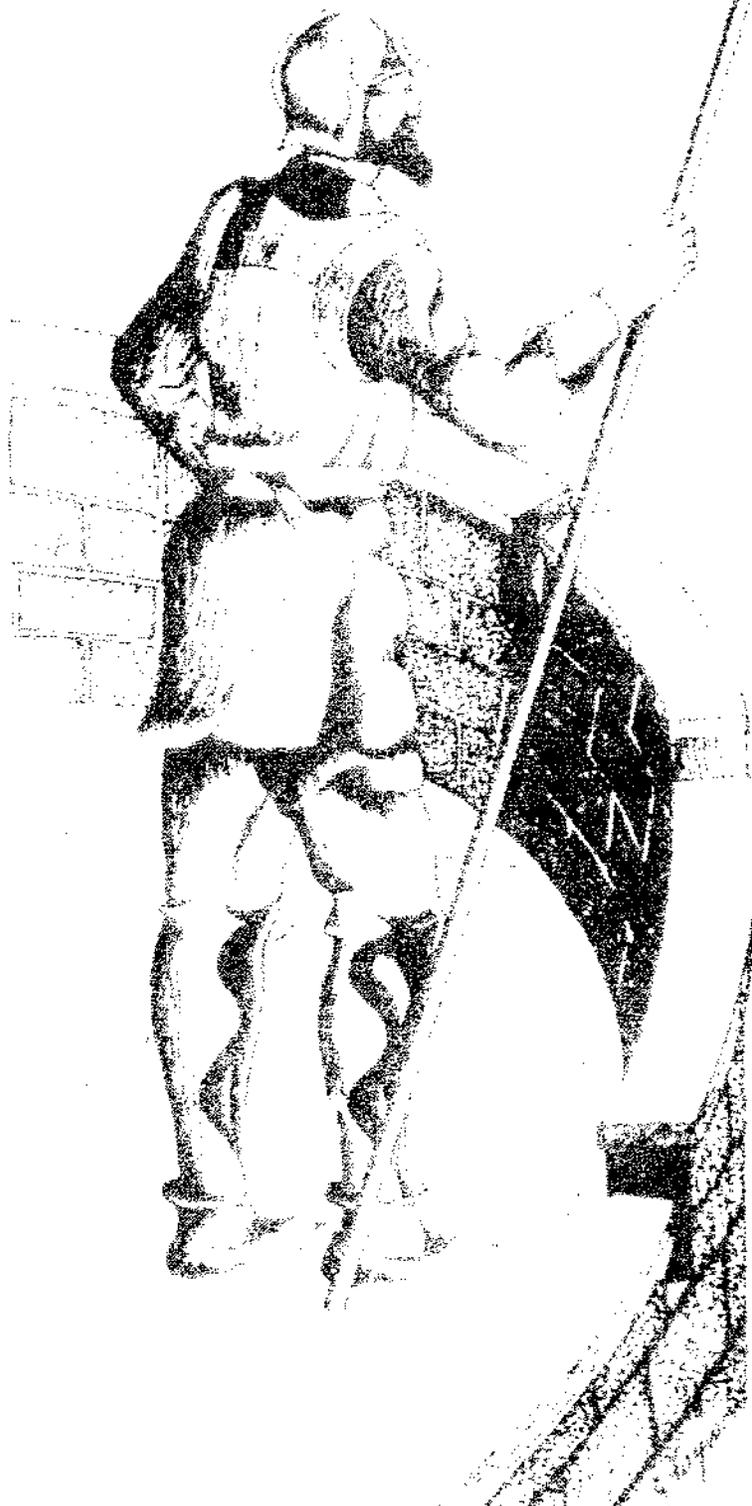


*"Watchman,
what of the night?"*

*"The hour has come, the hour is striking and striking at you,
the hour and the end!"* Eze. 7:6 (Moffatt)



"Catholic Priest Jailed for Rwanda Genocide, Adventist Pastor Freed."

Read Carefully

This title and article are taken from the Ecumenical News International (ENI) *Bulletin*, dated 20 December 2006, p. 10. (It is somewhat jumbled and must be read carefully.) The freed Adventist pastor had already served time for the same heinous crime of genocide, for which the priest was now convicted and was being sentenced. Fredrick Nzwilli reported from Nairobi, Kenya:

"The United Nations war-crimes court for Rwanda has convicted a Roman Catholic priest of genocide and sentenced him to 15 years for his role in 1994 mass killings in the central African country. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) found the Rev. Athanase Seromba guilty on two of four counts he faced in connection with the genocide which afflicted the country and in which about 800,000 people, mainly minority Tutsis and some Hutus, died. He was the first Catholic priest to have been tried in connection with the genocide.

"The chamber finds you guilty of genocide and extermination and sentences you to a single term of fifteen years in prison," Judge Andresia Vaz said, reading the verdict of the three-member panel.

"Last week the tribunal released Elizaphan Ntakirutimana, an 82 year-old former senior pastor of the Seventh-day Adventist

Church who was serving a 10-year prison sentence meted out on 19 February 2003 for his role in the genocide. Seromba was a Catholic priest at Nyange parish in Kivumu Commune and is an ethnic Tutsi. He pleaded not guilty to all charges. The priest was acquitted on two lesser counts ... of genocide.

"The charges (against Ntakirutimana, the Adventist pastor had involved) the destruction of his church where about 2000 ethnic Tutsis had sought shelter in April 1994. He was accused of ordering the destruction of the church by bulldozers, which led to the deaths of all inside, and of sending in Hutu militia members to kill Tutsis who tried to flee. Seromba had claimed he was simply a parish priest and powerless to stop the killing but prosecutors had called for the maximum sentence of life in prison for the cleric.

"Meanwhile, after his release on 6 December, former pastor Ntakirutimana said, "I have no idea where to go." On 7 December, the Rwanda government told the pastor he was free to return to his country. Ntakirutimana spent nearly three years at the prison during his sentencing, but the tribunal ruled an early remission for the time he had already served on remand in the United States and Arusha after being arrested in 1996 in Texas. ...

"He became the first ICTR convict to be set free, and left the prison in poor health. His age and state of health are thought to have facilitated his release. The pastor headed the Adventist church in western Rwanda and was also responsible for the Mugonero parish, where thousands of Tutsis were killed. He was convicted together with his son Gerard, who was a doctor at the Mugonero hospital. Gerard is now serving 25 years in prison."

This experience of the past century raises some questions. With the conviction of the Catholic priest it is evident that the "gospel" of Romanism – the Eucharist – is unable to transform human lives to such an extent that they would not take part in mass killings. It is also evident that neither the "everlasting gospel" as it was presented in Africa sufficient.

In this time frame, a missionary home on furlough from that part of Africa visited relatives living here at the foundation. I had several informative conversations with him. He was an educator connected with one of the colleges of the area. I was interested in what was being taught the students and through them, the converts as the results of their ministry. He indicated that they were not taught about the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 in connection with Revelation 14:6-7. I asked him, "Why?" His response was that the average person was not able to grasp it. But there in Rwanda is one who is spending 25 years for taking part in the genocide who is a medical doctor, and a son of an Adventist pastor. True, arithmetic does not spell salvation, but in the context of Scripture, it is involved with the sanctuary truth which is a part of the "everlasting" ("age-long" Gr.) gospel." The first was represented in types and shadows. God's request was, "Let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them" (Ex. 25:8). He promised, "I will set my tabernacle among you: I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people" (Lev. 26:11-12). The second was and is the Reality. The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (John 1:14, Gr.). We need to be careful lest we commit genocide against truth.