



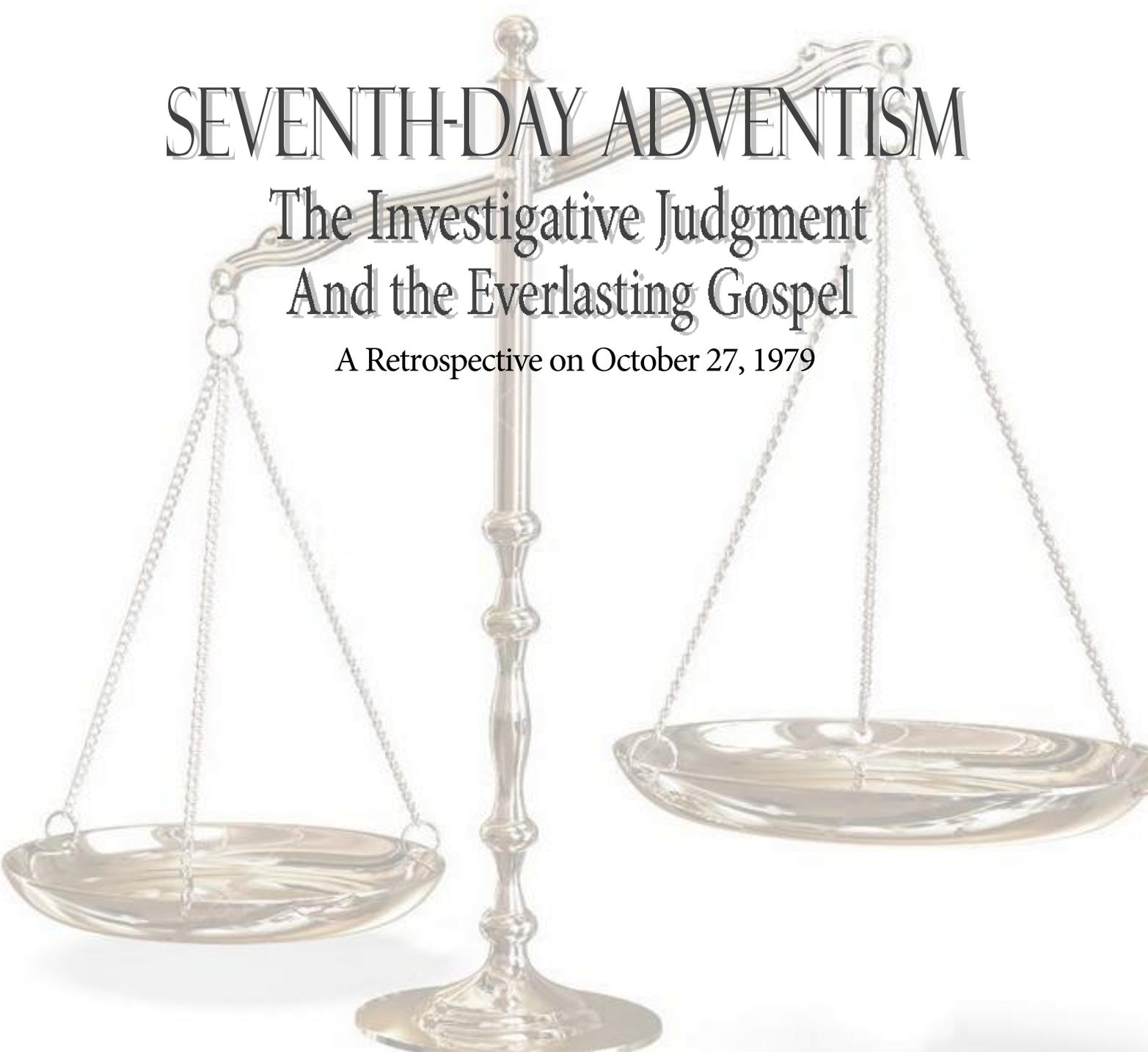
# SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM

## The Investigative Judgment And the Everlasting Gospel

A Retrospective on October 27, 1979

Desmond Ford

Ph.D., M.S.U., Ph.D., Manchester



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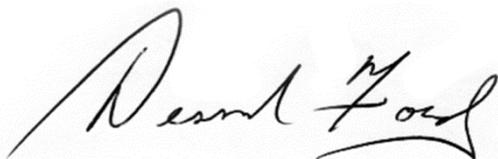
## Dear Reader

Almost forty years have passed since the events you will read about in this publication. At the time, the ripples from this controversy became a tsunami that tore through a generation of Seventh-day Adventists, leading to the exodus of hundreds of dedicated ministers and thousands of disillusioned members from the church. Many more remained inside the church they loved, but grew old and passed away without the confidence they deserved to have in the certainty of their salvation.

You may recall these events. You may have been personally caught up in them, and you may still be perplexed about the issues. You may, on the other hand, have heard about the controversy, and wonder what all the fuss is about.

This is not dry theology. It is not a matter to be left to scholars who have little contact with the 'real world'. This is about your personal assurance of salvation. The doctrine of an Investigative Judgment that began in 1844 denies the finality of the Cross, God's omniscience, and the reality of saving faith. Instead of the gospel being "good, glad, and merry tidings which makes the heart to sing and the feet to dance", it is made an accompaniment to fear.

*"You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Desmond Ford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and a stylized 'F'.

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The article 'The Sanctuary Review Committee and its New Consensus', by Raymond F. Cottrell, was printed in 2003 *Spectrum*/AAF. © All rights reserved. Raymond F. Cottrell, formerly associate editor of the Review and Herald and of the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, was a member of the original Daniel Committee and the Sanctuary Review Committee. *Spectrum* magazine, vol. 11, no. 2 (Nov. 1980), pages 2-26.

Much of the written work has been transcribed from oral public meetings and conversations and is readily available in other formats. The integrity of the transcription is of the highest standard. Every attempt has been made to give appropriate acknowledgment for material, visual or written. Enquiries can be made to the copyright owners.

## Index

Dear Reader.....	1
Index.....	3
Preface.....	5
Transcript: The Investigative Judgment: Theological Milestone or Historical Necessity? Pacific Union College Forum, October 27, 1979.....	7
Response from Dr Syme.....	23
Questions and Answers.....	27
Epilogue.....	35
Appendix One: Twenty-Two Incorrect Assumptions regarding the SDA Doctrine of the Investigative Judgment.....	36
Appendix Two: Raymond F. Cottrell.....	41
The Sanctuary Review Committee and its New Consensus: Article in <i>Spectrum</i> Magazine, vol. 11, no. 2 (Nov. 1980).....	41
<i>After Glacier View</i> : Dismissal of Ford.....	59
Evaluation of <i>Glacier View</i> .....	60
NOTES AND REFERENCES.....	68
Personal letter to Dr Ford, November 17, 1979.....	70



## Preface

For much of the second half of the twentieth century, the Seventh-day Adventist church was embroiled in dissent and argument over a doctrine which was largely unknown by other Christian churches.

October 27 1979 was a pivotal date for Seventh-day Adventism. On that day Desmond Ford, responding to an invitation from the PUC (Pacific Union College) Forum, spoke to over 1000 people on “The Investigative Judgment: Theological Milestone or Historical Necessity”. Dr Eric Syme responded, expressing his substantial agreement with Ford’s presentation. Then followed a lengthy Q&A session.

The results were cataclysmic: they included the loss of hundreds of SDA ministers and the withdrawal from Adventist churches of thousands in coming years. For several days in August 1980, at great expense to the church administration, over 100 church leaders gathered at Glacier View Colorado to discuss the controversial issues.<sup>1</sup> The ultimate Consensus Statement agreed with Ford’s written presentation in a dozen key areas, but was subsequently buried. The Daniel and Revelation committee (DARCOM) produced seven volumes in defense of the church’s traditional positions, but these have met with contempt because of their refusal to deal with the central issues. Roy Ingram (pseudonym for a well-known Adventist ministerial writer) published an article in *Adventist Today* (Summer 2011) on “The Assumptions of the Daniel and Revelation Committee in defending 1844”. It pointed out that only three and a half percent of the defense volumes touched upon the arguments offered by Ford. One of the church’s best scholars called the DARCOM series “a snow job”. The article by Ingram in its enlarged form has never been rebutted. It is available freely to all who are interested in it. Ford’s document is on the Internet, freely available for all who are interested.<sup>2</sup> (Since Glacier View over 45,000 criticisms and defenses of the Investigative Judgment have appeared on the Internet.)

Clifford Goldstein wrote a small volume defending the church view, but when invited by *Adventist Today* to debate it with Ford, he refused. Nowadays, the subject is rarely preached or written upon. There has never been a single scholarly volume published dealing with the central issues. Seventh-day Adventist scholars publish on other subjects—not this one.

*Spectrum* magazine (22nd of October 2015) published “Perspective: 1844—Pillar of Faith or mortal ‘Wound?’” by Andre Reis, giving an up-to-date criticism of the Investigative Judgment. It has not been successfully rebutted, though it summarizes the main reasons Adventist scholars today reject the Investigative Judgment. Three pages (174-176) in the published volume *Daniel 8:24, the Day of Atonement, and the Investigative Judgment* by Desmond Ford list over twenty erroneous assumptions implicit in every defense of the Investigative Judgment (See Appendix 1). Anyone deeply interested in this discussion can reach an accurate conclusion just by studying these three pages.

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<sup>1</sup> The Sanctuary Review Committee was called into existence by the General Conference president, Elder Neal Wilson. It met from August 11-15 at the Glacier View Ranch, a church-owned spiritual retreat and conference centre in Colorado, USA.

<sup>2</sup> <https://adventiststudies.files.wordpress.com/2011/09/assumptions-re-1844-full-version.pdf>

The editor of *Signs of the Times* has published his defense of the Investigative Judgment and it was reviewed by Ford in *Adventist Today*. But Marvin Moore is an exception among SDA ministers today who have mainly decided to ignore a topic they cannot adequately support.<sup>3</sup>

Why is this controversy important?

Firstly, it strikes at the very vitals of Adventism. Was the date 1844 really the result of correct biblical interpretation? Was Ellen White correct when she repeatedly endorsed the Investigative Judgment explanation for the disappointment on that date? *Great Controversy* has more than a dozen prophetic interpretations based on the exegetical methods of Historicism. Most of these the church now rejects. Why not 1844?

Over the last 36 years this topic has insisted on resurgence. SDA scholars in general ignore it. Most ministers will not preach it. Ford continues to challenge the traditional view. Does the church owe an apology to those it has defrocked over this controversy? Is it now a matter of honesty versus obscurantism and dishonesty?

Secondly, the author believes an incorrect interpretation of biblical teaching with regard to God's judgment leads to an incorrect understanding of the Gospel, and further, this doctrine of the Investigative Judgment and a claim to have the 'everlasting gospel' are mutually exclusive stances. This might help to explain why the issue continues to resurface even though SDA scholars and ministers ignore it.

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<sup>3</sup> Marvin Moore is a Christian of absolute integrity and his book *The Case for the Investigative Judgment* is the fruit of years of prayer and study. It was published by Pacific Press in 2010 and reviewed by Ford in *Adventist Today* in the Fall of the same year. Moore in the same issue of *AT* reviewed Ford's review and with perfect courtesy. Ford's chief objection to Moore's review is that the latter does not take into account that in the original unpointed Hebrew the word for seven was identical with what, on later occasions, was translated with a vowel to give the rare meaning of a period of seven embracing more than days. But most modern Hebraists translate the word as "sevens" not as "weeks". See the NIV.

## Transcript: The Investigative Judgment: Theological Milestone or Historical Necessity? Pacific Union College Forum, October 27, 1979

**Dr Desmond Ford:** This meeting actually began about 35 years ago in Sydney, Australia. As an Anglican—or I think you call them Episcopalians over here—in the city of Sydney, in my home in a suburb there, I was reading Hebrews, chapter 9. At that time, I was listening to the Advent Radio Church each Sunday, and I had begun to collect the books of Ellen G. White from second-hand bookshops around Sydney. And as I was reading Hebrews 9 that day, I said: “That’s strange. This is different than what the Adventists are saying. There is a problem here.” The problem wasn’t solved by the time I was baptized. And what I’m going to try to give you in the next hour is 35 years of thinking on the problem. And if it seems a bit concentrated, we would remind you that there will be tapes of it in the cassette library, and some of you may want to take it section-by-section.

You see, I am not a Seventh-day Adventist by birth, but by conviction. And the moment that ceases to be so, I will hand in my credentials as an Adventist minister. I rejoiced to find in the Spirit of Prophecy, when I became an Adventist, a very open attitude to investigation and biblical research. A false prophet would never have made it so. But I find Ellen White saying that we can never honour God by erroneous opinions, that error is never harmless and that it never sanctifies, and that every pillar of our faith should be critically examined by us before it is examined by the world’s greatest minds.

I found in the book *Counsels to Writers and Editors* statements like this, page 35:

There’s no excuse for anyone taking the position that there is no more truth to be revealed and that all our expositions of Scripture are without an error. The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for years is not a proof that our ideas are infallible. Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. If the pillars of our faith will not stand investigation, it’s time we knew it.

That’s Ellen White.

On page 37 of the same book, *Counsels to Writers and Editors*:

We have many lessons to learn and many, many to unlearn. God and heaven alone are infallible. Those who think they’ll never have to give up a cherished view, never have occasion to change an opinion will be disappointed.”

Page 38: God sees that our leading men have need of greater light.

Page 39: The fact that there’s no controversy or agitation among us as a people should not be regarded as conclusive evidence that God’s people are holding fast to sound doctrines. Where no new questions are started by investigation of the Scriptures, where no difference of opinion arises, there will be many now who, as in ancient times, will worship they know not what.

All good, healthy quotations from one who had nothing to fear. I can remember a few years after becoming a Sabbath-keeper walking the streets of a great city, out of work over the Sabbath. It didn’t seem to me meritorious or strange, it seemed the only right thing to do. If the seventh day was the Sabbath and that was the truth, it was the only right thing to do, and I was too much a coward to resist it. And I preferred to be out of work and walking the streets.

And when I became an evangelist about six years later, it seemed the right thing to do to urge the keeping of the Sabbath upon people, even though it might involve trouble at home, the loss of a job, loss of finance, change of status in the community, and so on.

If Christ is the truth, there is nothing to be lost by following the truth wherever it leads, however contrary to tradition. Many here in this auditorium only became Adventists by throwing over tradition. That must remain our attitude. Christ is the truth, and we are to follow him wherever it leads.

Now it was in the twentieth century, particularly, that some of the brightest lights in the Adventist church began to go out over the issue of the sanctuary. Men like Albion Ballenger, a man of undoubted integrity and spirituality, a man who wrote such books as *The Proclamation of Liberty and Power for Witnessing*, a book even recently reprinted. And about 1905 Albion Ballenger was put out of the work because of his views on Hebrews 9.

Not many years later, one of the greatest Bible teachers we've ever had in the denomination, W. W. Fletcher, one of our leading administrators in India, then came to the Australasian Division and was offered work in an administrative capacity there, and then became Bible teacher at Avondale College. Everyone that knew that man thought of him as a man of God, another man of undoubted integrity. I met him myself for thirty seconds. He seemed to be the saddest man on earth, and I knew nothing about his background.

In the 1950s, the Review and Herald sent to the Australasian Division the new commentary on Hebrews, the SDA Commentary on Hebrews. And President F.G. Clifford, when he read what it said on Hebrews 9 and 10, said, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they've laid him!" And the Australasian Division sent the manuscript back, with the request that it be changed, and it was.

A little after that I went to America, and on one occasion had the privilege of chatting with F. D. Nichol<sup>4</sup>. He said, "Brother Ford, our greatest need is a definitive work on the sanctuary."

I said to him, "We have a lot of problems in Australia over the sanctuary. We've had men leave the church over the sanctuary." And I said, "We have men who believe the heavenly sanctuary is an exact parallel with the earthly sanctuary in just about every detail."

He said, "Let them think it, Brother Ford, we know better than that." And he told me about his experience when he was on the committee that tried W. W. Fletcher in this country about the end of the 1920s. Nichol told me, he said, "Brother Spicer said to me, 'It doesn't pay to be too literalistic about the sanctuary. It just doesn't pay. It won't work.'"

A few years after that, Elder Nichol went in to Brother Figuhr<sup>5</sup>. He said, "Brother Figuhr, I am getting so many questions on the sanctuary. Can't we have a committee?"

Brother Figuhr said, "Yes, we'll have a committee."

They decided to have a committee where no minutes would be kept. This committee went on for five years and published nothing. The committee contained the brightest lights in Adventist scholarship. Men from our own university, men from the Review and Herald, the editors of the Commentary, and well-known scholars around the field. No unanimity could be reached. They had planned originally to publish some documents. That plan was never fulfilled, and no minutes of the meetings remained, after five years of meetings.

Several of the people in those meetings took the position that it was impossible to prove the Investigative Judgment from the Bible. These were very prominent, loyal Seventh-day Adventists. They were not

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<sup>4</sup> Chief church editor

<sup>5</sup> General Conference President, 1954-1966

apostates, they were loyal Seventh-day Adventists. And if I gave you their names, they certainly would make quite an impression upon you. Suffice it to say that at least three or four of them were prominent editors or writers of the SDA Commentary. And that we have thousands of pages of denominational literature written by these men. And several of them declared there is no biblical way of proving the Investigative Judgment.

Today, in the 1970s, in every area of our ranks, from the General Conference down, there are men that hold the same opinion. This is true in all our key institutions. I know many of the Bible teachers personally, and I could itemize off a number that take the same position as some of the SDA Commentary Bible writers and editors as expressed in that committee.

For example, one document that was circulated at that time began with this statement: "Application of the accepted norms of the grammatical-historical method to Daniel 8:9-14 does not yield the Adventist interpretation of this passage of Scripture."

From time to time I receive letters, from ministers mainly, who are embarrassed on this topic. Here's one from a man who just left the ministry a little time ago. A good soul-winner, a very earnest Christian, I know him very well. Here's what he wrote:

It's almost a year ago I made the most difficult decision I've ever had to make. In spite of my love for my church, my work, and, above all, my wife, I felt myself compelled by conscience to withdraw from the ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist church. The main reason why I finally took this rather traumatic heart-wrenching step was because I had come to disbelieve my church's teaching of a pre-advent Investigative Judgment. I write this paper not as a polemic against the Adventist church but in the sincere hope that adequate answers might be forthcoming. I continue to love and admire much of what constitutes Adventism, and I still consider myself open to alternative viewpoints. I know my objections are, in the main, not new and that answers to these objections have been proffered in the past. However, there's a difference between an answer and a convincing answer. (This was part of the paper he enclosed with his letter.)

Here's a statement from another letter:

The Bible, and the Bible only, can be believed [this was from an Adventist, too, who was] after first bringing it into line with the so-called Spirit of Prophecy in Adventism. I was conscious that most opposition came from the reliance on something outside the Bible, and even when the Bible is quoted in an attempt to oppose my views, I see that the opposition is because of faith in what Sister White has written, rather than as a necessity to believe a text from Scripture that it means what it says. For example, a day for a year is a Bible text often quoted, and they think we deny Scripture if we say, 'Nowhere does the Bible give a day for a year as a prophecy,' and yet this is true. See Numbers 14:34. The prophecy is for 40 years, not 40 days.

Here's another letter, this one from one of our missionaries.

Hebrews seems to say that Jesus entered the very presence of God for us once for all and to the right hand of God, etc., at the ascension. Mrs. White, in *Early Writings* and *Great Controversy*, puts him outside the veil, in the outer apartment somehow, not inside.

And then he goes on to talk about his embarrassment that he can't discuss it with his fellow missionaries, and he's just wondering what to do.

Here's a letter received just this week from another continent.

It all started a few years ago when I rediscovered the gospel. At that time we had a Sabbath school quarterly on the Epistle to the Hebrews. I decided then to follow candidly the text in the Epistle's author's reasoning. I couldn't find anything about a cleansing of the sanctuary or an atonement sometime beyond Christ's ministry on earth. I believe Christ went into the most holy place at his ascension. He was accepted in God's presence, because he had completed his ministry of salvation in favor of mankind.

And then he goes on to plead for help in his situation.

Here's another Adventist.

Returning again to Daniel 8:14, as much as I would have liked to salvage some contemporary fulfillment, I find the Scriptures silent on 1844. Christ entered God's unveiled presence once—at the ascension. As much as we commiserate with the pioneers that on October 23 Edson was deceived in the cornfield, we cannot construct a soteriological system on a historical non-occurrence.

I think what he's saying there, and he may have left out a word or two, is that we can't construct a doctrine on the fact that Edson had some sort of a conviction in the cornfield. There are some unthinking people that would like to make a joke out of the fact that it was in a cornfield.

Here's another one from a Bible teacher, a prominent Bible teacher in our work.

If an Investigative Judgment is necessary to determine who are prepared for the Kingdom of God, how was it that Christ was able to assure the disciples beforehand? That in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, they also would sit upon twelve thrones. How was Christ able to say to the dying thief, 'You'll be with me in paradise'? The truth is "the Lord knoweth them that are his" (2 Timothy 2:19). "I know my sheep," declares the good shepherd, "and am known of mine (John 10:14)."

And I could read on and on in that one.

There was another, a real scorcher, that came this week. I may have mislaid it, and that might be as well. It said what the others said, but with much greater emphasis. Maybe we'll leave it for the present.

Well, these are typical letters. Now because this tape will be used in some rather nefarious ways, because it will be strained and every syllable will be weighed and measured, added thereto or truncated, let me state my convictions, my personal convictions, before I go any further.

I believe in a pre-Advent Judgment, with every man's destiny settled before the coming of Christ. I believe the Day of Atonement has a special application to Christ's last work, as prefigured by the work in the second apartment. I believe the Seventh-day Adventist Movement was raised up in 1844 by God to do a special work, and that to it was restored the gift of prophecy in the person of Ellen G. White. There, for the record, they are my true convictions.

Now let me give you some positive supports for the Adventist position—or let me allude to them, because I mainly want to give you the problems. I have been working in this area for many, many years. I did my M.A. thesis in this area.<sup>6</sup> I went to England about ten years ago to work in this area and to ransack the Hebrew, the Greek, as well as commentaries in the French and the Dutch and the German and so on, on this very topic. I felt that the conclusions reached from this study substantiated very strongly what I've

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<sup>6</sup> Daniel 8:14 and the Latter Days.

been teaching my own students for many years regarding the problems of Hebrews 9 and Daniel 8. Much of this, by way of conclusions, I put in my Commentary on Daniel<sup>7</sup>, particularly in the preface to Daniel 8 and the preface to Daniel 9. And don't forget the small print, the footnotes.

But by way of illustration, here is a work that's a ten-year doctoral thesis: Lloyd Gaston's *No Stone Upon Another*. He's no fundamentalist or conservative. But in this volume, I find a typical summary of what some of the best of modern scholars are saying on topics that concern us as Seventh-day Adventists. This man, for example, says: "It is impossible to rest content with saying that Antiochus Epiphanies completely fulfilled the prophecy of Daniel 8."

Now, those of you that have read my little commentary know that I believe that Antiochus Epiphanies was an apotelesmatic fulfillment, a prior anticipatory, typical fulfillment, just like A.D. 70 is the preliminary fulfillment of Matthew 24. But I certainly do not believe Antiochus Epiphanies is a complete fulfillment of the little horn. And here's a modern writer, expressing the views of many, that says you can't get rid of Daniel 8 and say it only belongs to second century B.C. by talking about Antiochus. It is an eschatological passage and reaches down to the time of the end. And he goes on to say that Daniel 8:14 is a parallel to the picture of the judgment in Daniel 7, and that the expression "then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" has to do with an eschatological community of believers being justified.

I just mention that as representative of a number of works that could be adduced on a positive vein. I want to get to the problems. Let me just start with three.

One of the main problems that faces us is certainly that of the year/day principle. Let me read to you from the *Review and Herald*. I always feel safe when I do that. April 5, 1979, page six. It was a question sent to the review: "Why does Jesus say specifically, addressing the disciples who asked him about end events, 'I tell you this: The present generation will live to see it all.'" The writer is quoting the New English Bible of Matthew 24:34. Then the writer says, "But obviously he knew the 2300 day prophecy needed to be fulfilled before his return."

And then the *Review and Herald* editor, one of the editors, answers; and in the answer occurs these words: "If certain conditions had been met, Jesus would have come earlier, seemingly as early as the generation specified in Matthew 24:34." That is, this editor of the *Review* is saying, yes, Jesus could have come in that generation. Did you get the verse? "I tell you this: The present generation will live to see it all." The Second Coming. And the *Review* editor says, yes, it could have happened.

If this explanation is accepted and Jesus had come long ere this, what would have happened to the long-term time prophecies of 1260 days and 2300? Some have felt that Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6 established the year/day principle as needing to be applied to all time prophecies. But a careful examination of these passages shows that the principle is applied only to specific cases, that there's no general statement in these passages suggesting that a universal principle is set forth. In fact, Adventists do not apply the principle consistently to all time prophecies. The Holy Spirit gave directions about the year/day principle only after time was postponed. But whatever time the fulfillment would have come, the Holy Spirit could have provided the appropriate scale. And then it goes on and on in that vein. That was the *Review and Herald*.

Now the *Adventist Review*. April 5, 1979, "Bible Questions Answered," in which it clearly says that the year/day principle is not to be taken as a Bible principle for all time prophecies and that Christ could have come in "the first generation". I could talk to you for hours on this one, but I've already written a

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<sup>7</sup> *Daniel*, Southern Publishing Association, Nashville, Tennessee, 1978.

good deal on it that's been published, and I've written a good deal more that, Lord willing, *will* be published, so I'll leave it at that for the present.

The second problem is this one: In Daniel 8:13 and 14, we have a problem of context. In Daniel 8, we read about the nasty little horn, treading down the sanctuary. The nasty little horn doing a work of transgression. And then it says, "How long?" to give the sanctuary to be trodden underfoot by this nasty little horn. And the answer is given: "Under 2300 days." But now note: Adventists talk about the nasty little horn, the Antichrist doing his work on earth, and then suddenly, instead of Antichrist defiling the sanctuary, they start talking about the saints defiling the sanctuary with their sins and, thus, needing a cleansing.

Now are you following me? The context of Daniel 8:14 has to do with a wicked power defiling the sanctuary, not the sins of the saints. And the question is asked: "How long will this wicked power defile the sanctuary?" And Adventists, in answering it, forget about the sins of the wicked power and start talking about the sins of the saints. They switch from earth to heaven, and they go from Daniel 8 back to Leviticus 16. This is rather thin. It ignores the contextual problem.

The third issue, because I have answered that one also in print, has to do with the word "cleanse." "Unto 2300 days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." On the basis of that word, our pioneers linked this prophecy with Leviticus 16, but the word isn't there. You say, "Of course it's there." No, it's not there. The KJV is a mistranslation. The word translated "cleanse" there is not found in Leviticus 16. It's a different word altogether. That's why almost all modern translations do not use "cleanse," and therefore, from all other translations, you are crippled as a way of getting back to Leviticus 16.

Now let me state it again. Adventists have traditionally jumped from Daniel 8:14 to Leviticus 16 on the basis of the word "cleanse." "Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." The point is, the word "cleanse" isn't there. It's a mistranslation. It's a translation borrowed from the Septuagint, which used the word because it thought that the context was talking about Antiochus Epiphanies and the cleansing ceremonially by the Maccabees about 168 B.C. But the Hebrew word isn't "cleanse" at all, and the Hebrew word here used is nowhere found in Leviticus 16. That's why in my own commentary on Daniel I refused to take that route.

Now there's nothing new in bringing these objections to your attention. They have been taught for years in our seminary. Dr. Heppenstall<sup>8</sup> for many, many years has explained these problems and given his own answers.

Now let me come to the real problem, and I hope you have a Bible. And, if so, would you turn with me to Hebrews 9? There's only one place in the New Testament where the Day of Atonement is given a detailed explanation, and that's in Hebrews 9 and 10. This is the only place.

You remember the theme of Hebrews is that Christianity is better. In chapter one, it says Christ is better than the prophets. It goes on to say he's better than the angels. Then it comes on and says he's better than Moses. Then it says he's better than Joshua. Now we're up to chapter four. And then he's better than Melchizedek. And when you get to chapters eight, nine, and ten, it says he's better than Aaron, the great high priest of Israel, who made the Day of Atonement every year for Israel. He's better than Aaron. Chapters eight, nine, and ten are on that subject.

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<sup>8</sup> Dr Edward Heppenstall was the greatly loved chief professor of Andrews University.

Chapter nine, in particular, goes into detail on the Day of Atonement. You'll find in this passage, like verses—well, let's take verse seven:

Into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the errors of the people.

Look at verse 12. It speaks about:

He entered once for all into the holy place [or as most versions give, 'the most holy place'], taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood.

And then in verse 24:

Christ has entered, not into a most holy place made with hands, a copy of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest entered the holy place yearly [that word "holy place" means "most holy" in this context] with blood not his own.

Please note that Hebrews 9 is talking about an entering of the second apartment once a year with the blood of bulls and goats. Let's take our most recent translation, the *New International*. I'll read to you just one or two verses from there. Please note it very well, indeed, because later on some of you will say, "But the Spirit of Prophecy says..." and I agree with what the Spirit of Prophecy says, but I want to make sure you understand *all* that the Spirit of Prophecy says and, even before you know that, all that the Bible says. That's the place to start.

Now here's Hebrews 9, and please note what it says in verse 12:

He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves, but he entered the most holy place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.

In case some folks try, as *Questions on Doctrine* tried and some other books have tried, to make an issue out of the Greek, the word that is here translated "most holy place" is literally "holies." The Septuagint uses it repeatedly in Leviticus 16 for the most holy place. The word itself can mean the sanctuary as a whole, or it can mean the first apartment, or it can mean the second apartment. You can prove nothing from the Greek, because it has these possibilities, but from the context it is obvious. It's speaking about a place that the high priest alone went once every year with the blood of bulls and goats.

Are you with me? Listen to it again. "He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves" [that's bull calves that were offered on the Day of Atonement] "but he entered the most holy place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption." Verse 25: "Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the most holy place every year with blood that is not his own."

Back to verses 7 and 8: "Only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance." The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the most holy place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle, the first apartment, was still standing.

Please note: it's talking about goats and calves. They were the offerings for the Day of Atonement. It's talking about the once-a-year entrance, and that was the most holy place. It's talking about the high priest, his distinctive work was only that. He supervised things in the first apartment, but he had no distinctive work there. The distinctive work of the high priest was the second apartment.

Furthermore, it's talking about the cleansing with blood of the heavenly sanctuary. Verse 23: "It was necessary, then, for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves were better sacrifices than these, for Christ didn't enter a man-made sanctuary, but he entered heaven itself." The cleansing of the sanctuary, the Day of Atonement, is what is being discussed.

Let me underline it again, because you must get this point: the book of Hebrews distinctly teaches that Christ went directly into the most holy place at his ascension. There is no way out, around, or through it. I have ransacked every nook and corner, and twisted every syllable. There is no way out or around or through it. The book of Hebrews, chapter 9, teaches that Christ went directly into the most holy place at his ascension.

I will repeat for you verses 7 and 12. "Only the high priest entered the inner room. That only once a year and never without blood which he offered for himself." Then in verse 12: "He didn't enter by means of the blood of goats and calves, but he entered the most holy place once for all by his own blood."

Every commentary in the world has seen it, my friends, except one or two by Seventh-day Adventists.

Now, in chapter 6 and verse 19, we have a very important expression used, "within the veil," which casts light on this topic. Verse 19: "We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, or within the veil, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf."

Here, Hebrews 6:19 and 20 clearly says Jesus went within the veil. This expression is only used in the Old Testament for going into the second apartment. There is one possible exception, which is really no exception: Numbers 18:7, that I could speak on at greater length. The book of Hebrews, when it quotes the Old Testament, always quotes the Greek version, the Septuagint. And the Septuagint only uses this Greek phrase for the second veil. That was the only one culturally significant. The only one. And the expression "within the veil" always means "into the second apartment." There are about a dozen statements in the New Testament where it says Christ entered and went and sat down on the right hand of God or sat down on the throne of God. "I overcame and am sat down with my Father on his throne," Revelation 3. A dozen times it says he's entered straight into the presence of God.

Adventists have sometimes tried to get around this by inventing a moveable throne. Now, whether that means that the ark is left behind in the mercy seat in there and just some other aspect of the throne comes out, I'm not sure. But the Spirit of Prophecy is very clear that the most holy place was the centre of the divine work of atonement. And there's no biblical basis whatever for moving the throne. None whatever.

And if some here at this point wish to say, "But Sister White saw in vision the Father arise and enter a flaming chariot and go from the holy into the most holy," I would remind you that you should read closely what the *Seventh-day Adventist Commentary* says on the nature of symbolic vision in its notes on Ezekiel 1. A special note at the end of Ezekiel 1, where it points out that the prophets didn't see the actual but saw a representation that was meant to teach them something.

In *Early Writings*, you read in the supplementary notes, the supplement Ellen White put in, how she was criticized for describing certain people bowing before the throne who were wicked people. And the critics said, "Fancy having those people in heaven." And Ellen White said, "I never meant to say they were in heaven. I am but recording it as it was presented to me. Didn't John see a great red dragon in heaven?" Ellen White had a sense of humor.

Apocalyptic visions are not to be taken as graphical, literal representations of the unseen, my friends. They are sketches within the experience and culture of the contemporary prophet to teach them something. It's very important to understand that.

When you read in Jeremiah 13 about the prophet Jeremiah being told to take a girdle and take it to the Euphrates and then after 70 days go and get it back, you might be led to think that was next door. It was a thousand miles away. And United [Airlines] didn't exist then. He didn't go to the Euphrates, nor did he go and get it back. It was all done in vision.

And when you read in Ezekiel 4 about the prophet lying on his side 360 days, he never did, except in vision. And some of the things that Hosea did that may seem to shock you, find the same key of explanation.

So within the veil, sitting at the right hand of God, on the throne of God, can only mean the most holy place.

We've said many things in connection with the sanctuary that won't stand. We have spoken about how every day the blood went into the holy place and was sprinkled there and so it became defiled. Two errors there. Number one, the blood usually didn't go into the holy place at all. It was very, very rare the blood went into the holy place. Usually, it was poured outside of the altar. Secondly, we speak about blood defiling. You will not find anywhere in Scripture that the blood of a sacrifice ever defiles. It was always presented as cleansing. Always. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sins.

Well, there's nothing adequate in print on these topics. I've had a few swipes at it in print, but knew if I was very frank, it would never be published. So I said as much as I could, beginning back in the 1950s, and I have had some things published, touching on the problem.

What shall we say about it? Well, the first thing that I must say is in answer to what you will say. "But Ellen White..." So let me point out to you that Ellen White clearly teaches that Christ went into the most holy place at his ascension. In one place, she says: "Still bearing humanity, he ascended to heaven, triumphant and victorious. He has sprinkled the blood of the atonement on the mercy seat." That's at his ascension. Let me give you the reference. *Signs of the Times*, April 19, 1905.

Listen to it again. "Still bearing humanity, he ascended to heaven, triumphant and victorious. He has taken the blood of the atonement into the holiest of all" - notice she's quoting Hebrews 9 and 10, and she's applying the holiest of all to the most holy place, the place where the mercy seat is. Because the second half of the sentence says, "... sprinkled it upon the mercy seat."

So, here, Ellen White says that Christ, at his ascension, went into the most holy place and sprinkled the blood on the mercy seat.

I would point out to you that after Ballenger had written his books on this topic, E. Andross, a very devout Adventist scholar, for the first time went into print as saying, "Yes, 'within the veil' does mean 'the most holy place,' and Christ did go there, immediately ascended." That book is *A More Excellent Ministry*, by E. Andross. But, of course, Andross had to get out of it some way, so he said, "He went in and he came out again and went back into the first."

Listen to this one from *Acts of the Apostles*, page 33. And please note that Ellen White, here, as in many other places, is a rebel. The greatest rebel we've ever had amongst us was Ellen White. Praise God! No Adventist writer would have dared to write some of the things she wrote. I'm so glad she wrote them. They convinced me that she was led of the Spirit of God in the way that you and I have not been led. Listen to this one from *Acts of the Apostles*. It's a wonder the editors didn't wipe it out.

As in the typical service, the high priest laid aside his pontifical robes and officiated in the white linen dress of an ordinary priest, so Christ laid aside his royal robes and garbed himself with humanity and offered sacrifice, himself the priest, himself the victim. As the high priest, after performing his service in the holy of holies, came forth to the waiting congregation in his pontifical robes, so Christ will come the second time.

Now, please note, here she applies the Day of Atonement from the incarnation to the Second Advent. Did you get it? “As in the typical service, the high priest laid aside his pontifical robes and officiated in the white linen dress.” When was that? The Day of Atonement, that’s the only day. As the high priest did that on the Day of Atonement, so Christ laid aside his royal robes and garbed himself with humanity. There’s the incarnation. “...and offered sacrifice, himself the priest, himself the victim.” Here she goes beyond Uriah Smith. Uriah Smith said he wasn’t a priest. O.R.L. Crosier said he wasn’t a priest. Crosier and Smith both said it wasn’t an atonement. Ellen White departs from them on all three. She says it was the atonement at the cross, he was a priest, and it was the Day of Atonement from the incarnation here.

Now please don’t go out and say, “Des Ford says the Day of Atonement began the incarnation.” Please go out and say, “Ellen White says...” I didn’t write *Acts of the Apostles*. I wish I could have.

From the *SDA Commentary Bible*, Volume 5, 1109:

The mercy seat is open to all who accept Christ as the propitiation for sin, the veil is rent, the partition wall is broken down. “Christ came to demolish every wall of partition, to throw open every compartment of the temple.” This is *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 386.

This is why, my friends, in the book of Revelation, where you have some of the furniture symbolically pictured from the first apartment, and in the second apartment you never find a veil. You never find a veil. The New Testament knows nothing about a veil in the heavenly temple. Ellen White says, “There’s a new and living way into the holiest of all before which there hangs no veil.” That’s Ellen White.

But the strongest statement I leave to last. It’s never been noticed. We can read and read and read and not know what we’re reading. But in a book written years after *Great Controversy*, the greatest book Ellen White ever wrote, a book where she is more careful to exegete rather than just homiletically apply passages, the *Desire of Ages*, the greatest book in the world next to Scripture.

All this talk about Ellen White’s plagiarism. Sure she used other books in preparing this book. She used Hanna, Dr. Harris, Edersheim, Farrar, Daniel Marsh, and a number of other books. Sure she did. But, my friends, those books were open for anyone. I don’t see them coming up with the *Desire of Ages*. The issue isn’t: “Did Ellen White use sources?” It’s: “What use did she make of them? What did she come up with?” The sources are available for everyone, and people don’t come up with a thimble full of quality. The sources are there.

So here’s the greatest book she ever wrote, and please notice what she says at the end of the chapter on Calvary. Speaking about the rending of the veil:

The earth trembles and quakes, the Lord himself draws near. With a rending noise, the inner veil of the temple is torn from top to bottom by an unseen hand, throwing open to the gaze of the multitude a place once filled with the presence of God. In this place the Shekinah had dwelled. Here God had manifested his glory above the mercy seat. No one but the high priest ever lifted the veil, separating this apartment from the rest of the temple. He entered in once a year to make an atonement.

And then a little lower down she says:

Now type has met antitype. The great sacrifice has been made. The way into the holiest is laid open [quoting Hebrews 9 and 10]. A new and living way is prepared for all [do read it in its setting, Hebrews 10:19 and 20, a new and living way through the veil].

Here, that's what she's quoting. "The way into the holiest is laid open, a new and living way is prepared for all. No longer need sinful, sorrowing humanity await the coming of the high priest." And then she quotes Hebrews 9 and 12, which, as I read to you in the latest version, translates as Christ went into the most holy place at his ascension. She used the version available to her, which had "holy place," which the translators knew meant "the second apartment," because "holy place" is the name given to the second apartment right throughout Leviticus 16, about five times. And it's in Leviticus 16 where you have "within the veil" used repeatedly.

I marvel at the way Ellen White was not afraid to go right against Adventist traditions, right against some things she had apparently written herself, and when here she dealt in exegesis, she came right within the most precise specifications of biblical exegesis of the passage under review. And she pictured Christ going straight into the most holy place, as she has done in these other places, where it says he went in and sprinkled the blood on the mercy seat and so on.

Well, what shall we say about the solution to the problem? The coming of Christ, my friends, was the end of the world and the judgment of the world. "Now is the judgment of this world." Once at the end of the world has he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. The coming of Christ was the end of the world, my friends, legally, forensically. And all the things that happened in principle with the death of Christ are repeated again at the end of the age, when that which is forensically true already becomes, in a sensory fashion, manifest.

Let me illustrate what I mean. Theologians talk about inaugurated eschatology. What they mean is that when Christ came and said, "The kingdom is at hand, the kingdom is among you, now is the judgment." When Christ spoke about everlasting life now for those who believe, and when the New Testament says, "The devil was destroyed by the cross," theologians say, "All these statements are saying that somehow the end of the world came with the First Advent."

And then they talk about consummated eschatology, by which they mean the real, obvious end of the world. And you can take themes like judgment, eternal life, the destruction of Satan, new Creation, outpouring of the Spirit, the harvest - they all fit the First Advent, and they all fit the Second.

Let me illustrate it more. We know that the Passover pointed to the cross of Christ. But the New Testament also makes it point to the Second Coming. "As oft as ye drink this cup, ye do drink it till he comes." The Passover is made to point towards the Second Advent as well as the First. Pentecost saw the early rain. And on Pentecost, Peter said, "This is that that was foretold by the prophet Joel: 'I will pour out in the last days my spirit on all flesh.'" But Pentecost, like Passover, is to have a repetition at the end of the age. Consummated eschatology, as well as inaugurated eschatology.

Take the Jubilee. In Luke 4:16-20, when Christ stood up at Nazareth, he said, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me. He's anointed me to preach good tidings. The year of release to the captives." And then he spoke in terms of the Jubilee imagery. But the real Jubilee, of course, is at the Second Advent, when the captives are released from the grave, when the devil is destroyed, when we all go into our eternal reward.

So the Bible, my friends, applies the Passover, Pentecost, Jubilee, to the judgment at the end of the First Advent, and the judgment at the end of the world. And it's not a strange thing that it should say the same thing with the Day of Atonement. Does anyone here think the goat was slain in 1844? The Day of Atonement, my friends, is the same as the Atonement. It was the day the Atonement was made, and of

course that points to Calvary. How else could it, what else could it point to but Calvary? But it also points to the final application of Calvary in the Judgment, and Adventists have seen the second and denied the first. The worldly churches saw the first and denied the second. Ellen White has both.

Let me say it again. The book of Hebrews applies the Day of Atonement to the Cross of Christ and His ascension into the presence of God. The book of Revelation applies the imagery of the Day of Atonement—and this I have expanded in a recent commentary on Revelation not yet in print. But the book of Revelation applies the Day of Atonement to the seventh seal, the seventh trumpet, the seven last plagues and the beginning of the millennium. Many non-Adventist scholars have seen it, but no churches as a whole.

So the New Testament applies the Day of Atonement type both to what happened in inaugurated eschatology, the forensic judgment, “Now is the judgment of this world,” John 12:31, the cross; and it also applies it to the judgment at the end of the age, when the merits of the atonement it will be seen who has laid hold of them in the Great Judgment Day.

Now Adventists have caught the second, but not the first. Other churches did it in reverse. But Ellen White had both. And, please, don’t forget it.

There is a primary reason why the Day of Atonement has these two applications. They could both have merged. The New Testament, my friends, does not contemplate twenty centuries after Christ. Read the *SDA Bible Commentary* on Revelation 1, where it correctly says Christ could have come back in the First Advent, just after the cross. Of course, he could, my friends. *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 703, 704, says:

It was God’s purpose that the whole world be prepared for the First Advent.

Would it have taken twenty centuries if the whole world had been ready for the First Advent? Of course not, my friends.

Now, listen. Put aside your preconceived opinion and listen to these clear texts. What is the New Testament saying?

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, has spoken unto the fathers by the prophets, has spoken in these last days by his son.

Once at the end of the world has he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Yet a little time, and he will come.

It is the last hour, the night is fast spent, the morning is at hand, behold I come quickly.

This generation shall not pass until all these things be fulfilled.

There are some standing here that won’t taste of death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.

You’ll not have gone over all the cities of Israel until the Son of Man become.

My friends, it’s as plain as the nose on your face that the New Testament teaches that the end was meant to come just after the First Advent. If the church had seized hold of the gospel, understood the good news, and in the exuberance of joy and the great gift of God, gone out to spread it to the whole world—because Jesus cannot come until the whole world has heard the gospel. And the only thing that holds up the Second Advent is that people understand the gospel. Once they understand it, they can’t help but spread it. The trouble is, we’ve never understood it. That’s why we’re so Laodicean. That’s why we’re marching, marching, ever marching—backwards!

Do you know it took us until 1911 before we had as many people as William Miller had in 1844? It took us until 1911. Now the statistics are exploding so that unless some new thing happened within Adventism, friends, we'll be a forgotten sect at the turn of the century, or not long after. The only thing that held up the return of Christ after the cross was a church that understood the meaning of the cross. And that's what Matthew 24:14 is saying.

If you look at the last days of our Lord Jesus Christ, they represent the last days of his body. His body is the church. The last days of our Lord Jesus: remember, he preached 1260 days, he's anointed [by] the Holy Spirit, there is a loud cry in his ministry, great signs and wonders, he polarized the people. Then the opposing churches got together, and they linked arms with the state. They said it's expedient one man should perish and not the whole world. They passed the death decree. He had a little time of trouble. He was sealed for his mission. He was determined to go through with it. His probation shut. He had a bigger time of trouble on the cross. And the plagues fell, darkness, signs in the heavens.

My friends, the next thing that happened was that attention was drawn to the most holy place. Because that veil represented his flesh, and when the flesh of Christ was torn, my friends, there was no barrier to entering boldly into the presence of God, accepted because of the merits of the crucified Christ. That's the gospel.

So there, in the last days of Jesus Christ, the 1260 days of preaching, the polarizing of the people, the anointing of the Spirit, a latter rain, a loud cry, union of church and state, the death decree, time of trouble, signs in the heavens, the cleansing of the sanctuary. He did that in his last days. Drew attention to the most holy place. There you have prefigured the work of his body in the last days, my friends. It's all taught out in Revelation 11, where it uses the same things about the church as applied to Jesus Christ.

What happened in 1844? God brought this church back to apostolic privilege, brought it back to the place where it could see the significance of the Cross, brought it back to that place where if it would lay hold of the gospel, symbolized by the sanctuary. If it could lay hold of the blessed truth, represented by the daily, it would spread to the world and Jesus would come. Every man's destiny would be decided in the Judgment, "and he that is holy would be holy still, and he that is filthy would be filthy still. And, behold, I come quickly."

In 1844 God gave this church the opportunity of fulfilling the apostolic commission, and Ellen White says that had all the people in the Miller Movement accepted it, Christ would have been back just after 1844!

Well, says someone, the *Great Controversy* doesn't say it that way. Let me say a few things to you on the Spirit of Prophecy.

The best way to undo, my friends, is to overdo. And I treasure the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy. I've tried, tried, and tried again to apply its principles, and I have failed miserably a million times. And but for the gospel she reveals, I would be most discouraged. But I do know that those writings brought me to Christ. I do know those writings led me to the Bible. I do know those writings speak to my heart with an intensity and a conviction that no other human author has ever done. And having said that, I believe we misuse her writings in an abominable fashion. I believe we do things that would have made her hair stand on end and made her very angry.

Listen to what she wrote and which we have forgotten. The book *Evangelism*, page 256:

The testimonies of Sister White should not be carried to the front. God's Word is the unerring standard. The testimonies are not to take the place of the Word. Let all prove their position from the

Scriptures, substantiate every point they claim as truth from the revealed Word of God. Never do we want any soul to bring in the testimonies ahead of the Bible.

How come we don't do that? I mean, how come we don't do what she says? We do bring the testimonies ahead of the Bible. We do it all the time. You know, the Bible is a difficult book. But the *Testimonies*, I can understand that. That's nineteenth century and twentieth century English.

My friends, there is nothing of truth in the *Testimonies* that's not in the Bible, Ellen White says. Nothing. Ellen White did not give us a single truth of doctrine. Read sometime *Movement of Destiny* on that very subject. And read in this book, because I don't have time to enlarge on it, all the Ellen White quotes that say that the Bible, and the Bible only, is our standard of doctrine; that every point of doctrine is to come from the Bible. And she says the Bible is the only true source of doctrine that's unmixed with error. Boy, that sounds dangerous, but Ellen White said it.

Let me talk to you about Ellen White's role. Ellen White's role, my friends, is pastoral, not canonical. Not canonical. You have in the writings of Ellen White more than you've got in the whole Bible. And when Ellen White said she's a lesser light, she meant what she said. It wasn't just a becoming humility. She meant what she said. Her writer's role is not canonical. The gift of prophecy is not the gift of omniscience.

Adventists think that anything Ellen White ever spoke about, that was the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and so on. My friends, it wasn't always. How do we know? Because often she says something different in another book. Which is often complementary, not necessarily contradictory.

So the gift of prophecy is not the gift of omniscience, my friends. John the Baptist was the greatest of the prophets, said Jesus. Among those born of women, there hasn't been a greater than John the Baptist. He didn't have everything straight. He spoke about Christ, "His fork is his hand, he'll thoroughly purge his floor, he'll gather the wheat into the barn; he'll burn up the chaff with fire." And he meant *then*. He meant *then*. He didn't have everything straight. He didn't understand about the Kingdom of Grace. He didn't understand about the spiritual kingdom. He looked for a material kingdom, and *pronto*. And this greatest of the prophets had his doubts: "Art thou he that should come or do we look for another?"

My friends, the gift of prophecy is not the gift of omniscience. Ellen White would have been burdened above all measure if she thought she was supposed to know everything about everything. We don't know everything about anything. Everything is related to everything else. Therefore, you can't know everything about everything, and not everything about anything.

Take the apostles. They all had the gift of prophecy, but truth came slowly. After the ascension of Christ, they still believed in a shut-door theory for years. Only Jews could make it, the Gentiles were shut out. God had to work miracles in order to convince them that a Gentile had a chance at salvation, too. The apostles had the gift of prophecy, my friends. They are called the Apostles and Prophets, but they didn't understand everything. Neither did Ellen White.

Someone with the gift of prophecy is not inerrant, my friends. Please read sometime what Ellen White says about her own gift in *Selected Messages*, Volume One, the first chapter. She says, "As for infallibility, I've never claimed it." She says, "Some look to us gravely and they say about the manuscripts of the Bible, 'Couldn't there be mistakes in those manuscripts?'" And she says, "Of course there could be! The mind that would stumble over that would stumble over anything." And she goes on to say the Bible is not given in grand, superhuman language, but it's given for practical purposes. And she says the miracles are not recorded in their exact order. And she goes on and lists other imperfections. She says, "God's not on trial in the logic of Scripture."

My friends, we misunderstand the nature of inspiration. Inspiration, like all the acts of God, is beyond our comprehension. And it's for practical purposes. The glorious sun under which we walk has spots on it. Will we therefore walk in some subterranean channel? God never works miracles unnecessarily, my friends. Think of the type of man he chose to write the Epistles in the New Testament. He chose a theologian. He could have chosen a fisherman, but he didn't. Think of the people he chose to write the Gospels. People who were associated with Jesus Christ in the flesh, or closely associated with those that did. If inspiration was what many people think, he could have taken any schoolboy. Put a pen in his hand and said, "Write. W-R-I-T-E." He didn't do it that way.

We need to understand what inspiration is about. Inspiration is not inerrancy. Ellen White said, "As for infallibility, I've never claimed it. The Bible is the only source of truth," she says, "unmixed with error"; which suggests that even the writings of the non-canonical prophets, my friends, were not inerrant. As a matter of fact, if you'll apply a strict rule, even the writings of the Bible are not inerrant. And if that sounds blasphemous, that is our official position. Which doesn't make it right, but it makes it respectable.

The church's official position is that the Bible is not inerrant. It is reliable, it's an infallible rule of doctrine, but we've never ever taught inerrancy. We have many, many articles in print denying it. Please read sometime the book *The Testimony of Jesus* by F. L. Wilcox, that great editor of *The Review*, in which he has a whole chapter, no claim to infallibility.

When Ellen White put out *Spiritual Gifts*, the first 400 volumes, she said, "Please correct me where I've made any mistakes. My memory might have been wrong. Please correct me so I can change it." In *Great Controversy*, Ellen White could write about Josiah Litch and his prophecy about August 11, 1840. But, my friends, Josiah Litch was wrong. The date he chose to begin the prophecy was years out, he forgot about the dropping out of the days in the calendar change, and he didn't understand what the text was saying anyway. The text in Revelation spoke about the hour, day, month, and year. It's not a period at all. It's a point. And every Greek scholar in the world knows it. And the *SDA Commentary* knows it, too, so they put a special note in the *Commentary*, saying, "Because of the difficulties of the Greek and our smallness of space, we will not enlarge upon the problem."

Now I'm caricaturing it a little, and I hope that you'll read it for yourselves. When we put out a lesson quarterly on the trumpets, we said, "There are difficulties here." Great difficulties. Ellen White's endorsement of Litch was not correct. Litch was wrong. Absolutely wrong.

On some topics, Ellen White just wasn't told. When she was asked about the daily, she said, "On this point, I've received no instruction." But she had written on it in *Early Writings*.

Let me say something about the book *Great Controversy*, or one other thing, first. We've said Ellen White is not omniscient, not inerrant. Neither has she a divine commentary on the Scripture, and bang goes a very cherished heirloom. Ellen White nowhere claims to be the inspired commentary on the Scripture, my friends. She said, "The Bible is yet but dimly understood." And she didn't say in brackets, "But if you read all my writings, that problem will be solved." She said, "The Bible is yet dimly understood." She said, "When the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood, there will be revival amongst us." We haven't had the revival yet. Apparently, they're not well understood, and she didn't interpret them for us. You'll find that the most difficult passages in the Bible she doesn't comment on at all. She wasn't given to make us lazy. She said, "Go to the Word." The Bible, my friends, is the source of every point of doctrine, and Ellen White always points us to the Bible.

*Great Controversy* is a historical account of prophetic interpretation by Seventh-day Adventists at the time of the birth of that movement. She could talk about the signs and the sun, moon, and stars. And, my friends, the real meaning of those prophecies is obvious to anyone who reads the text. The great earthquake is the one that shakes every city and village and mountain and island at the end of time, not 1755 at Lisbon. And the falling of the stars are what accompany the coming of Jesus. And the darkening of the sun is what accompanies the coming of Jesus. Please just read the Scriptures. They're as plain as can be.

But God in his mercy gave previews of things to accompany the Second Advent Movement and to give integrity to what it was saying. Those signs were of God. The earthquake at Lisbon, and the dark day, and the falling of stars. They were not the absolute fulfillment of Scripture on the signs, my friends. In *Early Writings*, page 41, she very distinctly says that these signs in the heavens take place at the voice of God at the Second Advent. Read *Great Controversy*, page 637, where she makes the great earthquake at the Second Advent. Read Revelation 16:18 and 16:14. Those signs she recorded in harmony with the history of the movement. She wasn't saying that was the end of it.

Matthew 25 in *Great Controversy* is applied to the midnight cry in 1844. But read *Christ's Object Lessons*: that's not even mentioned. She gives the exegetical meaning. *Great Controversy* wasn't wrong, my friends, anymore wrong than about the signs, but it wasn't complete.

And similarly about the cleansing of the sanctuary. If you'll only read *Patriarchs and Prophets*, written years after—and I don't have time to read it—but in the chapter 'The Tabernacle and Its Services', she explains the cleansing of the sanctuary as the cleansing of the earth and the whole universe from sin at the very end of time.

So to apply Daniel 8:14 just to 1844 only, my friends, is to misunderstand it entirely. It points to the Great Judgment that seals every man's destiny before the coming of Christ as they respond to the Cross.

Look, I must stop and say one more thing. Here's the most important thing this afternoon: What is the meaning of the Adventists' stress on the most holy place? It is this, my friends. God wants us to look at what's there. That holy law, which must be sustained and was sustained by the cross, to show that God is against evil, that God will not compromise with sin, that the law is the foundation of the universe, its bulwark and its keystone.

But above it is a mercy seat. Duty has a twin sister, and it's love. God's not only light, but he's love. So look at the mercy seat. Better still, look at the blood drops there. He means us to see Calvary, my friends. We are meant to see the law, the mercy seat, the blood, the cross, and then see that every man's destiny is sealed by his attitude to those things. It is the attitude we take to the blood of Christ shed on the Cross to substantiate the law. It's the attitude we take to that that seals every man's destiny in the Judgment. And that, my friends, is our message to the world. And when we preach it, instead of preaching celestial geography, Jesus will come.

It was a good American that said, "God offers every man [and I might add every Movement] truth or repose. You can take one or the other, but you can't have both."

[Applause]

## Response from Dr Syme

If this was supposed to be a rebuttal, and generally in these sessions, this is the expectation, they picked the wrong man, because so much that Dr Ford has said in this very eloquent and very lucid presentation, I have been teaching myself, I think as most of my students will certainly confirm.

So I do disagree on a few points. But the points that I actually disagree on, I think, are extremely minor and I don't really feel that with ten minutes or fifteen minutes, it's worthwhile even beginning to dwell on those points. Let me very quickly summarize what I think are the essential points of this presentation as I see it.

First of all, I was extremely happy for his emphatic emphasis toward the end on the nature of the Bible and the nature of the Spirit of Prophecy. I have welcomed personally these jobs that people like Don McAdams and others have done to dispel this stupid literalistic miasma which has made the Spirit of Prophecy something which it was never intended to be.

I can't forget that when Dr Handspicker of the World Council of Churches in 1968 investigated Seventh-day Adventism, who strongly he stressed his sense of gratification that Adventists were not a heresy but in fact were Biblically oriented. But he then went on to say that the strange thing about their approach to the Scripture is that they come at it via their chosen prophet, Ellen G. White.

Some years later, I went to American University where I did my work in Church History and I met one of my Church History teachers and in conversation with him, he said, "You'd be very surprised to know what my present assignment is."

So I said, "Yes, I might be. Well, what is it?"

"Well", he said, "I have been spending about two months in the White vaults."

And I said, "What conclusion did you come to?"

"Well", he said, "The World Council of Churches has been picking up the tab. They wanted me to comment on the question of Ellen G. White because of Dr Handspicker's previous statement." And he said, "I've been investigating, and they have been very courteous and they gave me every facility. But," he said, "The thing that amazes me about Seventh-day Adventists, and the thing that amazed me particularly about the White Estate, was how they ever got any work done." He said, "That phone, it buzzed from first thing in the morning to last thing at night. The questions, the kind of questions which any person with common sense ought to be able to answer, they would have to inquire what Ellen White said about it."

Well, you can imagine I had some difficulty in explaining to the good man how this happened.

Well, I can't say how happy I am that this emphasis has been made. Certainly Ellen White is not canonical. The Scripture, the Old Testament, the New Testament, closing with the book of Revelation, is the composite picture of Jesus Christ. Ellen White is a commentary, or sorts, again quite truthfully she doesn't try to serve as a commentary of Scripture and specifically on the question of Hebrews, when Ellen White says Paul wrote the book of Hebrews, it certainly doesn't prove that he did write it.

We have no business, absolutely no business in trying to shortcut the problem of research by going to statements from Ellen G. White. This is a question that will be solved by perspiration, not inspiration.

And Ellen White, who wrote and read so many things, certainly gave no sanction to our students, or to Seventh-day Adventists, to avoid reading books. If she gave all the answers, then the average student

would need to read nothing but the Spirit of Prophecy and some of them have even given me that. Oh no, it's an inducement to careful and heavy study.

Well, coming back to the book of Hebrews. As Dr Ford pointed out, the whole purpose of the letter to the Hebrews is to demonstrate the sense in which Jesus Christ fulfilled the Judaistic system. Consequently, since there were Christians in the church—Jewish Christians—who said, “Well, Christ cannot be our high priest because He is not of the tribe of Levi”, one of the burdens of the book of Hebrews is to demonstrate the fact that Jesus is a priest of a much higher, a more eternal order.

In fact, He is both priest and sacrifice. The book says specifically in chapter 10 and the 20<sup>th</sup> verse that the veil, which is His flesh, is taken away. The whole thing, the whole question of the sanctuary, is symbolized in the most fundamental sense in the ministry of Jesus Christ. And if we try to peg it down to tents in heaven and apartments and pieces of furniture, we will lose what it's about.

Why does the book of Revelation speak of the Holy Spirit as the seven lamps of fire that burn before the throne? The whole burden of Revelation is the sense in which this symbolism was fulfilled in Jesus.

But now I want to come specifically to what Dr Ford has implied and said on the question of the Investigative Judgment. I looked up—I was unaware of the point that he raised in connection with the actual word, and I have to say immediately that I looked the word up. He is quite right. It doesn't mean 'cleansed'.

It's a word that could be translated as 'justify'. It's a word that probably would be better translated as 'vindicated'. This of course, is the whole burden of his emphasis that this power, this little horn power, that attacked the continual, the high priestly ministry of Jesus Christ, that this power which attacked that, how long will God allow it to go on doing that? Exactly the same query that you get in Revelation the sixth chapter where it speaks of the souls that are under the altar, whose blood cries out to God, “How long will you allow us to be traduced, our reputation torn to shreds, our people martyred?”<sup>9</sup> And it was given to them that they would have to continue in that state for a short season. So I couldn't agree more with Des on this point that this word, vindicate, it states far better the whole significance of the Investigative Judgment.

But I do think that Hiram Edson came up with a magnificent theological issue. He answered a question that is absolutely basic to theology. Maybe... can I have a little more time? A few minutes... I just want to make this point.

Bernard Shaw, that very witty Irish dramatist, many years ago made this point. He said, “Christianity is fundamentally unethical.” Then he went on to explain himself. He said, “If a man is in court of law, and is charged with a specific crime, the case has to be decided on the basis of the laws of evidence. He's either guilty or he's not guilty. No one else in that court of law can stand up and say to the judge, 'I am prepared to take his place.' The judge would immediately rule this out.” Shaw said, “This is simple justice. Yet,” he said, “the whole Christian concept is unethical because it's based upon the idea of the substitution of the innocent for the guilty. That is unethical.”

Now, we would obviously answer Shaw by pointing out that Jesus is above the law, that there are no parallels in human law that we can simply bog down on and say that Jesus has to fulfill what human law would see as the issue of simple justice. The fact that we are all sinners and the only way that God could save us was providing that substitution for man.

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<sup>9</sup> Revelation 6:10

But as Christ became our High Priest, or our Representative, and preferred us before the throne, and became, as Dr Ford pointed out, our Advocate and yet also our Judge, and in His Person comprised both those roles: as He did that, it raises another very important question that is fundamental both to theology and to philosophy. And that question is: Is God responsible for evil?

Now, that was Satan's accusation in the first place and God couldn't answer that question by destroying Satan, because He would simply perpetuate it. How then could God save the sinner, answer Satan's accusation—one which has been stated over and over again since? The only way he could do it was to allow the plan to be completely worked out.

And at the end, when the plan had been manifest in all particulars, when Jesus had died once for all and had assumed his role as our High Priest, when again and again He had applied that principle through the years as our High Priest to save the sinners, then right at the end of the process, something had to be done to show that God did not assume responsibility for the fact of Eden. The only way that could be demonstrated could be by a judgment.

I wrote this some years ago. It's a brief record of the history of the church, and I tried to use an illustration of this principle. I am just going to take a minute to read this, if I may. I think I'll miss this part out.

Before re-entering the camp, he washed himself and his clothes from the filth of the accumulated guilt that had been placed upon the head of Azazel. The final feast of the Jewish sacred year was that of Tabernacles, where all Israel rejoiced at being accepted within the camp. Just as the Feast of Passover and, seven weeks later, that of Pentecost, represented the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus and the ensuing gift of the Holy Spirit to the Christian church in order that its mission should be accomplished, so the closing ceremonies of the Jewish sacred year symbolize with the last phases of God's scheme of redemption.

The scheme of Christian redemption required an understanding of who is responsible for evil. God is certainly not responsible. Edson's analysis, while continuing to emphasize the redemptive ministry of Christ, must find the answer to the above question. The question it answered then was: Who is responsible for the origin of evil? From a philosophical standpoint also, the answer to this question is quite basic. It's something like asking who was responsible for the Second World War. The response to this query is not simply of academic interest. It is indissolubly linked with the problem of how to prevent a third disaster of the same kind. The fate of our civilization rests upon our capacity to solve this issue, and for this reason historians and sociologists have kept the fullest records possible on the events which led up to the war, the developments which concerned it and the movements that proceeded from it.

Similarly the purpose of the Investigative Judgment is not to satisfy God [as to] who is responsible for the origin of evil and who has been involved in maintaining it. God is already well aware of the answer to those questions and he has always been cognizant of that answer. The Investigative Judgment is for the benefit of the entire universe. It will enable God to prevent the re-occurrence of evil without taking away any created being's volitional freedom. It will be the educative value of the judgment that will make it possible for God to maintain a sinless order while retaining a free society. Those who throughout the Investigative Judgment have studied how sin arose and how God has dealt with it, will never be disposed to bring catastrophe again.

In other words, what I think Des is saying here at this point is that as a result of what he called the manifestation of the factors which concern the cross at the end of the world; as a result of the demonstration that God's free gift of salvation in Jesus Christ has actually brought to His people changed

lives because it brings changed motivation. Because of those facts, God's justice and God's mercy, that propitiation which is the very heart of the sanctuary system, the mercy seat which rests upon the two tables of the law, the fact that that manifestation is made in the full dynamic of closing events with all their complexity, with all their problems, will be etched forever in the minds of not only the redeemed, but in the minds of the angels and in the mind of the universe. Free men and women, men and women and created beings of other orders who could conceivably repeat what Lucifer did—because there will be no hindrances as far as their right of choice is concerned—will never do so because of the demonstration that God is affording in the Investigative Judgment.

Now I want to say one last thing, because this is going to come up. There are going to be some people who will say that this is a denial of Seventh-day Adventism, what he has said. I am only commenting on it. It isn't. You read Questions on Doctrine. Those people wrote that book because they wanted to reach the people of other denominations, and they tried to set Adventism in a tolerable basis that it would be accepted by people of other denominations. In Questions on Doctrine the point is raised on the Investigative Judgment, at the end of the Investigative Judgment, that we believe in Arminianism, that is, we believe in free will, and this belief that we have in free will is best embodied in our interpretation of the Investigative Judgment.

Now, Dr Ford, in re-translating that word in chapter 8 that is wrongly stated as 'cleansed' and properly stated as 'vindicated', is merely saying that. He is saying very emphatically that the purpose of the Investigative Judgment is the vindication of God and what God has done. Therefore, this is not heresy. It is in harmony with the finest traditions of our denomination. It breaks away, very fortunately, from that very foolish literalism that loses itself in the symbols and forgets the meaning—we've had plenty of that—and for that reason I welcome it and I think it's such an excellent contribution, so lucidly and so eloquently presented that I'm going to beg off disagreeing with you on some small points.

[Applause, benediction and time allowance for those who wished to leave.]

Dr Ford: "Our Father, we thank Thee for the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, who became our Substitute and Surety, who took our guilt that we might have His righteousness. Grant us such an insight into it Lord, that we'll spread it abroad that all the world might know and make its decision that Jesus may come. We ask in His name, Amen."

## Questions and Answers<sup>10</sup>

**Question:** I have one question: If in the past, the church has failed and the Lord's coming has been delayed, could that not happen again?

**Dr Ford:** I can only say that the promise of the New Testament is that the Lord will cut short the work in righteousness and make a speedy work. When He feels an adequate demonstration, in the lines of what Dr Syme has said, has been given to the universe of the inadequacy of the creature unless it's looking at the cross, He will trigger off the last revival. The signs in the world about us show a constricted world. The world has become a neighborhood, they are not a brotherhood. It's a global village in which we live. For the first time in history something that happens in one place can be seen everywhere and heard everywhere. The stage is ready for the end. God's peoples are the only stumbling block and He's not forever going to wait for us.

**Question:** If Christ fulfilled the whole day of atonement, which is what Matthew 5:17-19 more or less says when it mentions the whole law and the prophets are to be fulfilled by Christ, how does this apply also to the scapegoat transaction?

**Dr Ford:** Well at the cross it was made manifest that it wasn't any defect in the love of God that brought sin in. It's the cross and the judgment as Dr Syme has well indicated, that clear God's character before the universe and show that the devil is the one responsible for all sin. That's why Ellen White in *Desire of Ages* can say that at the cross Satan was revealed to the whole universe as a murderer. So even the scapegoat transaction does come into Calvary, because there it is seen in the love revealed, a love that would die for its creatures, that the guilt doesn't lie at God's door but at Christ's murderer, Satan himself.

**Question:** Twofold question: 1. Is one generation better or worse than another, that could have finished in one and not in another? And 2. What do we think of that translation, the New International, that puts race alongside generation?

**Dr Ford:** Answering the second one first. It is a very poor alternative, which is why they put it in the margin only and not in the text, because the expression 'this generation' occurs about twelve times in the New Testament and always means the generation to which Christ spoke unless that one is an exception. And that one is no exception because if one reads the preceding verses, it says, when you see the abomination of desolation (standing in the holy place), you must flee to Judea, and then there will be great tribulation. And in those days there will be signs in the heaven and then they will see the Son of Man coming, and this generation won't pass until it's all over. There is no possible way of dodging that v.34 is part and parcel of the whole scene from verse 15 onwards about the abomination of desolation and the Roman army surrounding the city that was to lead to the great tribulation, the signs and the return of Christ, had Christ's church been faithful.

When you say that one generation is better than another, the church has sometimes been more active in one generation than another. The beginning of the first century, after the cross of Christ, saw a very active Christian church. But by the time Revelation was written much of the church was Laodicean. It had fizzled out. So there have been some generations that have a better track record than others, and

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<sup>10</sup> Please note that interlocutors are usually not identified, and if so, only by first name. On some occasions, Dr Ford or Dr Syme repeats the question.

according to the book of Revelation, the one in which we live has about the worst track record. There's not much hope for the great majority of Laodicea unless their eyes are opened to the cross of Calvary.

**Question:** What happened in 1844, if anything?

**Dr Ford:** Something indeed happened. The Lord in His great mercy drew the attention of this people to the pattern, the figure, the symbolic lesson book of the cross – the sanctuary. The sanctuary was the best way of teaching the truths of the cross of Christ. The sanctuary showed that the law was central, that the breaking of the law meant death. That only the mercy of God and the ministry of the High Priest could bring salvation and that ultimately the whole camp of professed worshipers must be divided into two groups: one numbered with the Lord, and one with Azazel. So in 1844 the Lord drew the attention of this people to the significance of the torn veil on Calvary, but we got bogged down on the spot. And if that seems strange, may I remind you that within a few weeks after the giving of the law at Mt Sinai, the people who had heard in voices of thunder, “Thou shalt not bow down to any graven image,” were worshipping graven images.

**Question:** (David) If Great Controversy is very clear on what happened in 1844 in the most holy place; if Ellen White is in error there (and I don't know anyone who has said it yet), but if Ellen White is in error there, how can we trust her in other expositions of Scripture like Revelation 13?

**Dr Ford:** What I tried to say in my talk is that we should never take anything in Great Controversy as though that was all Ellen White said on the topic. “What God has joined together, let not man put asunder.”

Ellen White wrote about fifty other books besides Great Controversy, and I'm suggesting there are some things that are complementary but not contradictory. For example, on the point that David has raised on page 358 of Patriarchs and Prophets, it speaks about the cleansing of the earthly sanctuary and then explains it thus. (Please note, David, it is a different explanation in the sense of extent and quality to the Great Controversy one. Not contradictory, but certainly complementary.) Listen to it:

“Christ's work for the redemption of men and the purification of the universe from sin will be closed by the removal of sin from the heavenly sanctuary and the placing of these sins upon Satan.... So in the typical service, the yearly round of ministration closed with the purification of the sanctuary.... Thus in the ministration of the tabernacle...the people were taught each day the great truths relative to Christ's death...and once each year the great controversy...the final purification of the universe from sin and sinners.”

Now Ellen White here explains the cleansing of the sanctuary as having its fullness of meaning in the final purification of the universe from sin and sinners. She has spoken about the purification of the sanctuary, the purification of the universe and now at the end of Great Controversy the purification of the universe from sin and sinners. You may recall that I said earlier that the Great Controversy is the history of the early doctrinal formation of Seventh-day Adventists, which was a stumbling towards the light, which was not erroneous in principle but which was far from complete.

Thus we could say that when she uses the great earthquake of 1755—you go and try to convince people in the world today that Christ's coming must be near because an earthquake took place over 200 years ago. They'll think you're crazy. It was a sign, my friends, for the people who heard the great second Advent movement. But it is clear that the full exegesis of those passages about the signs has to do with the end of time, with the coming of Jesus, and that's the application Ellen White makes elsewhere. Similarly we mention Matthew 25 about the midnight cry, the parable of the virgins. She applies the midnight cry of Matthew 25 to what happened in the year 1844 and the closing of the door of the

parable to a closing of the door then. When she enlarges it in *Christ's Object Lessons*, removed from the historical context of Great Controversy, she doesn't even mention that one. So I am only suggesting, David, that there is no problem if we take all Ellen White says. But if we get bogged down on any one single quote, our problems will be similar as when we only take one part of Scripture.

**David:** I agree with you about the quote. However, my question is, what actually happened according to her with respect to this quote? Let's take all quotes. In other words, let's not just take...

**Dr Ford:** Right. She is saying our attention is drawn to the most holy place.

Question: What happened in the other quote? That is my question.

**Dr Ford:** She says, "Our attention was drawn to the most holy place with Jesus poised as Judge of all the earth about to declare the destiny of all men." But that was dependent on the church taking the gospel to all men by which they must be judged.

**David:** Thank you.

Question: Have I been rightly understood in saying that the Adventist position is the destiny of all men is sealed before the coming of Christ, while Kevin has suggested that the average evangelical outside Adventism has pictured the coming of Christ as in the judgment?

**Dr Ford:** You have rightly understood my position, and let me enlarge on it briefly. Until the birth of Seventh-day Adventists, the theologians of the world believed that there would be a resurrection of all men at the same time in order to come to the judgment. Adventists said No. There are to be two resurrections separated by a thousand years, and only the blessed and holy, those who sided right with Christ before the first, come up in the first. They don't come up to be judged because they come up in glorified bodies. They come out of prison. So the decision has been made beforehand. Now I am glad to tell you that today the exegetes of the world have come to the Adventists position about there being two resurrections being separated by a thousand years. In England, working at the university, I said to the most well-known evangelical scholar in the world, "Do I need to write a chapter defending my believe that Revelation 20 pictures two resurrections separated by a thousand years?" He said, "No, all exegetes of quality now acknowledge that Bible teaches that, whether they believe it will happen or not." And so you have rightly understood me, Kevin, that I believe the destiny of all men is settled by their reaction to the cross before the Advent and in the first resurrection those who have been found to respond to the invitation of mercy are raised in glory.

Question: Is the speaker in accord with much of contemporary Protestantism that regards the intercession of Christ being based on a finished atonement, whereas many Adventists look upon the atonement as something still in process and to be finished?

**Dr Ford:** In reply to that, let me point out that Ellen White used some very significant adjectives at times when she is speaking about the 1844 work as she understood it. She spoke about a final atonement, she spoke about a special atonement. Ellen White is as clear as crystal that *the* atonement was made on the cross. No one can read the last pages of *Desire of Ages* without coming across the words, "The Father said, 'It is enough; the atonement is complete'", or words to that effect. Ellen White is as clear as a bell on that, my friends. And what we talk about in the judgment is just the final application of that atonement so that men may be justified eschatologically. You see, justification, when we have faith, is an anticipated last judgment. But the last judgment is a ratified justification. And if a man is still trusting wholly in the merits of Jesus, and there is evidence in the books that it is so he is justified forever because of the merits of Jesus.

**Question:** Didn't Ellen White understand what she wrote in the statements that spoke about His going into the most holy at His ascension, if she could write that He ascended there in 1844?

*(Early Writings, 251)*

**Dr Ford:** That's a good and perfectly legitimate question. Let me try to answer it briefly. I suggested to you that the New Testament itself does not contradict itself when it can speak about a judgment at the cross and yet a judgment at the end of the world. The New Testament doesn't contradict itself when it can speak about a judgment at the cross and yet a judgment at the end of the world. The New Testament doesn't contradict itself when it says that those who believe have eternal life now, and yet we enter upon eternal life at the resurrection. The New Testament doesn't contradict itself when it speaks about a Pentecost there of the latter rain. Peter said about Joel 2, "This is that which was foretold by the prophet Joel." But Revelation 18:11-4 is not contradicting Peter when it's applying the latter rain yet to come. You see, it is a matter of applying things in their place. The sanctuary can be used as a symbol of the heavenly sanctuary, as a symbol of the church, as a symbol of Christ who tabernacled amongst us, as a symbol of each believer. So we need to just study things in context and then the difficulty disappears.

**Question:** [Not audible]

**Dr Ford:** Right. No one is asking you not to believe it. We're only asking you to believe the other things she said as well. Just as harmonious as the apparent disparate nature of New Testament statements that apply things that happened at the cross also to the end of time. See? John 12:31: "Now is the judgment of the world." But the book of Romans says that there's a judgment to come at the last day. No contradiction.

**Question:** Did I indicate at the beginning of my talk that the fundamental truths would have to be changed?

**Dr Ford:** I didn't say that, nor read anything to that effect. What I read was that "we have many things to learn, many things to unlearn. Those who think they'll never have to change a cherished view will be disappointed. We have but the first gleamings of the light that is to come upon us. God sees our leading men have need of greater light, and it behoves us to search out with close scrutiny all the pillars of our faith." She's not saying that the pillars are going to crumble, but she is saying that the way we express those pillars can be greatly improved if we give some attention to Bible study.

**Question:** She also says: "Our faith is reference to the messages of the first, second and third angels are correct. The great waymarks we have passed are unmovable, although the hosts of hell may try to tear them from their foundations and try in the thought that they have succeeded, yet they do not succeed. These pillars of truth stand firm as the eternal hills, unmoved by all the efforts of men combined with those that are of Satan and his hosts."

**Dr. Ford:** Amen, no problem.

**Question:** Does God not have to take responsibility for creating the beings who could choose wrongly?

**Dr Ford:** It's about time you spoke, Dr Syme.

**Dr Syme:** The question, if I understand it from what you said: if God doesn't have to take the responsibility, He could have created wrongly? Is that what he's saying?

**Dr Ford:** I think if I understand the question, he's saying: Doesn't God still have the responsibility for evil if He made beings that could choose evil? And doesn't he accept that responsibility?

**Dr Syme:** Of course He does. I mean obviously anyone, if you create something. If you created a cupboard you would take responsibility for anything that happened to the cupboard. But if your wife came along and put something too heavy on one of the shelves and it came crashing down, unless you're a man of very amiable temperament, I'm quite sure you would blame your wife for her stupidity. But you're still responsible for making the cupboard.

**Dr Ford:** Would it be fair to say that every great privilege is a double-header, and it is always a great responsibility and that God can't give one without the other?

**Dr Syme:** Absolutely. I mean, whoever took a job without accepting the right to make the decisions? I mean, you know when you take a job that you're going to take responsibility for error. So you demand that you're given a certain degree of initiative.

**Dr Ford:** Right. It's great to be married, you know. But my, the headaches it can bring! It's wonderful to be a father, but the headaches multiply at that point. Privileges bring responsibilities. You can't have one without the other. Not even God. We say with God all things are possible. With God all possible things are possible.

**Question:** We must be careful not to imply that God made an error in that creation.

**Dr Ford:** Correct.

**Question:** This is one for Dr Syme as well. I am going to try and repeat the question. I think Mrs Youngblood is asking questions along these lines: In one place and in one place only does the Greek use the term that implies "investigate" and that is in 1 Corinthians 4 where it speaks about a judgment at the coming of the Lord and not before. Secondly, what actually does Dr Syme mean when he uses the term "Investigative Judgment"?

**Dr Ford:** Maybe we'll let Dr Syme begin it, and I might throw in a line or two.

**Dr Syme:** Well, let me say right away, my field is history, not Greek, so I am going to leave Dr Ford to handle the Greek. As regards what I mean by 'investigate': the Investigative Judgment is simply a term we use. The Investigative Judgment is not a Scriptural term in any case. So, since it's our own term, I don't feel that I have any particular burden to define it.

All you have basically to go by is the statement in the Jewish economy that you find in Leviticus 16. That is the taking of the two goats at Yom Kippur, the sins of the congregation being placed on the head of the Lord's goat, which is killed and the blood then taken by the high priest into the most holy place or before the veil and then on into the most holy place. Then you have the other incident of Azazel (wrongly translated, incidentally, scapegoat), Azazel—which I would also add most old commentaries (I have one about 1880, which I bought for half-a-crown in Shaftesbury Avenue many years ago – Fairbairn's Imperial Bible Dictionary), I looked up the word Azazel and in a rather lengthy article the writer put out all the alternative interpretations. Then he said the whole base of the evidence suggests that it has to be Azazel who must coincide with Satan. Now, the point I want to get at in answer to that is that there was no shedding of blood as far as Azazel was concerned. He was taken by a man into the wilderness. Before the man was readmitted to the camp, he had to wash himself from head to foot. He had to wash all his clothes. So that the real issue here, the real interpretation, which I think is sound exegesis, is this: that since Leviticus says that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, and since the whole emphasis of both the Old Testament and the New Testament is that the only way that sin can be forgiven is by sacrifice, which of course points to our Lord Jesus Christ, since there is no sacrifice involved as far as Azazel is concerned, it is quite obvious that when the man took Azazel into the wilderness it symbolizes the fact that the sanctuary was to be cleansed (if you want to use that word, or

vindicated, which is a better word—it was redeemed, if you like) by the fact that the responsibility was finally on Azazel. Because Satan is responsible for sin and because everybody at the end when the judgment takes place, including Satan himself, will be compelled to admit their own responsibility by the sheer force of evidence and revelation, as I said before, and as you have said, that is the whole purpose of the Investigative Judgment. But I don't explain 'investigative' because God doesn't have to investigate. He knows everything: He's omniscient.

**Dr Ford:** Right. If I can just add a word or two. For those of you who don't know the Greek. Probably the word is *krino* with a prefix like *ana* or *dia*, and it just means to judge beforehand. But a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, and usually, my friends, the Greek says what the English says—usually. So be relieved, you don't need to spend twenty years on Greek, especially in the multiplicity of translations, though ministers ought to know it. But the next thing to say is this. A truth can be present whether a specific term is used or not. And the fact is there are two sets of texts about judgment in the New Testament: one that says the saints will judge the world, such as 1 Corinthians 6:2-3 and Revelation 20:4-5, and many other texts that say the saints themselves must stand before the judgment seat of Christ. So if the saints are going to judge the world, but are themselves to be judged, the second must necessarily take place before the other. But let me add, Adventists are wrong if they think Jesus began a judging work only in 1844. The point of our stress on 1844 is that we are meant to preach the gospel to the world in this generation so that every man's destiny can be fixed and decided before Jesus comes. But he's been a judge always and ever. All judgment was committed to the Son. "For judgment I came into this world. From hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power," it says in Luke 22:69. Christ has ever been a King and a Judge since his ascension. But in this generation, if it will take hold of the gospel, the destiny of all men living will be settled. That's the point.

**Question:** If the church came into a full knowledge of what we have been trying to say today, what difference would it make?

**Dr Ford:** My friends, if I can quote the Spirit of Prophecy:

With amazement the sinner hears the words, "You are complete in Him." Now all is at rest in his soul. No longer need he strive to find some worthiness in himself.

David, the great majority of Seventh-day Adventist worshippers are insecure. They are not certain if they have eternal life this very hour. They are not bubbling over with joy that their sins have been thrown into the depths of the seas, and that even if they make a mistake tomorrow, they are not cast off, they are accepted in the Beloved. So long as they trust in the merits of Jesus Christ, they can never be lost. Oh, what a freedom it brings, what a joy it brings. What a delight it is to witness when you know that. The church doesn't witness because it doesn't know that.

**Question:** The question that has been asked of Dr Syme and myself is: why do we use the expression 'the Spirit of Prophecy' for Ellen White in view of our stress that she is not canonical? Eric, do you want to make a start on that one?

**Dr Syme:** Yes, sure. Let's first of all define 'canonical'. 'Canonical' is simply the rule of Scripture. It's the collection of books that Christian councils—and not because it doesn't stand on the authority of Christian councils—but they recognize these particular books are part of the Bible canon. And it's inclusive. Roman Catholics would suggest that we add the Apocrypha, but the Protestant viewpoint takes the Bible as we know it. So in a very literal sense Ellen White could not be called canonical. But I am going to talk to the intent of your question rather than that point.

Let's first of all define the function of a prophet. Even the prophet in the canonical period, prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, who was mentioned spoke to situations. Their job wasn't to predict the future. Their job was to comfort the people at times of crisis and bring the counsel of God to the people at the time when the people most needed that counsel.

This is one of the stupidities of the reputation of Ellen White. In fact it has suffered in recent years. Ron Numbers in his medical book, he accuses her of "merely reflecting" (his words), the particular age at the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when she wrote her health literature. Because, he said, there were other people like Priessnitz, people of that description who were saying much the same thing. Well, it's a stupid objection really because it's an objection based upon misunderstanding of the nature of a prophet. Obviously a prophet talked to the situation, which interested people. He didn't go off into a cell and talk about some remote issue that didn't concern anybody. The prophets spoke on questions where were of paramount concern in their day. They didn't come, as Dr Ford pointed out, as God, because only God is infallible and only God is omniscient. It's blasphemy to suggest that Ellen White is infallible. Because you [inaudible] must only be to God. But she did come with a revelation from God concerning the particular issues which God has given her to speak to. And as Dr Ford suggested, much of the visions that God gave her, and we call it the Spirit of Prophecy because these were visions based upon the prophetic gift and were given under inspiration. But she had to supplement and she did supplement the visions by the best books of the time. Who would blame here if she wanted to sue Milman's History of the Jews, or Edersheim's Life of Christ, or James Wylie's History of Protestantism or D'Aubigne's work on The Reformation? Obviously she used these. But this is in no sense of the word a denial of the Spirit of Prophecy.

As a matter of fact, the reason why our first pioneers accepted Ellen White as a prophet was because she was practically ignorant of all the things they were talking about, and they said, well, if God gave her special light on this subject, it had to be that because she didn't know enough. She was a young woman, quite ignorant, quite feminine, very little education and didn't know what they were talking about when they were shaping our doctrines. Then when she came along and God gave her special information, they had to accept it as from God because there was no other way she could have this kind of light.

**Dr Ford:** Amen. Thank you, Dr Syme. If I can just add a p.s.: let me read to you two Scriptures. Revelation 19:10:

At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God!" (For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.)

Now please put with it the parallel passage in the last chapter where it says this (let me just locate it): Revelation 21:8:

I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel...but he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets."

Now please note the verses are parallel. The major difference is that where one says "your brethren have the spirit of prophecy", the other says, "your brothers the prophets". It may be a surprise to some Adventists to know that the expression 'the spirit of prophecy' has been used for the gift of prophecy for over two thousand years, and all the flak that Ellen White is getting from some quarters because of our use of this term, may be ignorant of the fact that commentators for hundreds of years, and before the Christian age in the Jewish age, used the expression 'the spirit of prophecy' for the gift of prophecy.

Verse 1: it speaks about the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. Blessed is the one who read the words of this prophecy. So Revelation 19:10 is saying, look, the mission of the prophets is to present the message of Jesus Christ, the gospel. This is what John 20, I think it is verse 31 says: “These are written, that ye might know (believe) that Jesus is the Christ, ...and that by believing you may have life through (in) his name.” The prophets were not sent to teach us astronomy, chronology, zoology, biology. They spoke about men thinking in their kidneys, and many things of that nature in harmony with the biology of the day. But the work of the prophets, the essence of all prophecy or its spirit, is the testimony of Jesus, the gospel.

**Question:** Let me comment on the question (Dr Ford). The question, if I understand it, is saying the following things: Didn't Ellen White say the omega of apostasy would be denying the gift of prophecy and the pillars of our truth? I think most of the latter speech was, “You used Ellen White to prove your positions.”

**Dr Ford:** My friends, what I have tried to say is that once you have established the position from Scripture, then you can certainly use Elle White to illustrate that position. And I trust you noticed that when we were reading Hebrews 9, that's not the name of a Spirit of Prophecy book, and that was the main centre of our study this afternoon.

**Question:** Was Ellen White clear or not?

**Dr Ford:** Ellen White was very clear if we take all she said upon the subject, very clear as to how much she understood on that area, and I believe Biblical, if we take *all* she says. Not at all clear if you wrench one statement and separate it from the others. Same principle as with Scripture.

**Question:** Dr Ford repeats the question: Basil, if I understanding your question, you are saying why have some people switched from the use of the term ‘Investigative Judgment’ to ‘pre-Advent judgment’? Is it because we rebel against the idea of having to wade through the books?

**Dr Ford:** Yes, I am sure it is. The Scripture is quite clear, the Lord does know them that are His. As Dr Syme has said, the purpose of the judgment isn't to give God information. You see a public judge—it's not enough to be just, he must appear to be just. And that's the reason for the last judgment.

Well please, where did I miss it—Basil, did I miss your point? Beg pardon, please say it again slowly.

**Basil:** The whole idea of intelligent beings going through the books. In other words, the Lord doeth it not for Himself, but for others. And supposedly that started in 1844.

**Dr Ford:** Basil, these are only figures, only metaphors. Whenever we talk of supernal things we have no way of couching them or expressing them in the things of the heavenly land themselves. We have to use the best available to us. I would recommend to you the statement by Arthur Spalding in his *History of Seventh-day Adventists*, where discussing this topic he said:

The heavenly sanctuary—not a room as we know it.

The day of atonement—not a day as we know it

Books—not books as we know it.

**Chairman:** Thank you so much Dr Ford and Dr Syme.

## Epilogue

According to one scholar there are over 1000 biblical references to the Judgment. But there is not one reference to any so-called “Investigative Judgment”. The chief New Testament references are to be found in Matthew 25: 31-46; Revelation 20:11-15, and 22:10-12; and Romans 14:10-12; 2 Corinthians 5:10. 1 John 5:17, John 5:24, and Romans 8:28-39 clearly affirm that Judgment Day has no terrors for the believer, as genuine faith safeguards us from condemnation and separation. The doctrine of the Day of Judgment reminds all that actions have reactions, sowing results in reaping, and one day all will see the everlasting results of their choices. Only Christ’s substitutionary atoning death saves his people from the penalty that would otherwise be theirs for “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” See Rom. 3:19-26.

The teaching of an Investigative Judgment beginning in 1844 denies the finality of the cross, God’s omniscience, and the reality of saving faith. Instead of the gospel being “good, glad, and merry tidings which makes the heart to sing and the feet to dance” it is made an accompaniment to fear. The Investigative Judgment dogma twists biblical eschatology, which assures us that all the important “last things” had their forensic fulfillment when Christ cried “It is finished.” Theologians refer to this as “realized eschatology” in contrast to “consummated” eschatology when Christ returns. For the man in the street, “It is finished” means that his sins have been dealt with and that salvation is freely available for all who trust their Savior.

The practical import of this study is that Seventh-day Adventism is at a fork in the road. God cannot continue to bless any movement that encourages dangerous errors and fails to repent of its past mistakes.

## Appendix One: Twenty-Two Incorrect Assumptions regarding the SDA Doctrine of the Investigative Judgment

The following is an extract from Chapter 3 of Desmond Ford's book *For the Sake of the Gospel: Throw Out the bathwater but keep the baby*. These assumptions were also published in the printed version of Ford's paper presented at Glacier View: *Daniel 8:14, the Day of Atonement, and the Investigative Judgment*, pages 174-176.

**Assumption 1.** That Daniel 8:14 speaks of 2,300 *days*. The Hebrew and Aramaic term *yom* occurs about thirty times in Daniel and is rightly translated "day" or "days," according to whether the original is singular or plural. But the term is **not** found in Daniel 8:14. The Hebrew there is correctly translated "evening-morning" and is commonly used in connection with the daily evening and morning sacrifices of the sanctuary. It is not identical with "the evening and the morning" of Genesis 1. *Ereb* and *boqer* signify points of time—the transition from day to night and from night to day respectively. **They do not mean the light and dark parts of the twenty-four-hour day.** The dark and light parts of each twenty-four-hour period are called "night" and "day" respectively, *not* "evening" and "morning." The Hebrew *ereb* and *boqer* are punctiliar, while *yom* is linear. There is not a single case where these terms as used in 8:14 mean a twenty-four-hour day. They belong to the burnt offerings of the morning and evening. See 2 Chr. 2:4. *Tamid*, translated "daily," but better as "continual," is contextually the equivalent of *ereb boqer*.

In verse 26, we find the definite article thus: "the evening and the morning," which indicates that verse 14 is referring to 1,150 days with two sacrifices a day (morning and evening).

Comparing the Hebrew of Daniel 8:14 with the Hebrew of Daniel 12:11, 12 makes clear that, while days are intended in the latter passage, they are not intended in the former. Thus Adventism has built a whole doctrine on a faulty translation.

It is amazing that, although it is usual for modern translations to omit "days" in translating Daniel 8:14, Adventists have gone on merrily, completely ignoring the testimony of scholarship.

**Assumption 2.** That the "days" of the KJV in Daniel 8:14 (missing in modern versions) signify years.

See our article on this subject re-examining the history usually associated with this theory. Nowhere does the Bible teach that in apocalyptic literature, days signify years. In Numbers 14:34, the future is foretold in years, and in Ezekiel 4:6, the past is literally denominated as days. Besides Adventists, only Jehovah's Witnesses have clung to this erroneous tradition. "Days" are not found in the Hebrew of 8:14 or 9:24, so the principle, even if correct, would not apply to these verses.

**Assumption 3.** That these supposed 2,300 years began centuries before the "little horn" began its attack on the sanctuary. But the context shows that the 2,300 period applies to the nefarious work of the nasty little horn.

**Assumption 4.** That the supposed 2,300 years begin at the same time as the "seventy sevens" of Daniel 9:24. But there is no Scripture that says so. The Hebrew *chathak*, translated "determined" in the KJV, means "cut" in the sense of "allot" or "decree." It does not necessarily mean "cut off from." There is no way of proving that the cutting off of 490 from 2,300 is intended. I know of no modern (or ancient) translation that makes any such conjunction. See my book *In the Heart of Daniel* for a defense of the traditional Christocentric interpretation of Daniel 9:24-27.

**Assumption 5.** That it is possible to be certain of the exact year that the seventy sevens begin, though exegetes have not been agreed on this point. Is the decree like that of 9:23, a heavenly one from God, or one from an earthly monarch? And if the latter, which monarch?

**Assumption 6.** That the decree of Artaxerxes recorded in Ezra 7 has to do with the restoring and rebuilding of Jerusalem. A quick reading of the chapter makes it clear that it is a temple decree, not a city decree. For decades, over fifty thousand Jews had been back in Jerusalem and its environs. See Haggai 1:4, which tells of the homes in the capital about 520 B.C. Zechariah prophesied about the same time, and his message is to the inhabitants of Jerusalem when they had begun to rebuild the temple.

The Biblical Research Committee held meetings after Glacier View, attempting to come to grips with the sanctuary problems. One attendant told me that the only folks who spoke much in those committees were those who knew little about the issues. One of our best scholars waved at the set of books ultimately produced and said to me, “A snow job. Don’t waste your time.” But I have spent some time on them only to find that my friend’s verdict is absolutely correct.

For example, there is an article in the book *The Seventy Weeks, Leviticus, and the Nature of Prophecy* entitled “Commencement Date for the Seventy Weeks of Prophecy.” If no certain date can be established for the beginning of the prophecy concerning the seventy sevens, then, on Adventism’s own premises, there is no certainty for 1844. The most remarkable feature of Dr. Ferch’s article is its exceeding tentativeness. There is no certainty here, except for the certainty that the issues are complex and dogmatism impossible. Here are some typical statements:

Unfortunately, no explicit proclamation is known.... Interpreters, therefore, have been obliged to deduce.... (p. 65)

Since the rebuilding of Jerusalem is not mentioned in this decree, the edict of Darius 1—as a fulfillment of the “word to restore and (re)build Jerusalem” is also ruled out. (p. 67)

On page 69, Dr. Ferch also says about the decree from Artaxerxes that it “mentions nothing about the rebuilding of Jerusalem.” Therefore, by his own logic, it should be ruled out. Instead, he rules it in.

On page 68, he says about the author of the Ezra 7 decree: “Assuming that this king is Artaxerxes 1....” There is much debate among scholars as to which Artaxerxes this one is. Scholars therefore are not agreed on the date of the issuing of the decree here given.

Another comment from Dr. Ferch:

The return of Ezra and his group of fellow Jews described in Ezra 7 appears to be related to the events recorded in Ezra 4:7-23. (p. 69)

But this, too, is an issue hotly debated, and dogmatism is not legitimate. See *The New Bible Commentary Revised*, page 401, for evidence that this Commentary did not regard Ezra 7 as a decree to rebuild Jerusalem.

On page 70, Dr. Ferch speaks of the work of “restoration of the temple and city from the time of Cyrus (ca 537/536-530 B.C.) on into the reign of Artaxerxes (465-423 B.C.)” This is a splendid statement and fully accurate. Clearly Isaiah predicted about “Cyrus”:

“He is my shepherd, and he shall fulfill all my purpose”; saying of Jerusalem, “She shalt be built,” and of the temple, “Your foundations shall be laid.” (Isaiah 44:28 RSV)

He shall rebuild my city. (Isaiah 45:13 RSV)

Please note that this is never said of Artaxerxes. The best scholars for centuries have regarded the decree of Cyrus as the one meant in Daniel 9:25. Recent research on chronography supports this view and warns against interpretation by chronology alone. Thus, we must confess that no passage of Scripture applies the rebuilding of Jerusalem to Artaxerxes and/or Ezra.

On page 70, we have more “presumables”: “Ahasuerus, presumably Xerxes I ... and in the days of Artaxerxes, presumably Artaxerxes I.”

“Appear” and “would seem” occur on page 74, crowning Dr. Ferch’s unsteady edifice of suppositions.

There is another problem. The date 457 itself is no longer acceptable to exegetes or archaeologists. The year 458 has replaced it, and in the spring—certainly not October 22. Sadly, 2,300 years from that date does not culminate in October 22, 1844.

Because Dr. Ferch was an honest man, he used many terms implying uncertainty. The *Adventist Review* did no better in its special issue on Bible doctrines, 1981, pages 26-27. As the *Review* desperately tries to bolster up the Investigative Judgment doctrine, it uses such language as, “it seems clear, “ “assuming,” “suggests”; “the Scriptures do not offer a detailed explanation of the work that was to begin in heaven in 1844”; “it is reasonable to assume”; “the term Investigative Judgment is not found in the Bible.”

Imagine you are preaching the gospel to dying men and women. You wish to employ the strongest, most powerful argument from the Word for the certainty of God’s love. You have just read Dr. Ferch’s learned article. Because of the unsteadiness of the structure he had built, you find yourself repeating John 3:16 in his language:

It is possible, even likely, that God so loved the world that it appears he gave his only begotten Son. This presumably implies that whosoever believeth in him (it seems) might not perish, but in all likelihood, have the most acceptable reward—eternal life, though no explicit proclamation to this effect is available. (John 3:16, 1844 edition)

**Assumption 7.** That the decree of Ezra 7 “went forth” in 457 B.C., when Ezra had arrived in Jerusalem and set to work.

But Ezra never says this, and the decree had been announced at least six months earlier. There is nothing in Daniel to say that this decree should be dated from the time of its implementation rather than its enunciation. Modern Bibles and commentaries have now replaced 457 B.C. with 458, but what is a mere year to enthusiastic, true believers?

**Assumption 8.** That we can show 408 B.C. to be the time when the restoration of the city was completed. Even Adventist scholars admit that this is an impossible task. There is no precise information in the latter books of the Old Testament as to how long the rebuilding took. There were many delays and interruptions. Where Scripture is silent, we should be. The use of sevens in this prophecy has more to do with symbolism than exact chronology.

**Assumption 9.** That we can show that A.D. 27 was the date of Christ’s baptism. We can’t. See any modern Bible chronology.

**Assumption 10.** That A.D. 31 was the date of the Crucifixion. It wasn’t. Other dates are given preference.

**Assumption 11.** That A.D. 34 was the date of the gospel going to the Gentiles. There is no way of proving that the stoning of Stephen took place on this date. Notice that the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 mentions no such terminus. Verse 24 summarizes all that the Messianic prophecy was to accomplish

and, as often occurs in Scripture, the last is given first. Acts 13:46 presents the turning to the Gentiles at a much later date than Stephen's martyrdom.

**Assumption 12.** That the 2,300 days end with the beginning of the antitypical Day of Atonement. This is blasphemous. The theology of the Christian church for two thousand years has rightly taught that the Atonement took place at Calvary. Read Leviticus for its emphasis on both blood and atonement. The latter requires the former, and there was no sacrificial blood shed in 1844. The divesting of himself of his glorious robes by the High Priest on this special day prefigured the incarnation of Christ (See *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 33). The resumption of his robes at the close of his work of atonement (Lev. 16:23-24) points to the glorified Christ after the resurrection. (Remember that he left his grave garments in the tomb, as the High Priest left his robes of humiliation in the sanctuary.) The book of Hebrews repeatedly applies the Day of Atonement in antitype to Christ's priestly offering of himself on Calvary.

**Assumption 13.** That until 1844 Christ was doing that work prefigured by the first apartment outside the veil. But Hebrews says that the first apartment represented the Old Testament era when men had restricted access to God and experienced outward ceremonial cleansing rather than perfection of the conscience. (See Hebrews 9:2-12; 9:8,12,25; 6:19-20; and 10:19-20). The New Testament is emphatic that Christ entered "within the veil" after his atonement. This is why the inner veil was torn at his death.

**Assumption 14.** That the work symbolized by the second apartment of the sanctuary was not to begin until over 1,800 years after the Cross. See the verses given in the discussion of the previous assumption. This assumption has always sounded bizarre to orthodox Christians because of the clear testimony of Hebrews to the contrary. In the type, the sprinkling of the blood on the mercy-seat took place immediately after its shedding. Ellen White speaks of the priest's conveyance of the "warm blood" within the veil.

**Assumption 15.** That the sanctuary of Daniel 8:14 means the sanctuary in heaven. But in the context the sanctuary is on earth.

**Assumption 16.** That "cleansed" is an accurate translation in Daniel 8:14. Even Adventist scholars today admit that this is not the case. See modern translations and any detailed commentary.

**Assumption 17.** That the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement was cleansed from defilement occasioned by the confession of sin and ministration of blood. But Numbers 9:13, etc., teach that the sanctuary was defiled when a person sinned, regardless of whether confession was made. In most cases (the offerings for the common people), the blood did not go into the sanctuary. In Scripture sacrificial blood always cleanses—it does not defile.

**Assumption 18.** That the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8:14 has to do with the sins of the professed believers in Christ. Yet the context has to do with defilement occasioned by the little horn, Antichrist, not the suffering saints.

**Assumption 19.** That this cleansing of 8:14 is also found in the judgment scene of Daniel 7, and that this judgment has to do with the recorded sins of the saints. But in Daniel chapter 7, as in 8, it is a wicked power that is the focus of the judgment. Daniel 7:26 says that "the court will sit and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever." The "his" is the little horn—Antichrist.

**Assumption 20.** That Revelation 14:7 has to do with the same Investigative Judgment of the sins of the saints. But John only uses *krisis* in a negative sense. Revelation 18:10 employs the same phraseology, but it is in connection with Babylon. Revelation 14:8 agrees. The later chapters of Revelation are forecasts of judgment on a wicked world.

In apocalyptic literature, while the saints may be warned, the chief emphasis is always consolation. Part of that consolation is the assurance that the wicked will be judged and punished. One need only read through Daniel and Revelation to see how true this is.

**Assumption 21.** That verses like Acts 3:19 point to the Investigative Judgment. But Acts 3:19 parallels Acts 2:8, and, like other NT verses cited, has nothing to do with an Investigative Judgment.

**Assumption 22.** That much depends upon October 22, 1844, as the beginning of the antitypical Day of Atonement. But contemporary Jews, even the majority of Karaites, did not observe that day. Neither is there evidence that the baptism of Christ or the stoning of Stephen took place on a Day of Atonement as the traditional doctrine requires.

In contrast to this traditional precision and convoluted series of assumptions, the chapter in our own *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* called "Interpretation of Daniel" shows that such precision is contrary to the whole history of exegesis of the times mentioned in Daniel. Furthermore, when our Bible Dictionary refers to Daniel 8:14 in its articles on Antichrist and the Little Horn, it makes no reference to an Investigative Judgment, but speaks of Daniel 8:14 as applying to a judgment upon the little horn and the restoration of true worship.

I well remember how in the committee of leaders prior to Glacier View, I was urged to reduce the number of these assumptions. But I was given no evidence for their reduction, and so I let the number stand. There are actually more than twenty-two assumptions, but I wrote these "off the cuff" when preparing the *Glacier View Manuscript*, and they still seem to me to be of considerable importance.

In *Alice in Wonderland* amazing things, even impossible things, happen. But we do not live in Wonderland. Ours is a world where reason must ultimately have its way, and where error does only damage. Error is not harmless. It never sanctifies or saves.

We quote Ellen White when it suits our prejudices. But I have rarely seen the following quoted in our official papers:

A spirit of Pharisaism has been coming in upon the people who claim to believe the truth for these last days. They are self-satisfied. They have said, "We have the truth. There is no more light for the people of God." But we are not safe when we take a position that we will not accept anything else than that upon which we have settled as truth. We should take the Bible, and investigate it closely for ourselves.... Some have asked me if I thought there was any more light for the people of God. Our minds have become so narrow that we do not seem to understand that the Lord has a mighty work to do for us. Increasing light is to shine upon us....

There is no excuse for anyone in taking the position that there is no more truth to be revealed, and that all our expositions of Scripture are without an error. **The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people is not a proof that our ideas are infallible. Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair.** (emphasis ours) (*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, pp. 34-35)

Can twenty-two erroneous assumptions lead to 1844? Yes, when men and women no longer read or think. No, while there are some who use their God-given individuality to search for truth as for hidden treasure, regardless of the cost.

## Appendix Two: Raymond F. Cottrell

### The Sanctuary Review Committee and its New Consensus: Article in *Spectrum* Magazine, vol. 11, no. 2 (Nov. 1980)

The most prominent Seventh-day Adventist scholar in the world over the last half of the 20th century was Raymond F. Cottrell. He worked on the original *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* from its commencement to its close, being the chief writer and Editor—although Senior Editor F. D. Nichol had the last word in all matters. Cottrell for decades was a key member of every theological study of the denomination. He wrote over 10,000 pages on critical issues.

For decades Cottrell worked on the problems implicit in the traditional interpretation of Daniel 8:14. When Desmond Ford walked with him one Sabbath morning in 1958 he found that Cottrell had the same problems as himself.

Cottrell ultimately approached Nichol and told him that the scholars in the church did not accept the “orthodox” teaching of the Investigative Judgment. Nichol authorized him to write every scholar in the church who could read the Old Testament in its original Hebrew. All twenty-six replied saying there was no exegetical linguistic basis for the Investigative Judgment and 1844.

With the permission of the current GC president a committee was set up to investigate the problems associated with the 1844 teaching. The committee met recurrently between 1961 and 1965 but could not come to agreement on the issues after studying over 40 papers (including some from Desmond Ford) written for the committee. So no official conclusions were rendered for the church. Elder Harry Lowe, North American ministerial secretary at the time and leader of the Daniel committee, wrote to the Glacier View committee stating this and saying that Ford came up with nothing that they had not already discussed. This letter was never read out at Glacier View.

Fourteen years after the Daniel Committee came Ford’s PUC Forum lecture. The following year came Glacier View with its 115 members at the cost of approximately a quarter of a million dollars. The majority of the attendees were administrators not scholars. The consensus statement largely agreed with Ford’s chief positions and was buried thereafter. Donald Yost made the only technical record of the Glacier View meetings, but Elder Neal Wilson forbade its being made available to others. However, Cottrell in shorthand recorded much that happened and gave it to *Spectrum* for its immediate publication.

In the months that followed Dr Cottrell worked on the manuscript he had begun decades before and completed it a few years before his death. It was entitled *The Eschatology of Daniel* and is now in the hands of a small group including Desmond Ford. It rejected in entirety the validity of the Investigative Judgment teaching. He wrote many other papers bearing on the same topic including *A Hermeneutic for Daniel 8:14* (originally written for and distributed to attendees at Glacier View) now in the archives of Avondale College. All came to the same conclusions. Cottrell’s objections were chiefly akin to the 22 erroneous assumptions on Ford’s list in his 991–page manuscript written for Glacier View (but only read by a few of those who attended). See Appendix 1 for those assumptions.

Cottrell was not alone in his beliefs, and he documented in his final work the evidence that most scholars agreed as he did. Many long to see Cottrell’s final work in print. that is an eventuality worth praying for.

## **The Sanctuary Review Committee and its New Consensus - by Raymond F. Cottrell**

Raymond F. Cottrell, formerly associate editor of the Review and Herald and of the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, was a member of the original Daniel Committee and the Sanctuary Review Committee. *Spectrum* magazine, vol. 11, no. 2 (Nov. 1980), pages 2-26.

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The meeting of the Glacier View Sanctuary Review Committee (referred to here as the Sanctuary Committee) Aug. 10-15, 1980, was the most important event of this nature in Adventist history since the 1888 General Conference in Minneapolis. With sober thoughts, its 115 members from around the world converged on Glacier View Ranch, located in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains northwest of Denver. Despite very real differences of opinion and some tense moments, an atmosphere of openness, freedom and mutual confidence prevailed; an atmosphere that could not have been possible ten, five or even two years ago.

The principal product of the conference was a 15-page consensus statement presented to the full assembly Friday morning, when it was debated, amended and duly voted. Although the document did not represent the thinking of every delegate on every point, the vote did accurately reflect a reasonable working consensus of the group as a whole. A document of nine pages, a ten-point critique that set forth in considerable detail points of agreement and disagreement with Dr. Ford's position paper, was read to the Sanctuary Committee, but not duplicated or placed in their hands. The full committee that had been working all week long to produce and vote its approval of the consensus statement was *not* asked to debate or vote, for or against, the ten-point critique. This document is not a product of the committee, nor does it reflect the thinking of the committee.

### **The Conference**

*Overview.* The Sanctuary Committee studied issues whose roots extend at least as far back as the Minneapolis General Conference.<sup>1</sup> Albion F. Ballenger, 75 years ago, was the first person of record to identify the specific issues subsequently raised by numerous others, such as L. R. Conradi, W. W. Fletcher, Harold Snide, R. A. Greive and of course, most recently Desmond Ford.

Dr. Ford traces his concern with the sanctuary doctrine back to 1945. Since then, he has sought unsuccessfully in papers, articles and books to persuade church leaders to face up to what he regards as serious non sequiturs in the traditional Adventist interpretation of Daniel 8:14 and Hebrews 9. From 1962 to 1966, the select General Conference Committee on Problems in the Book of Daniel had given protracted attention to these problems without being able to reach a consensus with respect to them.<sup>2</sup> The 1970s witnessed implementation of a policy that reserved decisions in theological matters primarily to administrators, which made it impossible to resolve a growing tension about the sanctuary through normal scholarly study and deliberation.

Desmond Ford, chairman of the theology department at Avondale College in Australia, had been serving as exchange professor at Pacific Union College in Angwin, California, when he accepted an invitation to speak to the local forum chapter on October 27, 1979. Subsequently, he was granted six months' leave at General Conference headquarters to write his reasons and conclusions, in consultation with an ad hoc guidance committee chaired by Richard Hammill, a vice president of the General Conference and a Bible scholar. The purpose of this committee was not to control Ford's research, but to assist him in preparing his formal statement of problems and solutions.

The resulting document, "Daniel 8:14, The Day of Atonement, and the Investigative Judgment" provided the basis for the Sanctuary Committee's deliberations. This nearly 1,000-page document

reviews the history of Adventist debates over the sanctuary during the past 75 years, examines the biblical evidence in detail, and presents Dr. Ford's own conclusions. In his manuscript, Ford contends that, at several points, the traditional Adventist interpretation of Daniel 8:14 and Hebrews 9 lacks an accurate, adequate basis,<sup>3</sup> and Ford proposes what he calls an apotelesmatic<sup>4</sup> solution. In varying degrees, most contemporary Adventist Bible scholars, including those in attendance at Glacier View, agree with his analysis of the exegetical problems, but not with his proposed solutions to them.

Several weeks before Glacier View, the General Conference provided each participant with copies of not only the 991-page Ford document, but 11 others of 849 additional pages—a formal reading assignment of 1,840 closely reasoned pages. A few additional papers were distributed during the conference.

The Sanctuary Committee was representative in composition. The administrative and biblical scholarly communities of the church were dominant. With some overlapping of categories, the 111 regular delegates and four “special invitees” included 56 administrators, 46 Bible scholars, five editors, six pastors, six graduate students, six members of the former committee on Problems in the Book of Daniel, and 14 retired persons. Administrators included virtually all the church's top world leaders. Nineteen were members of the General Conference headquarters staff. Nine of the ten world division presidents were present, along with 11 union and three local conference presidents. Thirty-four were from divisions outside North America. Minority racial groups and third-world nations were liberally represented.

The daily schedule provided for seven small study groups, consisting of 16 to 18 members each, which conversed for three and a half hours each morning. The full assembly met an equal length of time for discussions in the afternoon, and then met for lectures each evening. Each day the study groups and full assembly followed an assigned agenda.<sup>5</sup> Each study group drew up a consensus report on the topic for the day, for presentation to the full afternoon assembly. An official tape recording of proceedings of the full assembly was made by Dr. Donald Yost, General Conference archivist; individual records were limited to handwritten notes.<sup>6</sup>

Original plans for the conference did not provide for Dr. Ford to address the group or to answer questions publicly. Many delegates, however, wanted to hear him and thought that he should be given the opportunity to speak. Accordingly, the last hour of the last three afternoons (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) was devoted to this purpose. At some points, the questions and comments were very direct and explicit, and there were tense moments. But even the most emphatic speeches were made in a spirit of deep earnestness and sincerity.

Two identical opinion polls of delegates on the substantive issues were taken, one before the committee entered upon its task and the other at the close, with a view to evaluating the effect of study and deliberation on the thinking of the participants. Each poll consisted of 21 questions dealing with hermeneutical principles, points of exegesis and attitudes concerning relevant sections of the recently revised Statement of Fundamental Beliefs. A tabulation of responses to each of these polls was read to the delegates. The most noteworthy difference in responses to the two polls was a measurable trend toward a higher level of consensus on some of the key questionnaire items of the latter poll.<sup>7</sup>

*Sunday Evening: The General Conference President Speaks.* The opening meeting of the conference Sunday night featured an address by Neal Wilson, president of the General Conference and chairman of the committee that had assisted Dr. Ford in the preparation of his position paper. In his keynote remarks, Elder Wilson traced the historical background of concern with respect to the sanctuary doctrine and commented on the purpose and objectives of the conference.

WILSON: There never has been a meeting quite like this. It is not going to be an easy meeting, but we are optimistic and believe it will prove to be a blessing to the church. Between 1961 and 1966, the General Conference Committee on Problems in the Book of Daniel gave study to the same problems that bring us together here at Glacier View. Its 45 study documents have never been released. Its members, six of whom are with us tonight, were in agreement on ultimate conclusions but could not reconcile their differences of opinion as to what they considered adequate evidence on which to base these conclusions. These problems continue to fester, and it is unhealthy for the church that more has not been done to resolve them. Discussions of a confusing nature continue to multiply, and this is why we are here tonight.

Last October 27, our friend, our brother, our fellow minister Desmond Ford addressed a large meeting of the Adventist Forum at Pacific Union College, and some interpreted his remarks as a challenge to the church. There was a strong reaction, which led the Pacific Union Conference and Drs. Cassell and Madgwick—president and academic dean of Pacific Union College—to take the initiative in bringing the problem to the General Conference. The brethren planned an approach they thought would be consistent with Christian principles, and arranged for Dr. Ford to have a leave of six months in Washington to research his position thoroughly and to write a statement of his views. If he is teaching error, we ought to know it; if he is right, we should stand by his side.

Ellen White has told us that we should study the truth for ourselves, that we are not to take any man's word for it, and yet we are to be subject to one another. Some have felt that investigation should not be permitted, but she wrote that when no new questions or differences of opinion arise there will be a tendency to rely on tradition. We are not to think our opinions infallible, but we are to be teachable and prayerful as we study. We are not to study in order to find support for our preconceived opinions, but to hear what God has said. God would have all of our positions thoroughly examined.<sup>8</sup>

If the church has been remiss in the past, it has an even greater obligation to provide responsible leadership for our people today. Ignorance is no excuse. We are thankful for our Bible scholars, hermeneuticists, theologians, and exegetes.

HAMMILL: One of the crucial problems facing the church today is the interpretation of cleansing of the sanctuary beginning in 1844, as set forth in Daniel 8:14. It has become evident that we need better answers to some of the contextual problems. The guidance committee<sup>9</sup> did not force its views on Dr. Ford. Its role was to point out what seemed unclear and to aid him in securing the documents he needed. The committee met in a spirit of love and good will. The resulting paper of nearly 1,000 pages is Ford's. His paper touches on areas for which the Adventist church needs to give careful study. In such study, it is vital that none of us runs off on our own. Ellen White has said that people with strong minds must work with great care.

WILSON: I want Des Ford, his wife Gill, and their son Luke to know that we love them very much, and that we appreciate all that he has written. This is, and is not, a Des Ford meeting. Des is not on trial before this group, though some of his views are on trial. He is not a member of this group; he is here to answer questions and to clarify his position.

It will be our endeavor to be fair and open. We will work toward a consensus, but not a majority vote. We need to find out if we do have problems, what is central, and what needs more study. Please be honest and say what you think lest people misunderstand you. Here in this meeting, you will have immunity. We greatly appreciate the work of our Bible scholars on the new Statement of Fundamental Beliefs adopted at Dallas.<sup>10</sup> They will be partners of ours in reaching decisions on doctrine.

Some have suggested that several articles in the *Adventist Review*<sup>11</sup> in recent months were biased, prejudiced, and that they prejudged the case: I assure you that there has been no calculated strategy. The editors have done what the leaders expect them to do—to affirm and defend Adventist positions. It is not the role of the *Review* to give contrary views equal time, or to promote “new light” before that light has been studied by responsible groups. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is not on trial. It has a clear position on certain points; we are not here searching for a position, but we are reaching out for answers.

The bottom line, of course, is the role of Ellen White in doctrinal matters. This is central. Dr. Sakae Kubo, now president of Newbold College, has identified the great issue that will come before the church during the 1980s as the role of the Spirit of Prophecy. It will be *the* issue, he says.

It is our earnest prayer and hope that as a result of our deliberations here at Glacier View, God’s church will prosper and the coming of our Lord will be hastened.

***Monday Morning: The Small Study Group.*** The planning committee had drawn up an agenda for each day of the conference, Monday through Thursday, covering the problems relating to the sanctuary doctrine as presented by Dr. Ford in his position paper. The topics for the four days were:

- Monday, “The Nature of Prophecy,”
- Tuesday, “The Cleansing of the Sanctuary and the Investigative Judgment—1,” a consideration of the linguistic and contextual problems in Daniel;
- Wednesday, “The Cleansing of the Sanctuary and the Investigative Judgment—2,” a consideration of the sanctuary in the book of Hebrews;
- Thursday, “The Role of the Ellen G. White Writings in Doctrinal Matters.” Each of the seven study groups was composed of administrators, Bible scholars, and other delegates.

The various groups of 16 to 18 members met in appropriate locations throughout the camp. As already mentioned, remarks here attributed to each speaker give the gist of his comments, in his own words. These comments are reported in the order in which they occurred, but it should be remembered that a speaker is not necessarily responding directly to the one who preceded him, and that the bare gist of his remarks may, in some instances, tend to obscure continuity. The chairman of each group was a vice president of the General Conference; its recording secretary was elected by the group. Item by item, each group debated the agenda for the day and agreed on a consensus response to each. The secretary recorded these responses and combined them into a formal report which the group approved for presentation at the general assembly in the afternoon.

A detailed report of proceedings in all seven study groups, or of any one group over the four days, would be repetitive, tedious and longer than space permits. Instead, a virtually complete but considerably condensed report of the Monday morning discussion in Group 2 will provide an adequate concept of the general nature, scope and tone of the group discussions. Group 2 chairman was Charles Bradford, vice president of the General Conference for North America, and the secretary was Kenneth Strand, professor of church history at Andrews University.

The agenda for Monday called for a discussion of “The Nature of Prophecy.” That topic was subdivided into seven specific questions.

A: Could all the Old Testament prophecies have been fulfilled within the time of the covenant with Israel, i.e., by the time of the first advent of Christ? If so, what effect does this have on our interpretation of the time prophecies of Daniel?<sup>12</sup>

WADIE FARAG (pastor-evangelist, Alberta Conference): *The Encyclopedia Judaica* quotes the Midrash as recognizing a sanctuary in heaven, as well as one on earth. Accordingly, it is not possible to prove that Daniel did not know about a sanctuary in heaven.

MERLE MILLS (General Conference field secretary): We can give this question a decisive “no.”

FRED HARDER (retired executive secretary of the General Conference Board of Higher Education): If the prophecies were based on how the Lord knew things would work out, He would not have given them in the form He did.

KENNETH WOOD (editor, *Adventist Review*): The prophecies could not have been based on God’s foreknowledge. Had they been, the Lord would have been prejudging the result.

BRADFORD: Perhaps we should reword the statement by omitting the word “all.”

A. N. DUFFY (ministerial secretary, Australasian Division): The predictive prophecies of Daniel are unconditional.

FARAG: Daniel’s prophecies are definitely unconditional.

WOOD: If we take the question as it reads, our answer must be an absolute “no.” Some Old Testament prophecies could not have been fulfilled within that time frame.

A. A. ALALADE (graduate student at Andrews University, on study leave from the Adventist Seminary of West Africa): We need to recognize that many of the Old Testament prophecies have a dual application. (Some voices called for an emphatic “no”; others for a qualified “no.”)

FARAG: Predictive prophecy is a declaration based on God’s foreknowledge.

WOOD: We have wrestled with the idea that prophecy is an expression of God’s foreknowledge; some consider it to express God’s purpose rather than His foreknowledge.

HARDER: Our perspective does not preclude the idea that the prophecies all had a meaning for former ages.

WOOD: Ellen White said that they were more for our day than for former ages.

JAMES COX (professor of New Testament, Theological Seminary; under appointment as president of Avondale College): Are we saying “no” to this question from our point of view, or from that of the author? Daniel evidently did not envision multiple fulfillments of his prophecies, but the ongoing people of God have always considered the prophecies applicable to their own situation. From the author’s perspective, we would have to answer “no.” The predictive prophecies had meaning for the people of the time in which they were given; there was something that could have been applicable. But time has gone on.

STRAND: There are two types of prophetic literature—classical and apocalyptic—and this makes a difference. It is not proper to attribute multiple fulfillments to apocalyptic prophecies, as Dr. Ford does.

BRADFORD: I fear we would be giving the prophecies a wax nose.

B. Does the Old Testament set forth the two advents of Christ separated by an interim of many years?<sup>13</sup>

DUFFY: The Old Testament did not foresee two advents separated by 2,000 years.

FARAG: There is an Old Testament indication of two advents.

BRADFORD: The Old Testament recognizes a heavenly sanctuary. We want revelation, not speculation.

DUFFY: If we did not have the New Testament, what would we conclude about there being a second advent, from the Old Testament?

CLYDE O. FRANZ (retired secretary of the General Conference): If we had only the Old Testament, we would not have much information about what we call the second advent. The difference in our perspective is a result of the fact that 2,000 years have elapsed.

BRADFORD: Our consensus, then, is “no.”

DUFFY: There has been a progressive unfolding of the prophecies.

MILLS: Daniel clearly sets forth two advents, with a time interval between them.

WOOD: The question is not whether Daniel sets forth two advents, but whether what he wrote is perceived as indicating two advents. The question before us is, does Daniel set forth two advents with a time interval between them?

COX: That is a specious argument. We are stuck with perception.

HARDER: It is clear from Matthew 24, which Christ Himself based on the prophecies of Daniel, that neither He nor the disciples envisioned a long time before He would return.

FARAG: Spiritual things are spiritually discerned.

C. Is the New Testament church predicted or acknowledged in the Old Testament?

BRADFORD: I think our answer will have to be “no.” (No objections.)

D. Does the New Testament indicate the likelihood of a first-century return of Christ?<sup>14</sup>

VOICES: “Yes.” (No objections.)

Recess.

E. Is the year-day principle a biblical teaching?<sup>15</sup>

JEAN ZURCHER (secretary, Euro-Africa Division): We cannot prove it from Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6. We need another principle. I believe the year-day principle is based on the sabbatical year and the jubilee system. (He presented evidence for the jubilee system as a basis for the principle.)

JOHN W. FOWLER (president, Ohio Conference): The jubilee system in addition to Numbers and Ezekiel.

HARDER: We will have to recognize that the day-year principle does not apply in Daniel 9.

COX: I do not use Numbers and Ezekiel at all. But it is a biblical principle; I just say, “A day symbolizes a year,” and let it go at that. Let us not use specious arguments when it is not necessary to do so.

HARDER: Ezekiel does not satisfy me at all. We need to provide something that we can rely on.

BRADFORD: We are saying that the day-year principle is valid.

MILLS: Are we to tell our people that we have been wrong? Doesn't Sister White use this argument?

FRANZ: It is a biblical datum.

ALALADE: There is no problem in recognizing that we have been wrong. We believe in progressive revelation, and that implies progressive understanding, does it not?

WOOD: Ellen White speaks of an “unfolding.” The word “progressive” has evolutionary connotations. This church has a lot to lose by being iconoclastic with the pioneers. We should build on, and enrich, their insights.

STRAND: I am with Jim Cox on *shabu’ah* (“weeks” or “sevens” of years).

COX: Why should we insist on using arguments that are weak?

STRAND: Our consensus, then, is “yes,” but that we need to base it on better reasons than we have in the past.

DUFFY: We should not use negative expressions in our report.

STRAND: The crucial issue is how Ellen White used these texts (Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6). God always communicates with His people in terms of their own time.

F. Do the time prophecies of Daniel contain conditional elements, or are they exclusively unconditional?<sup>16</sup>

There was no discussion; all in this group agreed that Daniel believed his prophecies were unconditional. Group 2 adjourned its morning session half an hour late and there was not time to discuss the last question.

G. To what extent do the prophecies of Daniel permit application to multiple situations or fulfillments?

Group 2 took this item up first the following morning, and there was unanimous agreement that Daniel makes no provision for multiple fulfillments.

***Monday Afternoon: The Full Assembly.*** Each afternoon, the secretary of each of the seven study groups presented its consensus report. With a few minor variations, there was remarkable agreement. Monday afternoon, the consensus of all seven groups concerning the questions was approximately as follows:

A. Some, but not all, of the Old Testament prophecies could have met their fulfillment in connection with the first advent of Christ.

B. There is no consensus as to whether the Old Testament presents two advents separated by an interval of many years.

C. There is no Old Testament intimation of the New Testament church.

D. The New Testament clearly indicates the likelihood that Christ could have returned in the first century of the Christian era.

E. The year-day principle is biblical, but there is some uncertainty as to the best evidence for it.

F. The time prophecies of Daniel are unconditional.

G. The prophecies of Daniel are not susceptible to multiple fulfillments.

After the group consensus reports were read to the full assembly, discussion began. In response to a request from Group 2, Dr. Jean Zurcher repeated the evidence for the sabbatic year/jubilee system as a basis for the year-day principle in Bible prophecy, which he had presented to the group that morning.

HAMMILL: All Old Testament prophecy could have been fulfilled in an end-time back there.

RICHARD LESHNER (director, Bible Research Institute): God’s foreknowledge imposed a sealing of the prophecies of Daniel.

FARAG: There is a difference between application and fulfillment. God's people may, at times, apply a prophecy to their time that is not to be considered a fulfillment.

R. L. ODOM (retired, member of former Daniel Committee): The classical prophecies could all have been fulfilled in ancient Israel, but not the apocalyptic time prophecies of Daniel.

BEATRICE NEALL (professor of theology, Union College): The outcome of Israel's probation was conditional. There were two possible outcomes of Daniel 9 and the 70 weeks.

ODOM: Let us get something positive.

LESLIE HARDINGE (dean of the seminary, Philippine Union College): We are wasting time on speculation. Let us cut off the "ifsies." (A loud chorus of Amens.)

Afternoon recess.

V. N. OLSEN (president, Loma Linda University): Old Testament eschatology is realized in the New Testament.

A. L. WHITE (retired secretary of the Ellen G. White Estate): On page 472 of *Patriarchs and Prophets*, we read that God, in His foreknowledge, opened the future to Moses down to the end of time.

FRED VELTMAN (chairman, department of religion and biblical languages, Pacific Union College): The New Testament clearly expected an early fulfillment of the promised return of Christ. We cannot use the same arguments as we have in the past.

JAN PAULSEN (secretary, Northern Europe-West Africa Division): We need to consider the "ifs." Let us refer the matter of conditionality back to the groups for further study.

NEALL: We should consider the possibility that the Old Testament prophecies have been reinterpreted by later-inspired writers.

HARDER: In Matthew 24, Christ interpreted the prophecy of Daniel to His disciples, and in so doing explicitly assigned their fulfillment to the generation of the apostles.

HAMMILL: For twelve years, I have had the uneasy feeling that the eschatological prophecies of the Old Testament could have met their fulfillment in New Testament times. Was the New Testament church deluded in its belief that Christ could have come in that generation? Clearly, the Lord could have come in that time, and if so, the Old Testament prophecies would have met their fulfillment then. Daniel 7 does present the sweep of history, but not to A.D. 2,000.

JAMES LONDIS (pastor, Sligo Church, Takoma Park, Md.): Some of us are not as certain as others seem to be on the matter of conditionality. Are we saying that God intentionally deceived His people for 2,000 years?

GERHARD HASEL (professor of Old Testament, Theological Seminary): It was not a delusion. God's only intention in Daniel 8:14 was to point forward to 1844. (Chorus of "Amens.")

JOHN BRUNT (associate professor of New Testament, Walla Walla College): I second Drs. Hammill and Londis. The book of Revelation, at the very close of the New Testament, repeatedly speaks of the time of Christ's return as near. We need a hermeneutic for Daniel that does not have God playing games with people.

STRAND: Our consensus on the book of Daniel seems to be in conflict with our consensus on the book of Revelation. We are raising questions that were irrelevant in Bible times.

LEROY MOORE (coordinator, Native American [Indian] Affairs): God intended that His people should receive comfort from an application of the prophecies to their time, though the application may not have been a fulfillment. The sealing of Daniel provided for a positive fulfillment at a later time.

K. G. VAZ (ministerial director, West Indies Union Conference): We need to make a distinction between application and fulfillment, and between the classical prophecies and apocalyptic prophecy. It is of great importance that this committee leaves us with confidence in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

ROBERT ZAMORA (chairman, department of religion, Columbia Union College): We must listen to what the writer himself is trying to say. This subject needs much more study.

HARDER: There is no question as to what “this generation” meant to the people who heard Jesus speak.

NORMAN YOUNG (professor of theology, Avondale College): The distinction some make between classical prophecy and apocalyptic prophecy is not valid. The book of Revelation interpreted the book of Daniel, and Revelation emphasizes the imminence of Christ’s return at that time. The principle of reinterpretation should be given further study.

### **Tuesday Afternoon: The Heppenstall-Ford-Wilson Encounter.**

For his assigned hour, Dr. Ford stood at a small lectern on the main floor immediately in front of the platform, where the chairman and his assistants sat. The substance of Ford’s remarks Tuesday afternoon was as follows.

FORD: The day of atonement is clearly reflected in Daniel 8 and 9. The prayer in Daniel 9 is a day of atonement prayer and Daniel 9:24 is stated in day of atonement terms. Vindication is the keynote of every chapter of Daniel. The motif of judgment is clearly reflected in Daniel and, in fact, throughout the Bible, but not an investigative judgment. Daniel 8:14 and 9:24 refer to the same event at the end of the 70 weeks. Many Adventists fear judgment even after their sins have been forgiven, because of the way in which the investigative judgment is presented. The book of Revelation makes clear that Christ’s kingdom could have come in the first century of our era, and Daniel 7 could have been fulfilled then.

I fully believe that God raised up the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1844. I believe in the year-day principle, but not on the basis of Numbers and Ezekiel. When that which could have happened did not happen, God led people to apply the year-day principle to Daniel’s prophecies. I believe that God spoke to Ellen White miraculously. This church would have been shipwrecked without her. But we have misused Ellen White.

Inspiration comes to us today as Christ came—in the culture of our day. As Donald McAdams and Walter Rea have demonstrated, our usual views of inspiration have been wrong, Ellen White was a creature of her time, as the twelve disciples were of theirs. None of this in the least degree detracts from Ellen White’s gift of inspiration. It does prove, however, that “inerrancy” is not the correct word to describe her inspiration.

Highlight of the Ford hour Tuesday afternoon was the result of a question addressed to him by E. E. Heppenstall, emeritus chairman of the department of theology, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary; Dr. Ford studied with Heppenstall in classes 25 years ago.

HEPPENSTALL: Des, what took place in heaven in 1844, in relation to the judgment of Daniel 7:9-14? Do you see in this a new phase in Christ’s ministry in the heavenly sanctuary?

Misunderstanding Dr Heppenstall's intention, Dr. Ford responded with a lengthy disquisition. Later, after talking with Heppenstall, he understood that Heppenstall's intention was to affirm his own loyalty to the Adventist understanding of the judgment, and to give Ford an opportunity to join him in doing so. He apologized to Ford for the misunderstanding. Some delegates construed this verbal exchange as evidence that Heppenstall, a long-time friend and supporter of Ford, turned against him. Heppenstall, however, denies that he has changed his attitude toward Ford and says that his remarks on this point have been misconstrued. After Ford's disquisition had continued at some length, Neal Wilson, chairman of the session, who was seated behind a table on the platform, interrupted.

WILSON: You mentioned that you have changed your mind on some things and that you could be wrong. You have stated your great affection for Ellen White. Her counsel is that you should present your opinions to the brethren, and that if they see no light in them, you should lay them aside. Dr. Heppenstall has appealed to you to do so. Do you accept his counsel? You never listen to your brethren. If you believe in Ellen White, and the brethren tell you what they think, you had better practice what you preach. If you are not willing to accept the counsel of your brethren...

FORD: I appreciate your counsel.

While the final housekeeping remarks of the session were being made, Dr. Ford gathered up his papers and left the lectern. This challenge to Dr. Ford's integrity brought Tuesday afternoon to an abrupt halt, and the Sanctuary Committee to its moment of highest tension. To be sure, the lengthy disquisition Neal Wilson interrupted was not one of which even Ford's most ardent supporters could be proud; in fact, it was the nadir of his performance at Glacier View. Even so, many members of the committee were taken completely by surprise, and were at a loss to understand why the president of the General Conference had considered it necessary to speak in such uncharacteristically strong language. For the first time, some of the scholars began to wonder if their presence at Glacier View had been intended to provide support for a decision concerning Ford that had been already determined.

### **Wednesday Afternoon: Exchanges with Ford.**

FORD: I am sorry that I misunderstood yesterday. My response was not as positive as if I had understood. I have told the brethren many times that I am fully prepared to be quiet on the issue. I have no wish to crusade in this area. I have published many hundreds of pages on the subject over the past 23 years. I believe in our sanctuary message, but the way in which we have expressed it has not always been the best way. I am perfectly happy to accept the counsel of the brethren on this matter. Since October 27, I have refused to speak on the judgment, and I have no intention of speaking on it until the brethren have studied it. I long for the insights of my brethren. Many invitations have come to work outside the church, but I have had no wish to accept them. I cannot go against my conscience, and I am sure you do not want me to.

WILSON: The statement Des just made brings great rejoicing to me. I believe it is an answer to prayer. I accept your statement, Des, at full value. At no time has this church endeavored to control minds. It gives considerable latitude for opinions, but this carries with it an enormous sacred responsibility. It does not give latitude to create doubts, to undermine faith, or to muffle the message of this church. We cannot afford to confuse others' minds with our personal opinions. When a person becomes a minister, he accepts a commitment to preach and teach the message this church has to give. Des, you are not only to be silent on certain things; you have a message to proclaim to the world. All I was trying to say yesterday was: Think through carefully the counsel of brethren of experience. You are teachable, yield to their judgment. I am accepting your statement at full value.

FORD: The church has not really put its act together. Some of the opinions we have heard expressed the past few days are very different from our published statements. Our published literature had denied that Hebrews 9:23 refers to Calvary. The investigative judgment and the cleansing of the sanctuary are not identified in Hebrews 9. As Dr. Heppenstall has pointed out, blood never denies [sic (ed: 'defiles')], but cleanses. The New Testament clearly uses the language of last things to describe the first advent and events that followed it. This is what I was taught at the seminary. It has been published in *The Ministry*. The question is, do we want the best answer or the traditional answer? I have made many mistakes, and I may be wrong again.

G. RALPH THOMPSON (secretary of the General Conference): We do not have all the answers to all the problems, but it is our duty to proclaim the accepted beliefs of the church when we preach. We are safe when we stay with these beliefs. Further study in groups is O.K.

FORD: The things I have been saying are set forth in the article on "The Role of Israel in Old Testament Prophecy" in volume 4 of the *SDA Bible Commentary*. I did not invent them. Also, the book of Revelation is crystal clear on the subject.

LONDIS: I am puzzled about your use of the term "pastoral" in referring to the writings of Ellen White. Is it not fair to say that she is one doctrinal authority?

FORD: Of course, she has teaching authority. Again and again she urges us to base all our teachings on the Bible. Her writings can be used doctrinally when what she writes is clearly supported by Scripture.

K. S. PARMENTER (president Australasian Division): I hold Des Ford in the highest esteem. He is a man of God, a man of high moral principles, a man of much ability who has had a powerful ministry. He has potential to help this church as a minister. But unless there is pastoral concern along with his ministry, it will prove to be a power for evil. Our friendship has been on a most cordial, friendly basis. We are still supporting Dr. Ford fully, and it is my responsibility to protect his name. Des, I urge you to listen to, and accept, our counsel. Lay your views aside. For six years you have been appealing to the General Conference for a hearing, and you have implied a dereliction of duty on its part for not giving you such an opportunity. But you have changed your position; your manuscript and your book do not agree.

FORD: You must look at the problems, and then you will see that the two are in agreement.

PARMENTER: I greatly appreciate your acceptance of the counsel of your friends. The dialogue this afternoon has been good. But it is not enough to say that you are willing to be silent on some things. Your document has gone everywhere in Australia, and we have a pastoral problem of tremendous magnitude there as a result. As I read your document, morning light turns to midnight. Is there any shift in your position? I refer to such things as conditionality in the prophecies of Daniel, to your apotelesmatic principle, and to the idea that Christ could have come in the first century of our era.

FORD: I have not changed my position on conditionality. I abide by what the *Bible Commentary* teaches on that subject. It is also clear from Scripture that if the Jews had been faithful Jerusalem would never have been destroyed. Nineveh would have been destroyed if the city had not repented. Look at what the prophecies of Daniel meant to the people who first read them. No, there is no shift in my position on conditionality.

**Thursday Afternoon: Statements by Pierson, Blehm and Provonsha.**

The first item of business Thursday afternoon was the reading, by retired General Conference secretary Clyde O. Franz, of a lengthy letter from Robert H. Pierson:<sup>17</sup> “An Appeal to the Sanctuary Review Committee.” In substance the letter read:

Glacier View is a historic convocation in Adventism. I hope it will create a new awareness of the hour in which we live. The papers prepared for the conference are thought provoking. I believe in the need for change in appropriate circumstances, but there must be valid reasons for change. Some change is good, some is hurtful.

As I read the conference papers, I saw lights flashing—some green, some amber, some red. I come, in all sincerity, to raise certain vital questions. I am deeply concerned that so many of our distinctive doctrines are being questioned. As I read Dr. Ford’s manuscript, I felt a sense of abandonment. Is our message to be tested by the norms of unbelieving theologians and scientists? Are we to be asked to accept an emasculated view of Ellen G. White? Is it intellectually honest to affirm faith in Ellen White and then attack what she wrote? Are we to reassess our position on the judgment? Are we to jettison or update our sanctuary truth because some challenge it? Brethren, I protest.

Desmond Ford has been teaching and preaching this doctrinal position for many years, and he is sadly wrong. No one has a right to teach or preach such things while he is being supported by the church. It is morally and intellectually dishonest for a person to accept financial support if he is undermining the church. If he is not in harmony with the church, he should be honest enough to withdraw to a climate in which he feels comfortable. Academic freedom and responsibility, yes, but not academic license.

*Later Thursday afternoon, W. D. Blehm, president of the Pacific Union Conference, spoke in a similar vein:*

BLEHM: I see better today than ever before that the meaning of the past is correct. I accept what I believe to be a divine communication through Ellen White. It is our privilege to improve the pillars of the faith, but not to change them. Dr. Ford’s challenge has already borne fruit in the Pacific Union—split congregations, doubts in the minds of pastors leading them to give up their credentials, divided faculties. Anything that divides this church or leads to doubt is wrong. Some of our theologians are hotbeds of doubt. Let us get our act together. We have an obligation to go back and get our churches moving for God. We need each other today as never before. We’ve got to forget our suspicion of administrators. This is where I stand.

In an attempt to heal the rift between Dr. Ford and the Australasian Division, Dr. Jack Provonsha commented on the importance of healing as a prelude to a question he intended to put, in turn, to Neal Wilson, K. S. Parmenter, and Desmond Ford.

JACK PROVONSHA (professor of ethics, Loma Linda University): As a physician, I am more concerned with healing than I am with surgery. In 1910, Ellen White advised that graduates of Loma Linda should be fully qualified medical practitioners. This led to the accreditation of Loma Linda, of our colleges that prepare students for Loma Linda, and of our academies that prepare students for our colleges. It led, eventually, to higher education for our ministers and to accreditation of schools in which they are trained. The church has never been quite the same since that fateful statement by the messenger of the Lord in 1910. It has enabled us to fulfil the message of Revelation 14:6-7 more fully than we ever could have otherwise. Except for Ellen White’s insight, our witness would have remained on a more limited level.

As a result of higher education there is, today, a broad spectrum of thought in the church. I believe in the 2,300 days, in the heavenly sanctuary, and in the investigative judgment, but these words have a different content for me than when I was a child. I cannot accept the literalism of my father, but we can all stand

on the shoulders of our fathers. They would not be happy with what I have to say. But at the same time I do believe in continuity with our fathers and with what they believed. The church is like a tree that springs from seed; as one of the branches, I belong to the roots of the tree. I believe in continuity. There are depths yet undreamed of in the sanctuary and the investigative judgment. There is a very real progression in our perception of truth.

(Addressing Elder Wilson, Dr. Provonsha continued:) The other day Des stood on the spot where I am now standing. If you asked me to put my convictions in my pocket, I would have to reply, "I am sorry; I can't do that. My personal integrity is more valuable to me than credentials or church membership. I can't put my integrity in my pocket. But if you asked me not to speak publicly on certain matters, I could put them in my pocket. I will do what I can to overcome tensions." If I sent you a letter in which I gave this assurance, would you accept it in good faith?

WILSON: Yes, I would accept that.

PROVONSHA: The reason for the tension we all feel over this matter is that we have not been meeting together, as we have here at Glacier View. I must agree with most of what Des Ford is saying. (Then, turning to Elder Parmenter, Dr. Provonsha addressed to him the same question to which Elder Wilson had just replied in the affirmative.)

PARMENTER: Your statement should also affirm that you stand loyally by the church. This church is not led by one man; we have committees. I would want you to write out your statement.

WILSON: One further small step is needed, I think. You should add, "I stand by the position of the church; I am committed to it." Dr. Provonsha has given us something very important; Des Ford is a man worth saving.

PARMENTER: I take my stand with Elder Blehm. Des, if you are honest, you will pass in your credentials and do so without being asked.

PROVONSHA (turning to the audience): All of you, would you do that? If you ask people in this room to turn in their credentials, not a few would have to do so on the same basis that Ford is being asked. Integrity is more important than church belief. The real question is, am I a man of integrity? If you brethren can't think more about healing—surely there must be other ways of dealing with this. I could not sell my soul in order to be a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

PARMENTER. Healing must be on a wider basis. Our churches in Australia are severely polarized. Healing must reach further than just one man.

PROVONSHA: This meeting is bigger than Des Ford. We need to find a way of keeping this broad spectrum of thought together; we need something that will keep us together.

JOE BATTISTONE (pastor, Fletcher, North Carolina): It has been a great blessing for me to be here. I am stunned at the thought that a number of my colleagues in the ministry are considering turning in their credentials if Des Ford has to surrender his. I am stunned at the idea of split, polarized churches. If they are polarized, this serious state is not the result of the present crisis, but of something much more basic. We, as ministers, have not been nurturing our churches as we should. That is why the churches react as some are doing today. What you refer to is a symptom of a much greater crisis.

FORD: Some confuse loyalty with not asking questions. I am not committed to all the church has taught, nor are you. None of us believes everything the church has taught down through the years. On that basis, we all ought to be excommunicated.

GEORGE W. BROWN (president, Inter-American Division): Dr. Heppenstall directed your attention to 1844 and the judgment. Ellen White endorses the sanctuary as the foundation of our message. How do you reconcile your rejection of this doctrine with your appeal to Ellen White?

FORD: I believe Ellen White's messages regarding 1844 and the heavenly sanctuary. I believe God gave us the sanctuary message. The problem is with our way of saying it; we need to find a better way.

A. H. TOLHURST (president, Trans-Tasman Union Conference): You have limited access to the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary in the era of ancient Israel, and you imply that Christ has no first apartment ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. How do you reconcile this discrepancy between the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries?

FORD: In the comparison of Hebrews 9, the service in the first apartment of the earthly sanctuary stands for the entire Mosaic era, and that in the most holy place of the ancient earthly sanctuary stands for all of Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary since His ascension.

H. E. DOUGLASS (book editor, Pacific Press Publishing Association): In support of your position, you have repeatedly appealed to the *SDA Bible Commentary* article on "The Role of Israel in Old Testament Prophecy" in volume 4. As I remember, Ray Cottrell, you wrote that article. I would like to ask you how you reconcile Ford's understanding of that article with this sentence in it: "This rule does not apply to those portions of the book of Daniel that the prophet was bidden to 'shut up' and seal,' or to other passages whose application Inspiration may have limited exclusively to our own time" (p. 38).

RAYMOND COTTRELL (retired book editor, Review and Herald Publishing Association, and member of former Daniel Committee): Yes, I wrote that article, but Elder Nichol added the sentence to which you refer, during the editorial process. Ask him. (General laughter.)

LOUIS VENDEN (pastor, Loma Linda University Church): Des, I have profited and benefited from your inquiry. I would like to ask, however, did something change in heaven in 1844?

FORD: In 1844, God set the third's angel's message in motion.

D. P. GULLON (professor, River Plate College): Then there is really no room for 1844 as we have understood it?

FORD: Yes, there is; the church teaching on the sanctuary is not all tentative.

GERARD DAMSTEEGT (pastor, Fairfax, Virginia): We need to distinguish between inaugurated and consummated eschatology.

HAMMILL: The interpretation of Hebrews 9:8's making the earthly first apartment figurative for the entire Mosaic dispensation, and that of the second apartment figurative for the entire ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, seems contrary to the author's intent. On certain key doctrinal issues, you differ from the rest of us. You seem to do away with the intercessory ministry of Christ in the first apartment. Most of the people here would not agree with you. We do not ask you to do something contrary to your conscience, but a minister must be able to win people to the church, to prepare candidates for baptism. Are you clear in your own mind that you could prepare candidates for baptism?

FORD: Certainly.

MILLS: I appreciate Dr. Provonsha's healing message. The sanctuary is not really the main issue, but the gift of prophecy. Dr. Ford, you do not really believe in the Spirit of Prophecy. Ellen White's teaching about the sanctuary is one of our main pillars. How, then, am I to relate to Sister White?

FORD: I am not against Ellen White, but against a misuse of Ellen White. The problem has to do with a person's view of inspiration.

MILLS: How can I know what part of the Spirit of Prophecy is still good today? Can I be selective? In order to accept progressive light, I do not have to reject former light. How can I accept new light if it contradicts former light?

FORD: I am not against the church, nor Ellen White nor this message.

WILSON: Tomorrow morning we will study two statements, one addressed to our people and the other a response to Des Ford's document. Then PREXAD and the Australasian Division will sit down and talk with Des. The church deals honorably and sympathetically with people. It may make mistakes, but it intends to be fair. Des, you have made a contribution to our lives and to the church.

FORD: "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity."

PARMENTER: The Australasian Division will work in close harmony with the General Conference. The patient himself must help in the healing process. I agree with Neal Wilson; we will work closely with the General Conference and accept their advice.

After the reading of the consensus reports from the small study groups on "The Role of Ellen G. White in Doctrinal Matters," discussion continued.

WILSON: There is clear harmony in these reports. It is beautiful.

WALTER R. SCRAGG (president, Northern Europe-West Africa Division): How close the statements are!

HARDINGE: There are no errors in Ellen White's writings. Beware of historians.

HARDER: The church is a living community. This group is an instrument of God's revelation. We should recognize the authority of the church. The church does not control Scripture. The church would not have retained the investigative judgment without Ellen White.

OLSEN: Our joy here reflects the fact that things have not been as they should be. This meeting is a unifying factor, an evidence of the unity of the church. The seven groups have all come to the same conclusions. This is our best understanding at the present time. As a result of setting up creeds, Protestantism stagnated.

#### **Friday Morning: Adopting the Consensus Statement.**

As the close of the conference approached, a drafting and screening committee combined the seven-group consensus reports for all four days into a unified consensus statement for the committee as a whole. The 15-page consensus statement consists of two parts: "Christ in the Heavenly Sanctuary," and "The Role of Ellen G. White's Writings in Doctrinal Matters."<sup>18</sup> All present, including Dr. Ford, found the statement viable, some because it affirmed the traditional interpretation and others because it recognized the problems and need for further study.

Another document, a ten-point critique of Ford's position paper (see pp. 72-75) was read the same morning to the full assembly in "the spirit of love and a desire to heal," and with the intention of being "fair to Dr. Ford, to his position paper, and to the church." The drafting committee of six expressed appreciation for Ford's many years of service to the church, for the example of his personal lifestyle, for his talents as a Bible scholar and for his deep concern for an accurate exposition of the Bible.

Drafted overnight, this document was considered “preliminary” until Dr. Ford and the General Conference could review the accuracy with which it reflected Ford’s position. Elder Wilson explicitly told the delegates that they were not being asked to express their approval or disapproval of the document. In other words, although formulated at Glacier View, it does not reflect the thinking of the Sanctuary Committee, which did not discuss it or to vote on it. After the reading, one of the delegates, Dr. Louis Venden, specifically called the chairman’s attention to the fact that the Sanctuary Committee had not “approved” the critique. Another delegate, Dr. Fritz Guy, professor of theology at the seminary, asked if orthodoxy would be determined by the ten-point critique. Elder Wilson replied that “no, the document would not be used in that way.” Both it and the consensus statement would be considered “working documents.”

Soon after one o’clock, the Sanctuary committee adjourned *sine die*.

#### **Friday Afternoon: General Conference & Australasian Division Leaders Meet with Dr. & Mrs. Ford.**

At four o’clock Friday afternoon, three hours after the Sanctuary Review Committee had concluded its deliberations; Dr. and Mrs. Ford were summoned before an *ad hoc* committee of nine, chaired by the president of the General Conference. Early in the meeting, the president told Dr. Ford about the small committee that had worked on the ten-point critique and showed him a copy of the document to make sure it included accurate summaries of Ford’s main points. The president urged Ford to admit, after reading the critique, that his positions were tentative. After the president’s initial statement that included, according to J. R. Spangler’s account in *Ministry*, a discussion of not only Dr. Ford’s theology, but also his attitude and judgment, other members of the group questioned Ford.<sup>19</sup>

In his responses to the *ad hoc* group, Dr. Ford said that apart from wording on two points, he considered the critique to repeat accurately his positions before it attempted to refute them. He also assured the group that he was “pleased” with the consensus statement and that he could live with it and preach it—not that it was perfect, but that it was far in advance of any previous statement which Adventists had put out.

Later in the meeting, Keith Parmenter read a handwritten draft of a letter to Dr. Ford containing much of what appeared in the subsequently typed letter (see p. 76). The extent to which the handwritten letter was more demanding than the later typewritten version is a matter of some dispute, as is the nature of the discussion that followed the reading of the letter. Spangler and other members of the *ad hoc* committee insist that at no time were Dr. Ford’s credentials called for.

Dr. Ford remembers the handwritten version as being so differently worded from the later version that he was justified in thinking that he was being asked to surrender his personal convictions on the exegesis of Daniel and Hebrews, and on the basis of the ten-point critique to declare publicly that he was in error and ready to change his views. He agrees that he was urged to take time to consider his answer, and that, instead, he said, “You have made it very easy for me, brethren. I cannot do what you ask. We don’t need time to think it over. You may consider this our final answer to your conditions.”

Ford also remembers asking, “Are you asking me to lie?” and Parmenter replying, in substance, “No, we don’t want you to go against your convictions. But if you can’t affirm these requirements, I shouldn’t have to ask you for your credentials—you should be giving them to me.” He further recalls that at the close of the meeting, Elder Parmenter told him and his wife Gill that the Australasian Division would pay their fare back to Australia and that they would receive six months’ severance pay. “There was no doubt in our minds that the decision was final,” the Fords have subsequently said.

While this session was in progress late Friday afternoon, members of the Theological Consultation were arriving for the second Glacier View meeting, which began that evening (see pp. 26-30). The Fords remained at Glacier View until Sunday, August 17, when they returned to Washington, D.C.

## *After Glacier View: Dismissal of Ford.*

While in Washington, the Fords received Elder Parmenter's typed version of his letter. In the letters dated August 26 and September 1 (see pp. 77-78), Dr. Ford replied to Parmenter's letter stating specifically how he could and could not comply with the requirements being made of him.

At the direction of the president of the General Conference, W. Duncan Eva continued to meet with Dr. Ford in an endeavor to find common ground that would make it possible for Ford to retain his credentials and continue to serve the church. The president of the General Conference met with Dr. Ford for more than an hour on the morning of August 22. There appeared to be every indication that the General Conference was attempting to mediate between Dr. Ford and his home Division, and for two or three weeks it seemed that this attempt at mediation would be successful.

The climax came when the President's Executive Advisory Committee (PREXAD) met September 2. Dr. Ford was informed of its decision two days later. PREXAD recommended to the Australasian Division that Dr. Ford be given the opportunity to withdraw voluntarily from the ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. If he chose not to do so, the Australasian Division should relieve him of his responsibilities and withdraw his ministerial credentials. The first reason for this action was PREXAD's judgment that Ford had failed to use clear, concise, unambiguous, unqualified answers in his letters to Elder Parmenter. The second was that the Sanctuary Committee had rejected his arguments and conclusions on the heavenly sanctuary, the investigative judgment and the role of Ellen G. White as insufficient to cause the church to change its distinctive teachings in these areas. Third, Dr. Ford had not accepted the advice of administration, the guiding committee, or the Sanctuary Committee in areas vital to the church, and had failed to sense his responsibility for the divisive effect of his speaking, writings and recordings. Fourth, Dr. Ford had repeatedly declined to disassociate himself openly and specifically from activities considered to be subversive to the wellbeing of the church. This was generally acknowledged to refer to the activities of Robert Brinsmead and his associates.

Two weeks after PREXAD's action, on September 18, the Australasian Division Committee and the Board of Avondale College implemented the recommendation of the General Conference. Meanwhile, on September 10, the Fords had taken up residence in Auburn, California, a small community in the foothills of the Sierras 35 miles northeast of Sacramento, with friends who had offered him employment as chaplain of the Health Education and Research Foundation.

## Evaluation of Glacier View

***The Conference.*** At the opening session of the conference Sunday night, the president of the General Conference said: “It will be our endeavor to be fair and open. . . . Please be honest and say what you think lest people misunderstand. Here in this meeting you will have immunity. . . . The scholars will be partners of ours in reaching decisions here on doctrine.”

How fully and effectively was this assurance of academic freedom implemented, how fully and effectively did the Bible scholars participate, and were they heard? To what extent do the consensus statement and the ten-point critique reflect their contribution to the conference? And even more important, to what extent has their point of view been taken into consideration in subsequent administrative proceedings regarding Dr. Ford?

There was general agreement that all proceedings of the conference, including the small study groups and the full assembly, were conducted in a “free and open” manner. With one exception—the presentation of the ten-point critique Friday morning—there was no indication of any attempt at control. It is also fair to say that the small-group consensus reports to the full assembly each day, and the consensus statement voted at the close of the conference Friday morning, were honest attempts to express the consensus of the groups and the committee as a whole. By no means is this to say that every delegate found the consensus statement an accurate expression of the truth; it is to say that each delegate found his own convictions reflected in it, and voted for it as the best statement that could be expected at the time and under the circumstances.

***A Crucial Difference in Methodology.*** In order to understand theological differences between church administrators and theologians, one must recognize a fundamental difference in their respective methods of interpreting Scripture. Until about 1940, practically all Adventist Bible study relied on what is known as the proof text method. Today, most non-scholars in the church still follow that method, whereas almost all Bible scholars follow the historical method. The *SDA Bible Commentary* in the fifties (1952-57) was the first major Adventist publication to follow the historical method as its guiding principle.

The proof text method of Bible study consists essentially of a study of the Bible in translation (English for instance), of reliance on the analogy of Scripture on the verbal level with little if any attention to context, of giving, at best, inadequate attention to the historical setting of a statement or message and what it meant to the people of its own time, and of permitting subjective preconceptions to control conclusions arrived at deductively.

By contrast, the historical method consists of a study of the Bible in its original languages, of accepting the literary context of every statement and message as normative for its meaning, of determining what the messages of the Bible meant to the various reading audiences to which they were originally addressed, in terms of the intention of the inspired writer and the Holy Spirit, of accepting that original meaning as a guide to an accurate understanding of their import for us today, and of reasoning inductively, arriving at conclusions on the basis of the evidence.

Use of the historical method by the decided majority of our Bible scholars, and of the proof text method by most non-scholars, has been responsible for practically every theological difference of opinion over the past 40 years, including that posed by Ford. The traditional Adventist interpretations of Daniel 8:14 and Hebrews 9 were formulated by the proof text method.<sup>20</sup> Prior to about 1940, a very few Adventists—among them A. F. Ballenger, W. W. Prescott, L. R. Conradi and W. W. Fletcher—had begun to use

some elements of the historical method; it was this that made them aware of some of the problems of exegesis of our traditional interpretation, and precipitated their individual crises.

Let it be clear that Adventist Bible scholars using the historical method all accept the validity of 1844, Christ's day-of-atonement ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, an eschatological "restoration" of the heavenly sanctuary to its "rightful state" (or "vindication"), and a pre-Advent judgment, but they reject the proof text method reasoning on which these tenets of Adventist belief were originally based. Dr. Ford's apotelesmatic principle for interpreting Daniel 8:14 is one of the several<sup>21</sup> that have been proposed in an attempt to build a bridge between a valid historical understanding of these passages, and the objective realities to which the traditional Adventist interpretation points. Before we criticize Ford's proposed solution to the exegetical problems, we have an obligation to offer a better one.

From a hermeneutical point of view, the basic flaw in our thinking at Glacier View lay in assuming the traditional Adventist interpretation of Daniel 8:14 and Hebrews 9 as the norm for measuring Ford's position paper. With this as our norm, it was inevitable that we would find his position defective. But if we had been willing, and able, to let the Bible itself, and the Bible alone, serve as our norm, we would have come to a somewhat different conclusion. The consensus statement sets forth several new and seemingly plausible reasons for retaining our traditional interpretation, but at no point does it face up to even one of the exegetical and hermeneutical problems posed by Ford or make an attempt to deal with it on the basis of "the Bible, and the Bible only, as our rule of faith and doctrine." In the thinking of the majority at Glacier View, Adventist tradition was the norm for interpreting the Bible, rather than the Bible for tradition.

Dr. Leslie Hardinge aptly described this approach when he said to the full assembly Wednesday afternoon, "I search the Bible for evidence that our message is true." This comment elicited a loud chorus of "Amens." In contrast, a majority of the Bible scholars present would have said: "I search the Bible to hear what is it saying, in order that my presentation of our message may be true to the Bible."

A common commitment to the historical method resulted in the majority of the biblical scholars at Glacier View concurring with Ford's identification of the problems of exegesis and interpretation. One attempt to ascertain the views of members of the Sanctuary Committee was the use of polls conducted at the beginning and end of the conference. On a series of items, the questionnaires provided a choice between the traditional interpretation and the position taken by Ford. Many have challenged the value of the results of the poll because of ambiguities in the wording of a number of the questions. However, my personal acquaintance, both at Glacier View and over a period of many years, with the thinking of approximately three-fourths of the Bible scholars present, indicated that four-fifths of this number (24% of the 115 delegates) acknowledge the same problems in interpreting Daniel and Hebrews to which Ford has called attention. That is almost exactly the proportion of the total committee that sided with Ford's positions in the reported tabulation of the final poll taken at Glacier View.<sup>22</sup>

Further corroborating evidence for this is provided by the scholars' speeches reported above. In a typical debate of the full assembly Monday afternoon, 11 of the 15 speeches by scholars supported one aspect or another of Ford's position.

Furthermore, some points of view expressed by the majority of the Bible scholars in the study groups were lost in the group consensus reports, and as a result, in the final consensus statement of the conference as a whole. This was probably not intentional on anyone's part; it was simply that the majority of the Bible scholars constituted a minority of the whole. Here is one illustration of several that could be given—the first item on Monday's agenda:

Could all the Old Testament prophecies have been fulfilled within the time of the covenant with Israel, i.e., by the time of the first advent of Christ?

At least 16 speeches were made Monday morning in Group 2 affirming that all Old Testament prophecies, including those of Daniel, could have been fulfilled not later than the first century of the Christian era, and that Christ and the eschaton envisioned by Daniel could have come at that time. It is significant that this and other majority points of view lost in the process were favorable to Dr. Ford's position. In other words, although the consensus statement does accurately represent a majority consensus of the 115 delegates taken as a whole, it does not fully reflect the extent to which the majority of Bible scholars at Glacier View concur with Ford's identification of problem areas in Daniel and Hebrews.

Why then, did the scholars vote for the consensus document? To them it represented a major step by the church in the direction of an objective consideration of the facts, it cautiously recognized the reality of the problems in our traditional interpretation, and it opened the door for further study of these problems. To the scholars, this document represented the best that could be expected at the present time. On the other hand, if the ten-point critique of Ford's position paper had come to a vote, the majority of the biblical scholars would doubtless have rejected its evaluation of Ford's position.

*The Documents.* Comparison of Ford's position paper, the consensus statement, and the ten-point critique of Ford's paper reflects the significant fact that the consensus statement identifies the same points in our traditional interpretation as less than convincing and in need of further study, as Ford's paper does. For this reason, the very dogmatic ten-point critique of his paper stands in tension with the consensus statement. The consensus statement clearly affirms that there is no doubt in our minds as to what we believe, but tacitly admits that we are not at all certain as to why we believe as we do. It explicitly acknowledges that our supporting evidence lacks a clear exegetical basis on a number of points, and this ambivalence gives rise to an internal tension within the document itself.

Both the consensus statement and the critique emphatically reaffirm the validity of the traditional Adventist interpretations of Daniel 8:14 and Hebrews 9. The consensus statement deals with the substantive issues wholly apart from Dr. Ford's paper, while the critique deals with them specifically in relation to his paper. But there is an implicit dichotomy between the two documents: whereas the consensus statement explicitly recognizes the problem areas in the traditional interpretation as problems, the critique ignores them as problems. In fact, the critique—which was never formally adopted as a consensus of the Sanctuary Committee, condemns Dr. Ford for the very things the consensus statement, which was formally adopted by vote as reflecting the consensus of their thinking, implicitly commends him. In other words, the critique requires him to be positive at the very points at which the consensus statement realizes we cannot be all that positive. This dichotomy implies that we can be reasonably objective when dealing with the issues, but not with the person who brought them to our attention. While the critique censures Dr. Ford for speaking to the church about these problems, the consensus statement acknowledges that there is substance to what he has said and written on the subject. This ambivalence in the Glacier View statements makes evident that the church itself, and not Dr. Ford, is responsible for the persistent ambiguity between what we believe about the sanctuary and why we believe it.

Knowing that he and the majority of Adventist Bible scholars are in substantial agreement with respect to the *exegesis* of these passages, Dr. Ford feels that he cannot conscientiously say that he is wrong in this respect without forfeiting his personal integrity as a Seventh-day Adventist Bible scholar. This is especially true, inasmuch as, the *SDA Bible Commentary*, and now the Glacier View consensus statement,

acknowledge the same exegetical problems he does. His firmness in this area has been construed as intransigent unwillingness to accept the counsel of his administrative brethren, who are not Bible scholars. On the other hand, he has volunteered to abandon his apotelesmatic principle of interpretation if somebody can find a better one.

**Polarization.** In his position paper, Ford emphatically and repeatedly affirms his personal confidence in the sanctuary doctrine and in Ellen White (see pp. 35-36). Addressing the Sanctuary Committee, he reaffirmed this confidence:

I fully believe in 1844 and that God raised up the Seventh-day Adventist church...  
I believe in the year-day principle...  
I believe that God spoke to Ellen White miraculously...  
Of course she has teaching authority...

Only a dedicated Seventh-day Adventist could make statements such as these.

The magnitude of the doctrinal issue and the fact that knowledgeable Adventists around the world are deeply concerned about it, inevitably focuses attention on the person who has become identified with it as a result of his Adventist Forum remarks. Even before that lecture, his years of teaching in Avondale College, his numerous articles and books published by the church, and his participation in the ongoing debate on righteousness by faith, had made him a world figure in Adventist theological circles.

For perhaps ten years, there has been increasing tension in Australia with respect to Dr. Ford, especially regarding righteousness by faith. Hundreds of students who have sat in his classes—many of them now ministers—appreciate his contribution to their lives as an inspiring teacher and spiritual leader. On the other hand, the responses of some veteran ministers to what they consider his innovative theological concepts are emphatically negative. The result today is acute polarization: congregations are divided, a number of younger ministers have threatened to turn in their credentials if he has to surrender his, and all this has confronted church administrators “down under” with a traumatic problem of “tremendous magnitude,” as Elder Parmenter described it to the Sanctuary Committee. Add to this the fact that a greater percentage of Australian Adventists seem to get more deeply involved in theological discussions than do Adventists in other parts of the world.

Long before Dr. Ford became the Avondale exchange professor at Pacific Union College three years ago, polarization was developing—over the past decade—in North America between administrators and the Adventist academic community. Here, as in Australia, Ford has been both widely and appreciatively received as a teacher and speaker, but also opposed by a few theologians and a number of ministers, editors, and administrators, all of whom take a dim view of certain aspects of his theology. Probably none of the Bible scholars and theologians agrees completely with his application of the apotelesmatic principle to Daniel, but they are deeply concerned that he be treated fairly.

The majority of Adventist Bible scholars feel personally involved in the issue because censure of Dr. Ford on the exegetical points inevitably implies censure of them also, inasmuch as they recognize the same exegetical problems, although they differ as to the solution to these problems. Beyond that, any real or apparent miscarriage of justice with respect to one member of the Adventist academic community would inevitably be felt by the community as a whole.

With a charismatic personality, Dr. Ford unintentionally tends to polarize his auditors, many of whom appreciate him as an inspiring spiritual leader, whereas others resent him as if he were an evil genius. His deep convictions tend to antagonize those who differ from his point of view. One factor in this is his intense personal dedication to truth that finds expression in his manner of speaking—his naturally

incisive, dynamic delivery, which those who do not know him well sometimes misconstrue as egocentric histrionics. He does not intend to be as dogmatic as he sometimes appears to be, but he does tend to overemphasize certain points in an endeavor to get them across. There may also be a touch of jealousy on the part of some who lack the luster of his charisma.

***The Academic Community.*** The abrupt and unexpected turn of events of the first week in September 1980 came as a seismic shock to the academic community of the church around the world. Why did the General Conference, which everyone had been thinking of as the attorney for the defense trying to work out a mutually satisfactory solution between Ford and his home division, suddenly appear in court as the prosecuting attorney, demanding a professional death sentence?

The academic community could understand Australia's pressing its charges all the way. In the first place—judging by past events—that would be in character, and in the second place, an extremely traumatic situation has developed in the academic community over Ford. *In extremis*, a physician will sometimes resort to procedures he would not attempt at other times. But why should the General Conference choose to be an accomplice in the deed, instead of letting the brethren “down under” chart their own course—or, better yet, to continue working on other alternatives? This action is particularly inscrutable in view of the following considerations:

The Glacier View consensus statement acknowledged a valid biblical basis for every significant point of exegesis to which Ford had called attention, and that the church must give these points further study.

The consensus statement represented a clear and unquestioned consensus of the entire Sanctuary Committee, and Dr. Ford himself had explicitly accepted that statement. With one or two minor exceptions, he said that he could preach and teach it with conviction.

The ten-point critique, which was specifically used as an indictment of Ford's position, was not produced by the Sanctuary Committee. That committee was explicitly instructed not to debate it or to vote on it, as with the consensus statement. Yet the critique was used as if it did reflect a consensus against Ford.

On the floor at Glacier View, and in his August 26 and September 1 letters to Elder Parmenter, Ford had made clear beyond any quibble that he accepted the counsel of the brethren and that he would remain silent on the issue for as long as they might deem necessary in order to give it study. He had offered to comply with all the requirements imposed upon him, except that of repudiating his conscientious convictions with respect to the problems of exegesis, whose validity the consensus statement recognized.

Ford is by no means alone in these convictions; most of the convictions are either stated or implicit in the *SDA Bible Commentary*, which has been in use for 25 years without challenge; some of the points he had learned at the Theological Seminary. Except for a few relatively minor details, the decided majority of Adventist Bible scholars were in agreement on the point of exegesis.

At Glacier View, the Bible scholars had expressed themselves freely on all of these points, in the study groups and in the full assembly, and in the guarded language of the consensus statement. The ten-point critique did not emerge out of the week-long, painstaking process of consensus building, and was not voted by the Sanctuary Review Committee. Since Glacier View, the Bible scholars have been represented as saying the precise opposite of what they actually did say there—emphatically and repeatedly. Little

wonder that many scholars feel betrayed by being represented as willing accomplices in condemning Ford, and that many of them have drafted letters of protests. All but two members of the department of theology at Southern Missionary College signed a letter to the president of the General Conference asking a series of questions that reflects their dismay at steps to discipline Ford. Thirty-nine signatures appear at the end of an “Open Letter to President Wilson from Concerned Pastors and Scholars at Andrews University Seminary and Graduate School” (see pp. 61-62).

*The Future.* The long-range significance of Glacier View for the church is that, for the first time, a large group of administrators and Bible scholars entered into meaningful dialogue, reached a working consensus on substantive matters reasonably acceptable to both, and agreed to continue the dialogue. The consensus statement not only recognizes certain problems and summons the church to give them further study, but indicates the direction this future study should take. It not only reaffirms the doctrine of the sanctuary as essential truth for our time, but recognizes that this truth has much larger dimensions than we have realized before.

Those larger dimensions came into clear focus Tuesday night in a paper presented by Dr. Fritz Guy of the Theological Seminary (see pp. 44-53). This paper met with instant and enthusiastic approval from all the delegates. It rose serenely above the confusing exegetical problems and focused attention on the ultimate reality to which the sanctuary doctrine points. This focus looks beyond our traditional thesis and its exegetical antithesis, to synthesis on a higher and more mature level of understanding than we have heretofore attained.

Guy’s paper reflects the fact that we have been relying on the day-of-atonement symbols to explain the apocalyptic symbols of Daniel, and that this second set of symbols is not altogether compatible with the first set. We have been engrossed in working out so exegetically precise a correlation between the details of the two sets of symbols—which do not in fact match in all respects as precisely as we would like—that we are in danger of losing sight of the reality to which each set was designed to point. Dr. Guy’s approach is right. To translate one coded message into another code (in this case, to interpret the cryptic apocalyptic symbols of Daniel in terms of the day-of-atonement symbols of Leviticus and Hebrews) still leaves the message encoded; what we need is a translation into the everyday language of the real world. With the sanctuary, that reality is not a structure on earth or even one in heaven, but is what Christ has done for us at Calvary, what He is doing for us now, and what he will yet do for us at His second coming. God gave us these symbols of salvation to point the way to the reality of salvation in Jesus Christ, in anticipation of His Son coming to restore all things to their rightful state.

By their enthusiastic acclaim of Dr. Guy’s paper, the administrators and Bible scholars at Glacier View made evident that they were in full agreement on this ultimate reality to which both sets of symbols point. If we, individually and as a church, can rise above the symbols into the clear sunlight of reality, we, too, will find that unity for which Christ prayed. We have much to lose by measuring one another’s orthodoxy in terms of these symbols of salvation instead of by the ultimate reality to which they point.

By recognizing the inadequacies of our traditional supporting evidence for the sanctuary doctrine at several points, the consensus statement tacitly acknowledges that Dr. Ford had valid exegetical reasons for raising the questions he did. There may be differences of opinion as to the wisdom of the way in which he did so, and there may be reason to censure him for that. But are we consistent, honest, fair, or responsible if we censure him for raising questions whose validity our own consensus statement acknowledges? After all, Dr. Ford did not invent these questions. One person after another has been raising them for 75 years.<sup>23</sup> As a church, we have dealt decisively with the people who did so, one by one, but we have done little or nothing yet by way of providing the church with viable answers to the

questions they asked. We have treated the questioners as if they were troublemakers, and the questions as if they did not exist, except in someone's perverted imagination. It would be difficult to defend this longstanding default on our part as a responsible, Christian way of relating to what we all recognize as a major theological problem. Perhaps we should all censure ourselves for this dereliction of duty: *Mea culpa!*

But this is no time to weep over past mistakes; we now have an opportunity to relate responsibly to the issues that have brought us to this *kairos* in our history. We have no reason to be vindictive—1 Corinthians 13 forbids that—even when there may seem to be due cause. Vindictiveness is a clear denial of the gospel (1 John 3:10).

Wednesday afternoon, Dr. Ford told the Sanctuary Committee, "I have made many mistakes." Doubtless the delegates all agreed, though not all for the same reasons. Dr. Ford might have chosen to leave the church on account of certain ambiguities in our sanctuary doctrine, as others have in the past, but instead he has sought to enter into responsible dialogue with the church concerning them.

Is it ethical, or even in our own interest, to blame a competent physician for an unwelcome diagnosis and for prescribing an unpleasant remedy? Or is it ethical to haul him into court for malpractice when he has sincerely exercised his best professional judgment—even if he may at times make honest mistakes of judgment—as we all do? Those who bring problems to our attention are not enemies, but friends.

Nor is the Australasian Division to be blamed for its justifiable pastoral concern. It is the duty of administrators to be concerned about the health and well-being of the church. For attempting to do what it believed to be its duty, it deserves our understanding, our appreciation, our prayers, and our intelligent support—not our criticism and opposition. Nor are "the brethren" in Washington to be blamed. They did not originate the problem. But when Pacific Union College did not deal with it as a scholarly problem to be solved on campus, but instead passed it to church administrators, they did act responsibly and wisely in working toward a solution that would be right and fair to all concerned. They, too, deserve our understanding, appreciation, prayers, and intelligent support. Our leaders in both Wahroonga and in Washington would be the first to acknowledge that they can, and sometimes do, make mistakes. But so do we all. To acknowledge a mistake, honestly made, inspires confidence and loyalty, and especially so when appropriate remedial measures are taken to redress the wrong done.

For at least 20 years, a decided majority of Adventist Bible scholars have recognized the hermeneutical and exegetical problems in Daniel 8 and Hebrews 9 to which Dr. Ford has recently called attention, but because of neglect on our part to deal realistically and responsibly with these problems, there is, as yet, no consensus concerning a viable solution to them. This is an important part of the unfinished business of the church. Unless we proceed to care for this unfinished business—as the Glacier View consensus statement proposes—our children will have to wrestle with the same problems all over again, and they will blame us and not Dr. Ford for their plight.

Fortunately, we do agree with respect to the ultimate reality to which the sanctuary and its day-of-atonement symbols point—what Christ did for us on the cross, what He is now doing for us in heaven, and what He will yet do for us when He comes again. If our relationship to Him and to one another is as it should be, we will all find a ready entrance through the pearly gates irrespective of how we may understand the symbols of Daniel 8 and the sanctuary. Our salvation depends on how we relate to that ultimate reality and to one another in our endeavor to understand the symbols that point to it, not on the precision with which we are able to exegete and interpret them.

But if we depart from the *agapé* principle of 1 Corinthians 13 and make our particular interpretation of these symbols a shibboleth by which to test one another's integrity, we will all find ourselves quarantined outside the pearly gates—permanently. But if there is room in heaven for a person irrespective of his understanding of the symbols, there should be room for him as a minister of the church here on earth as well—so long as he does not make an issue of his particular views and insist on them as a standard to which he requires other people with equally sincere convictions of their own to conform. And this applies to the rest of us as well as to Dr. Ford.

We all realize that something needed to be done, both with respect to finding a viable solution to the points of exegesis to which Dr. Ford called attention in his forum address at Pacific Union College, and to the situation that resulted from that address. But a decided majority of Dr. Ford's peers in the Adventist community of Bible scholars believe that there was a much better way of resolving both these problems—a way that would not have hurt anyone and that would, at the same time, have preserved the unity of the church for which Christ prayed. The proverbial mills of the gods do not always grind as fast as we impatient mortals might like them to, but they do grind. And if God can be patient with all of us in our mistakes, we can well afford to be patient with one another while we await the solution to which the Holy Spirit will lead, if we do not sabotage His purpose by our petulant impatience.

We believe that God overrules in the affairs of men, and that in His own good time He will restore the present unhappy state of affairs—as well as the sanctuary of Daniel 8:14—to its rightful state. In the meantime, let us use all available stones to build the temple of the Lord, not to slay one another and thereby forfeit the ultimate reality to which the symbols of salvation point. If mistakes have been made by Dr. Ford, by the folk in Wahroonga, Angwin, or Washington, or by any of the rest of us, it is now time to redress these mistakes, to forgive and to forget, and to go forward together to finish the task Christ has entrusted to us.

The one we elected at Dallas to lead the world church opened the final session of the Glacier View conference with the ultimate question: "How do we stay together all over the world?" Dr. Guy's Tuesday night paper offers a viable answer to that question, an answer that can bring us all together and keep us together. The solution to our problem will come when we learn to see through the symbols to the reality they represent. That paper spontaneously unified those present at Glacier View, whatever their opinion about Daniel 8:14, 1844, and the investigative judgment. Is this not tangible evidence of what can happen to the church as a whole if we follow where his paper points the way? In so doing, we will find unity and strength for proclaiming the message God has given us, in a way even the bitterest critics of Adventism cannot successfully assail on biblical grounds. If we follow through with the spirit and the letter of the Glacier View consensus statement and Dr. Guy's paper, we will more convincingly witness to our faith in the soon coming of our Lord, and so hasten the day of His return.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. See, for example, Bert Haloviak, "Pioneers, Pantheists, and Progressives: A. F. Balenger and Divergent Paths to the Sanctuary," a Glacier View document.
2. See Raymond F. Cottrell, "Sanctuary Debate: A Question of Method," *SPECTRUM*, 10 (March 1980), 16.
3. See Cottrell, "A Hermeneutic for Daniel 8:14," a Glacier View document.
4. "Apotelesmatic" is a technical theological term meaning "multiple fulfillments." See also Ford's position paper, pp. 345-47 and 485-89.
5. See *Adventist Review*, 157 (September 4, 1980), 11.
6. Throughout this report of the Glacier View conference, remarks attributed to a speaker (taken from shorthand notes) give the gist of his comments on the point under discussion, in his own words as condensed—*Reader's Digest* style—for presentation here.
7. There were noteworthy increases of the following items, with the percent of increase in the second poll, over the first: the prophecies of Daniel were unconditional (15%), the prophecies of Daniel have a single fulfillment (15%), the year-day principle is supported by Scripture (10%), the Old Testament presents two advents separated by a long span of time (20%), defilement of the sanctuary was by the little horn and the sins of the saints (15%), sacrificial blood in the daily service cleansed from sin but did not transfer sin to the sanctuary (10%), agree strongly with the Statement of Fundamental Beliefs, Section 23, "Christ's Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary" (10%).
8. These statements are based on *Great Controversy*, p. 598; *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 307; *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, pp. 39-40; *Testimonies*, V. 706-707; *Counsels to Teachers*, p. 463; *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 105; *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 112.
9. In addition to Hammill (chairman), the committee consisted of W. R. Leshar (secretary), T. H. Blincoe, J. J. C. Cox, Gerard Damsteegt, W. D. Eva, Fritz Guy, Gerhard Hasel, W. G. Johnsson, Robert Olson, J. R. Spangler, Kenneth Strand, Fred Veltman, and Don Yost.
10. *Adventist Review*, 157 (May 11, 1980), 651 and 649.
11. For example, W. R. Leshar, "Landmark Truth Versus 'Specious Error,'" *Adventist Review*, 157 (March 6, 1980), 4; and "Truth Stands Forever," *Adventist Review*, 157 (March 13, 1980), 6; D. F. Neufeld, "How Adventists Adopted the Sanctuary Doctrine," *Adventist Review*, 157 (January 2, 1980) 14 and (February 28, 1980), 17.
12. See Raymond F. Cottrell, "The Role of Israel in Old Testament Prophecy," *SDA Bible Commentary*, IV, 25-38; "A Hermeneutic for Daniel 8:14," pp. 18, 35-36.
13. The Book of Zechariah implies two advents with a very short span of time between them. See Zechariah 9:9-10, 12:2, 9-11; 13:6-7; 14:1-4. The New Testament applies some of these passages to Christ at His first advent; some apply to what we refer to as the second advent.
14. See Raymond F. Cottrell, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20, 37-38.
15. Cottrell, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-14.
16. Nothing in Daniel implies conditionality. Christ and the New Testament apply Daniel's prophecies to New Testament times. According to Ellen White, God's eternal purpose for the salvation of the world could have been completed with Israel as the chosen people long ago. See *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 499-502, 703-704, 712-714; *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 290.
17. The retired General Conference president was a member of the Sanctuary Committee but under doctor's orders not to attend.

18. Some references made to these two documents since Glacier View are ambiguous. Care should be taken to determine whether the author refers to these two parts of the consensus statement, which were originally distributed as separate documents, or to these two as one document and the other the ten-point critique.

19. In addition to the president, the group included from the General Conference, Ralph Thompson, secretary; Francis Wernick, general vice president; C. E. Bradford, vice president for North America; J. R. Spangler, ministerial association secretary; Charles Hirsch, education departmental director; Duncan Eva, retired general vice president on special assignment to the president; and from the Australasian Division, Keith Parmenter, president; and A. N. Duffy, ministerial association secretary.

20. See Cottrell, "Sanctuary Debate: A Question of Method," SPECTRUM 10 (March 1980), 16.

21. For example, those by E. E. Heppenstall and R. F. Cottrell.

22.

All Old Testament eschatological prophecies were originally to be fulfilled to Israel within the first century of our era. 23%

The prophecies of Daniel were conditional. 23%

Each prophecy of Daniel has more than one fulfillment. 38%

The year-day principle is not supported by Scripture. 10%

Jesus expected to return during the lifetime of His contemporaries. 40%

The Old Testament does not provide for two advents separated by a long span of time. 34%

Application of the 2,300 days of 1844 was a secondary fulfillment. 19%

The heavenly sanctuary was defiled by the little horn, not by the sins of the saints. 19%

Sacrificial blood in the daily services of the sanctuary cleansed the sinner but did not transfer sin to the sanctuary. 36%

The cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary did not begin in 1844. 10%

The concept of an investigative judgment is not supported by Scripture. 10%

In Hebrews 9, the first apartment ministry in the earthly sanctuary is said to be representative of the entire Mosaic dispensation. 18%

The heavenly sanctuary needs no cleansing. 18%

"The hour of his judgment" (Revelation 14:7) refers to the judgment of the wicked only. 18%

In Hebrews 9, the second apartment ministry in the earthly sanctuary represents Jesus' beginning His second apartment ministry at His ascension, not in 1844. 28%

Agree in part ("somewhat") with the statement on Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, in the Dallas Statement of Fundamental Beliefs, No. 23. 18%

Average 22.6%

23. See Ford's position paper, pp. 53-115.

Personal letter to Dr Ford, November 17, 1979

*The Cottrells*

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November 17, 1979

Dear Des,

You couldn't be more right in what you told the Forum two weeks ago, thanks to the tapes you asked Dr. Jennings to send me. They arrived in the mail today, and I spent the early part of the evening listening to them. Thirty years ago some of the retired folk were shooting at me for saying much less (about the battle of Armageddon). A letter from H. W. Lowe notes that some of them have sent tapes back to Neal Wilson with "harsh" comments of which he by no means approves. I admire your courage; keep up the good work.

Four weeks ago I was in Berrien, where the Forum asked me to present the same subject--problems in Daniel and the abortive Daniel Committee. I did so from slides I prepared ten years ago. Essentially you and I said the same thing. I would be hard pressed to find anything in your talk I could disagree with. The Forum also requested me to speak on trends in Adventist theology (a two-hour presentation) and a hermeneutic for Ellen White and the Bible, in which I gave them the same gospel you did. Gordon Hyde has prevented any study or discussion of the subject for ten years now, and we are reaping the results of this conspiratorial silence.

One crop is Walter Rea's mounting evidence about the sources Ellen White used in writing Desire of Ages, some of which you mentioned in your talk. Rea has twenty sources documented now. This summer Bob Olson had Walter Specht and me comparing White and Hanna, and we recently sent in our reports. Last Wednesday at Bob's request I accompanied him for several hours in Walter Rea's home in Arcadia. The three of us were at PUC at the same time and know one another well. Neal Wilson was there then too. At Harold Calkins' request, Specht and I met with the workers of the Southern California Conference two months ago, on the same subject. Rea is creating quite a stir in these parts, among people who have an artificial concept of inspiration, especially that of EGW.

I forgot to mention that my Berrien trip was occasioned by a paper Dr. Schwarz asked me to present at their sesquicentennial celebration of J. N. Andrews' birth, one of a dozen or so papers. My assigned topic was JNA, theologian and exegete.

Thanks for the tapes, via Dr. Jennings. Be of good courage as you fight the good fight of faith.

Always,

