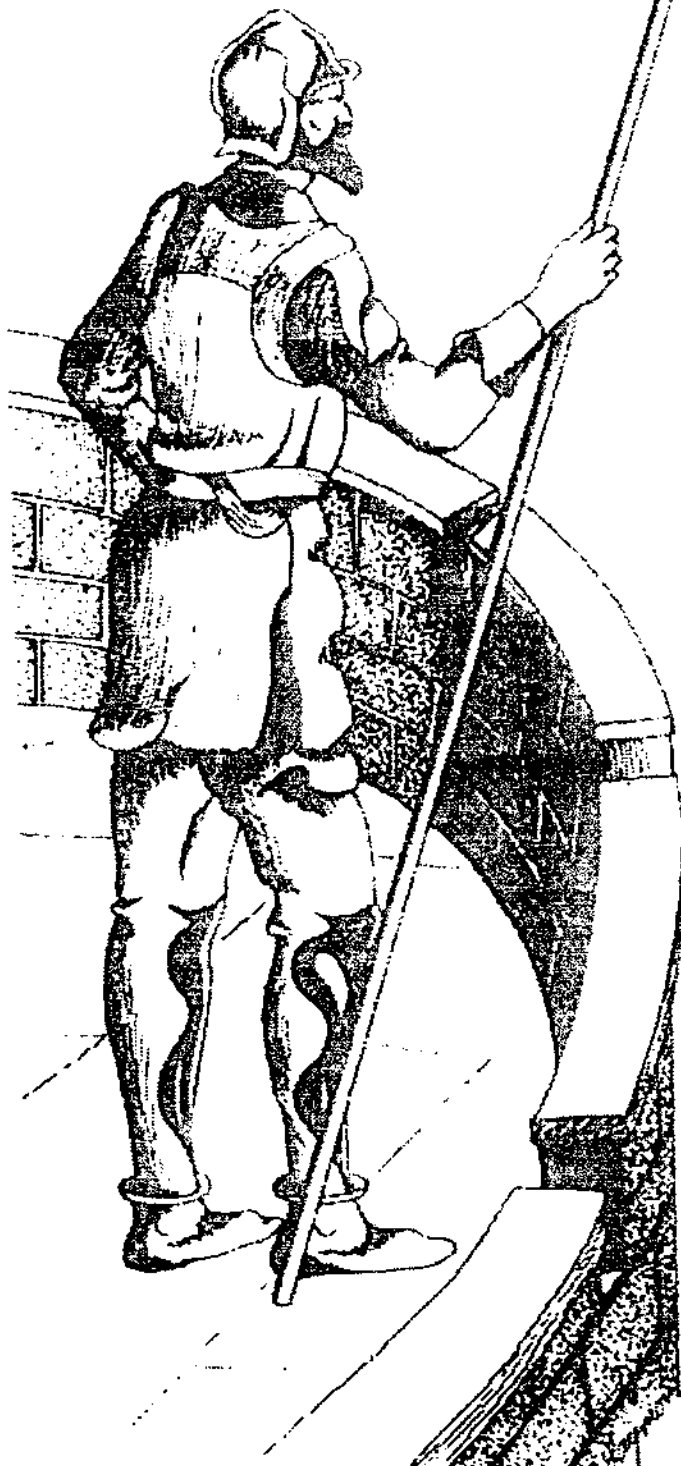


"Watchman, what of the night?"

"The hour has come, the hour is striking, and striking at you,
the hour and the end!"

Exe. 7:6 (Moffat)



THE FINAL ATONEMENT - I

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Two Parables

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Editor's Preface

This issue of WVN is different than any previous issue. It will be a true "thought paper," as others have been. A "thought paper" is written to stimulate thinking. It is not perceived as an infallible or dogmatic pronouncement on the subject discussed, but rather a discussion of the subject from a viewpoint not previously investigated. In this issue, we intend not only to stimulate thinking but also to explore as far as possible all texts which relate to the subject of the Final Atonement. It is admitted from the start that in so doing, there is the possibility that cherished traditional concepts will come under close scrutiny. It is also possible that some of these traditions will be found to be at variance with the Biblical data. This has been the record of religious contention in all time. This was a key factor of conflict between Christ and the Pharisees of His day. (Matt. 15:2-3). Is not the counsel given in connection with the 1888 experience still apropos today? It read: "If the pillars of our faith will not stand the test of investigation, it is time that we knew it. There must be no spirit of Pharisaism cherished among us" (IM, p. 107).

Standing as we are at the end of time with the coming of the Great High Priest as King of kings and Lord of lords, should we not carefully explore every aspect of the Final Atonement? Since the book of Revelation (15:8) indicates a brief period of time between the close of the High Priestly ministry of Christ and His return as King of kings during which the saints must live in the sight of a holy God without an Intercessor, should we not be sure that our position is truly Biblically sustainable?

This issue will not complete our intended study on the subject of the Final Atonement; others will follow.

Review,
then Review again, and
Review all that you've Reviewed"

The Final Atonement - I

The typical services of the Wilderness Sanctuary evidenced a dual atonement. The convicted sinner who brought the prescribed offering in confession of his guilt was, through the ministry of the officiating priest, forgiven. The text reads - "The priest shall make an atonement for him as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him" (Lev. 4:26). The second atonement was typified in an annual yearly service. The tenth day of the seventh month was called the "Day of Atonements" (Plural in the Hebrew, Leviticus 23:27-28). On that day the High Priest alone ministered an atonement which resulted in cleansing. The text reads - "For on that day shall (the high priest) make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord" (Lev. 16:30).

It was around these typical services and their anti-typical significance that the present theological crisis in Adventism evolved. Following the Great Disappointment, a small group seeking to find an answer as to why Jesus did not return according to expectation on October 22, 1844 turned their attention once again to the services of the wilderness Sanctuary. The message as had been given by William Miller was focused in the summer of 1844 on Daniel 8:14 - "Unto two thousand and three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" - and was related to the annual date for the Day of Atonement - "the tenth day of the seventh month."

One who had embraced this message, O. R. L. Crosier, after the disappointment, produced a lengthy and detailed study on "The Sanctuary." In this study, he designated the two atonements of the typical services as "the individual atonement" and "the National Atonement." In meeting objections to his emphasis of the National Atonement as the answer to the Disappointment, he rejected the position taken by the mainline churches' theologians, that the atonement had been completed at the cross. In doing so, he denied that there was an atonement made at the cross, holding that the

cross was merely the sacrifice by which the atonement was made in the sanctuary in heaven by Christ as the great High Priest.

The early pioneers of Adventism adopted Crosier's position publishing his study in 1850, along with other articles, in a 48 page pamphlet called the Advent Review. In 1853 into all unsold copies, James White "tipped" a leaf which contained this comment regarding the Crosier study - "The subject of the sanctuary should be carefully examined, as it lies at the foundation of our faith and hope." The 1872 Statement of Beliefs, the first to be drawn up after the organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1863, echoed Crosier's position. It read concerning Jesus Christ - He "ascended on high to be our only mediator in the sanctuary in Heaven, where with His own blood He makes atonement for our sins; which atonement so far as being made on the cross, was but the offering of the sacrifice, is the very last portion of His work as priest" (Article II).

During the 1955-1956 Conferences with the Evangelicals, the Adventist conferees not only adopted the position that the atonement was completed on Calvary, but denied the final atonement, thus reversing the original position. In the published answer to questions asked by the Evangelicals, Questions on Doctrine, the new position taken is stated with emphasis:

Adventists do not hold any theory of a dual atonement. "Christ hath redeemed us" (Gal. 3:13) "once for all" (Heb. 10:10). (p. 390)

This denial of faith ruptured Adventism. If the Adventist conferees really were convicted that the positions of the Evangelicals had merit, then the only honest approach would have been to say, "It appears we have some 'home work' to do, so that our positions harmonize with the Word of God." Then there should have followed a prayerful and diligent study of the Word to bring our doctrinal concepts into harmony with the revealed truths of the types and their fulfilment in the reality of Jesus' sacrifice and high priestly ministry. There should have been no abandonment of the original position, nor a denial of the faith, until such was done. It is true that research was permitted, as in the case of Dr. Desmond Ford, but it was to defend a position assumed, not to discover truth. In this there is a dis-

inct difference.

It is our objective in this "review" of the final atonement to: 1) Consider the Scriptural facts and data given regarding the typical Day of Atonement; and 2) Note other texts which contribute to the questions raised which reflect on traditional perceptions. After examining carefully the questions and problems which surface from the data thus obtained, we will detail the actual services performed on that day by the high priest.

Leviticus 23

The 23rd chapter of Leviticus lists with instructions "the feasts of the Lord, even holy convocations" which were to be observed during the ceremonial year beginning with the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month (vs 4-5). The anti-typical fulfillment of this "Feast of the Lord" is noted in the New Testament. Paul writing to the Corinthian church declared, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:7). Thus this ceremonial year of ancient Israel as outlined in the services of the wilderness Sanctuary could serve as an overlay of the Christian era beginning with the sacrifice of the Lamb of God and finding its climax in the High Priestly ministry of Jesus Christ during the anti-typical Day of Atonement.

In the Hebrew, as we noted in the first paragraph, the word "atonement" is in the plural form - "Day of Atonements" (23:27-28). Is this the "majestic plural" thus denoting its prime importance, or is it simply a plural which is accounting for the multiple objectives obtained ceremonially by the high priestly ministry on that day? (16:33). The single distinct difference as to how the congregation of Israel was to relate to this day in contrast to the other feast days gives weight to the recognition of the use of the plural form as a "majestic plural." On each of the other major feast days, the injunction was given - "Ye shall do no servile (occupational) work therein" (23:8, 21, 25, 35, 36) - while for the Day of Atonements, the command was - "Ye shall do no work in that same day" (23:28). This placed the Day of Atonements on the same level as the Sabbath day (23:3).

Not only did the Day of Atonements provide ceremonial cleansing for the people from all their "sins

before the Lord" (16:30); but it also provided for a judgment to be executed if something was done, and if something was not done: 1) "Whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people" (23:29). 2) "Whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people" (23:30). How it was determined who did and who didn't is not given in the Biblical record, but some kind of an investigative judgment is implied on the part of God. The Day of Atonements was thus a day of cleansing and a day of judgment. This dual aspect of the day is reflected in the prophecies of Daniel (7:10; 8:14), and in the book of Revelation (14:7, 12).

Revelation and Daniel

Let us turn our attention to one verse from each of these books. First, Revelation 14:6-7, which reads:

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth..., saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come.

Literally, the last clause reads - "Because came the hour of the judgment of Him." The Greek word for "is come" is ηλθεν, a second aorist (past tense) indicative, and can be translated by either the simple English past tense, or in this case by the perfect tense as is done in the KJV. However, how is the phrase, "the judgment of Him," to be understood? It could indicate a simple possessive sense - "His judgment" - or it could mean that God goes on trial, that He faces a judgment - "the judgment of Him" (της κρισεως αυτου). The book of Revelation gives a picture of both concepts. In Chapter 20, John sees the "great white throne" and before this throne of God, stand the "dead," and they are "judged" by "those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (vs. 11-12). This is God in judgment - "His judgment." In Chapter 12, after the symbolic representation of a war between "the dragon" and "Michael," a loud voice is heard saying in heaven - "Now is come... the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ (Messiah)" (ver. 10). Has the kingdom of God, thus God, been in question? Paul indicates that God abdicated in favor of Christ, "ill He hath put all enemies under His feet" (1 Cor. 15:24-28). The question follows - Did

the sin problem place God on trial? If answered in the affirmative, then Revelation 14:7 could mean as it literally reads - "the judgment of Him."

We shall leave in abeyance any conclusions, but must also note in passing, that in Revelation a single book is introduced - "the book of life" (Rev. 20:12). This book is also called, "the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). Further, since the names of those redeemed are in this book, and evidently not in the "books," Paul's comment to the Corinthian church is significant in a full consideration of any heavenly "judgment." He wrote - "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (I, 5:10).

Turning next to Daniel, let us note Chapter 8 and verse 14 which reads:

And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.

The margin in the KJV indicates that the word translated, "cleansed" in the Hebrew means "justified." Other translations of this final clause read:

Then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated. (NIV)

Then the Holy Place will be restored. (REB)

Then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state. (RSV)

Then the Holy Place shall emerge victorious. (NEB)

Then is the holy place declared right. (Young's Literal Translation)

Interestingly, the NKJV translates the verb "shall be cleansed" without a marginal reference to the Hebrew. In the KJV, there are two marginal notations in this verse both giving the reading of the Hebrew text. The NKJV retained only one of them, the first. This could be saying one of two things: 1) That the Hebrew word, *nisdaq*, can mean, "cleansed," and should be so translated in this instance, or 2) That this word appearing in the Massoretic Hebrew text is incorrect, and that the LXX and the Vulgate should be followed which would have been translated from a different Hebrew and/or Aramaic text of Daniel than the text used by the Massorites.

The first of these possibilities is pressed by theologians at Andrews University as well as other research scholars of the Church. One problem, in determin-

ing the meaning of the verb *nisdaq*. Is that it is in the Niphal form in Daniel 8:14, and used only this one time in the Old Testament. In the Hebrew Lexicon by Brown, Driver and Briggs, the meaning is given in translation as "the holy place shall be put right." Also, "be justified," following Gesenius who so defines the word as well as giving the definition, "vindicated." However, Gesenius makes an interesting comment. Noting the Vulgate he adds - "Not unaptly *mundabitur*," the Latin verb, "shall be cleansed."

Other linguistic problems involving the entire book of Daniel, which reflect on Daniel 8:14. need to be addressed. There are Hebrew scholars (Zimmermann and Ginsberg) who contend that the whole of the book of Daniel was originally written in the Aramaic, and that parts of it were translated into the Hebrew. Ginsberg (*Texts and Studies of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America*, Vol. XIV, p. 41-42) further maintains that the Aramaic word in Daniel 8:14 did mean, "shall be cleansed" as translated by the LXX and Vulgate. Interestingly, this position of Ginsberg was challenged by an Andrews University scholar, Hans Erbes. It is evident that more exploration needs to be done in regard to linguistics surrounding Daniel 8:14, a key text in any study of the final atonement.

To summarize this linguistic problem, we need to keep in mind that we are discussing three texts of the Sacred Scriptures, one in Hebrew, the Massoretic; two translations, one in Greek, the LXX; and the other in Latin, the Vulgate. The latter two agree that Daniel 8:14 should read as is given in the KJV and NKJV - "shall be cleansed." The Massoretic text, which in point of time was last of the three, uses a word in the Hebrew that is not used in Leviticus 16 for "cleansed," and which has as its primary meaning, "justified" or "vindicated." It seems to me that it would be much simpler to accept as a fact that both the LXX and Jerome in the Vulgate were translating from earlier manuscripts than are represented in the Massoretic text as far as the book of Daniel is concerned. Adventist scholarship, represented in Andrews University and the Biblical Research Institute, seeks to show that "one of the semantic nuances of *nisdaq* in Hebrew is 'cleanse,' as well as 'restore' and 'vindicate/justify,'" so as to harmonize all three ancient texts. It would seem, however, that the translators of the LXX and Jerome

worked from a text of Daniel which read, *taher*, "cleanse" rather than *nisdaq*. Gesenius indicates that the adjective form of *sadaq* is usually translated in the LXX by the Greek word, *δικαιος*, meaning, "just or righteous." But the LXX does not use a form of *δικαιος* but rather, *καθαρισθησεται*, which Thayer says is the choice of the LXX for *tihar*, the Piel form of the Hebrew, "to cleanse."

The Gospel of John

In a very sharp contention with the Jews over Sabbath observance and His claim to equality with God, Jesus made two pronouncements which relate to the judgment. He declared:

The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment (*κρισιν*) unto the Son... Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (*κρισιν* - judgment) but is passed from death unto life. ... And (the Father) hath given Him authority to execute judgment (*κρισιν*) also, because He is the Son of man. (John 5:22, 24, 27)

What is Jesus saying? First, let us analyze these words:

1) "The Father judgeth no man." Then the question must be asked, is the "judgment" of Daniel 7:9-10, "the judgment of Him" as Revelation 14:6 can imply? However, the response to such a conclusion can also be in the form of a question, Why then are the books opened? However, a careful reading discloses that the "dead" are not judged out of "the books" until the judgment of the "great white throne" (Rev. 20:11-12). This then leaves the question still unanswered - why are the books opened in the judgment that "was set" in Daniel 7?

Into this picture, as noted previously, the prophecies of both Daniel and Revelation inject for consideration "another book" (Rev. 20:12; Dan. 12:1). This is "the book of life" (Rev. 20:12), which if one's name is found therein, he is "delivered" (Dan. 12:1). This "book" belongs to "the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). It lists the names of those who "overcome" through "the blood of (that) Lamb" (Rev. 3:5; 12:11). This brings us to the second declaration of Jesus in John 5:22.

2) "The Father... hath committed all judgment unto

the Son," and a reason is given in verse 27, "because He is a Son man" (No article in the Greek text). First, what is meant by "all" judgment? It is obvious that two aspects of judgment are involved first a determinate involving those "who heareth (Christ's) word and believeth on Him that sent (Him)" (5:24), and secondly, an execution of judgment (v. 27). Paul speaks of Christ's second coming as a time He will take "vengeance on them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thess. 1:8). Are these two "judgments" - determinate and executive - the meaning of "all judgment"? Or is "all" limited to the ones "that heareth" the word of Jesus and "believeth" in the Father? The context is the question of equality of "honor" to the Father and the Son" (v. 23). If this latter meaning is the intent, then those who "hear" and "believe" are placed in the Lamb's book of life, and "do not come into condemnation (*κρισις* - judgment, whether "determinate," or "executive"); but (have) passed from death unto life." It needs also to be noted that four verbs, or verbal forms in this verse, in the Greek, are in the present tense while one - "sent" (*πεμψω*) - is in the past tense, and the final verb, "is passed" (*μεταβεβηκεν*) is in the perfect. This linguistic factor cannot be overlooked in any analysis. If these words of Jesus in John 5 have any meaning at all in the "exploration" of the judgment, it is saying that the words of the hymn, "Safe in the arms of Jesus," is more than mere rhetoric.

Further, this pronouncement of Jesus in John 5 presents a major conflict with a long standing tradition. Jesus as the Son of man demonstrated His authority to make determinate judgments. To the thief on the Cross, who pled, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," Jesus replied, "Verily I say to thee today, shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:42-43). Jesus gave His judgment that day. The question arises, does that thief have to face an investigative judgment again? If indeed the blood of the Lamb blots out sin, then the thief's sins are no more, and neither his name nor his deeds can be found "in the books," but his name is in "the book."

What would apply to the thief would equally apply to Enoch, Moses, Elijah, and the "many... saints" which arose at the resurrection of Jesus (Matt. 27:52-53). Also included in this picture are the "four living creatures" and twenty four "elders" who pro-

claimed of the Lamb - Thou "has redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev. 5:9). The question is simply, do these who have been redeemed have to face a second investigation to see if they can stay in heaven? This is placing them in double jeopardy. Dare we impute to God such an injustice? We dare not, for unto the Son all judgment has been "committed." When He gives the word - as to the dying thief - that word stands.

Further, there can be no question but the sequence which is emphasized in the prophecy of Daniel 7, points to the fact that the judgment pictured in verses 9-10, relates to the time indicated in Daniel 8:14, and that "the judgment," the "cleansing of the sanctuary," and the "final atonement" all focus on the same activity in the plans and purposes of God. It is left to us to carefully reconsider our tradition and bring it into line with all divine revelation involving judgment and the final atonement.

There is one important factor that is often, if not entirely, overlooked. Judgment must begin with the resolution of the issue over which sin began. The Scripture is clear that sin began with an angel whose responsibilities placed him at the very Throne of God (Eze. 28:14). It ultimately led to a part of the heavenly host, joining Lucifer in his rebellion against God (Rev. 12:4). Therefore, we must conclude as a starting point, that there is deep significance to the fact that the prophecy of Daniel 7 regarding the judgment begins with the assembling of the entire angelic host before the Ancient of days.

There is still more exploration to be made.

(To be continued)

TWO PARABLES

In the Gospel of Luke there are two parables of Jesus recorded unique to his Gospel. The significance and meaning of one is obvious. We shall note it first. Jesus said:

Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God I thank thee, that I am not as

other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other. (Luke 18:10-14)

The message comes through clear and distinct. Justification is the free gift of God bestowed in answer to the prayer of faith which recognizes one's sinful condition. The question then follows, does the forgiven sinner return to his house to live as he lived before? The answer is, obviously not if he truly loathes the sin he confessed and appreciates the mercy of God which freed him from its guilt. The unmerited favor of God elicits a love that fulfils the law. But the question is: Does this endeavor to keep the law because of love constitute work merit toward one's salvation? In other words, is sanctification merely the extension of justification, being the contribution of man to his justification?

Here is where the second parable of Jesus enters the picture. He asked:

Which of you, have a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? (But) will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. [NKJV - "I think not"] So likewise, when ye have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do. (Luke 17:7-10)

This is sanctification - doing that which it is our duty to do. Does this accrue merit? Never, because even in doing that which it is our duty to do, there is so much of self woven into our every act, due to the encumbering of our fallen nature, that we can only confess, we are still "unprofitable servants." Servants, yes, but sustained by the grace and mercy of God through the redemption in Christ Jesus we become sons of God.

This is the gospel given to Paul by the risen Lord to proclaim. In the Ephesian letter, Paul not only wrote:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast (2:8-9).

But he also follows these verses with these words:

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them (v. 10).

We are no longer to walk after the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof, but after the Spirit to seek "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14). This is sanctification - "a work of a lifetime" for one who has been justified by the grace of God. He has been "set apart," consecrated to God, which is the meaning of the word used in the Greek text.

"All that is in the world ... is not of the Father" (I John 2:16). But of those whom Jesus intercedes, He prays - "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." For these He sanctified Himself "that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (John 17:16, 19). Is their life then filled with "meritorious works"? No just the things "which (is) our duty to do." We are still in this "vile body" awaiting the final redemptive act of our Saviour who shall give us a body, "fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. 3:21). He is "the Alpha and Omega" of salvation. He is "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (I Cor.1:30-31). #

UPDATE:

The issues of WWN are prepared sometimes two to three months prior to the date of publication. Thus some articles reflect the situation at the time of writing, and are not current with the time of printing. Such was the case of the editorial, "Let's Talk It Over," in the April issue. In February, we received a letter from Elder Alfons Balbach indicating he would answer my previous correspondence upon his return from an overseas trip. This he did in a letter dated, February 29, which we received a few days ago. As soon as we find time to carefully read his response, we will write. The summary of the exchange, we will endeavor to note for the readers of WWN in a future issue. #

FURTHER UPDATE:

After completing the Special Issue on the "Accord Between the Vatican and the PLO," we received the March 2 issue of *Origins*, the CNS documentary service, which contained a complete text of the Accord. The explanatory preface contained some pertinent comments. These read in part:

Israel captured the Arab part of Jerusalem in 1967 and later annexed it, unilaterally declaring the undivided city its capital. Aharon Lopez, Israel's ambassador to the Vatican, told Catholic News Service he was "dismayed" at the agreement because it had taken positions on controversial issues that "are at the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict and are on the agenda of future negotiations." The accord called for an internationally guaranteed statute for Jerusalem - which Israel always has rejected - in order to protect basic religious freedoms.

The copy of the accord will be included among the documents offered to those interested. See the offer on p. 7 of the Special issue. #

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"There is no excuse for anyone in taking the position that there is no more truth to be revealed, and that all our expositions are without an error. The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people, is not proof that our ideas are infallible. Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation" (CW&E, p. 35)

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