

To Elder Figuhr and GC Committee (7L-EF L1)

Description

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 Saviour. 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

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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.â?? 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: â??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.â?? Many were sleeping stupefied with the cares of this life and allured by the deceitfulness of riches from their waiting, watching position.â?•â?? Testimonies, Vol. 2, p. 192.

â??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.â?•â?? 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, â??We are in the third watch,â?• 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 â??sunk 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.â?•â?? 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 Christâ??s day!

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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:

â??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.â?• Rev. 14:6,7.

Peter also prophesied: â??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?â?• 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 the 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

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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 names 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 L1, p. 4 8

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 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