

THE BRANCH WRITINGS

**SEVEN LETTERS TO THE GENERAL
CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS**



SEVEN LETTERS
TO
ELDER R. R. FIGUHR

AND
THE GENERAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
OF
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

by
BEN L. RODEN

"Doth our law judge any man, before
it hear him, and knoweth what he
doeth?" -John 7:51.

The seven letters reproduced herein have been copied from the original, with only slight alteration. Some references only alluded to have been quoted in full. Some explanation has also been added to the original text. An appeal has also been added to Letter No. 6 for time to be given by the present President and General Conference to hear the proofs of the material contained herein.

September 27, 1956

President R. R. Figuhr and
General Conference Committee of Seventh-day Adventists
Takoma Park, Washington, D. C.

Dear Brethren:

Every alert Seventh-day Adventist knows and realizes it cannot be long until the return of our dear Savior. Yes, I know people say William Miller thought that Jesus was coming in 1844; and Sister White wrote seventy or eighty years ago (ninety or one hundred now) as though His coming was very near. You brethren, I am sure, remember fifteen years ago (thirty-five years now) that most Adventist sermons were built around the imminent return of Christ in the clouds. Of late, by far the largest majority of the sermons we hear on Sabbath are of a different nature.

What do you suppose has brought about this new trend of thinking? Do you suppose that we feel conscious that His coming is near, and do not stop to think but that all our dear Adventist people are as conscious of the glorious event as we? Therefore, we turn our thoughts and energies to other things that we feel have to be accomplished before He can return.

Surely you do not suppose we have drifted into the condition that Jesus spoke of while on this earth!

"Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8, last part.

Do we as a people find ourselves, as Sister White saw some of His people, not recognizing their condition and failing to hear the warning in the following statement:

"What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.' 'Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping.' The Lord intimates a delay before the morning finally dawns. But He would not have them give way to weariness, nor relax their earnest watchfulness, because the morning does not open upon them as soon as they expected. The waiting ones were represented to me as looking upward. They were encouraging one another by repeating these words: 'The **first and second** watches are **past. We are in the third watch**, waiting and watching for the Master's return. There remains but a little period of watching now.' I saw some becoming weary; their eyes were directed downward, and they were engrossed with earthly things, and were unfaithful in watching. They were saying: 'In the first watch we expected our Master, but were disappointed. We thought **surely** He would come in the **second watch**, but that passed, and He came not. We **may be again disappointed**. We need not be so particular. He may not come in the following watch. **We are in the third watch**, and now we think it best to lay up our treasure on the earth, that we may be secure against want.' Many were sleeping stupefied with the cares of this life and

allured by the deceitfulness of riches from their waiting, watching position." - *Testimonies, Vol. 2, p. 192.*

"Angels were represented to me as looking on with intense interest to mark the appearance of the weary yet faithful watchers, lest they be too sorely tried, and sink under the toil and hardships made doubly severe because their brethren had been diverted from their watch, and become drunk with worldly cares and beguiled by worldly prosperity. These heavenly angels grieved that those who were once watching should, by their indolence and unfaithfulness, increase the trial and burdens of those who were earnestly and perseveringly endeavoring to maintain their waiting, watching position." -- *Ibid., pp. 192, 193.*

God forbid that any of His people fail to watch and ever be looking upward and let the day come upon them as a thief! I am certain that when we understand fully what Sister White meant when she wrote, "We are in the third watch," it will stir our hearts to prepare for that glorious event as never before.

Let it never be said of any of His dear Advent people, that they persecuted their brethren that are faithfully watching that they "sink under the toil and hardships made doubly severe because their brethren had been diverted from their watch, and became drunk with worldly cares and beguiled by worldly prosperity." - *Ibid., p. 193.* God forbid that we as a people should fail to recognize the possibility of our falling into the condition spoken of here in the Testimonies; that we fail to show our love to our brother, and thereby fall under the same condemnation as did the Jews in Christ's day!

We all know as a people, because we have studied our Bibles, that before Jesus comes we must all be judged as were the Israelites in the Day of Atonement and that Jesus as our High Priest will make atonement for us in the Heavenly Sanctuary. We all know this to be a fact whether we have thought of it or not, for John wrote nearly two thousand years ago:

"And I saw **another** angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of water." Rev. 14:6, 7.

Peter also prophesied: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" 1 Pet. 4:17.

Since all Seventh-day Adventists understand that the angel of Revelation 14:6 represents the First Angel's Message brought by William Miller and since John wrote, "I saw another angel," shows that there was another warning of "the hour of His judgment is come" to be given, which would necessarily be that of the Judgment of the Living.

Malachi forcibly set forth: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even

the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. 3:1.

Sister White wrote much concerning the Atonement in its application to the living, though her message was declaring the Atonement for the dead.

"Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. For many years this work has been in progress. **Soon - none know how soon** - it will pass to the cases of the living. In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review. At this time above all others it behooves every soul to heed the Saviour's admonition: 'Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.' Mark 13:33. 'If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.' Revelation 3:3." -*The Great Controversy*, p. 490.

"When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death." - *Ibid.*

"Every individual has a soul to save or lose. Each has a case pending at the bar of God. Each must meet the great Judge face to face." - *Ibid.*, p. 488.

"The work of the investigative judgment and the blotting out of sins is to be accomplished before the second advent of the Lord. Since the dead are to be judged out of the things written in the books, it is impossible that the sins of men should be blotted out until after the judgment at which their cases are to be investigated. But the apostle Peter distinctly states that the sins of believers will be blotted out 'when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ.' Acts 3:19,20. When the investigative judgment closes, Christ will come, and His reward will be with Him to give to every man as his work shall be." -*Ibid.*, p. 485.

These statements from the pen of Mrs. E. G. White and the Bible prove to us beyond any slightest doubt that the Lord is going to investigate the case of each and every professed Christian. This work of investigation for the dead began October 22, 1844. By the definite time, "the people were brought to the test . . . in order to reveal to them what was in their hearts." She says: "The message was designed for the **testing and purification** of the church. They were to be led to see whether their affections were set upon this world or upon Christ and heaven." - *Ibid.*, p. 353.

Sister White wrote about seventy-two years ago (ninety-two years ago now), that the solemn and closing work of the atonement would soon begin with the living (*The Great Controversy*, p. 490). In the same book, page 480, she tells us that this "investigative judgment" begins with us - God's people - the house of God. Quoting from the Bible (1 Pet. 4:17) shows what she means by the statement, the "closing work of the atonement." As we all know, her work and message was the beginning work of the atonement for the dead. Therefore, she was not given **the time in which the atonement would begin for the living**. The definite time is to be a test of God's people.

The Loud Cry of the Third Angel's Message is the atonement for the living, and in order to have the "Loud Cry" we must know the time it is to start and be able to prove the same from the Bible. If the Lord had not given the people the date for the beginning of the atonement for the dead, we would have had no message of the Sanctuary all these many years - that of the Third Angel. It was not until after the curtain that separated the two apartments of the Sanctuary (Holy and Most Holy) was rolled back that Sister White saw in vision, the Ark of the Covenant. After that time only were the ten commandments, with a bright light encircling the fourth, disclosed to her in vision.

Likewise with the commencement of the **atonement for the living at the house of God (1 Pet. 4:17) October 22, 1956** - we should have a better understanding of the Sabbath and Sanctuary.

With an abundance of evidence of the time the atonement is to begin, we humbly submit our petition and request for a hearing concerning this all-important matter between the dates October 7-12, 1956. I mention the above dates in the first place so it will give you the antitypical ten days (October 12-22) to warn the churches of the beginning of the atonement, October 22, allotted to typical Israel. In the second place, the date, October 7-12, is about as soon as I can get to Washington, as I am at the present time nearly two thousand miles away.

I realize, brethren, that you are very busy these days and also that you have numerous requests for interviews. However numerous the requests may be, there is none that comes so suddenly, and is so tremendously important as is this, in the crisis hour for the church. I pray that the God of heaven will impress on your hearts the importance of this consequential matter, to give your time and wisdom to grant this humble request.

Sincerely your brother in Christ Jesus

Ben L. Roden

President R. R. Figuhr and
General Conference Committee of Seventh-day Adventists
Takoma Park, Washington D.C.

October 1956

Dear Brethren:

As it is written in Ecclesiastes: "To every thing there is a season, and a **time** to every purpose under the heaven A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a **time** to speak." Eccl. 3:1, 7.

All the planets of the Universe keep the most accurate time in their movements. The Lord does everything on time. He came on time; He was baptized on time; He was crucified on time; and He and His Father went into the Most Holy Place of the Sanctuary at a given time. Likewise, He will come on time. Even though we know not when that time is, He will, nevertheless, make the date known at the proper time.

"Soon we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and hour of Jesus' coming. The living saints, 144,000 in number, knew and understood the voice, while the wicked thought it was thunder and an earthquake. When God spoke the time, He poured upon us the Holy Ghost, and our faces began to light up and shine with the glory of God, as Moses' did when he came down from Mount Sinai." -*Early Writings*, p. 15.

"It was at midnight that God chose to deliver His people Signs and wonders followed in quick succession. Everything seemed turned out of its natural course And as God spoke the day and the hour of Jesus' coming and delivered the everlasting covenant to His people, He spoke one sentence, and then paused, while the words were rolling through the earth. The Israel of God stood with their eyes fixed upward, listening to the words as they came from the mouth of Jehovah and rolled through the earth like peals of loudest thunder. It was awfully solemn." - *Ibid.*, pp. 285,286.

Ezekiel was commanded to go speak the Lord's words to the house of Israel (Eze. 3:4). In verse 15 of Chapter 3, we find that neither Ezekiel nor any of his brethren understood the vision. So we, along with many Bible commentators, believe that the book of Ezekiel is prophetic from his day. Ezekiel 9 is a prophecy of the Judgment of the Living. If God's people are to know when the church is to be judged, the time would have to be made known; for it **first** begins at the house of God (1 Pet. 4:17).

The church has been proclaiming the Judgment of the Dead for over a century. If God had not given us a starting date, the Third Angel's Message would have had little effect. If we had not been given the beginning of the 1260 years the prophecy would have been of little worth to the church these many years.

How will we ever proclaim the "Loud Cry" of the Third Angel (the Judgment of the Living) to the world if we are never to know when that time begins? We must have a starting date to have a "Loud Cry" message.

Since the Judgment of the Living begins at the house of God, it is obvious that the Lord would give us information as to when it begins; otherwise, it would not be legal or just. The Lord never does anything except He first warns His people through His servants the prophets (Amos 3:7), for He is just in His dealings.

"Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth **both time and judgment**. Because to every purpose there is **time and judgment**, therefore the misery of man is great upon him." Eccl. 8:5,6.

"Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the **time to favor** her, yea, the **set time** is come." Ps. 102:13.

"Now is the time for the last warning to be given. There is a special power in the presentation of the truth at the present time; but how long will it continue? Only a little while. If there was ever a crisis, it is now." - *Testimonies, Vol. 6, p. 16*.

"All are now deciding their eternal destiny. Men need to be **aroused** to realize the **solemnity** of the **time**, the nearness of the day when human probation shall be ended. Decided efforts should be made to bring the message for this time prominently before the people. The third angel is to go forth with great power. Let none ignore this work or treat it as of little importance." - *Ibid.*

The light we have received upon the third angel's message is the true light. The mark of the beast is exactly what it has been proclaimed to be. **Not all in regard to this matter is yet understood**, nor will it be understood **until the unrolling of the scroll**; but a most solemn work is to be accomplished in our world. The Lord's command to His servants is: 'Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.' - *Ibid., p. 17*.

Here the Lord's servant says that we have come to a crisis time when the Third Angel's Message is to go forth with great power; and at this time we are to understand more in regard to the mark of the beast, because of the **unrolling** of the **scroll**. God's people are to be warned of their transgressions!

Truly this is the time of the **Judgment** of the **Living** and it is plain to see that those who reject this message will receive the mark of the beast.

"While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God's people upon earth." - *The Great Controversy, p. 425*.

"This work is more clearly presented in the messages of Revelation 14." - *Ibid.*

You must surely realize, brethren, that if the evil one can keep us ignorant of the time of the investigative judgment for the church, there will be no "special work of purification," of putting away sin among God's people. If he can keep the people in darkness in regard to **the time of the atonement for the living** until probation for them is closed,

then it will be forever too late for them to repent.

This "special work of purification" - putting away sin - is further explained in *Testimonies, Vol. 1*:

November 20, 1857, I was shown the people of God, and saw them mightily shaken. Some, with strong faith and agonizing cries, were pleading with God. Their countenances were pale, and marked with deep anxiety, expressive of their internal struggle." - *Testimonies, Vol. 1, pp. 179,180*.

"Some, I saw, did not participate in this work of agonizing and pleading. They seemed indifferent and careless. They were not resisting the darkness around them, and it shut them in like a thick cloud. The angels of God left these, and I saw them hastening to the assistance of those who were struggling with all their energies to resist the evil angels, and trying to help themselves by calling upon God with perseverance. But the angels left those who made no effort to help themselves, and I lost sight of them. As the praying ones continued their earnest cries, a ray of light from Jesus would at times come to them, to encourage their hearts, and light up their countenances." – *Testimonies, Vol. 1, pp. 180,181*.

These agonizing ones realize that the investigative judgment is going forward in behalf of the living; and not knowing what hour their cases might come up in the Heavenly Sanctuary, they are in agony. But the careless ones are those who do not realize or even believe that the atonement is going on for the living; in spite of the fact that Sister White plainly tells us that the judgment would some day begin at the house of God (*The Great Controversy, p. 490*).

"So in the great day of final atonement and investigative judgment the only cases considered are those of the professed people of God." - *The Great Controversy, p. 480*.

The Lord's servant, Sister White, explains the same event in another way: "I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen, and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this will cause a shaking **among God's people**." -*Testimonies, Vol, 1, p. 181*.

The "STANDARD" here referred to is the Ten Commandment Law and the Testimony of Messiah, for by this the living are judged.

"Some will not bear this **straight testimony**. They will rise up against it," and this is what causes a **shaking among God's people**. So, when the investigative judgment is completed at the house of God (1 Pet. 4:17) to the end, the true people of God will go forth proclaiming the Sabbath more fully in the Loud Cry.

We see plainly by this, brethren, that the "straight testimony" mentioned, is none other than the Investigative Judgment of the Living. This shaking takes place in the church at the same time our names and our deeds are being investigated in the courts above.

It is inevitable then that there is to be a message of warning "of sounding of trumpets" (Lev. 23:24), as it were, declaring "the hour (time) of His judgment (Harvest).is come." Rev. 14:7.

"And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped." Rev. 14:15,16.

A message of present truth is announced, proclaiming that the "eleventh hour" has struck for the church and now is the time to come to the Sanctuary in figure and confess our sins, so that we may be covered by the Righteousness of Christ as He atones for us, and thus we receive the **Mark of God** (Eze. 9:3,4).

This short period of investigation will bring the purification of the church and a holy sanctified ministry, as a result of the "straight testimony."

"The testimony of the True Witness has **not been half heeded. The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs** has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded. This testimony must work deep repentance, and all that truly receive it, will **obey it and be purified.**" - *Testimonies, Vol. 1, p. 181.*

A message of life and death is to be presented to the church and upon that solemn message the "**destiny of the church hangs.**" It takes people to make up a church, therefore, each individual's destiny hangs upon his acceptance or rejection of that message.

If the message had originated with the General Conference, it would cause no shaking, for all would accept it. This is why the Lord has never in all the history of the church, brought a great change through the same organized body existent at the time. It is just as impossible for the leadership today, to bring about a change in "ideas, theories, habits, and practices." (*Christ Our Righteousness, p. 121*). 'Yet, Sister White teaches that the work must be reorganized for the final proclamation of the Third Angel's Message (Judgment of the Living) to the world.

When Jesus first came to this earth there was a reorganization of the work. When He came to the temple in 1844 to begin the Judgment for the Dead, there was a reorganization. Likewise, there must be a reorganization of the work for the lighting of the earth with the glory of the Third Angel. Both the Spirit of Prophecy and the Bible make this subject plain, brethren, and whether or not you agree, the reorganization will come-with or without your help.

"Unless those who can help are aroused to a sense of their duty, they will not recognize the work of God when the loud cry of the third angel **shall be** heard. When light goes forth to lighten the earth, instead of coming up to the help of the Lord, they will want to bind about His work to meet their narrow ideas. Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this **last work** in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning. There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward **under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel** in the message to be given to the world. God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that **He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised by the simple means** that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness. Those who are accounted good workers will need to draw nigh to God, they will need the divine touch. They will need to drink more deeply and continuously at the fountain of living water, in order that they may discern God's work at every point." -*Testimonies to Ministers, p. 300.*

Here we see that the Lord has taken the reins in His own hands and He will "bring about and perfect His work of righteousness." All may have a part in this last great work, but not the control of it; for the Lord has in His hands the controls. If we are ever to know when to start this work of reformation, we must be told.

"The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved." Ps. 99:1.

"Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea, the **set time is come.**" Ps. 102:13.

Here we see that there is a time for the Lord to take the reins in His own hands. Yea, a "set time," for Him to begin His reign over the church. Then for anyone to use Sister White's writings to prove that we will not know when He begins this work, is to say we will not know when the Judgment of the Living begins. To such a one the Lord says:

"If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee," Rev. 3:3, last part.

"God calls for watchmen who, in the power of the Spirit, will give to the world the last warning message; who will proclaim the time of night."- *Testimonies, Vol. 8, p. 304.*

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it **first begin** at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" 1 Pet. 4:17.

We must know the time in order to warn the people, for the Lord instructs:

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the **day** of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand." Joel 2:1.

"And I saw **another angel** fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." Rev. 14:6.

"Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the **hour of his judgment** is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Rev. 14:7.

The first angel's message, the Judgment of the Dead, was proclaimed in 1844. But John calls it "another angel" which shows that the "hour of His judgment" was to be proclaimed again after 1844 -or at the beginning of the Judgment of the Living - to "them that dwell on the earth," the church first and then as the Scripture reads, "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

"We see before us a special work to be done The fourteenth chapter of Revelation is a chapter of the deepest interest. This scripture **will soon be understood** in all its bearings, and the messages given to John the revelator will be repeated with distinct **utterance.**" - *Review and Herald, October 13, 1904; Reprinted in Review and Herald, July 12, 1945.*

After the shaking Sister White writes: "My attention was then turned to the company I had seen, who were mightily shaken. I was shown those whom I had before seen weeping and praying with agony of spirit. The company of guardian angels around them had been doubled, and they were clothed with an armor from their head to their feet. They moved in exact order, firmly, like a company of soldiers. Their countenances expressed the severe conflict which they had endured, the agonizing struggle they had passed through. Yet their features, marked with severe internal anguish, now shone with the light and glory of heaven. They had obtained the victory, and it called forth from them the deepest gratitude, and holy, sacred joy." - *Testimonies, Vol. 1, pp. 181,182.*

"The number of this company had lessened. Some had been shaken out, and left by the way. The careless and indifferent, who did join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to perseveringly plead and agonize for it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness, but their numbers were immediately made up by others taking hold of the truth and coming into the ranks. Still the evil angels pressed around them, but they could have no power over them." - *Ibid., p. 182.*

"I heard those clothed with the armor speak forth the truth in great power. It had effect." - *Ibid.*

"I asked what had made this great change. An angel answered: 'It is the latter rain, the refreshing from the presence of the Lord, the loud cry of the third angel.' "*Ibid., p. 183.*

"Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict. 'Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners,' . . . she is to go forth into all the world, conquering and to conquer." - *Prophets and Kings, p. 725.*

This arrangement of the above quotations from the Spirit of Prophecy places them in their proper setting and in strict fidelity to the word of God.

To Summarize:

Our High Priest stands up to atone for the living which begins at the house of God **(1 Pet. 4:17; Rev. 14:16)**.

There is a definite time - a "set time" for this most solemn work to begin. Revelation 14 is to be repeated, and understood in all its bearings (Ps. 102:3; *Review and Herald*, Oct. 13, 1904).

A shaking takes place in the church because of the presentation of the straight testimony.

The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs that should work deep repentance, is lightly esteemed (*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, p. 181).

"There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world. God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness. Those who are accounted good workers will need to draw nigh to God, they will need the divine touch. They will need to drink more deeply and continuously at the fountain of living water, in order that they may discern God's work at every point." - *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 300.

God takes the reins in His hands, nevertheless, by the simple means He uses to perfect His work of righteousness, and surprises those that want to control the work.

This shaking brings the purification of the church. Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness the church (those that survive the shaking) go forth into all the world conquering and to conquer (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 725).

Brethren, do not disregard or even lightly esteem this warning message, for upon it hangs the destiny of the church - yes, and even of the world. There is a definite date set for the atonement, for the building of Zion.

Therefore, the date set for the atonement of the dead, **October 22, 1844** (*The Great Controversy*, p. 400) coincides with the Judgment of **the Living for the church, October 22, 1956**, in fulfillment of **the prophecies in the book** of Ezekiel.

Yours to stand in the Judgment of the Living,

Ben L. Roden

October, 1956

President R. R. Figuhr and
General Conference Committee of Seventh-day Adventists
Takoma Park, Washington, D. C.

Dear Brethren:

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand." Joel 2:1.

"A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains." Joel 2:2, first part.

In these Scriptures prophesied by Joel, there is to come a time when God's servants are to blow the trumpet and sound an alarm in His church to warn all that His Judgment day is very near and that all should rend the heart and not the garment. This is a day of darkness and perplexing uncertainties, and all should prepare to meet the Lord in judgment. Truly, just such a day as here spoken of by Joel, is before the people; nevertheless, the Lord's promises are sure to those who turn to Him with all their heart. They shall be delivered!

"As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the **cloudy and dark** day." Eze. **34:12**.

"A great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness: They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief." Joel 2:2-9.

"Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict. 'Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners,' she is to go forth into all the world, conquering and to conquer." - *Prophets and Kings*, p. 725.

When the church reaches this state of purity prophesied in Joel and Sister White's

writings she will, no doubt, have the ark containing the two tables of stone written by the finger of God.

She writes: "Among the righteous still in Jerusalem, to whom had been made plain the divine purpose, were some who determined to place beyond the reach of ruthless hands the sacred ark containing the tables of stone on which had been traced the precepts of the Decalogue. This they did. With mourning and sadness they secreted the ark in a cave, where it was to be hidden from the people of Israel and Judah because of their sins, and was to be no more restored to them. That sacred ark is yet hidden. It has never been disturbed since it was secreted." - *Ibid.*, p. 453.

"When the judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened, and every man shall be judged according to the things written in the books, then the tables of stone, hidden by God until that day, will be presented before the world as the standard of righteousness. Then men and women will see that the prerequisite of their salvation is obedience to the perfect law of God. None will find excuse for sin. By the righteous principles of that law, men will receive their sentence of life or of death." - " *A Message to Our Churches*," E.G. White, *Review and Herald*, Jan. 28, 1909.

" 'And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.' There are abundant evidences of the immutability of God's law. It was written with the finger of God, **never to be obliterated, never to be destroyed**. The tables of stone are hidden by God, **to be produced in the great judgment-day**, just as He wrote them." - E. G. White, *Review and Herald*, Mar. 26, 1908.

"At the judgment this covenant **will be brought forth**, plainly written with the finger of God, and the world will be arraigned before the bar of Infinite Justice to receive sentence."- *Prophets and Kings*, p. 187.

". . . the prophet, being warned of God, commanded the tabernacle and the ark to go with him, as he went forth into the mountain, where Moses climbed up, and saw the heritage of God. And when Jeremy came thither, he found an hollow cave, wherein he laid the tabernacle and the ark, and the altar of incense, and so stopped the door. And some of those that followed him came to mark the way, but they could not find it. Which when Jeremy perceived, he blamed them, saying, As for that place, it shall be unknown **until the time that God gather His people again together**, and receive them into mercy. Then shall the Lord shew them these things . . ." 2 Maccabees 2:4-8.

"The solemn scenes of the judgment, the great day of atonement, should be kept before the people, and urged upon their consciences with earnestness and power." - *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 421.

"The announcement, 'The hour of His judgment is come,' points to the closing work of Christ's ministration for the salvation of men." -- *The Great Controversy*, p. 435.

"We need to humble ourselves before the Lord, with fasting and prayer, and to meditate much upon His word, especially upon the scenes of the judgment." - *Ibid.*, p.

601.

"We are in the great Day of Atonement, and the sacred work of Christ for the people of God that is going on at the present time in the heavenly sanctuary should be our constant study." - *Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 520.*

These verses of Scripture need little explanation to anyone; and especially to you brethren who are skilled in the work of God. We plainly see that the Lord first sends a warning message to enlighten His people that the "hour of His judgment is come," and that those who escape the judgment (shaking - *Testimonies, Vol. 1, p. 181*) are a mighty and strong people, the like of which has never been.

It is certain that we know of no people today who fit this description; neither do we know of a land on the earth that is like the garden of Eden. Truly the people here projected must be those referred to in *Prophets and Kings*, "Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict, 'Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners,' she is to go forth into all the world, conquering and to conquer." - *p. 725.*

And the land before them must be the one which Ezekiel prophesied.

"And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited." Eze. 36:35.

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Isa. 54:17.

Sister White explains: "The darkest hour of the church's struggle with the powers of evil is that which immediately precedes the day of her final deliverance. But none who trust in God need fear; for 'when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall,' God will be to His church 'a refuge from the storm.' Isaiah 25: 4." - *Prophets and Kings, p. 725.*

"In that day only the righteous are promised deliverance. 'The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly . . ." - *Ibid.*

The above quotations find their true setting in the time of the Investigative Judgment. Fearfulness seizes the hypocrites, and the sinners in the church are afraid of God's judgments when they begin to fall.

The triumphant church with headquarters in a land like the garden of Eden goes as a mighty army throughout the world "conquering and to conquer." These references throw light upon the proclamation of the Third Angel's Message in a light and beauty and splendor as perhaps "we have never before beheld it." Nevertheless, evidence is

unmistakably clear and the promises are sure and steadfast. If space and time permitted, it would be shown that every Bible writer has spoken of this same day in which we live.

The question, brethren, is not as to the weight of evidence presented in support of the idea here introduced; but is, "are we willing to relinquish our pride of opinion" and exchange it for a "thus saith the Lord."

With your acceptance of the Angel that has now come to **unite** His voice with the Third Angel, the work can be quickly finished. At the rate which the church is now carrying the message, a thousand, yea, ten thousand years would not suffice for the finishing of the gospel.

No, brethren, it is not a matter of the weight of evidence. It is a matter of your hearing or being able to hear.

Jesus had the weight of evidence and yet they crucified Him. Will you, brethren, do as did the Jews; and reject the message that He sends to join the Third Angel in the message to be given to the world in the Loud Cry?

Many of you have spent your lives in the work. To fail in making the last step and going the "last mile" would be a tragedy, indeed. Think and pray this thing through, dear brethren.

The word of the Lord is: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him."

"Clearly, then, the bride represents the Holy City, and the virgins that go out to meet the bridegroom are a symbol of the **church**." - *The Great Controversy*, p. 427.

"I am often referred to the ten virgins, five of whom were wise and five foolish. This parable has been and will be fulfilled to the very letter, for it has a special application to this time." -- *E. G. White, Review and Herald, Mar. 13, 1947 (Reprint)*.

These statements show that if we get the extra oil (Judgment of the Living) now, and confess our sins while our High Priest is atoning for us in the Sanctuary above, we will be covered in the day of the Lord's fierce anger. If we put on Christ's Righteousness while probation lingers, we will not fall when Michael stands up and puts on His garments of vengeance.

"What time is here referred to? **Not to the revelation** of Christ in the clouds of heaven No; but to His **return** from His ministration in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary This is the **time of reckoning with His servants**." - *Testimonies, Vol. 2, pp. 190, 191*.

"Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord." Lev. 23:27.

"Under the Mosaic system the cleansing of the sanctuary, or the great Day of Atonement, occurred on the tenth day of the seventh Jewish month (Leviticus 16:29-34), when the high priest, having made an atonement for all Israel, and thus removed their sins from the sanctuary, came forth and blessed the people. So it was believed that Christ, our great High Priest, would appear to purify the earth by the destruction of sin and sinners, and to bless His waiting people with immortality. The tenth day of the seventh month, the great Day of Atonement, the time of the cleansing of the sanctuary, which in the year 1844 fell upon the twenty-second of October, was regarded as the time of the Lord's coming."- *The Great Controversy*, p. 400.

Therefore, all are urged to prepare for the Day of Atonement October 22, 1956, as set forth in type and be accounted worthy to stand.

Your brother in Christ,

Ben L. Roden

P.S. October 22, 1956 beginning of investigative judgment at the house of God (Seventh-day Adventist) 1 Pet. 4:17; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 480,488,435,436,431; *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 466; *Early Writings*, pp. 228,250,254.

October 22, 1956

President R. R. Figuhr and
General Conference Committee of Seventh-day Adventists
Takoma Park, Washington, D. C.

Dear Brethren:

You realize that October 22, 1956, marks the one-hundred and twelfth anniversary of the message of the Judgment of the Dead. We all realize that each passing year brings us nearer to the coming of the Kingdom of God.

Sister White tells us that some day the Lord will begin the Judgment of the Living which begins at the house of God -the church.

"For many years this work has been in progress. Soon - none know how soon - it will pass to the cases of the living." - *The Great Controversy*, p. 490.

"In the typical service only those who had come before God with confession and repentance, and whose sins, through the blood of the sin offering, were transferred to the sanctuary, had a part in the service of the Day of Atonement. So in the great day of final atonement and investigative judgment the only cases considered are those of the professed people of God. The judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work, and takes place at a latter period. 'Judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel?' 1 Peter 4:17." -*Ibid.*, p. 480.

"Every case had been decided for life or death. While Jesus had been ministering in the sanctuary, the judgment had been **going** on for the righteous dead, and then for the righteous living. Christ had received His kingdom, having made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins." - *Early Writings*, p. 280.

"Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." Mal. 4:4-6.

In *Early Writings*, page 280, Sister White tells us that first the dead are judged, and then the living. We know when the Judgment for the Dead began, but what of the Judgment for the Living? Is it not logical that we should know when it begins too? Which is the more important to the living; to know that God is judging the dead; or that He is judging them? Which would be more important to a criminal; to tell him other cases were being tried; or that some day his case would come up; or that on the morrow he would be judged? I dare say, he would be most interested in the latter instance.

How would we feel if we knew our case were to be reviewed today before the Great Judge of the Universe? Would not our concern be greater than if we say, "the

Lord is going to judge us some day, but none know when?" Yet, Sister White says: "The church will be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary." -*Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 83.*

How does the Seventh-day Adventist Church stand before the Throne with her future glory resting in the hands of the General Conference? Are we prepared to face the Ancient of Days? Have we employed the Sun of Righteousness to plead our case, and done all to stand?

We see in Malachi's prophecy that the Lord is to send a message calling attention to the law of Moses before the **great and dreadful day of the Lord!** That message is designed to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers. Since the Judgment of the Dead has failed to accomplish the Lord's purpose, then it must be that the Judgment of the Living is to bring about this mutual relationship between parents and children. To realize that the Judgment for the Living is in progress would cause any parent to be more concerned for his children.

The Law of Moses was that of the Sanctuary which had to do **with the living only.**

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord. And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God." Lev. 23:26-28.

You may say, would not the Lord speak to all of His people, if He was going to judge them? Remember, He spoke only to Joshua when He told the people to march around Jericho, and it was their faith that caused the wall to come tumbling down.

Today, the people of God have the written word; nevertheless, their faith will be severely tried. Sister White tells us:

". . . as the disciples declared that there is salvation in no other name under heaven, given among men, so also should the servants of God faithfully and fearlessly warn those who embrace but a part of the truths connected with the third message, that they must gladly receive all the messages as God has given them, or have no part in the matter." - *Early Writings, pp. 188, 189.*

" 'Satan has ability to suggest doubts and to devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue, a mark of intelligence in them, to be unbelieving and to question and quibble. Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and a teachable spirit, and all should decide from the weight of evidence.' 'God gives sufficient evidence for the candid mind to believe; but he who turns from the weight of evidence because there are a few things which he cannot make plain to his finite understanding will be left in the cold chilling atmosphere of unbelief and questioning doubts, and will make shipwreck of faith.' "- *Testimonies, Vol. 5, pp. 675, 676.*

Is there any way whereby we can determine the beginning of the Judgment of the Living? When we review the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy in regard to the Third Angel's Message, we quickly see that the beautiful truths brought out in the Judgment of the Dead are repeated and intensified under the Judgment of the Living. As Sister White says, "when the work goes forward under the direction of the **angel who joins the third angel . . .**" (*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 300). This message that joins the Third Message, Ellen G. White, shows, as does the Bible, to be the Judgment of the Living! In fact, all Scriptures pertaining to this subject point indirectly to the Judgment of the Dead and directly to the Judgment of the Living because it is the most important. The focal point of the Scriptures is not necessarily the second coming of Christ in the clouds when every eye shall see Him, but to His coming in judgment to the living; for all saints are sealed before He comes in the clouds, therefore it (His second coming) is no test to them then.

Ezekiel 29:9-12 records a "**forty years**" of which **history has no record of having taken place** (*S.D.A. Bible Commentary, Vol. 4, p. 679*). Since Ezekiel's prophecies are for Israel in the last days, the forty year period applies to modern-day-Israel -Seventh-day Adventists. Time and opportunity to present the evidences would be greatly appreciated, brethren.

I realize that Autumn Council is a very busy time for you; but do you not see the hand of Providence at work? The message has come the very year of the Autumn Council which starts October 23, one day after the Atonement this year, October 22. This is in God's providence and should be "marvelous in our eyes." Truly the Angel of Revelation 18:1, *Early Writings*, p. 277, and *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 300, has come to join the third angel to finish the work. This should thrill our very souls, that God is going to glorify His work and cut it short in righteousness.

Since Sister White prophesied that the Judgment of the Living would soon begin (*The Great Controversy*, p. 440) consider these figures. From her death in 1915 to 1955, marks forty years which brings us to the Judgment of the Living, beginning with Davidian Seventh-day Adventists who are represented by two-tribe Judah. 1956 - Judgment of the Living in the house of God - Seventh-day Adventists, represented as the ten-tribe Israel. "We are repeating the history of that people" (*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 160). This is the marking of those who "sigh and cry" - the unrolling of the Scroll (*Testimonies*, Vol. 6, p. 17; *Ezekiel 9*). Furthermore, 1955 marked the seventy-first year of her prophecy concerning the Judgment of the Living). Even more conclusively, we read where Mrs. White says: "The work of restoration and reform carried on by the returned exiles, under the leadership of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, presents a (*The Great Controversy*, p. 490) picture of a work of spiritual restoration that is to be wrought in the closing days of this earth's history." -*Prophets and Kings*, p. 677.

These statements are very startling but are just a small sample of the evidence that can be presented if the opportunity is permitted us.

Other meetings of importance should not cause you to overlook the importance of reorganizing under the "angel that joins the third angel," that the work may go forward in

power.

"The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader and is steadily retreating toward Egypt." -*Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 217.*

"Jesus and all the heavenly host looked with disgust upon the scene; yet God **had a message for the church** that was sacred and important. If received, it would make a thorough reformation in the church, **revive the living testimony** that would purge out hypocrites and sinners, and bring the church again into favor with God." - *Early Writings*, p. 228.

Now is your opportunity, brethren, to turn the church about face and get her back into God's favor, secure your life, and save your children. My prayer is that you not overlook the fact that God is taking the "reins in His own hands" and will perfect His Work of Righteousness.

Yours for a quick work in the church!

Ben L. Roden

October 26, 1956

President R. R. Figuhr and
General Conference Committee of Seventh-day Adventists
Takoma Park, Washington, D.C.

Dear Brethren:

It is my earnest desire to make plain that in this series of articles to you, the aim is not to manifest a spirit of criticism and to point to past failures, for we well realize that the flesh is weak and human nature is faulty. It, therefore, becomes none to speak ill of his brother. The point is not to look back to the failures of the past but forward, pressing toward the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus. The purpose of these letters is not to cause greater division among Sabbath keepers, which already exceeds that in Christ's day, but rather to call for unity of action among all Seventh-day believers in our day.

For as long as Sabbath-keepers continue to fight among themselves, the gentile will stand by and watch until he loses his soul, for many gentiles are honest and peace-loving not desiring to get into a family squabble.

Therefore, let our warfare be directed against the devil and wickedness in high places so prevalent throughout the length and breadth of the land, and not at each other, though there be differences of opinion.

But the Lord's promise is: "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." Isa. 52:8.

As one travels about the country he will come in contact with the different beliefs among various sects of Sabbath-keepers. As you study with them you will find that all have some very high moral standards, and are as loyal to principle (as they understand it) and are as devoted to God as others in any church. The question comes to mind: Why are not these dear souls with the main body of Seventh-day Adventists? Has every possible effort been exerted to bring about the unity for which Jesus prayed? Are these honest souls to be lost, or are there many ways to salvation? Sister White gives us the one and final effort the Lord will employ, if His people do not get together, and iron out the problems that keep His Spirit from working in a marked way.

"I was shown the inhabitants of the earth in the utmost confusion. War, bloodshed, privation, want, famine, and pestilence were abroad in the land. As these things surrounded God's people, they began to press together, and to cast aside their little difficulties. Self dignity no longer controlled them; deep humility took its place. Suffering, perplexity, and privation caused reason to resume its throne, and the passionate and unreasonable man became sane, and acted with discretion and wisdom." - *Testimonies*, Vol. 1, p. 268.

Yes, the Lord may have to employ the same means He used in the brick yards of Egypt, to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness. And if it takes persecution

to prepare the church for deliverance, is this to come from the world? Sister White explains:

"Christ has plainly taught that those who persist in open sin must be separated from the church, but He has not committed to us the work of judging character and motive. He knows our nature too well to entrust this work to us. Should we try to uproot from the church those whom we suppose to be spurious Christians, we should be sure to make mistakes. Often we regard as hopeless subjects the very ones whom Christ is drawing to Himself. Were we to deal with these souls according to our imperfect judgment, it would perhaps extinguish their last hope. Many who think themselves Christians will at last be found wanting. Many will be in heaven who their neighbors supposed would never enter there. Man judges from appearance, but God judges the heart. **The tares and the wheat are to grow together until the harvest**, and the harvest is the end of probationary time." -*Christ Object Lessons*, pp. 71, 72.

"Notwithstanding Christ's warning, men have sought to uproot the tares. To punish those who were supposed to be evildoers, **the church has had recourse to the civil power**. Those who differed from the established doctrines have been imprisoned, put to torture and to death, at the instigation of men who claimed to be acting under the sanction of Christ. But it is the spirit of Satan, not the Spirit of Christ, that inspires such acts. This is Satan's own method of bringing the world under his dominion. God has been **misrepresented through the church by this way of dealing with those supposed to be heretics**." -*ibid.*, p. 74, 1941 Edition.

The thought behind these statements from the Lord's servant presents to the church a great problem. For when the message comes in at the right time to join the third angel in the last great work for the world (*Early writings*, p. 277), the church is not looking for a message to join the third angel. Then there is the possibility that she might brand the message as heresy, and do as the church has done in times past. God forbid that His church of today find in itself of the same spirit that was manifest in the church at the first advent of Christ and, thereby, bring down upon the church God's displeasure.

The church has been warned over and over again through the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy to manifest a spirit of tolerance toward those that they may consider as heretics, that they not be found fighting against God. Yes, we realize that there are many voices saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Nevertheless, the Lord at the same time sends a message that is to judge the living - first to the church, then to the world. "The church will be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary. If her moral character and spiritual state do not correspond with the benefits and blessings God has conferred upon her, she will be found wanting." - *Testimonies*, Vol.5, p. 83.

"In the balances of the sanctuary the Seventh-day Adventist church is to be weighed. She will be judged by the privileges and advantages that she has had." - *Testimonies*, Vol. 8, p. 247.

Since the church is to be judged in the heavenly Sanctuary, it must be that our cases come up in the investigative judgment before probation closes. At the same time there is to be a message of reform. A warning to the church on earth:

"While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God's people upon earth. This work is more clearly presented in the messages of Revelation 14." -*The Great Controversy*, p. 425.

"Unless the church, which is now being leavened with her own backsliding, shall repent and be converted, she will eat of the fruit of her own doing, until she shall abhor herself. When she resists the evil and chooses the good, when she seeks God with all humility and reaches her high calling in Christ, standing on the platform of eternal truth and by faith laying hold upon the attainments prepared for her, she will be healed. She will appear in her God-given simplicity and purity, separate from earthly entanglements, showing that the truth has made her free indeed. Then her members will indeed be the chosen of God, His representatives." -*Testimonies*, Vol. 8, pp. 250, 251.

"The time has come for a thorough reformation to take place. When this reformation begins, the spirit of prayer will actuate every believer and will banish from the church the spirit of discord and strife. Those who have not been living in Christian fellowship will draw close to one another. One member working in right lines will lead other members to unite with him in making intercession for the revelation of the Holy Spirit. There will be no confusion, because all will be in harmony with the mind of the Spirit. The barriers separating believer from believer will be broken down, and God's servants will speak the same things. The Lord will co-operate with His servants. All will pray understandingly the prayer that Christ taught His servants: 'Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.' Matthew 6:10." - *Ibid.*, p. 251.

And what is to judge us? "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the **word that I have** spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." **John 12:48.**

So the church, the house of God, is to be judged by a message! Since she is to be judged by a message, then the message, like that of 1844, should come on time and proclaim that the event has actually taken place, and is now going on.

Such a message did come October 10, 1955, and the parable was uttered in fulfillment of Ezekiel 24:1-3 marking the date of the beginning of Judgment of the Living. As God is the Great Head of Gold and the true King of Babylon - a King of kings, - and made plain by Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar; so, the application was made to the message and the parable was uttered. Anciently God used the King of Babylon to judge Judah - the two tribes. The parable shows that God, the true King of Babylon, has taken the reins in His own hands and is judging His people. The application of the King of Babylon to the message of 1955 was made before it was known that Sister White had anything to say about the subject. She writes:

"The history which the great I AM has marked out in His word, uniting link after link in the prophetic chain, from eternity in the past to eternity in the future, tells us where we are today in the procession of the ages, and what may be expected in the time to come. All that Prophecy has foretold as coming to pass, **until the present** time,

has been traced on the pages of history, and we may be assured that all which is yet to come will be fulfilled in its order." - *Education* p. 178.

Every link of prophetic truth is to fit perfectly into the golden chain of truth and show where we are today, and that which is yet future will be fulfilled in its order. But, you may ask, how does the truth of the King of Babylon fit into this chain? Let us see what Sister White says:

"The final overthrow of all earthly dominions is plainly foretold in the word of truth. In the prophecy uttered when sentence from God was pronounced upon the last king of Israel is given the message." - *Ibid.*, p. 179. In other words, the parable is uttered, or the comparison is made to the message like the King of Babylon coming to Jerusalem to take captive the last king of Israel, King Zedekiah.

"For through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, till he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it, and built forts against it round about." Jer. 52:3,4.

How does this show where we are living? The next paragraphs tell us.

"Thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown; . . . exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him.' Ezekiel, 21:26,27. The crown removed from Israel passed successively to the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia; Greece, and Rome. God says, 'it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him.'" -*Education*, p. 179.

Since the Judgment of the Living is the crowning act of the Gospel, the announcement, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him," is given again. This is the time Christ receives His (figuratively) and they receive their (figurative) crowns. The Judgment of the Living, the loud cry Angel of Revelation 18:1 will take the crown off the heads of earthly kingdoms. Now that God is the King of Babylon and the ministry (the mother - one that brings in the converts) of the modernist churches is His estranged wife: therefore, the woman on the back of the scarlet-colored beast is the mother of harlots - Mystery, Babylon the Great (Rev. 17:5).

Since the Atonement was October 22, and the Feast of Tabernacles is five days later, the Sabbath should be celebrated as a Sabbath within a Sabbath.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the Lord. On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do **no servile work therein**. Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein. These

are the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day: Beside the sabbaths of the Lord, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the Lord. Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath." Lev. 23:33-39.

As part of the seven days was allotted to study during this time, then it would be fitting if time could be devoted to Bible **study now** during Autumn Council.

Your brother in Christ,

Ben L. Roden

October 29, 1956

President R. R. Figuhr and
General Conference Committee of Seventh-day Adventists
Takoma Park, Washington, D.C.

Dear Brethren:

The five letters I have written you have called to your mind the beginning of the Judgment of the Living, which according to Sister White and the Bible, begins at the house of God - the church. The information given in the letters represents only a small portion of the evidence that is available to prove the time it begins.

Surely everyone will agree that since God is going to judge the world, it would be necessary for Him to make known the beginning of that judgment, else it would not be legal or just.

Even the courts of the land first notify the individual of his pending trial before they fix his penalty. Is God more unjust than the unjust judges? As Nicodemus says, "Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?" John 7:51.

We all well know that the church cannot tell the world that the living are being judged unless she has a starting time - without which there can be no "Loud Cry" message. The knowledge of the starting time, therefore, is what adds power to the third angel's message; and as it is proclaimed throughout the world under the ministrations of the Holy Spirit it swells to a "Loud Cry," sounding everywhere, "Come out of her, My people." Rev. 18:4.

Before the Lord judges the world He must first judge the church (1 Pet. 4:17). Sister White makes this plain in the following statements:

'
"The church will be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary." - *Testimonies Vol. 5, p. 83.*

"In the balances of the sanctuary the Seventh-day Adventist church is to be weighed. She will be judged by the privileges and advantages that she has had." - *Testimonies, Vol. 8, p. 247.*

"Our condemnation in the judgment will not result from the fact that we have been in error, but from the fact that we have neglected heaven-sent opportunities for learning what is truth." - *The Desire of Ages, p. 490.*

What happens before the blotting out of sins?

"But before this can be accomplished, there must be an examination of the books of record to determine who, through repentance of sin and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. The cleansing of the sanctuary therefore involves a work of investigation - a work of judgment. This work must be performed prior to the coming

of Christ to redeem His people; for when He comes, His reward is with Him to give to every man according to his works. Revelation 22:12." - *The Great Controversy*, p. 422.

"The solemn scenes of the judgment, the great day of atonement, should be kept before the people, and urged upon their consciences with earnestness and power." - *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 421.

"The announcement, 'The hour of His judgment is come, points to the closing work of Christ's ministration for the salvation of men.'" - *The Great Controversy*, p. 435.

"We need to humble ourselves before the Lord, with fasting and prayer, and to meditate much upon His word, especially upon the scenes of the judgment." - *Ibid.*, p. 601.

In *The Great Controversy*, pages 423 and 424, Sister White tells about the disappointment in 1844: how they expected their Lord to come to earth. It was not that their message was wrong, but that they did not understand the event to take place.

It seems incredible, brethren, that God's people of today would be so unaware of the devil's devices that he could catch us by this same trick and blind our eyes to the event that is to take place now. No, it is not the devil that has tricked us into believing that the Lord is coming in the clouds before He comes to the temple (the church to cleanse it before His visible coming. I repeat, this could not be the work of the devil. The Lord has held His hand over these prophecies, as He has always done, that His people not proclaim the message of the judgment of the Living out of season. The Lord will come in due time; but **not until after He first examines our cases in the heavenly sanctuary and purifies the church on earth**, that He might receive unto Himself a glorious church "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." Eph. 5:27.

So, brethren, let us not say, "the Lord delayeth His coming," but rather, "He has already come to His temple and is now investigating our cases before the Great Judge in heaven."

"I am often referred to the ten virgins, five of whom were wise and five foolish. This parable has been and **will** be fulfilled to the very letter, for it has a special application to this time." - *E. G. White, Review and Herald, Mar. 13, 1947, Reprint.*

Sister White not only places the parable of the ten virgins in the past, but also in the future.

"What time is here referred to? **Not to the revelation** of Christ in the clouds of heaven No; but to His **return** from His ministration in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary This is the time of reckoning with His servants." - *Testimonies*, Vol. 2, pp. 190, 191.

Also Sister White says that Revelation 14 "will be repeated with distinct utterances." - *Review and Herald, Oct. 13, 1904.*

These statements plainly show that there is another coming of the Lord to His temple and whether you believe that now is the time for the fulfillment of these prophecies; nevertheless, you can easily see that they will be fulfilled to the very letter before Jesus comes in the clouds when every eye shall see Him.

Since you have been so busy, brethren, with Autumn Council meetings, I have been careful not to urge these things upon you. But because of the profound importance of this message to the church, I humbly beseech you by the mercies of our Lord Jesus Christ that you grant me a hearing before the Autumn Council before the brethren return to the foreign fields. Since General Conference is composed of our brethren from all over the world, they should have the opportunity to be present at these meetings that their judgment may be exercised.

My request is that you grant me time for five one-hour studies, free from interruption before, or immediately following the close of Fall Council. This is of as serious a consequence as could be possible or it is of no importance at all. Either the church's destiny is hanging in the balances of the sanctuary, or it is not. This is for you to decide, brethren.

Please give me a written reply whether for or against, by Wednesday, October 31, 1956. Thank you.

Yours in Christian Love,

Ben L. Roden

P.S. To date (September 15, 1976), no reply to any of the seven letters that were written to Elder Figuhr and the General Conference Committee from September 1956 to February 1957, has been received either from Elder Figuhr or any of his successors or any member of the General Conference.

In the past twenty (20) years, since 1956, much light and instruction has been received for God's remnant church from the mighty Angel of Revelation 18:1. Each subject of enlightenment received is exceedingly vital for the salvation of the church.

"The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded." - *Early Writings*, p. 270.

Therefore, the message of the Angel of Revelation 18:1, the antitypical Elijah message, the very last, the Judgment of the Living at the house of God - Seventh-day Adventist - to Elder Pierson and the General Conference at the present time, is a request for seven (7) uninterrupted studies, one (1) hour each, to be given to the entire body of Seventh-day Adventists in session at the next General Conference, which is tentatively planned for April 20-26, 1980, in Dallas, Texas.

Yours for the salvation of God's people,
the Seventh-day Adventist church,

Ben L. Roden

February 22, 1957

President R. R. Figuhr and
General Conference Committee of Seventh-day Adventists
Takoma Park, Washington, D. C.

Dear Brethren:

Now that Autumn Council is past history and the worldwide program adopted for the church well under way, may your attention be directed to the letters written you in October 1956. In this letter I would like to direct your attention not only to the Investigative Judgment, but to that great and most important fundamental principle of the third angel's message - "Justification by faith" - which fits us for the Righteousness of Christ.

Because of the abundance of information relating to these subjects by Mrs. White it will not be necessary to go into a long discussion of this all-important matter, but rather, some of the fundamental principles involved in connection with them. By way of explanation, I will use mainly quotations from the Bible and the writings of Mrs. E. G. White.

First, a statement from Elder A. G. Daniells: "That all who accept the third angel's message should enter into the experience of justification by faith. They should have Christ revealed to and in them. They should know by personal experience the work of regeneration. They should have the fullest assurance that they have been born anew, from above, and that they have passed from death unto life. They should know that their guilt has been canceled, that they have been delivered from the condemnation of the law, and are thus ready to appear before the judgment seat of Christ." *Righteousness, p. 68. - Christ Our*

"To fail to enter into this experience, will be to miss the real, vital, redeeming virtue of the third angel's message. Unless this experience is gained, the believer will have only the theory, the doctrines, the forms and activities, of the message. That will prove a fatal and awful mistake." - *Ibid.*

Elder Daniells warns that formalism and a faith without a living experience would be fatal (*Christ Our Righteousness, p. 69*).

He continues: "O that we had all listened as we should to both warnings and appeal as they came to us in that seemingly strange, yet impressive, way at the Conference of 1888! What uncertainty would have been removed, what wanderings and defeats and losses would have been prevented! What light and blessing and triumph and progress would have come to us!" - *Ibid., p. 69.*

In these quotations Brother Daniells is trying to warn all of God's people, both ministry and laity, that they not make the same mistakes made at the 1888 General Conference at Minneapolis. Pointing out the great loss to us because they rejected the

message sent by the Lord to instruct His people at that time, he says that the One who loves us will yet hear our plea if we will but respond to both warning and appeal.

"The sweetest melodies that come from human lips, - justification by faith, and the righteousness of Christ." - *Mrs. E. G. White, Review and Herald, April 4, 1895; Christ Our Righteousness, p. 73.*

What a wonderful thought is here expressed in these last lines. But, O, what a fearful warning comes to all of us from the pen of Mrs. E. G. White. We quote:

"In **1888** at the General Conference held in Minneapolis, Minn., the angel of Rev. 18:1 came down to do his work, and was ridiculed, criticized, and rejected. And when the message he brings again swells into a loud cry it will again be ridiculed, spoken against, and rejected by the majority." - *Taking Up A Reproach.*

"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent!" - *Christ Our Righteousness, p. 120.*

"I am instructed to say that these words are applicable to Seventh-day Adventist churches in their present condition. The love of God has been lost, and this means the absence of love for one another. Self, self, self is cherished, and is striving for the supremacy. How long is this to continue? Unless there is a reconversion, there will soon be such a lack of godliness, that the church will be represented by the barren fig tree. Great light has been given to her. She has had abundant opportunity for bearing much fruit. But selfishness has come in, and God says, 'I . . . will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.'" - *Christ Our Righteousness, p. 120.*

"Jesus looked upon the pretentious, fruitless fig tree, and with mournful reluctance pronounced the words of doom. And under the curse of an offended God, the fig tree withered away. God help His people to make an application of this lesson while there is still time." - *Ibid.*

These statements from the pen of the Lord's servant, severe as they are, should cause us to do some serious thinking. Their being applicable to the churches today, we should lay the ax at the root of the tree, repent, receive the blessings of the Lord, and save our souls.

"God calls for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation. Unless this takes place, those who are lukewarm will continue to grow more abhorrent to the Lord, until He will refuse to acknowledge them as His children." - *Ibid., p. 121.*

"A revival and a reformation must take place under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is

connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend." - *Ibid.*

"The word of the Lord never represses activity. It increases man's usefulness by guiding his activities in the right direction Man will increase in power as he follows on to know the Lord. As he endeavors to reach the highest standard, the Bible is as a light to guide his footsteps homeward." - *Ibid.*, 122.

"God rebukes His people for their sins, that He may humble them, and lead them to seek His face. As they reform, and His love revives in their hearts, **His loving answers will come to their requests. He will strengthen them in reformatory action**, lifting up for them a standard against the enemy. His rich blessing will rest upon them and in bright rays they will reflect the light of heaven. **Then** a multitude not of their faith, seeing that God is with His people, will unite with them in serving the Redeemer." - *E. G. White, Review and Herald, Feb. 25, 1902; Christ Our Righteousness, p. 123.*

In these statements from Sister E. G. White's writings it is pointed out that "God calls for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation." The indication here is that only a revival by the Holy Spirit will be acceptable. A reformation by man alone is not sufficient to bring about and accomplish the desired results. Elder Daniells explains that the church has experienced an untold loss because the brethren did not accept the Spirit-filled message that was presented in 1888. Sister White tells us that the message that was presented at the 1888 Conference was the Angel of Revelation 18:1. At that time it was "ridiculed, spoken against and rejected." And **when it comes again** and as it swells to a loud cry, it will again be ridiculed, spoken against, and rejected by the majority.

There are several things easily seen from the statement quoted: (1.) that the Angel of Revelation 18:1 is a message; (2) it is to bring revival and reformation; (3) according to Sister White it is to come sometime after 1888; (4) we know that never in her lifetime did she mention such an event taking place after 1888.

According to Elder Daniells the Angel had not arrived before he compiled *Christ Our Righteousness*.

This brings us face to face with the stern fact that since we are living in the very last days of this earth's history, it is about time the message of Revelation 18:1 begins to swell. The signs reveal that heaven will not wait much longer for His people to get ready. We are to remember a message never comes in a way that pleases us, but that it will be contrary to any human planning. "Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning." -*Testimonies to Ministers, p. 300.* Nevertheless, the message has come and will accomplish its work.

"A message that will arouse the churches is to be proclaimed. Every effort is to be made to give the light, **not only to our people**, but to the world **Our own people need to have the light placed before them in clearer lines.**" -*Ibid.*, p. 117.

Here we are told that our own people are to be given this message, first that they might have a clearer understanding of the message; afterward, it is to be given to the world. Many statements in the Spirit of Prophecy books tell the same thing. From a portion of a few I shall quote:

"We are in the great day of atonement, when our sins are, by confession and repentance, to go beforehand to judgment. God does not now accept a tame, spiritless testimony from His ministers. Such a testimony would not be present truth. The message for this time must be meat in due season to feed the church of God." - *Review and Herald, Mar. 22, 1887; Christ Our Righteousness, p. 150 (1926 and 1929 editions only; not found in 1941 edition).*

"The cases of the righteous dead have been passing in review before God. When that work shall be completed, judgment is to be pronounced upon the living. How precious, how important, are these solemn moments! Each of us has a case pending in the court of heaven. We are individually to be judged according to the deeds done in the body." - *Ibid.*

"If we have any regard for our souls' salvation, we must make a decided change." - *Ibid., p. 151.*

"We are fast approaching the close of our probation. Let every soul inquire, How do I stand before God?" - *Ibid.*

"Let the church arise, and repent of her backslidings before God. Let the watchmen awake, and give the trumpet a certain sound. It is a definite warning that we have to proclaim . . . The attention of the people must be gained; unless this can be done, all effort is useless; though an angel from heaven should come down and speak to them, his words would do no more good than if he were speaking into the cold ear of death. The church must arouse to action. The Spirit of God can never come in until she prepares the way." - *Ibid.*

In these quotations only a few of the high points are mentioned. All who read all of the pages quoted from this little book will see the picture is more glaring than we have space or time to show. All Sister White's books, from Steps to Christ to Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel workers, tell the same startling story. Who is in this sad condition? "Let the church arise and repent of her backslidings before God. Let the watchmen awake, and give the trumpet a certain sound." - *Ibid.*

The "church" and the "watchmen" mean lay members and the ministry. We must all arouse to action or be lost. "All" means from the least to the greatest, for says Jesus: "there is none good but one, that is, God." Matt. 19:17. Let us reform and put away all selfishness and pride, so that God may bless us and natural affection for each other return.

Thus far, the dark side of the picture is shown. Now, let us look at the bright side.

"While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a **special work of purification**, of putting away of sin, **among God's people upon the earth.**" -*The Great Controversy*, p. 425.

In the book *Christ Our Righteousness*, p. 150, Sister White says that first the dead are judged and **then the living**. The above statement from *The Great Controversy* shows that this special work of putting away sin among God's people is during the **Judgment of the Living**, which begins at the house of God -the church (1 Pet. 4:17). We know this to be true because our sins are removed when we are judged. You can see that God would not remove our sins before He judges us; to do this would be predestination.

"When this work shall have been accomplished, the followers of Christ will be ready for His appearing. 'Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.' Malachi 3:4. Then the church which our Lord at His coming is to receive to Himself will be a 'glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.' Ephesians 5:27. Then she will look 'forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.' Song of Solomon 6:10." -*The Great Controversy*, p. 425.

Now to make this work of Investigative Judgment of the Living plain, which, according to the apostle Peter, begins with the church, we will quote Sister White: "As they reject the teachings of His word, God withdraws His Spirit and leaves them to the deceptions which they love."- *Ibid.*, p. 431.

To reject the message of the Angel of Revelation 18:1 is to cause God to withdraw His Spirit, and instead of having sins removed from the sanctuary in heaven, the names of those who fail to repent will be removed from the book of life.

When this work is accomplished for the church, then says Sister White: "Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict, 'Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners' (Song of Solomon 6:10), she is to go forth into all the world, conquering and to conquer." - *Prophets and Kings*, p. 725.

When the investigative judgment is over for the church then in her purity she will take the Judgment of the Living to the world. "God's elect must stand untainted amid the corruptions teeming around them in these last days. Their bodies must be made holy, their spirits pure (A pure church 'not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing')." - *Counsels on Health*, p. 20.

What a wonderful day it will be when all of God's people show their love for one another - when brother can trust brother. According to the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy this condition does not exist today; whereas, both teach it will prevail in the church before Christ comes in the clouds where every eye shall see Him.

Since reform must and will come, the first thing we need to know is what are some

of the things that need reforming. As Sister White says: "Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices." - *Christ Our Righteousness*, p. 121. The Lord is urging all to quickly prepare themselves for this great work of reform.

In order to reform we must know how to reform. When repairing an engine, a mechanic first determines the cause of trouble, then makes the necessary repairs. So, we, like the mechanic, must diagnose our case. With the necessary information, we may quickly set to work on repairs. Sister White's writings give the needed information.

The most important thing to the operation of an engine is the firing system. There must be the proper amount of fuel and the right kind in order to make it run efficiently. In our diagnosis of the Christian engine, we find that the Holy Spirit is ever present to ignite the fuel - the word of God in our hearts. So then, we must check our fuel to see if it is the right kind, sufficient amount, and proper mixture. In checking our fuel, we find the Adventist church is blessed with the proper sort and an abundant supply from the word of God as interpreted by the Spirit of Prophecy. If the church is not on fire with the Holy Spirit, then it must be that foreign substances have **gotten** into our fuel tank.

We find that this condition existed among the disciples before **Pentecost**. But as soon as they got rid of the foreign material in their fuel tank, the Spirit came and ignited the church. So the church today cannot be fired without the Spirit and the Spirit cannot come without the needed preparation. Each must ask himself if he is standing in the way and blocking the door that the Spirit cannot enter.

To get the proper understanding of the fuel system of the Christian, we shall divide it in two parts. First, the spiritual, then the temporal. To dispense to the Christian engine the proper spiritual fuel, and fire it with His Spirit, is God's responsibility. To supply the engine with the proper temporal fuel is our responsibility. When these two blend, then heaven unites with earth in the work of redemption. As long as foreign substance is in the fuel system the Spirit cannot come. The soul cannot be fired by the Spirit as long as the diet consists of flesh food, tea, coffee, etc. The word and the Spirit must agree, so let us check the Spirit to see if It agrees with the words here spoken.

"Flesh foods are injurious to the physical well-being, and we should learn to do without them." - *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 403.

". . . flesh food is not the right food for God's people. I have been instructed that flesh food has a tendency to animalize the nature, to rob men and women of that love and sympathy which they should feel for every one, and to give the lower passions control over the higher powers of the being. If meat eating were ever healthful, it is not safe now. Cancers, tumors, and pulmonary diseases are largely caused by meat eating." - *Ibid.*, p. 404.

"The health of the body is to be regarded as essential for growth in grace and the acquirement of an even temper, If the stomach is not properly cared for, the formation of an upright, moral character will be hindered. The brain and nerves are in sympathy with

the stomach. Erroneous eating and drinking result in erroneous thinking and acting." - *Ibid.*, p. 405.

"But when I visit the Retreat, I see that there is a very marked departure from health reform on the matter of meat eating, and I am convinced that there must be a change, and at once." - *Ibid.*, p. 406.

"A positive injury is done to the system by continuous meat eating. There is no excuse for it but a depraved, perverted appetite The flesh of animals will no longer compose a part of our diet; and we shall look upon a butcher's shop with disgust We are built up from that which we eat. Shall we strengthen the animal passions by eating animal food?" - *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 407.

This light was given to our people over 88 years ago; we may inquire if a proper use is being made of the light God so abundantly gave to us. Is it true that the above admonitions were given only for instructions at the Health Retreat? There is likewise instruction given to our ministers and people.

"As God's messengers, shall we not bear a decided testimony against the indulgence of perverted appetite? . . . God has provided an abundance of fruits and grains, which may be healthfully prepared and used in proper quantities. Why, then, do men continue to choose flesh meats? Can we possibly have confidence in ministers who at tables where flesh is served join with others in eating it?" - *Ibid.* pp. 401,402.

"Let our ministers and canvassers step under the banners of strict temperance. Never be ashamed to say 'No thank you; I do not eat meat. I have conscientious scruples against eating the flesh of dead animals.'" - *Ibid.*, p. 402.

"No meat will be used by His people." - *Ibid.*, p. 407.

"The more largely flesh composes the diet of teachers and pupils, the less susceptible will be the mind to comprehend spiritual things." - *Ibid.*, p. 395.

"For thirty years the light on health reform has been coming to the people of God They have continued to use tea, coffee, spices, and flesh meat. Their bodies are full of disease. How can we, I ask, present such ones to the Lord for healing?" - *Ibid.*, p. 400.

We see plainly, brethren, by these statements written by the direction of the Holy Spirit that when the churches wholly practice and teach these health principles, they will then be in line to be fired by that same Spirit as the early church. As long as God's church and His people disregard this admonition, just that long will the Holy Spirit fail to hear their pleadings. Adam and Eve lost Eden through indulgence of appetite and the only way Eden will be restored is through the control of appetite.

Then there is also another item, and a very great one. Training young men for the army when they should be trained as laborers in the Lord's vineyard testifies against the Spirit of truth, for we read:

"I was shown that God's people, who are His peculiar treasure, cannot engage in this perplexing war, for it is opposed to every principle of their faith. In the army they cannot obey the truth and at the same time obey the requirements of their officers. There would be a continual violation of conscience. Worldly men are governed by worldly principles. They can appreciate no other." - *Testimonies, Vol. 1, p. 361.*

Then there is the matter of using drugs in our Sanitariums which Sister White condemns.

"Drug medication, as it is generally practiced, is a curse. Educate away from drugs. Use them less and less, and depend more upon hygienic agencies; then nature will respond to God's physicians - pure air, pure water, proper exercise, a clear conscience." - *Counsels on Health, p. 261.*

"You should avoid the use of drugs and carefully observe the laws of health. If you regard your life you should eat plain food, prepared in the simplest manner, and take more physical exercise. **Each member of the family needs the benefits of health reform.** But drugging should be forever abandoned; for while it does not cure any malady, it enfeebles the system, making it more susceptible to disease." - *Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 311.*

"A practice that is laying the foundation of a vast amount of disease and of even more serious evils, is the free use of poisonous drugs." - *Ministry of Healing, p. 126.*

"People need to be taught that drugs **do not cure disease.**" - *Ibid.*

"By the use of poisonous drugs, many bring upon themselves lifelong illness, and many lives are lost that might be saved by the use of natural methods of healing." - *Ibid., pp. 126,127.*

These statements, with hundreds of others, some even more pointed, tell the story of why the church is not fired by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit cannot work with those who do not work along the prescribed lines.

The true basis of **any** reform is love - love to God and love to our fellowman. It is my earnest desire and sincere prayer that you will take these things in the same spirit in which they were written. The admonitions contained in the Spirit of Prophecy writings were not put there for one particular group, but they are for every one to read and follow.

To accomplish the most good in the shortest period of time, reform should begin at the head. You are the logical ones to lead out, brethren. This is the reason for this appeal. Why drift, why not go to work on reform today? Start and there will be plenty to help-even the Spirit. Cast out the abomination from our hospitals and sanitariums, and let doctors and nurses take up the work of treating the sick with herbs and natural remedies. Let them train young men and women in the use of simple methods, with prayer for the sick, and there will be a revival such as this earth has never witnessed. Why not put our young people to work for the Lord rather than let them be slaughtered

in the war? "Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war." Isa. 3:25.

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they that gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee." Isa. 60:1-5.

When God's people make ready for the Spirit by clearing the way, the blessings of these Scriptures will be realized. If we take care of the needy, the poor, and sick among us, the Lord says the Gentiles will come with their means. No necessity to go out in harvest ingathering here, for the Gentiles will come voluntarily. Do we have faith to claim the promises?

When the conditions are met, the Spirit will come. "And I will take sickness away from the midst of thee." Ex. 23:25.

"In visions of the night, representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God's people. Many were praising God. The sick were healed, and other miracles were wrought. A spirit of intercession was seen, even as was manifested before the great Day of Pentecost. Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families and opening before them the word of God. Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest. On every side doors were thrown open to the proclamation of the truth." -*Testimonies, Vol. 9, p. 126.*

This was not a vision by Sister White of a flesh eating, drug using people - but a vision of genuinely converted health reformers.

"In order to be purified and to remain pure, Seventh-day Adventists must have the Holy Spirit in their hearts and in their homes. The Lord has given me light that when the Israel of today humble themselves before Him, and cleanse the soul-temple from all defilement, He will hear their prayers in behalf of the sick and will bless in the use of His remedies for disease." - *Ibid., p. 164.*

"If, after so much light has been given, God's people will cherish wrong habits, indulging self and refusing to reform, they will suffer the sure consequences of transgression. If they are determined to gratify perverted appetite at any cost, God will not miraculously save them from the consequences of their indulgence. They 'shall lie down in sorrow.' Isaiah 50:11." - *Ibid.*

"If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him." 1 Kings 18:21.

What is your decision, brethren? is the Spirit's plea.

Yours to serve God and Him only,

Ben L. Roden

Note: The **1941 edition** of *Christ Our Righteousness* **has been used exclusively throughout this** letter, except where otherwise stated.

Seven Letters SDA – L7p10