



*"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*

# ANNUAL COUNCIL ACTION

## Deletion from CHURCH MANUAL

A little publicized action was taken at the 1984 Annual Council, which met at Takoma Park, October 9-18. A committee charged with harmonization of the Statement of Beliefs voted at Dallas in 1980, and the Baptismal Certificate made a recommendation which involved more than merely harmonizing the two instruments. It involved a revision of the Church Manual. The Annual Council accepted the report of the Harmonization Committee to delete Chapter 18, Appendix, Outline of Doctrinal Beliefs. (Adventist Review, Dec. 20, 1984, p. 17, col. 4)

This deleted "Outline of Doctrinal Beliefs" had also been voted at Dallas in 1980 as an action of the General Conference in session. At the Fifth Business Session, April 20, it was "Voted, To amend the section Doctrinal Instruction for Baptismal Candidates, CM [Church Manual] 54-61, as follows:" (Ibid., April 21, p. 20) The formulation of a statement of doctrines which formed the basis of this "Doctrinal Instruction" is what has now been deleted. This doctrinal formulation was preceded by the following "voted" preface:

This summary of doctrinal beliefs is especially prepared for the instruction of candidates for baptism. Every candidate should thoroughly familiarize himself with the teachings contained in this outline and with the duties enjoined upon believers, demonstrating by practice his willing acceptance of all the doc-

trines taught by Seventh-day Adventists and the principles of conduct which are an outward expression of these teachings, for it is "by their fruits ye shall know them."

Prospective members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, before baptism or acceptance on profession of faith, should be carefully instructed from the Scriptures in the fundamental beliefs of the church as presented in chapter 2 (pp. 31-46) of this Manual. [The Dallas Statement of Beliefs] In order to assist evangelists, pastors, and others in giving such instruction and making it Scripture-based and practical, a specially prepared outline appears as an appendix on pages 288-294 of this Manual and in the Manual for Ministers. (Ibid., pp. 20-21; Church Manual, pp. 60-61)

When this action, and the outline of the doctrines which follow the preface were voted, the discussion on the Fundamental Statement of Beliefs had not taken place. In fact a question was raised over this point. Number 15 of the Doctrinal Instruction regarding the family had brought some questions to the floor. The following exchange took place:

GOTTFRIED OOSTERWAL: It might be a point of order, but I would like to phrase it in a form of a question. Point number 15, as well as all the other points, deals with fundamental beliefs of the Adventist Church. Does this discussion preclude the one on fundamental beliefs at a later session?

G. R. THOMPSON: No, the present Church Manual includes our fundamental beliefs. It also includes doctrinal instruction for baptismal candidates, and it lists things for which one can be disfellowshipped. These are all separate, so this discussion does not preclude the one to follow on fundamental beliefs.

GOTTFRIED OOSTERWAL: Then I would like to make a suggestion that at this session we bring these three into harmony with one another. The statement of fundamental beliefs, which includes a statement on marriage, differs radically from this statement. We have three dissimilar statements, leading to the confusion. I wish that we could harmonize all into one fundamental statement of beliefs.

G. R. THOMPSON: It has been suggested that the fundamental beliefs be organized in numerical order. It has been tried, but the best we can recommend to you is that it cannot be put together, because the fundamental beliefs need to be separate. We feel that instruction to candidates must set the ideal before them, but sometimes there must be small differences. The fundamental teaching is the same. While the fundamental-belief statement may be good for its purpose, it does not necessarily fit into the actual needs of doctrinal instruction. Now that's how the Church Manual Committee felt in this particular case. (Adventist Review, April 22, 1980, p. 22)

Here is the crux of the whole problem - there were as Dr. Oosterwal suggested, some radical differences between the two statements.<sup>1</sup> Besides the differences in the one on Marriage and the Family, which created the discussion quoted above, the statements on the ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary were not harmonious. What was voted at Dallas in regard to Christ's High Priestly ministry reads:

There is a sanctuary in heaven, the true tabernacle which the Lord set up and not man. In it Christ ministers on our behalf, making available to believers the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross. He was inaugurated as our great High Priest and began His intercessory ministry at the time of His ascension. In 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, He entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry. It is a work of investigative judgment which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin, typified in the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. In that typical service the sanctuary was cleansed with the blood of animal sacrifices but the heavenly things are purified with the perfect sacrifice of the blood of Jesus. The investigative judgment reveals to heavenly intelligences who among the dead are asleep in Christ and therefore, in Him, are deemed worthy to have a part in the first resurrection. It also makes manifest who, among the living are abiding in Christ, keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and in Him, therefore, are ready for translation into His everlasting kingdom. This judgment vindicates the justice of God in saving those who believe in Jesus. It declares

that those who have remained loyal to God shall receive the kingdom. The completion of this ministry of Christ will mark the close of human probation before the Second Advent. (Adventist Review, May 1, 1980, p. 27)

However, the candidates for admission into the church were to be instructed in harmony with historical Adventism. It read:

Upon His ascension Christ began His ministry as high priest in the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, which sanctuary is the antitype of the earthly tabernacle of the former dispensation. As in the type, a work of investigative judgment began as Christ entered the second phase of His ministry, in the Most Holy Place, foreshadowed in the earthly service by the Day of Atonement. This work of the investigative judgment in the heavenly sanctuary began in 1844, at the close of the 2300 years, and will end with the close of probation. (Church Manual, p. 289. This has now been deleted!)

Other interesting comparisons can be shown. The word - trinity - wasn't placed in the Doctrinal Instruction, neither the language taken from the Constitution of the World Council of Churches on the nature of God and the Church. The statement in the Instruction regarding the prophetic gift is more in harmony with the position taken by the pioneers of this Movement, and does not set up a third Testament of Scripture as does the Fundamental Beliefs as voted at Dallas.<sup>2</sup>

After taking the action deleting the Doctrinal Instruction as voted by the 1980 General Conference (How can the Annual Council alter an action of a General Conference in session, if they believe that such sessions are "the voice of God"?), the Annual Council voted a further recommendation of the Harmonization Committee. This action read:

VOTED, To accept the report of the Fundamental Beliefs and Baptismal Certificate Harmonization Committee as follows:

1. To provide a copy of the Twenty-seven Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists as voted by the 1980 General Conference session with each Baptismal Certificate.

2. To print on the back of the Baptismal Certificate the baptismal vow as expressed in the Church Manual, with only the slight adaptation necessary to phrase it as a personal response to the Fundamental Beliefs . . .

3. To request the General Conference Ministerial Association to revise the baptismal teaching guide,

"In His Steps," and to include in it the Twenty-seven Fundamental Beliefs as a basis for the teaching guide. Each point should be expanded as necessary, but should follow the same sequence and numbering as the Fundamental Beliefs. . . . This proposed baptismal teaching guide, "In His Steps," will be the official adult baptismal teaching guide for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. [Numbers 2 & 3 are subject to final approval by the 1985 Annual Council] (Adventist Review, Dec. 20, 1984, p. 17)

We now have only one statement of beliefs for the Seventh-day Adventist Church - the apostate statement voted at Dallas in 1980. During this interim between the 1980 General Conference Session, and the 1984 Annual Council, we had a very interesting situation - a duplicity. In presenting the proposed Fundamental Statement of Beliefs to the delegates at Dallas in 1980, Elder Neal C. Wilson stated:

There are a great many individuals, for instance, who write to the General Conference Ministerial Association requesting a simple statement of our fundamental beliefs. We would like to feel that when such a statement is sent to those who are theologically educated or who are proficient in stating Biblical truth simply, they will understand not what they see but rather what we see and what we believe. It is one thing for me to apply a certain set of values and theological-doctrinal principles to a statement and find that it all fits together. Someone else reading the same statement might not perceive the same truth. (Ibid., April 23, 1980, p. 9)

Just before the final vote was taken on the 1980 Statement of Beliefs, Spangler of the Ministerial Department stated what he perceived the need to be in adopting this apostate statement. He said:

I do appreciate this document, because we need to clarify our beliefs in order to send them to the numbers of non-Adventist clergy who are constantly asking us for an authoritative statement of our beliefs. I hope, Brother Chairman, that this will be voted today. We must not fail to do this. We are embarrassed to send the Statement of Beliefs we have now because it contains many loopholes and some things are omitted. (Ibid., May 1, 1980, p. 21)

Clearly the objective for the 1980 Statement of Beliefs was to have a document to present to the theologians of "Babylon" and to have a Doctrinal Instruction outline for prospective baptismal candidates which in the main paralleled our historic beliefs.

## MILLIONS IN THE STOCK MARKET

At the 1984 Annual Council, the delegates received an auditing firm's report on the financial statements of the General Conference for the year ending December 31, 1983. This report revealed that the General Conference received in Tithe Funds for 1983 a total of \$78,869,416.32, as their portion of the tithes received worldwide. Of this amount \$16,137,637.64 was used in GC Office Operating, and \$39,115,000.00 was appropriated to overseas work. (p. 7) Accumulated tithe funds have been invested. These investments totalled in 1983 - \$16,009,449.36 of which \$20,905.95 were in Savings and Loan Associations, while \$15,908,209.22 was listed as "Commercial Paper." (p. 9)

"Resources available to the General Conference from sources other than tithe are accounted for within the Specific Purpose Fund." (p. 16) The total current assets of this fund (1983) stand at \$77,465,880.77. From this fund the General Conference has advanced to the Unions the sum of \$3,372,731.16 noted as "Davenport Matter Loans." The explanatory note reads - "Funds advanced to unions to be repaid as cash flow permits. Interest payable quarterly at the average of short-term interest rates in effect during the quarter." (p. 18)

There are three funds listed in the report which involve action on either the international or national securities exchange (stock markets) - The Investment Fund, the Income Fund, and the International Fund. The Investment Fund has one third of a total sum of \$116,222,057.84 in common stock or \$38,266,035.72. (pp. 43-44) While carried on the books at the \$116 million figure, the actual value on the Statement of Assets and Liabilities is given as \$109,321,627.69. The Income Fund has 28% in common stock which cost \$7,816,219.49, and presently valued on the Summary sheet at \$9,980,650.87. (p. 64) The International Fund has in common stocks a total of \$10,654,627.65 with a "current value" of \$10,670,710.00. This small gain in "current value" could be wiped out by a single investment held in the International Fund. There are 220,000 shares

Thus our representative on the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC could say - "See our Statement of Beliefs contains the very confession demanded for fellowship. We even borrowed the very wording from your Constitution." The leadership of the Church could say to Walter Martin - "Look, here is the very wording from the book, Questions on Doctrine. We have not gone back on our compromises at the SDA-Evangelical Conferences. And to the laity, they could point to the outline of Doctrinal Instruction and say - "We still believe in historical Adventism." But apparently this duplicity was not working well, and so now at the Annual Council, the leadership has decided to come down on one side only - the side of apostasy!

<sup>1</sup>When Dr. Oosterwal indicated the two statements differed "radically" he was evidently comparing the statement under discussion for the proposed "Doctrinal Instruction Outline" and the statement on the same topic in the "Working Statement" given to the delegates concerning the "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists." Here are the two side by side for comparison:

WORKING STATEMENT #22

Marriage was divinely established in Eden and affirmed by Jesus to be a lifelong union between a man and a woman in loving companionship. Mutual love, honor, respect and responsibility are the fabric of this relationship, which is to reflect the sanctity, closeness and permanence of the relationship between Christ and His church. Regarding divorce, Jesus said that whoever divorces his wife, except for fornication, and marries another, commits adultery. Although some marriages may fall short of the ideal, through the guidance of the Spirit and with the assistance of the Church, those who have committed themselves to each other may achieve loving unity in Christ and preserve their marriage. God blessed the first husband and wife and told them to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, (sic) He intended the family to help each of its members toward complete maturity. Parents are to bring up their children in the admonition of the Lord, teaching them by precept and example and leading them to become members of the body of Christ and the family of God. (See Ms - Key Doctrinal Comparisons, pp. 33-34)

DOCTRINAL OUTLINE #15

Marriage is one of the God-given institutions dating from the Garden of Eden, before sin entered the world. Jesus honored the institution of marriage and upheld its sanctity and permanence. The New Testament repeatedly affirms the sacredness of the marriage relationship, and instructs that it is to be entered into with a lifelong commitment to fidelity and moral purity. Sexual intimacies between male and female outside of marriage or between members of the same sex are contrary to the divine plan and are condemned in the Bible as sin. Those who are followers of Jesus will by His grace maintain moral purity within these Biblical guidelines concerning sexual relationships. "For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that you abstain from immorality." (I Thess. 4:3, R.S.V.)

The Christian husband and wife are to love and respect one another as God loves and respects them. They are commanded to love and respect their children, to treat them gently, and to teach them to love and serve God. To this end they are to utilize family worship, attendance at Sabbath school and the other church services, and as much as possible, the schools operated by the church. Likewise children are to fulfill their responsibilities to respect and obey their parents. (Church Manual, p. 291)  
(This is to be deleted)

<sup>2</sup>Other comparisons between the Voted Statement of Beliefs at Dallas, and the Outline of Doctrinal Beliefs voted at the same session are also very interesting:

FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS

17. The Gift of Prophecy

One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church

DOCTRINAL OUTLINE #21

The church is to come behind in no gift, and the presence of the gift of prophecy is to be one of the identifying marks of the remnant church. [Texts]

and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord's messenger, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. (Church Manual, pp. 39-40)

#### 21. Christian Behavior

We are called to be a godly people who think, feel, and act in harmony with the principles of heaven. For the Spirit to recreate in us the character of our Lord we involve ourselves only in those things which will produce Christlike purity, health, and joy in our lives. This means that our amusement and entertainment should meet the highest standards of Christian taste and beauty. While recognizing cultural differences, our dress is to be simple, modest, and neat, befitting those whose true beauty does not consist of outward adornment but in the imperishable ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit. It also means that because our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, we are to care for them intelligently. Along with adequate exercise and rest, we are to adopt the most healthful diet possible and abstain from the unclean foods identified in the Scriptures. Since alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and the irresponsible use of drugs and narcotics are harmful to our bodies, we are to abstain from them as well. Instead, we are to engage in whatever brings our thoughts and bodies into the discipline of Christ, who desires our wholesomeness, joy, and goodness. (Church Manual, pp. 41-42)

Seventh-day Adventists recognize that this gift was manifested in the life and ministry of Ellen G. White. (Church Manual, p. 293)

19. The Christian is called unto sanctification, and his life should be characterized by carefulness in deportment and modesty and simplicity in dress.

20. The Christian should recognize his body as the temple of the Holy Spirit. He will therefore honor God by caring for his body intelligently, partaking in moderation of that which is good and avoiding the use of that which is harmful, abstaining from all unclean foods, from the use, manufacture, or sale of alcoholic beverages, the use, manufacture, or sale of tobacco in any of its forms for human consumption, and from the misuse of, or trafficking in, narcotics or other drugs.

25. In the Christian life there is complete separation from worldly practices, such as card playing, theater going, dancing, et cetera, which tend to deaden and destroy the spiritual life. (Church Manual, pp. 292-293)

[All references to the Church Manual are from the Revised 1981 edition.]

While the action of the 1984 Annual Council deleted from the Church Manual the "Outline of Doctrinal Beliefs," they made provision for the General Conference Ministerial Association to revise "In His Steps." The instruction is clearly stated - This booklet is "to include in it the Twenty-seven Fundamental Beliefs as a basis for the teaching guide." Further, each of the Twenty-seven points "should be expanded as necessary." Here is the place to watch. Will the expanded comments worked out by the Ministerial Association actually reflect what the Fundamental Statement says, or will it be expanded in such a way so as to deceive the laity into believing that the Statement voted at Dallas conforms to historic Adventism? Thus they could have their Statement to show to the theologians, and inquirers from "Babylon," and at the same time an "expanded version" to quiet the concerns of a disturbed laity. It appears to be a planned "by-pass" to keep intact, and maintain the status quo. After the approval of "In His Steps" by the 1985 Annual Council, this work of the Ministerial Department is to become "the official adult baptismal teaching guide for the Seventh-day Adventist Church." (See pp. 2-3) Will there be a General Conference "in session" approval of this booklet? An open question!

MILLIONS IN THE STOCK MARKET - from p. 3

in the Hong Kong Shanghai Bank which cost \$387,755.04, but which now are valued at \$198,000.00. (p. 83)

In connection with each of these funds, there is a note on Administrative Services which reads - "In accordance with denominational policy, the General Conference Tithe Fund absorbs personnel and other administrative cost pertaining [to the said fund.]" (pp. 57, 74, 85)

Another note of interest by the Auditors reads - "The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists has been named as a co-defendant in certain litigation which seeks compensatory and punitive damages which, in the event plaintiffs were to prevail, could be material to the financial position of the Tithe Fund. The ultimate outcome of the lawsuits cannot presently be determined and no provision for any liability that may result has been made in the financial statements." (p.5) The litigation cited are the Proctor Case which involves alleged violation of federal anti-trust laws; the Davenport Case, besides certain possible cases with the banks which had loaned money to Davenport, plus the Trustee in Bankruptcy. Certain cases arising from the Bankruptcy scandal were settled in 1983 for about \$500,000. (pp. 104-105) Another case has been filed this year. (See next article)

Besides the totals on the common stock noted above, the Church has \$38 Million in the Bond Market of the Investment and Income accounts. (pp. 43, 64)

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#### SUIT FILED AGAINST CHURCH IN FEDERAL COURT

On January 22, 1985, in the United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri, legal counsel for Reid Granke filed a Complaint against the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and its corporation, the Upper Columbia Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists, Richard Fearing [President of the North Pacific Union], W. D. Blehm [President of the Pacific Union], Wayne Massingell, James Hoppe, Harvey Sauder, and James Davis,

besides unnamed enterprises noted a XYZ 1-10; ABC Corporations 1-10; and John/Jane Does 1-25.

Some of the allegations read as follows:

"Defendants Does 1 through 25 as trust committee members accepted finders fees from Davenport in consideration for voting for loan approval." (p. 6)

"After voting approval for the making of loans to Davenport, and in consideration thereof, defendants Does 1 through 25 as members of the trust committee personally loaned to Davenport money on which they received interest of twenty to eighty percent in violation of state usury laws." (p. 6)

"Defendants Does 1 through 25 as trust committee members accepted first deeds of trust on the real estate as alleged security for the loans but agreed and conspired with the other defendants that said deeds would not be recorded thereby permitting Davenport to sell or encumber the property to others and thereby foreclose the trusts from recouping some part, or all or more than all of, their investment upon the sale or other type disposal of the real estate." (pp. 6-7)

"In addition to defendants involvement in nationwide Davenport loans as aforesaid, Defendants engaged in a scheme of permitting certain church members to make sham gifts of real estate, including nursing homes, to defendant church. By the terms of a 'working agreement' husband and wife church members 'donated' certain nursing homes including but not limited to Parkside Manor, Crestview Nursing Home, Hawthorne House, and Cashmere Nursing Home in the State of Washington to defendants. The appraised value of the property as of the date of the 'gift' less any encumbrances against the property, on the date of the 'gift' was then deducted as a charitable contribution by the donors in computing their state and local income taxes. However, said 'gifts' were not gifts at all but an exchange of real property whereby the 'donors' were relieved from responsibility for mortgages on the real estate, cost of repairs and alterations, and received all of the benefits of the income and profits from their property, tax free. The defendants participated in this tax scheme with the 'donors' by allowing

'donors' to accumulate tax free income in addition to receipt of the property itself at the 'donors' death." (p. 8)

"From as early as 1966 and continuing to the date hereof, the defendants, each of them:

- (1) Have received an income from a pattern of racketeering activity and have used and invested such income to acquire interests in, establish and operate an enterprise engaged in and affecting interstate commerce (hereinafter the 'Racketeering Enterprising');
- (2) Have, through a pattern of racketeering activity acquired and maintained interest in and control of the 'Racketeering Enterprising'; and
- (3) Have, through their employment by or association with the 'Racketeering Enterprise' conducted and participated in the conduct and affairs of the enterprise through a pattern of racketeering activity; . . ." (pp. 9-10)

"For the purpose of executing the aforesaid scheme defraud, or attempting to do so, defendants Fearing, Massingell, Hoppe, Sauder, Davis and Blehm utilized or caused to be utilized the United States mail and facilities and interstate commerce on two or more occasions thereby violated 18 U.S.C. [U. S. Codes, Numbers cited]"(p.12)

The basis for Granke's Complaint is given as "Wrongful Discharge" with attendant "Emotional Distress." The allegation reads:

"As the plaintiff began to discover the aforesaid wrong doings of defendants concerning the Davenport loans and the nursing home 'gifts', he began to call them to the attention of others in defendants' hierarchies and to take steps to try to extract church funds from the Davenport investments and nursing home transactions; and was instructed by defendants not to deal with those matters and the files concerning the Davenport loans and nursing home 'gifts' were removed from him.

"When plaintiff persisted in making known his concern and disapproval of the Davenport transactions and nursing home 'gifts', defendants wrongfully discharged plaintiff from his position as trust officer, secretary, and treasurer with the purpose of harming plaintiff in his business, property, and reputation in order to prevent plaintiff from further discovering and revealing the aforesaid wrong doings of defendants." (p. 14)

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**SEMINAR IN GALATIANS - August 4-10**

The attendance will be limited to 25-30 at most due to accommodations and nature of the Seminar itself (classroom type). If you are interested, please ask for an Application Form. Just mail a postcard to P. O. Box 789 making the request. We must make final decisions soon.

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**NEW POSTAL ADDRESS - Box 789**

A new Post Office was opened in Lamar, and the box 178 in the new facility was unable to hold the volume of incoming mail. We were given a choice of one of the largest boxes available, and we chose 789 which should be easy to remember. However, on our stationary, the change over will come only as new printing of supplies are required.

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**A QUESTION ASKED**

Some have asked if they are limited to five names to whom to send the 1984 Edition - The Times of the Gentiles Fulfilled - and the answer is - "NO!" The number five was only suggestive. One person sent twenty names. Send as many as you wish. Please enclose \$1.00 for each name to help cover postage and handling.

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