

stepped on board just as the contraption is beginning to disintegrate.

Ultimately a major criterion in deciding what hermeneutic should be followed lies in its fruits. Does our hermeneutic lead to a Christ-centered experience in which the Word testifies of Him? Does it produce a clearer grasp of what the Word actually says? Does it produce a clear definition of the will of God? Does it point up the abysmal lostness of humanity and the magnitude of God's rescue, as well as a grander global understanding of His sovereignty over all? Does it build a strong sense of mission and desire for unity in the church, firing up zeal for outreach to our neighbors? Does it lead to numerical and spiritual growth of the family of God and provide practical strength in meeting temptation? Does it lead to a resolve to be prepared for Jesus' early return in the clouds of heaven? Only such a hermeneutic carries the marks of being genuinely Adventist and will provide the framework for a growing understanding of God's will.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST DOCTRINES AND PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

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Progressive revelation has played an important role in the development of the Seventh-day Adventist church and its theology. By "progressive revelation" I mean God's continuous unfolding of prior revealed truth.¹ Without such progressive revelation, the unfolding of inspired truth building on truth previously revealed and never denying it, the Seventh-day Adventist Church would not exist.

Throughout their history Seventh-day Adventists have looked forward to discovering or receiving additional truth that would harmonize with prior truth. Ellen G. White, one of the principal founders of our church, kept this hope alive with statements such as: "Truth is an advancing truth"² and, "There are mines of truth yet to be discovered by the earnest seeker."³

In speaking of "truth" she always meant truth as given by God in His divine Word.

The preamble to the 1980 statement of Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists reflects this attitude:

Seventh-day Adventists accept the Bible as their only creed and hold certain fundamental beliefs to be the teachings of the Holy Scriptures. These beliefs, as set forth here, constitute the church's

understanding and expression of the teaching of Scripture. Revision of these statements may be expected at a General Conference session when the church is led by the Holy Spirit to a fuller understanding of Bible truth or finds better language in which to express the teachings of God's Holy Word.⁴

This article looks at some trends among Seventh-day Adventists, having to do with the operation of progressive revelation.

Some Current Trends

Historically, Seventh-day Adventists have viewed new light as something positive, a continuation or unfolding of previous revelation.

At times, however, some members have been skeptical of progressive revelation out of fear that it would destroy the foundations of Adventism. Such a fear was displayed at the 1888 Minneapolis General Conference and during its aftermath. Ellen G. White responded frequently with appeals for openness to further understanding.

Today some members feel a need for significant changes in methods of Biblical interpretation and doctrine, and a transformation of the understanding of the Adventist experience. Among the underlying assumptions for their thinking is that our doctrines are not based simply on the Scriptures but rather they represent our church's understanding of what the Bible teaches at a particular time and place. They claim that our doctrines reflect the specific culture in which our community operated at the time of its formation. Consequently, the time has come they say, for indigenized theologies such as an African Adventist theology, an Asian Adventist theology, and a European Adventist theology.

The role of doctrine in the community of believers is both to safeguard the faith once delivered and to communicate the community's religious experience. At the first formulation of doctrines these two dimensions are integrated into the lives

of the believers. Doctrine clearly reflects harmony with the religious experience of the pioneers.

After the passing of the founders, a second, third, and fourth generation come onto the scene who, living in a changing society with different challenges and having a different religious experience, can still affirm the truth in one way or another but may feel it has lost its relevance. Thus there arises a call for change in doctrinal formulation, for a "present truth" adapted to current times and places.

The view just presented gives the impression that doctrines are open-ended, that they are molded by the interaction of the community of believers in its socio-cultural settings with the Scriptural testimony as understood in those settings, that whatever the community later decides on is acceptable as progressive revelation. But this view is not necessarily correct.

Doctrinal Developments

Analysis of the doctrinal statements of the Seventh-day Adventist church over the years is revealing. The early statements of 1872 and 1889 show clearly the impact of the 1844 experience on the Adventist pioneers. They thus demonstrate an integration of belief and religious experience.

The 1872 statement consists of 25 articles. These articles include the main truths of traditional Christendom, such as the doctrines of God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Scriptures, baptism, and the new birth, but clearly call attention to the distinctive doctrines that came as the result of proper progressive revelation and that contributed to the founding of the Seventh-day Adventist church.

The 1872 formulation of Adventist doctrines gave an explanation of the nature and historical fulfillment of prophecy, revealing that the mistake of Adventists in 1844 was not related to the prophetic time calculations but to the nature of prophesied events. Christ began the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary as the antitype of the Day of Atonement

in 1844 as Scripture taught. They call the period since 1844 a time of investigative judgment, during which the blotting out of sins takes place for the righteous dead as well as the righteous living. Since the 1840's God has sent a proclamation symbolized by the three messengers of Revelation 14 that magnifies the law of God and its role in preparing people for the second advent of Jesus Christ.

In 1889 three additional articles were provided, concerning Christian conduct, modesty of dress, and tithing and freewill offerings—bringing the number of articles to 28.

In 1980 a thorough revision and rewriting of the Fundamental Beliefs was undertaken in which the articles were arranged more or less in categories of systematic theology: the Doctrine of God (1-5), the Doctrine of Man (6-7), the Doctrine of Salvation (8-10), the Doctrine of the Church (11-17), the Doctrine of the Christian Life (18-22), and the Doctrine of Last Things (23-27).

This new arrangement undoubtedly has advantages for comparing Seventh-day Adventist beliefs with those of other churches. However, in the process the Seventh-day Adventist distinctive doctrines lost some of their distinctiveness, because of the usage or superimposition of categories taken from the discipline of systematic theology.

Will people who join the Adventist Church exclusively on the basis of a limited exposure to the 1980 Fundamental Beliefs have a different religious experience and doctrinal view than earlier Adventist believers? This may indeed be so, because the belief system and faith experience are not as integrated as was the case for earlier believers and can lead to an attitude that some doctrines are irrelevant or outdated. On the other hand, those persons who have been exposed to the structure of doctrines in categories of systematic theology as set forth in the book *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* (1988) may develop a greater understanding of them than those who do not have such an opportunity.

Some Adventists have attempted a rewriting of the Fun-

damental Beliefs in the context of Christ and the cross. Others have called for doctrinal changes in order to increase the relevance of our beliefs to the religious experience of the present generation—even though it was as recent as 1980 that the current rewriting was undertaken and voted at the General Conference session held in Dallas. For the very purpose of updating them and bringing them together into a more relevant and harmonious unity.

What direction should the Adventist Church take to make its beliefs more relevant to its members as well as to the Christian community and the world at large? It seems that no matter how carefully one tries to rewrite the doctrines, or change their sequence and or categories, there will continue to be a demand for change, additions, and eliminations.

How to Understand Seventh-day Adventist Doctrines

In conversations between the World Council of Churches (WCC) and representatives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Dr. Paul Schwarzenau, the WCC representative, made a significant observation. He said,

Prior to and underlying every particular church doctrine, however objectively it may be based on biblical exegesis and theological argument, are experiences of faith which have left an indelible mark on that doctrine and are the source which consciously or unconsciously determines the questions, inquiries and teachings of the church in question. The living resonance of the Protestant, "Scripture principle" rests on the fact that Luther had earlier experienced in the depths of despair the converting power of the Gospel (his so-called "tower experience"). And it is very much to the point that Adventist doctrine is rooted in and derives strength from an event which Adventists later referred to as "the great disappointment" (October 22, 1844).⁵

Schwarzenau concluded that "the full truth of a church's doctrine is therefore not yet grasped so long as, in its details or as a whole, we see it in isolation from such events and as mere doctrine."⁶

Anyone who wants to understand the soul and genius of

the Advent movement and wishes to perceive the full truth and continual relevance of its beliefs will never succeed as long as the current fundamental beliefs are studied in isolation from the action of God in the 1844 Advent experience.

The 1844 Advent experience "opened to view a complete system of truth, connected and harmonious, showing that God's hand had directed the great Advent movement and revealing present duty as it brought to light the position and work of His people."⁷

It was a progressive revelation that illuminated the past, present, and future of God's loyal remnant people.

Many arguments used by those who seem to be dissatisfied with the relevance of doctrinal formulation have to do with a failure to see Adventist theology in the context of God's opening providence at the time of the origin and rise of the Advent movement. The need to participate mentally in the 1844 Advent experience is one of the most crucial challenges for every Seventh-day Adventist and those desiring to understand the movement.

Emphasizing the crucial significance of understanding the past Adventist experience, Ellen G. White stated: "As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history."⁸

She considers it of sacred importance for ministers and people to recapture God's providence in this original Advent experience. A revival of this experience is indispensable to the relevancy of the church's doctrines for believers and its proclamation to the world. She challenged believers "to revive and recount the truths that have come to seem of little value to those who do not know by personal experience of the power and brightness that accompanied them when they were first seen and understood. In all their original freshness and power these truths are to be given to the world."⁹

Yet as vital as this experience is, Ellen G. White called on

believers to search for additional light, because God is more than willing to bestow additional light that harmonizes with previous light.

The questions now to be explored are: In what way should we expect progressive revelation to affect Adventist doctrines? What new doctrinal developments can we expect in the near future? Will some doctrines be replaced by others? How does new light change doctrine and the interpretation of Scripture? Is appropriate change to be determined by majority opinion? But before coming to these questions let us examine briefly the principles under which proper progressive revelation operates.

Operating Principles of Progressive Revelation

Ellen G. White's comments have been quite influential. Many believers have quoted her views, especially those who have advocated a need for a change in doctrinal formulation. It is, therefore, most appropriate to analyze her views on advanced or new light.

A. Nature and relevance of advanced light. The light of truth advances constantly (Prov 4:18). Ellen White wrote that "we shall never reach a period when there is no increased light for us."¹⁰

"In every age there is a new development of truth, a message of God to the people of that generation."¹¹

This further development of truth and the new light, also designated as present truth, "is a test to the people of this generation"—who are accountable for truth that past generations were not accountable for.¹²

B. Its true source. God is the source of advanced truth. "If God has any new light to communicate, He will let His chosen and beloved understand it, without their going to have their minds enlightened by hearing those who are in darkness and error."¹³

C. Particular areas of advancement. The areas of advancement are associated in a special way with the practical dimen-

sions of Christian life. They touch upon matters necessary for the perfection of the faith and of the faithful.¹⁴

New light is intended to lead God's people "onward and upward to purity and holiness."¹⁵

One particular area of potential advancement is light on the character of God. Ellen G. White wrote, "It is our privilege to reach higher and still higher for clearer revealings of the character of God."¹⁶

And because Christ is the key to our understanding of God, it is vital for us to wrestle with truth "as it is in Jesus." We must bring "Jesus before the churches and before the world."¹⁷

Truth in Christ and through Christ is measureless. The student of Scriptures looks, as it were, into a fountain that deepens and broadens as he gazes into its depths. Not in this life shall we comprehend the mystery of God's love in giving His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. The work of our Redeemer on this earth is and ever will be a subject that will put to the stretch our highest imagination. . . . The most diligent seeker will see before him a boundless, shoreless sea.¹⁸

Another special area for advancing light is Christ's righteousness.¹⁹

It is God's desire that finally "one interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up every other,—Christ our righteousness."²⁰

When this one interest does prevail, the brilliance of God's final message of mercy will illuminate the entire world. (See Rev 18:1.)

Additional light is to be expected also on final events,²¹ the book of Revelation²² and the antitypical significance of the Jewish economy.²³

D. Conditions for Reception. The prerequisites for the bestowal of new light mentioned by Ellen White generally focus on individual spirituality. They involve diligent and prayerful study of the Bible,²⁴

living a righteous life,²⁵

growing in grace,²⁶

having a vital connection with Christ,²⁷

walking obediently in present light,²⁸

purging sin from the life,²⁹

having an attitude of humility,³⁰

following the light of health reform,³¹

accepting and applying the old truths,³²

accepting the Spirit of Prophecy,³³

being chosen and illuminated by the Holy Spirit,³⁴

and advancing in proportion to the light.³⁵

E. Harmony with previous revelation. Ellen G. White stressed a close relationship between old truth and new truth:

1. **NEW PERSPECTIVES OF OLD TRUTH.** The long established truths of redemption continue to offer new perspectives, "though old, they are ever new, constantly revealing to the seeker for truth a greater glory and a mightier power."³⁶

2. **AN UNFOLDING OF THE OLD.** "The old truths are all essential;" "new truth is not independent of the old, but an unfolding of it. . . . It is the light which shines in the fresh unfolding of truth that glorifies the old. He who rejects or neglects the old does not really possess the old. For him it loses its vital power and becomes but a lifeless form."³⁷

3. **IN HARMONY WITH THE FOUNDATIONS OF ADVENTISM.** New truth always will be in harmony with previous truth and will not divert the attention from Christ or the special Seventh-day Adventist mission.³⁸

Progressive revelation understood in the proper sense in no way diminishes the relevancy of the truths upon which the Seventh-day Adventist church was founded. Ellen G. White cautioned: "Let not any man enter upon the work of tearing down the foundation of truth that has made us what we are."³⁹

"Not one pillar of our faith is to be removed. Not one line of truth is to be replaced by new fanciful theories."⁴⁰

The truth for this time, God has given us as a foundation for our faith. He Himself has taught us what is truth. One will arise and still another, with new light which contradicts the light that God has given under the demonstration of His Holy Spirit. . . . We are not to receive the words of those who come with a message that contradicts the special points of our faith. They gather together a mass of Scripture, and pile it as proof around their asserted theories. . . . And while the Scriptures are God's word, and to be respected, the application of them, if such application moves one pillar from the foundation that God has sustained these fifty years, is a great mistake.⁴¹

4. IN HARMONY WITH THE LANDMARKS. Ellen G. White strongly defended the theological landmarks of Adventism that were discovered around the time of 1844. "Those who seek to remove the old landmarks are not holding fast," she said. "They are seeking to bring in uncertainties as to set the people of God adrift without an anchor."⁴²

In 1889 she defined the landmarks as follows:

The passing of the time in 1844 was a period of great events, opening to our astonished eyes the cleansing of the sanctuary transpiring in heaven, and having decided relation to God's people upon the earth, [also] the first and second angel's messages and the third, unfurling the banner on which was inscribed, "The Commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." One of the landmarks under this message was the temple of God, seen by His truth-loving people in heaven, and the ark containing the law of God. The light of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment flashed its strong rays in the pathway of the transgressors of God's law. The nonimmortality of the wicked is an old landmark. I can call to mind nothing more that can come under the head of the old landmarks.⁴³

5. IN HARMONY WITH THE HISTORICIST HERMENEUTIC. Seventh-day Adventists interpret Scripture in a way similar to that of the Reformers and William Miller. Ellen White had a high regard for Miller's rules of interpretation, five of which she especially recommended.⁴⁴

Miller's rules were part of the historicist method of prophetic and Biblical interpretation.

The Acceptance of Progressive Revelation by the Church

Great care must be taken in the introduction of purportedly "new light."

A. Attitudes towards new light: Ellen White called for an openness to new light and strongly opposed the attitude that we have all the truth for our time.⁴⁵

New light is not a private affair, for no one should claim that he or she has all the light.⁴⁶

The investigation of new ideas is important. She stated:

Our brethren should be willing to investigate in a candid way every point of controversy. If a brother is teaching error, those who are in responsible positions ought to know it; and if he is teaching truth, they ought to take their stand at his side. We should all know what is being taught among us; for if it is truth, we need it. We are all under the obligation to God to know what He sends us.⁴⁷

Ellen White illustrated the correct attitude toward new Scriptural insight with her personal experience in 1844.

In 1844, when anything came to our attention that we did not understand, we kneeled down and asked God to help us take the right position; and then we were able to come to a right understanding and see eye to eye. There was no dissension, no enmity, no evil-surmising, no misjudging of our brethren.⁴⁸

B. Procedure for discussing new light: The way in which new light should be discussed is crucial. The Bible must be studied "with fasting and earnest prayer before God."⁴⁹

The Bible is the norm for the evaluation of any new point. It is the "standard for every doctrine and practice. . . . It is the word of the living God that is to decide all controversies. . . . God's Word is our foundation of all doctrine."⁵⁰

The baptism of Holy Spirit is indispensable for the elimination of the spirit of prejudice. "When the Spirit of God rests upon you there will be no feeling of envy or jealousy in examining another's position; there will be no spirit of accusation and criticism, such as Satan inspired in the hearts of the Jewish leaders against Christ."⁵¹

C. Tests of new light: The following tests are recommended to determine the genuineness of new light:

1. IS IT CHRIST-CENTERED? Ellen White recommended a simple test to determine new light: "Does this light and knowledge that I have found, and which places me at variance with my brethren, draw me more closely to Christ? Does it make my Saviour more precious to me and make my character more closely resemble His?"⁵²

2. TO THE LAW AND THE TESTIMONY. God "has given direction by which we may test every doctrine,—'To the law and to the testimony if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them' [Isa. 8:20]. If the light presented meets this test, we are not to refuse to accept it because it does not agree with our ideas."⁵³

3. DOES IT PRODUCE FRUITS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS? The most convincing testimony that we can bear to others that we have the truth is the spirit which attends the advocacy of that truth. If it sanctifies the heart of the receiver, if it makes him gentle, kind, forbearing, true and Christlike, then he will give some evidence of the fact that he has the genuine truth. But if he acts as did the Jews when their opinions and ideas were crossed, then we certainly cannot perceive such testimony, for it does not produce the fruits of righteousness.⁵⁴

Implications for Adventist Doctrines

From the above discussion of the way progressive revelation operates it is clear that the doctrines Adventists hold are not open-ended or in a state of flux, ready to be changed at any time. We shall briefly list some implications of progressive revelation.

A. The impact on current doctrine. New light will not manifest itself in a form that is altogether different from the light the church already possesses. It will take the form of a further advancement of present truth. It is a fuller, clearer, and brighter unfolding of the old truth. There will be harmony with the theological landmarks, the Spirit of Prophecy, and

historicist principles of Bible interpretation. Thus it will not replace, substitute, radically change, or tear down the foundations of Adventist faith and practice.

B. Expected new doctrinal developments. Further developments can be expected, particularly in the areas of presenting the truth "as it is in Jesus." All teachings should be viewed in the light of Christ our Righteousness. Christ our Redeemer is "the center of all our faith and hope."⁵⁵

The "sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster."⁵⁶

C. Conditions for changes. All changes, whether in doctrinal positions or elsewhere, are controlled by the careful application of the revealed guidelines for the reception of new light.

First and foremost, the spirituality of those calling for change and claiming new light need to be examined. This is vital because God reveals new light only to those who diligently and prayerfully study the Scriptures, who live righteous lives, are growing in grace, and have a living connection with Christ. They have purified sin from the life, and attempt to walk obediently in the present light. They live in harmony with and support the full messages of the Spirit of Prophecy and are advancing in proportion to the light already given.

Suggestions for doctrinal change should be investigated, not simply by administrators, but by brethren of experience, who are diligent Bible students. The investigation should be done with fasting and prayer, calling upon God for a baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Personal investigation is crucial. No one is infallible. No one should rely on the views of others. The Bible must be the norm by which any light is to be investigated and tested.

Every one should be clear on what the old landmarks are and support them. All prejudice should be eliminated so that everyone involved approaches the investigation with an open mind.

Finally, the tests for new light must be applied: Is it in

harmony with the law and the testimony, the Bible in its entirety? Does it support the Spirit of Prophecy, or is it in disharmony with it? Does the change produce a greater Christ-centeredness? Will it bring fruits of righteousness based on the foundation of the Bible as the Word of God?

During the investigation there should be ample time given to the study of the Scriptures in all its aspects. Nothing can be rushed. Nothing can be decided by a majority vote. When the procedures outlined above are followed, God will not leave His church in doubt about what direction it should take. When God is leading His people into further truth, the study of the Scriptures, together with prayer and fasting, will lead the body of believers as a whole to a general consensus just as He did in 1844 at the time of the Great Disappointment and its aftermath.

D. Change by majority vote. When the church follows proper guidelines for the evaluation of new light it can expect unity of faith and practice. If the body of the church, i.e., the General Conference in session, has taken an action on a point, then it is best for believers to let an issue rest for awhile, because further agitation at the time has the potential to divide and destroy the unity of the church. Majority votes by groups or committees are not the way to decide on Bible truth and doctrinal change.

During the Reformation the majority of Christians continued to follow the traditions of an apostate Christianity. The Reformers were a minority who dared to challenge the apostasy in Christendom with the Bible as the final norm of faith and practice.

It happened the same way during the nineteenth century second advent movement that had a great impact on many Christian denominations. Yet it was only a remnant of these churches that decided to submit themselves to the full teachings of the Bible. That remnant separated itself from other ecclesiastical organizations which placed creedal statements and man-made traditions above the Word of God.

These experiences in the history of the Christian Church are a lesson for us today. It is possible that, as in the past, a part of God's people will gradually slip into apostasy, give up their respect for the Bible as the final authority for all faith and behavior, and depart from Bible doctrines and practices.

When this takes place, a remnant, inspired by Scripture and the Testimony of Jesus, will continue to call upon God's people to return to the Word of God. Their mission will be successful in spite of heavy losses. The firm assurance is given that at the very end of time

God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority—not one or all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain "Thus saith the Lord" in its support.⁵⁷

Endnotes

- 1 For a critical discussion of contemporary usages of the concept of "progressive revelation," see Gerhard F. Hasel's essay, "The Totality of Scripture," in this issue.
- 2 Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 33.
- 3 Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:204.
- 4 *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, 1986 ed., p. 23.
- 5 Paul Schwarzenau, *So Much in Common* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1972), p. 106.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 107.
- 7 Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 423.
- 8 Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches*, p. 196.
- 9 Ellen G. White, *Diary*, Jan. 31, 1890; *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 2:574.
- 10 Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, 1:404; White, *Testimonies*, 5:650.
- 11 White, *Object Lesson*, pp. 127, 128.
- 12 White, *Testimonies*, 2:693. Cf. Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, pp. 42, 43.
- 13 White, *Early Writings*, p. 124.
- 14 Cf. White, *Writers and Editors*, p. 48.
- 15 White, *Testimonies*, 5:534.
- 16 Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 464.
- 17 Ellen G. White, *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 259.
- 18 White, *Object Lessons*, pp. 128, 129.
- 19 Ellen G. White, MS 9, 1890; *1888 Materials*, 2:537.

- 20 White, *Sons and Daughters*, p. 259.
- 21 White, *Testimonies*, 2:692, 693.
- 22 White, *Object Lessons*, p. 133.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 27; White, *Sons and Daughters*, p. 259; White, *Writers and Editors*, p. 35.
- 25 White, *Writers and Editors*, pp. 34, 35.
- 26 White, *Testimonies*, 5:706.
- 27 White, *Editors*, p. 35; White, *Object Lessons*, pp. 130, 131.
- 28 Ellen G. White, *My Life Today*, p. 310; cf. White, *Testimonies*, 2:67.
- 29 White, *Ministry of Healing*, pp. 464, 465.
- 30 Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, "Be Zealous and Repent," Dec. 23, 1890.
- 31 White, *Testimonies*, 2:67, 70.
- 32 White, *Object Lessons*, p. 127; White, *Testimonies*, 5:369.
- 33 White, *Life Sketches*, pp. 198-200.
- 34 Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 297; White, "Be Zealous."
- 35 White, *Testimonies*, 5:534.
- 36 White, *Object Lessons*, p. 127; cf. *ibid.*, p. 130.
- 37 *Ibid.*, pp. 127, 128.
- 38 White, *Writers and Editors*, p. 49.
- 39 Ellen G. White, MS 62, 1905, p. 5.
- 40 Ellen G. White, *Medical Ministry*, p. 96.
- 41 White, *Writers and Editors*, p. 32; cf. White, *Selected Messages*, 2:115; Ellen G. White, MS 62, 1905, p. 5.
- 42 White, MS 62, 1905, p. 5.
- 43 Ellen G. White, MS 13, 1889, p. 3., *1888 Materials*, 2:518.
- 44 Ellen G. White, "Notes of Travel," *Review and Herald*, Nov. 25, 1884.
- 45 White, *Writers and Editors*, p. 33.
- 46 White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 107; White, *Great Controversy*, p. 343. For Biblical support she referred to Job 11:7; Isa 55:8, 9; 46:9, 10.
- 47 White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 301.
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 302.
- 49 Ellen G. White, MS 13, 1889, *1888 Materials*, 2:517; Ellen G. White, "How to Meet Controverted Points of Doctrine," *Review and Herald*, Feb. 18, 1890; *1888 Materials*, 2:534.
- 50 Ellen G. White, Letter, Aug. 5, 1888.
- 51 *Review and Herald*, Feb. 18, 1890; Ellen G. White, MS 2, 1890; Ellen G. White, "Open the Heart to Light," *Review and Herald*, March 25, 1890; Ellen G. White, Letter, Jan. 7, 1890.
- 52 White, *Testimonies*, 3:444.
- 53 White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 301.
- 54 Ellen G. White, Letter, March 13, 1890.
- 55 Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 172.
- 56 *Ibid.*, p. 190.
- 57 White, *Great Controversy*, p. 595.

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IN CONFIRMATION OF THE SANCTUARY MESSAGE

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For the Seventh-day Adventist pioneers, "the subject of the sanctuary was the key which unlocked the mystery of the disappointment of 1844. It opened to view a complete system of truth, connected and harmonious, showing that God's hand had directed the great advent movement and revealing present duty as it brought to light the position and work of His people."¹ In 1906 Ellen G. White affirmed that "the correct understanding of the ministration in the heavenly sanctuary is the foundation of our faith."² For a century and a half the doctrine of the sanctuary has continued to lie at the foundation of Adventist theology and mission and has remained the most distinctive contribution of Adventism to Christian thought.³

The unique Seventh-day Adventist understanding of the sanctuary has frequently proven to be a storm center for disagreement and criticism both within and without the Adventist church.⁴ Because in the decade of the 1980s considerable agitation once again surrounded this basic tenet of faith, Adventists have been constrained anew to rigorously test the soundness of their sanctuary teaching against the standard of God's Word.

The past ten years have brought agonizing doubts for many; for some it has meant rejection of the historic Adventist