first tent." (9:2) And after "the second veil," the tent was called Hagia Hagion. In the rest of the book, where Christ's Heavenly ministry is referred to, the term, Hagia, is used. Can you show me otherwise?

When in the book of Hebrews, we are asked to "consider... the High Priest of our profession" (3:1), we are directed to look to Him seated on "the throne of grace" (4:14-17), and there to "come boldly." It is to this throne, and to this work of Jesus that the book of Hebrews directs our attention. The "Throne of Grace" is not the "Throne of Judgment" upon which the Ancient of days sits. (Dan. 7:9)

Thank you for the book sent. I obtained a copy soon after it was first published. I shall be happy to share it with my contributing editor.

Respectfully yours,

Wm. H. Grotheer, Editor

Are You a Seventh-day Adventist? - from page 1

first and the last - do not agree! Thus a 1989 Seventh-day Adventist is not an 1872 Seventh-day Adventist. This, the difference between the two statements in and of itself, would not necessarily mean apostasy, but could mean progression.

The changes and contrasts between the first and last (so far) "Fundamental Statements" by the official Church fall into four categories:

- 1) Additional statements in the 1980 Fundamentals which are not found in the original formulation. For example, a statement was added in 1980 on "Marriage and the Family" which was excellent and timely. Other additions such as "The Church" which reflects the the Constitution of the World Council of Churches raises serious questions.
- 2) Statements were reworded which amplified what had been written in 1872. An example of this is the statement on the second coming of Christ, a cardinal Adventist teaching.
- 3) Key statements from the 1872 formulation were omitted in 1980. The statement on the meaning and significance of prophecy, as well as the identification of "the man of sin" do not appear in the 27 Fundamentals as voted at Dallas.
- 4) Major doctrinal changes in vital areas of truth, such as the incarnation and the atonement.

The question - Are You a Seventh-day Adventist? - presents a challenge to every professing member of the Church as well as those who claim to adhere to what is called "historic Adventism." In other words, are you a 1980 Seventh-day Adventist, or are you what? - an 1872, 1889, or a 1931 Seventh-day Adventist. Formulation of Beliefs were produced in each one of these years, and while the changes were of minor significance between the 1872 and 1889 statements, there were changes.

No one dares put a period on either his belief or experience, but neither does one dare to accept a statement which contains apostate positions contrary to the truth revealed in the Bible. As it stands now in 1989, a Seventh-day Adventist is one who believes in and adheres to the 27 Fundamental Statements of Belief as voted at Dallas, Texas, in 1980.

If one does not so believe, and has questions, then what is he? - A Traditionalist, a

Historic, a Progressive, or just what kind of an Adventist? Labels do have meaning, and are significant. One must stand for something. But if now aimlessly "drifting," it will not be for long. A final controversy is nearing. What are you?

Besides doctrinal differences between the first and last statements, the method of adoption and use being made of the 1980 Statement differs markedly from the attitude expressed in the preface to the 1872 Statement. The 1872 Statement was not formulated to "secure uniformity" while the 1980 Statement is so used. Further the 1872 Statement was not a voted statement, while the Dallas Statement was voted by the General Conference in session with all that that means to the hierarchy. This compounds the problem for one who desires truth and truth alone. Either the action of the General Conference in 1980 was indeed "the voice of God" and major doctrines as held by the Church for more than a century were to be accounted as error, or else the General Conference became apostate. If so, then what are you if you are a 1989 Seventh-day Adventist?

If the 1980 Statements are apostate, then to be a 1989 Seventh-day Adventist is to be an apostate, or if they are indeed "the voice of God" then what "voice" was leading the Advent Movement over the past century?

To Be Continued

Note: We promised to discuss in this issue of how certain judicial opinions are effecting "individuality in religion." This has been delayed till the May issue of WVN.

\*\*\*\*\*

1989 ANNUAL FELLOWSHIP - AUGUST 7 - 12

\*\*\*\*\*

"Watchman, What of the Night?" is published monthly by the Adventist Laymen's Foundation of Mississippi, Inc., P. O. Box 789, Lamar, AR 72846, USA

In Canada, write - The Adventist Laymen's Foundation of Canada, P. O. Box 117, Thorne, Ont., POH 2J0.

Editor  
Contributing Editor

Elder Wm. H. Grotheer  
Allen Stump

Any portion of this Thought Paper may be reproduced without further permission by adding the following credit line - "Reprinted from "Watchman, What of the Night?" - Lamar, Arkansas, USA.

First Copy free upon request; duplicate copies ---- 50¢.