

# CRUCIAL EVENTS IN SDA THEOLOGY TODAY DAY OF DESTINY II

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An appropriate interlude, outwardly occasioned by certain strange things around Samuele Bacchiocchi's Sabbath books.

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## INTRODUCTION TO AN INTRODUCTION.

Once upon a time a very high premium used to be put on something called the logical consistency of well-disciplined thought. This, however, does not seem to assert itself as the great passion of our present generation. Even our most renowned scholars often seem inclined to think that utter inconsistency should "have a fair chance" once in a while. Logical reason also might need "a breather".

I have now even begun to wonder about my good colleague of old at Andrews University, Samuele Bacchiocchi. I am referring to his latest book on the Sabbath: -- "The Sabbath in the New Testament" -- and just one part of this book, but a part important enough.

Now, don't think I put all the blame on Samuele. There are some mitigating circumstances. My poor friend has for a long time been surrounded on all sides by certain well-wishing fans. And fans may sometimes be your most dangerous enemies. It so happens that I for my part have become particularly afraid of what I call existentialist nonsense-thinkers. I am here not speaking of Bacchiocchi's serious Sabbath research, the well-known dissertation. I am, of course, speaking about the strange way it has been viewed and reviewed.

Up to this point I had not at all been dumbfounded by most of what Bacchiocchi expressed about the Sabbath. My true surprise rather had to do with the peculiar type of attitudes, on the part of those fans of his who insisted on making his product famous

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in their own way. First, of course, there are those "Doctor Fathers" of his in the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. And it is not the nauseating case of fulsome flattery, coming from academic would-be experts only. No-no. What normal Seventh-day Adventist readers -- or Protestant readers by and large -- will at first tend to wonder greatly about, is why the Pope himself should feel impressed to decorate a Sabbath researcher like Bacchiocchi with a gold medal.

Still, upon more mature reflection, we do, after all, understand something of that fit of mad inconsistency manifested by the Roman Catholic Church. For, while you and I may -- hopefully -- still regard it as something absolutely fatal to be found guilty of having dared to change God's Holy Law; those Fathers of the "Mother Church" see, in that same historical fact, a wonderful sign of her heavenly power to interfere majestically.

But there are also other strange happenings regarding the treatment given to Bacchiocchi's Sabbath literature. And this time I am referring to what official Protestant circles have felt anxious to state about it. If anyone thinks that testifies more in favor of

consistent thinking within the ranks of contemporary Christian theology, then I am sad to say: "I cannot agree." I am now speaking about the prefatory notes to Bacchiocchi's dissertation on the Sunday, taking the place of the Sabbath in the history of the Christian Church. That preface is another song of praise to the admirable qualities of the book. By whom was that written? I ask you, by whom of all persons? By the supreme leader of a Pious society, erected to the honor of "the Lord's Day." And you know what day is here meant by that name.

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So what is happening to Samuele and to the great idea he has been fighting valiantly to get across? Apparently, it has failed miserably. For what, indeed, seems now to have won the day? Just the opposite of his best intentions -- not stern Biblical realism but, rather, the ultimate in sheer pagan anti-realism. It looks as if some astute evil-natured imp finishes by celebrating a resounding triumph. The world's "Sunday-men" par excellence have distorted entirely the pious message the author intended to preach. They have done this with a dexterity I am forced to look upon as more demonic than divine.

A bizarre experience, somewhat similar to the typically modernist one happening to Bacchiocchi in his academic career, happened to me; this time not in the theological field but in the philosophical one. I describe that farcical episode in the first pages of my recently printed book: "The Part of the Story You Were Never Told ABOUT WOMEN". In a rather superficial and outward way I, too, on that occasion might appear to be academically benefited quite marvelously. But please tell me frankly: How could sheer nonsense, taking the legitimate place of sound sense, ever manage to be a real benefit in any serious person's life -- in the long run? Impossible! There is no reason here to giggle noisily, is there?

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In the introduction to this book of mine which is also a most serious one on the Sabbath in endtime history, I take this opportunity to remind you of something that may appear ridiculous, but is also, and above all, pregnant with destiny. I am referring to a general modernist trend, in present-day theology as well as in philosophy. It is sometimes thought of as an inevitable side effect of radical existentialism. Anyway, its fatal peculiarity is to praise the absurd, the totally self-contradictory, the absolutely paradoxical. An ever increasing number of scholars seem to see in this mystic "wisdom" of the entirely nonsensical the highest revelation of supreme truth.

I should say here a few words about Samuele Bacchiocchi in a human context, the way I know him as my good brother and colleague.

There was one surplus wonder -- present, coming to him from his well-wishers in the Vatican which they, themselves, probably were ignorant of.

There is an increasingly insistent rumor going around in popular Seventh-day Adventist circles. I have come across it in church after church now. It is rumored among imaginative Adventists that the Jesuit Society has secretly engaged some of our most influential men to do service as spies for the Catholic Church. You can, no doubt, understand why Bacchiocchi has earned a prominent position in this capacity. I imagine that he, himself, will regard it as a questionable honor which he is being granted as a star of this peculiar kind.

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In vain am I doing my best to explain to some of the rumor mongers what an unlikely double-game player Samuele would make. What intelligence service bureau would select him as their favorite? It is men of few words that they feel they can depend on in secretive businesses of that kind. But Samuele is a man of many words. And he enjoys using them all. In fact, he does use them with a candor and a fluency that is certainly Italian, but not Mafia Italian. And, if it is true as some people say that he possesses a business ingenuity that would easily sell a refrigerator to an Eskimo, then the basic essence of all that is a candid altero-centricity of an even more than Italian quality. The Jesuit spy firm our dear brothers are speaking about would instinctively shy away from candidates of such dubious qualifications for the secret service profession.

Moreover, where is it regarded as a questionable quality today to be a business genius? Certainly not in America, the homeland of modern Adventism! nor in Italy, for that matter. Or why don't I say "Europe"? That would include Norway. In the whole Western world I think we, as a denomination, assert ourselves quite well in every material and financial way. It does not seem likely that we shall die of what is called in Norwegian: "sviktende naeringsvett."; that is, a failing sense of business and a failing sense of assimilating proper food. We may feel pretty safe.

But now my smooth talk may have to come to an end, at least for a while. That applies to what is said about you and me. It also applies to what I feel duty-bound to say about Bacchiocchi and his writings on the topic of the Sabbath. I am coming back to his recent publication:

## II. THE SABBATH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

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Here something unexpected causes me, not only surprise, but genuine alarm. I now have the painful experience of facing matters of inconsistency that my friend, Samuele himself, has committed. In the latter part of his book he lends support, unfortunately, to what I feel perfectly entitled to characterize as a modernist view of the Sabbath. For years and years now, this view about Sabbath observance has caused regrettable strife and confusion, bitterness and internal discord, wherever it made its way into Seventh-day Adventist circles of Sabbath theology and Sabbath practice.

Since the remote day when Ellen White received her remarkable message from God about a more stringently Biblical time for beginning -- and finishing -- our Sabbath celebration, there did not for a long period of time seem to be any serious divergences of practice or any official trend of wavering views in our denomination on this point. Relative peace and harmony seemed to reign regarding the "edges of the Sabbath".

Some readers, it is true, of the report written down by Ellen White regarding the message given by the angel about the right time to begin the Sabbath, have felt that there is something mysterious in the conversation between the two. I shall presently render, verbatim and in extenso, that testimony. I am challenging your personal opinion about it. First, however, I shall give an example of how our pioneers generally worked in order to arrive at safe conclusions about theological matters.

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About the same time our brethren of old, true to their tradition, decided to have the matter thoroughly investigated through simple Bible study. Elder J. N. Andrews was particularly selected for devoting his time to that kind of Scripture study. He discharged

himself in a most honorable way of his assigned task. The great conclusion this very capable Bible scholar arrived at, going from scripture to scripture, could be summed up in this main conclusion: "From even to even shall your Sabbath rest be." What did that term "even" actually stand for? Brother Andrews pursued this question in a careful scripture-to-scripture analysis until no doubt could remain any longer: The setting of the sun was the majestic mark of the heavens, given to man in order that he might find his right bearings. He was safely ushered, by the great Creator of heaven and earth, into the safe harbor of holy time for his life. Read Andrews' scholarly dissertation with care, and you can't fail to admire its thoroughness and clarity. I am not surprised that our church adopted that principle of Sabbath chronology quite unanimously in those days; the more so as this very principle had been confirmed by the Spirit of Prophecy.

But now to the "problem" aspects of the matter, particularly as they have caught quite a different attention in later years. To be entirely fair to you as an Adventist of ultra-modern times, I go to the extreme of taking you along on a trip to my own country, Norway. I even choose to lead you all the way upward to a town named Hammerfest. It happens to be the northernmost in all the earth.

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The practical problems gradually asserted themselves in our denomination. And we should not be too sad to give a complete report. Gradually, the number of Seventh-day Adventists increased notably. Even the rather inhospitable climes called the "Arctic regions" had Adventists, more and more of them all the time. Hammerfest, like so many other towns of Northern Norway, has now had its Seventh-day Adventist congregation for a great number of years. And how do these people get along with their "Sabbatical peculiarity" as far north as that? Some would say: "as close to the Pole as that." There was something here to which our brethren as a whole had, so far, paid little attention. In fact, there has been a sad neglect of taking it seriously into consideration. "Problem" is the solemn word coming quite readily to the ones who happen to be right in the midst of it. And it helps wonderfully sometimes to know at least that the more fortunate ones outside are aware of our hardships.

Now, in front of that word, "problem," we are sometimes quick to put an adjective: "insoluble." That may, in certain cases, be a rather rash decision. On the other hand, I can understand and sympathize with people who have found little comfort in what Gabriel Marcel, a French philosopher of modern date, has said. He was, in fact, a Christian, which is a rare phenomenon in France, particularly among French philosophers. What he repeated again and again was this: "The Christian child knows no problem, only mysteries." I accept as a perfectly natural thing that Sabbath-keepers in Hammerfest do not necessarily feel like walking on air all the time. On the contrary, some of the things they have had to grapple with must have struck them as anything but mysterious in a fascinating sense of the term. I must try to give you an inkling of that. I, for one, have not come across too many who have found that their Sabbath

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walk over Arctic territory was like "walking on air." You may, as a stranger, react to the novelty of my description as to something of a fairy tale, so exactly a mysterious adventure. But the "natives", themselves, who have experienced, in their own "flesh and bones", the real problems of sundown-determined Sabbaths are hardly tempted to look upon them in terms of an edifying mystery, something all that adventurous. No. And

particularly some of our most eloquent experts in Arctic Sabbath-ology have hardly tended toward viewing the matter from that sympathetic angle of the "Christian mystery."

Well, since I have already invited you to put your feet inside the premises of the Hammerfest Seventh-day Adventist Church, let us have a practical day-by-day encounter with the problem aspects. Why not meet our brothers and sisters in Hammerfest in the late autumn; for instance on the last Friday "night" when they do have a Sabbath sunset at all? That is at a season when the shadows of an arctic winter are about to settle down upon them for good. Their scanty hours of autumn daylight have shrunk with remarkable rapidity. Soon its duration is reduced to a matter of minutes -- around midday. So, this week of our first visit, it is just a brief glimpse we get of the sun ball in its former glory. We instinctively take a look at our watches. They show something rather close to 11:30. Is that a decent sundown time? Am I speaking about 11:30 P.M.? No, this is 11:30 A.M.

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A bit early for a sundown and for entering into "holy time"? This may be your first reflection. And then another "mystery" announces its settling down in your bewildered mind: "What about the following weeks?" During close to a whole quarter -- that is, far into the new year -- there won't be any Sabbath-beginning sundown at all, for the sun has decided to stay below the horizon for more than two months. So, the only possibility is to keep to that "unlikely" hour of 11:30 A.M., when the last visible sundown happened on the day of preparation. And when, according to human calculation, must it be assumed that the Sabbath ends? Of course! Exactly 24 hours later; that is, at 11:30 A.M. on the day officially called Saturday. That is the time when our church members, from the beginning, were told to resume their weekday chores. Some drama-conscious tale-tellers, particularly eager to scare you or at least mystify you, will inform you that our churchgoers in Hammerfest bring along with them, as they go to Sabbath school, their empty milk cans so they can go straight from the meeting to the dairy shop on their way home.

Now, if you should decide to brave the cold and the darkness of that season, you might stay in the most hospitable town of Hammerfest until some day in February when the sun returns. The minutely reliable lamp, hung up in the heavens by a faithful Creator, once more begins to brighten man's days on earth -- even as far north as Hammerfest. The sunlit part of man's existence becomes longer and longer. You feel more and more "normal" -- until, by and by, a new "abnormality" happens to you. The arctic phenomenon of the "midnight sun" is approaching. The Sabbath will arrive later and later every new Friday night. And then, finally, there will once more

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be no sundown for an equal number of months, but this time for a more pleasant reason. The big red ball just does not sink below the horizon, at all, during more than two long summer months. Again, there is only one thing to go by, for determining the beginning and the end of holy time. That is the last day in late spring or early summer when there still was a sundown -- followed almost immediately by a sunrise.

Now, what do you realize in spite of all this apparent abnormality? It is "technically possible" for the "men of good will" to keep track of God's holy hours, after all.

But in man's life there happen to be other problems -- besides those of pure chronology. You may know what orthodox Marxists try to teach us: In this world of ours there is just one great question deciding men's destiny. That is the matter of economy.

So, we have to come back to Hammerfest with a new viewpoint. It is a viewpoint which is far from new to the Hammerfestians. With a minimum of imagination, you and I should be able to find out something strikingly problematic about this, all by ourselves. We already do know one thing: Sabbath keepers in a Sunday-keeping world have always had to face serious hardships regarding the quite important prospects of simply finding a job. To decent breadwinners in any region, or at any time, you should be careful to avoid telling the myth that the "winning of that bread" of theirs is a negligible matter. And what do you think happens to employment seekers, when not only the Saturday, but also the Friday, asserts itself as a capital problem?

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On the other hand, of course, taking those problems to be a valid reason for giving up one's faith in the God who has commanded: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" -- that is certainly quite a different matter.

So much for man's economic life! But let us not forget the primordial significance of man's emotional life. Why should we here simply skip such realities in normal human lives as the problems of external honor, social prestige, etc.? In our society those tend to cause greater disruptions in human hearts than any material hardships may ever do. Do Adventists enjoy being looked upon as a bunch of weird creatures with rather abnormal patterns of behavior in our respective environments? By no means. We have long enough heard this definition of Seventh-day Adventists, particularly in Norway: "Those strange ones who keep Sunday on Saturday and do not eat pork."

Now, I can assure you, I do know something about the way teenagers -- and why not just Adventist ones in the city of Hammerfest -- do have the bad luck to feel sometimes. I just need to go back to my own teen years experience. My memories about this are still very vivid in spite of the fact that I certainly did not have the black misfortune of growing up that far north, in what old Tacitus, the Roman historian, calls Ultima Thule. I was a high-school student in a day school in Western Norway. But that school happened to function in the afternoon exclusively. So, how do you think I felt -- the only Seventh-day Adventist child in my class of tough companions -- as Friday night sun-down sneaked in upon me, earlier and earlier from week to week?

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Do you imagine that a youngster feels like a tremendous hero as, in the middle of a class period, and as noiselessly as ever possible, he puts his books and other school material into his school satchel and steals on tiptoe out of the room -- "with his tail between his hind-legs," as the Norwegian expression goes, borrowing its picturesque metaphor from the world of canine creatures? We observe the way our dogs behave as an outward expression of deep shame.

Did I have any real reason to be so deeply ashamed? Hardly. Some pious Seventh-day Adventist would probably blame me for not rather rejoicing at this splendid opportunity for witnessing heartily about my boundless love for Sabbath holiness, soon breaking in upon me. But please be merciful to me, dear reader. Do you happen to be young enough, and foolish enough, to take pity on my youthful immaturity in those days of a more rapid growth in bodily than in spiritual respect? Can you, in spite of all your

wisdom-spattering adulthood, still understand the way a poor fellow like me in those days would react, as I turned to close the door behind me and got a glimpse of my headmaster's disapproving eyes peering at me over the dusky rims of his large glasses? He had formally okayed the reasons given for my leaving the classroom at this unlikely hour. But, of course, that did not necessarily mean that he had been delivered from his serious misgivings about the effect these "religious whims" might have on that dubious scholar's final exams. Far more unpleasant to my self-image, however, than the headmaster's frowns, were the ironical smiles on my schoolmates' faces.

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I wonder if I did not, in fact, sometimes catch myself thinking how much better it would have been, after all, if that old salt, Joseph Bates, had been permitted, by our denomination, to "remain in power" rather than having that "mere girl" prophetess, Ellen White, glide secretly, but safely into the "supreme command".

Do you see the strange mechanisms working in the depths of human minds? According to this, do I have so much to boast of today when I compare myself to those "antisabbatarian rebels" in contemporary Seventh-day Adventism? Would it be a bad thing if I could marshal a little bit more of brotherly mercy and patience and a true understanding of the situation others are finding themselves in? On the other hand, it is, of course, somewhat of a strain for an arch conservative ("old-fashioned") character, like me today to listen to the revolutionary voices crying out with resounding echoes from a congenial resonance chamber all around:

"O Sabbath-keepers of a New Age, unite your forces against a tyranny imposed upon you. Why do you still submit to that sundown slavery of an old-fashioned Adventism? Throw off that yoke of a pedantically stringent sundown type of Sabbath. It has, long enough, proved its inadequacy in our ultra-modern world. We do have timepieces of all kinds, don't we? They are chronological devices we depend on both winter and summer in the Arctic territories anyway.

Now, don't get us wrongly. We do not suggest that you should be exactly like men of the world. They have been arbitrary, choosing midnight as the time when the calendar changes from one day to the other. We should remain unique, exactly as in the days of Joseph Bates, way back in the glorious era of our first beginnings. He was a practical man of down-to-earth sensibility. Long live Joseph Bates and his reasonable and well-balanced Sabbath from 6 to 6."

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I am putting into prose a hymn that has been chanted for years now. And what then happens these days? Even Samuele Bacchiocchi joins his voice to that of the liberals. Was this the only thing still lacking to make the chaos complete? The famous Sabbath expert has finally said his say.\*

We may have a lot of admiration for the writer Samuele Bacchiocchi. He is the man who has spellbound Catholics and Seventh-day Adventists alike, almost as if the two groups were of one single religious persuasion. Now, he, too, has made his verdict about the beginning and the end of holy time. His word has considerable weight among us, and therefore exerts a considerable influence. But influence is something to be both desired and feared!

Now, please do not imagine that I give my former colleague, Bacchiocchi, the main blame for an "innovation" of so rare dimensions. Far from it. He has had too many outstanding forerunners besides our good brother, Elder Bates of old.

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\*One fact Bacchiocchi uses to indicate that God does not insist all that rigidly on the exact hour of the beginning and the end of the Sabbath is this: The Sabbath commandment, itself, does not mention anything about this.

Well, Samuele, is not this a rash way of drawing conclusions? From where do we take the authority to forbid God to speak "ex cathedra" about the Sabbath except in one single verse in Exodus 20?

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There have been numbers of illustrious examples inviting imitation in ultra-modern times. I do not need to limit my search to the annals of Seventh-day Baptism. Even right in the midst of official circles of present-day Adventism the influence of bold innovators is being strongly felt:

A few years ago there was finally formed a committee, charged with the task of giving serious study to the questions now making themselves notoriously heard. It was natural for that committee to convene in Scandinavia, and Skodsborg was the famous center of its convention. It was under the leadership of scholars from the Biblical Research Department of the General Conference and from the Theological Seminary of Andrews University. What could be imagined as more competent than that in Seventh-day Adventist theology? And what result did that committee come up with in terms of a final report issued at the close of the meetings? That report may, to some, have the appearance of being quite honorable in its academic formulations. Still, some very serious scholars may claim it is a pitiable bungle. Why? Where does its most catastrophically modernistic feature turn up? That is in the very fact of letting the two diametrical opposites appear as "both very good." How could anything as wishy-washy as that be tolerated by conscientious scholars of the old stock? To be sure, it can never be tolerated by the stern realism of a meticulously righteous God. I just can't understand why such "wishy-washiness" should have to be the result in this case; the more so as some most knowledgeable scholarship was present in that committee.

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Now, let me show you where the catastrophic is here allowed to come in -- in plain everyday life. I am taking the case of two very young students attending the same class in a non-Seventh-day Adventist day school -- in Hammerfest, if you please! They are both Adventists. One of them has been struck by some of the serious arguments asserting themselves in part of the Skodsborg study conference, clearly in favor of the most stringent sundown alternative. So, that student takes all the "shame" involved in choosing to "run the gauntlet". Friday after Friday, his unimpressive figure is pursued by the mocking stare of two rows of fellow students and the critical comments of a teacher who just cannot understand why a Seventh-day Adventist student should feel forced to leave the classroom at 11 A.M. on a Friday forenoon: Anyway, that boy has his mind made up. For this is the way he and his family have interpreted the Skodsborg minutes. But that is only half the story, and the better half.

What about the other student? Everybody knows that he, too, is an Adventist, belonging to the same "infested" Arctic Region Seventh-day Adventist Church. Well, his choice is to stay in school `til everybody leaves in the dark afternoon.

By the onlookers in the city that student is, of course, the one who is considered the "normally-behaving fellow." You might say: "He and his household are the ones who have really grasped the true and `liberating' message of the Skodsborg Convention's final report."

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One thing I am naturally very much concerned about here is the impression the great multitude of an onlooking world must necessarily get of the behavior of modern Seventh-day Adventism. Could it be an impression of admirable consistency? I am rather much afraid that it is bound to be a most confusing testimony of utter inconsistency. What kind of "living letters" are you and I, read by a curious crowd surrounding us? Does this sound similar to God's testimony? Here I must confess something to you. From the beginning I used to have a particular sense of holy awe listening to that special testimony coming directly to you and me, selected children of the mercifully caring One in the endtime. Why does it seem such a heartfelt concern of His to inform us exactly about the correct hour for us to enter the solemn time to which he has attached a special holiness, an outstanding blessing? Maybe it is the unexpected way that special testimony emerges in the Spirit of Prophecy literature that has surrounded it with a certain mystery in my mind. Take first Page 113 of the first volume. There we read: "TESTIMONY FOR THE CHURCH, number one." A couple of pages follow with a most serious appeal under the title: "THY BROTHER'S KEEPER." Ellen asks the angel why simplicity has been shut out from the church and why pride and exaltation have come in instead. The angel gives the reason: It is unconcern. We constantly seem to be asking: "Am I my brother's watcher?" The angel then goes into several everyday details, regarding just that destructive and self-destructive trend of self-centeredness. And then, all-of-a-sudden, we are presented with something we hardly expected. In fact, an incredible number of Seventh-day Adventists are seen to know nothing about it. The headline runs:

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### **"TIME TO BEGIN THE SABBATH"**

"I saw that it is even so, `From even unto even shall ye celebrate your Sabbaths.' Said the angel, `take the word of God, read it, understand, and ye cannot err. Read carefully, and ye shall there find what even is, and when it is. I asked the angel if the frown of God had been upon His people for commencing the Sabbath as they had. I was directed back to the first rise of the Sabbath, and followed the people of God up to this time, but did not see that the Lord was displeased, or frowned upon them. I inquired why it had been thus, that at this late day we must change the time of commencing the Sabbath. Said the angel, 'Ye shall understand, but not yet, not yet.' Said the angel, `If light come, and that light is set aside or rejected, then comes condemnation, and the frown of God; but before the light comes, there is no sin, for there is no light for them to reject.' I saw that it was in the minds of some that the Lord had shown that the Sabbath commenced at six o'clock, when I had only seen that it commenced at 'even,' and it was inferred that even was at six. I saw that the servants of God must draw together."

Are you, perhaps, waiting for some additional enlightenment here regarding the same topic immediately? If so, then you are disappointed. What follows is a sharp line of separation. Then comes another main headline:

### **III. "OPPOSERS OF THE TRUTH."**

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What does all this mean? Has the serious question of the weekly beginning of holy time been left dangling in mid air? Not at all. It is you and I who keep dangling in the air. The Sabbath truth had been entrusted into our hands, but we have been unfaithful stewards. The sacred has been desecrated. Even for the solemn question of our salvation or perdition, God has made himself dependent on our cooperation. It is for our sake as persons, creatures endowed with a free will, He has agreed to accept that fantastic degree of other dependence. It is part and parcel of His going all the way down. In this, too, He has proved Himself to be the Realist par excellence. He does not push us, high-handedly, into his realms of holiness. Only through a corresponding spirit of lowliness on our part can the reality of Sabbath holiness, with the solemn stringency it implies, flow abundantly into our lives and transform our nature to the likeness of His nature.

In view of these facts, so clearly revealed in the Bible, I cannot fail to ask one question about our present behavior. How in the world could any ever so bold spirit of proud modernistic humanism, within our ranks, be audacious even to the point of defying that plain message of ultimate finality quoted above? Just how could it possibly happen?

Please get to know the secret stratagem employed by satanic forces in order to prevail over otherwise quite sensible human minds and cause them to adopt the incredible principles of a nonsense philosophy, paralyzing, as it were, every morsel of common sense.

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I am not here speaking about childlike cases of simple ignorance -- for instance, a perfectly understandable (and, therefore, to some extent quite excusable) lack of linguistic proficiency; I have known people, sincere Bible students, who suddenly felt they had made a discovery that would cause resounding sensation in the world of theology. The "new truth" had to do with precisely our present topic. It was supposed to revolutionize our knowledge of the exact beginning of the Sabbath, or of any day for that matter. The occasion was the famous passage of Matthew 28:1.

"In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to the sepulchre."

Did not this mean that the end of the Sabbath happened early on Sunday morning? What a lucky strike! So, when did the Sabbath begin, according to this? Would not that be early on Saturday morning? What a pleasant discovery! Where could anybody -- whether Gods or men -- look for a more fortunate point to begin holy time? All the usual problems seemed to be conquered for good. Even our secular investors of 12:00 o'clock midnight as the place to start counting a new day would here tend to look like dwarfs in matters of practical intelligence. And what about Christians? What did they have to worry about now? What solution could be more peaceful than this one? From this moment on any man could simply sleep his way right into the holy day. Would not that seem pretty problem-free? Finally, all the troubles, theoretical ones and practi-

cal ones, had apparently had the good grace of simply blowing away with the fresh breeze of a vanishing night.

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Indeed, why not? The solution would seem a very shrewd one -- if it had not been for one little thing: Evidently, that realistic God of ours never planned for you and me to glide as passively as that -- I should perhaps rather say "as sleepily as that" -- into His time of divine holiness. Do you blame Him? Who would dare to reproach God for His evident plan of having something diametrically opposite happen in man's life, something very different from blank unconsciousness? On the contrary, He insisted on making our encounters with the Sabbath a regular drama. That does not necessarily mean devoid of peace. Christianity, just as Judaism, has its own idea about the "peaceful."

"How I wish you would mind my commandments," says the Lord. "Then your peace should be like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the ocean." What does that mean? That means drama, a tremendously dynamic underwater (submarine) kind of drama. Try to stem the tide of that peaceful river and you will see what kind of dynamics you have to deal with. In fact, in the lives of some of us, God even seems to have wanted something one might call melodramatic, preferably in as positive a sense as ever feasible. He might even plan a Sabbath trauma we shall have to remember for the rest of our lives.

I have already mentioned serious failures in terms of downright bankruptcies. You have imagination enough to visualize what financial ruin may mean under certain circumstances. You might prove to be an exceptional Job in the Biblical sense of a temporary trauma; and why? For one simple reason: You have made up your mind to keep the Sabbath in the only scriptural way, even for a resident of the Arctic region!

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Or you could be the victim of a regular nightmare, an emotional crisis. For some Sabbath-keepers, God has had in store a "Jabbok River experience" of the radically transforming pattern. And you need not even go all the way to an Ultima Thule center of those crowned with the dubious glory of being called northernmost in the world, in order to suffer persecution of the deepest mental category.

As you see, I have not made any effort to minimize the negative effects, the trials and temptations, resulting from man's going ever farther north. If you settle for such latitudes, that is your privilege; but you must not expect a sundown type of Sabbath observance to be an easy thing to manage there. In most cases, of course, it was distant forefathers of mine who made up their minds to take part in migrations that happened to be in vogue. They just went north -- for unknown reasons, and not necessarily the most rational ones.

How could there be any frown of God, to use Ellen White's formulation, upon present-day Adventists who happen to be the heirs of those migratory irrationalists of old? When was there a time during which descendants did not have to bear the consequences of their ancestors' unfortunate choices? What would tend to make the burdens borne rather unbearable are the light-minded hints on the part of certain liberalist characters suggesting that bearing the burdens is a useless drudgery, and hence meaningless.

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But who, then, is the truly responsible one for having imposed upon Sabbath-keepers' necks those "meaningless burdens?" Is it God perhaps? Was He the One who fooled your forefathers and mine into settling down in such inhospitable regions? Was it God who put into some men's minds, right now, that they should spend years on end upon the very North Pole, or extremely close to it? Is it because they are so immensely anxious to have holy time in their lives that people go where sundowns are hardly discernible at all?

Or what about our astronauts circling the earth in their space ships? Each tour takes about an hour and a half. How many hours does it take them to have seven sundowns at that speed? Is it the eagerness to arrive at a Sabbath evening vespers that drives them to speed that wildly along?

I note with interest what the great dream of some men today happens to be. It is to go on "holiday" trips to Mars and Venus. Some eight months is the approximate time of travel to Mars, and eight months back again. They won't have to worry excessively about sundowns during that time, will they, except for that single "self-made" one at the moment when they steer their space vessel around the planet to start on their homeward journey? Apart from this, they will have the sun shining brightly all the time on their sophisticated vehicle for another eight months. Whatever the source of their inspiration is, it certainly is not the desire to keep track of God's holy Sabbath. Sundowns seem to have the destiny of becoming few and far between, in terms of vesper worship in this age of increasing displacement madness. It is above all God and His holiness that is being displaced.

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And what about you and me in this mad whirl? Are we particularly mindful of a counsel given to us by the Spirit of Prophecy? We are solemnly recommended to place ourselves where it would be easy for us and our children to keep the Sabbath. Is that what we seem particularly striving to do?

Was it the thing our forebears were particularly eager to do during millennia? I am afraid not!

Still, there is one suggestion I would hardly dare to make to Sabbath-keepers whose total situation I know so little about: "Pack your trunks and go south!"

I would hesitate seriously to give a counsel of that categorical kind to any person whose entangled life situation I do not know with any perfect accuracy.

What I do know fairly well is the ideal God, Himself, originally had for His children on earth. The Garden Home He had prepared for our first parents was located in the balanced clime of old Mesopotamia. And who can doubt what He had in mind for their children? He definitely did not plan for them to settle down extremely far from that model home. No, that was obviously the place they were supposed to get back to ever so often. How often, in fact? Once a week. We shall consider further evidence for the capital principle already mentioned: The Sabbath is a family affair. What was the sequence of the two great institutions of Eden? The institution of Marriage preceded that of the Sabbath. Sabbaths were simply, from the beginning, planned as the great family festivals. The Creator, Himself, was the great family Father of that unique festival. Those who may have any doubts about this should just read the last verses of the Book of Isaiah.

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They contain the great prediction about God's projects for Sabbath celebration for millennia without end in the earth made new. Whatever your weekdays will be like, wherever they will be spent, one thing is certain: Your Sabbath will be celebrated at the throne of God and the Lamb. The "going up to Jerusalem" will once more be the great experience for young and old, and now even once a week. That going up will be a festive event more glorious than anything ever known in ancient Israel.

Anyway, you do realize one thing: There is no chance that some will be spending their Sabbath on the North Pole, some on the South Pole and some at any casual place in-between. There will be no question of varying places with varying Sabbath sundowns for this group and that. Oh no, togetherness is the happy formula for Sabbaths in eternity.

Of course, our age is bound to be different from that ideal. Realism has a different story to tell you and me today. So far, we are simply bound to put up with sundry inconveniences in sundry lands. We must learn to adapt to something so dishearteningly short of the idea God has had in store for us from eternity. The great tragedy, however, is not that adaptation as such. When, only, does tragedy threaten to invade our lives? Only at the dreadful moment when we permit our adaptation to take the form of throwing overboard fundamental God-given principles.

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We have not lost our bearings that completely, have we? We are not among those who refuse to consider the great Noachian Flood as a natural consequence of just exceeding sinfulness among men, are we? On the contrary, I hope. We know full well certain astrophysical changes coinciding with that global inundation that occurred as a direct result of that same sinfulness of ours as a human race. The obliquity of the earth's axis is a reality. The natural conditions of this globe will remain a mess for another one thousand years.

We just have to accept as a curse -- and still as a virtual blessing -- the natural consequences of that lack of straightness once happening to our earth's relationship to the sun, a relationship physically decisive for our literal encounter with holy time:

"While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." Genesis 8:22.

Only two times a year does it happen that all parts of the globe can enjoy the same well-balanced distribution of light and darkness, day and night. That is at spring equinox (March 23) and at autumn equinox (September 23). How nice, after all, to be granted seasons when inmates of the earth, in spite of all their immeasurable migrations, can enjoy equatorial balance in the distribution of day and night. Even the Hammerfestian can then have the rare pleasure of seeing the sun rising at 6:00 in the morning and going down at 6:00 at night. Of course, as winter comes nearer and nearer that "good behavior" of the sun tends to fail, ending in total darkness. The balance is lost. Also, as summer comes nearer and nearer, the precious quality of orderliness and just balance gets miserably lost.

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The great question in human life, however, is and remains the ethical one. And there the capital issue is not "How does the sun behave?" The thundering question goes: "How does man behave?" Is his decent behavior entirely dependent on "possible caprices" in the way the sun acts? Not one bit. There is all the time, and under all cir-

cumstances, the wonderful possibility of a perfect behavior. It is a question of humble submission to the will of God. There is nothing really complicated in this matter. Even in good Sabbatarianism there is always a possibility of submitting rather than revolting. Even in Hammerfest there are both eventualities making themselves available.

What, in the two alternative cases, is the possible choice?

1) Humility says something like this:

"How blessed to have this weekly encounter with a merciful God at the specific time that He has provided. Then I never run the risk of missing His rendezvous! Even as the sinner I am, I can bravely appear in front of Him. I come to Him, fully aware of my position as a 'Post-Noachian.' That is, I have a full share in even Pre-Noachian sinfulness. But the rainbow God sent to Noah is still here and a living token that God's mercy also includes me. The few inconveniences I have to suffer are certainly not much to make such a fuss about. In fact, they rather seem to function as one valuable way God avails Himself of for the purpose of straightening me out. That obliquity of the axis actually seems to help me wonderfully to keep straight on my own axis. How could I manage without that constant reminder of my personal shortcomings."

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So much for the case of the good behavior.

But what now about a very different specimen of the "polar species"? His growling and grumbling has the husky tone of the born rebel. I am referring to a behavior, in the face of adversity, which certainly is not all that good. It has, on the contrary, distinguished itself as notoriously bad. The manner of speech coming out in this case, if I dare at all to subject it to a realistic interpretation, might be something like the following:

"God in Heaven, let me be frank with you. There is something discouragingly crooked I seem to come across all along my pathway in life today. And it is not a crookedness limiting itself to that axis of the earth you have arranged for us. That is just a part of the mess with which I am confronted. They say it is your way of putting things straight again. But never mind. I have fortunately found my own way of adapting myself to that obliquity. I simply make as if everything is straight as a needle, after all. You should know

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then the reasons I do have for skipping the hurdles my brothers and sisters on earth tell me to respect. How could a man born for freedom make himself dependent on that desperately irregular timepiece you have suspended in the heavens. I have found it imperative to invent a clock of my own. That one goes on ticking with impeccable regularity summer and winter, day and night. It does not for one moment permit itself to be led astray by the whims of your deficient axis. It faithfully informs me every new week exactly when holy time, as I know it, happens in my sturdy life cycle. I am the perfectly self-sufficient one, the absolutely self-contained one. I am the Sabbatarian grouch of the Polar night and the Midnight Sun. I am telling you, in case you should not know already."

What I have tried to describe above is two life styles. They are not to be found exclusively in Adventism north of the Polar Circle (Some say: "north of the Moral circle.") No, the distinction applies to Christendom all over the world. For the latter of the two styles, however, it is worthwhile noticing that Norwegians have the possibility of summing it up in one single word: SELVTEKT. In English it may need a whole line to

be expressed. It is the peculiar life style of TAKING THE LAW INTO ONE'S OWN HANDS.

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That style never brought its man to the stupendous originality he used to be bragging of, nor to the pinnacles of fame he was constantly dreaming about. On the contrary, his very grouchiness always tended to drop him at the sad shores of a pitiable mediocrity God has in store for mediocre hearts. That is the frustrating fate Ellen White warned Canright that he would experience if he went on chanting his old refrain: "Oh, if only I had been a preacher engaged by one of the major Protestant denominations! What a stir I would make in the world." Ellen told him, with the tough realism her prophetic vision revealed to her, what the real facts were like: It was thanks to the Advent message that he had the good fortune of finding himself in the exceptionally favorable position he was blessed to enjoy so far. And, if he went on indulging in the dubious thoughts and desires the tempter placed before him, a destiny of the most tragic sort would eventually catch up with him: His "sun would set in obscurity."

What strikes me particularly here is not the word "sun", but the word "obscurity." In English this is not only the opposite of light. It is the antonym of fame. The foolish stubbornness of a self-sufficient heart leads -- not to glorious distinction, but rather, in the long run, to the dull shadows of a mediocre life, and to final perdition.

Our liberals have too much in common with a group of people our day has agreed to describe as "hippies." They choose "to do their own thing." In their relationship to Sabbath holiness, they will inevitably end up someday being totally "relieved".

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They assert themselves more and more as "free thinkers." As far as the Sabbath is concerned, they will no longer be "inconsistent like Desmond Ford", but rather "consistent like Robert Brinsmead." The Sabbath is ultimately left behind altogether. Like Canright of old they will have the eerie experience of seeing their "sun setting in obscurity."

By the way, I do not feel that we as a denomination have all that much to be joyous about, as regards the Brinsmead drama. Have we not been pretty merciless toward him at a time when a willingness was growing up in his mind and heart to come back to us? I often feel that I am here taking part in a denominational tragedy.

#### **IV. A REVELATION OF HISTORIC DIMENSIONS: GLIMPSES OF A PHILOSOPHY CALLED THE ENDTIME OMEGA**

The fact we should not miss by any chance is the following: What we are experiencing today is a mere introduction into one thing: the decisive endtime drama of the Sabbath. As an historian of ideas, I have dedicated decades to a fascinating study, namely: certain patterns of human thought ending with one thing: a sort of quicksand desperation I call "Sabbathlessness." We have never paid due attention to the nature of those patterns of thought. Nevertheless, knowledge about them has been available throughout history, ancient and modern. What was sadly lacking in you and me was the necessary motivation to dig deep into the treasure of truth, placed abundantly at our disposal by the Spirit of

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Prophecy. In the testimony especially adapted to our present need, it is all registered and sorted out as part and parcel of the science of salvation, warnings and admonitions, of expert quality. My writing of a second book on the "Day of Destiny" is a vain attempt, and your reading it is a waste of time, unless you deem it worthwhile to take the trouble to grasp a number of basic ideas with which you are not necessarily familiar offhand.

And be advised! That grasp is surprisingly simple, once you have gone in for it. Gradually, it also turns out to be pleasurable, for it finally reveals itself as filled to the brim with plain Christian meaningfulness. It is a lack of genuine Spirit (a lack of the "Truth as it is in Jesus") that causes both theology and philosophy to look complicated.

The art of intelligent reasoning which the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy recommend to us does not at all demand any sophisticated gifts of discursive speculation. On the contrary, the more straightforward your habits of reasoning are, the more easily you will grasp the essential.

One myth, however, you must definitely abandon is the unfortunate idea among mainstream Seventh-day Adventists today, that philosophy as such is a matter we have nothing to do with. What a perilous standpoint! For that would immediately imply one catastrophic thing: "Also, the philosophy of Christian Realism is doomed to death."

Some try to impress me by saying, As far as they know, 'the Bible never said one word about Realism.' They forget that Holy Writ has its own term for the modern word "Realism." That is "the love of the truth." And, if we have not noticed the solemn warning the Bible gives to such who have neglected to receive that noble treasure in a human heart, then we are in serious jeopardy. (2 Thess. 2:10, 11.)

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We are right in the midst of the solemn topic of Christian sense and pagan nonsense.

I feel downright ashamed sometimes to admit how ridiculously infatuated we all prove to be in front of a certain "prestige" we secretly suspect is present, after all, in archpagan philosophy. That infatuation will always correspond exactly to a similar amount of inferiority feeling of which we suffer in the face of the simple truthfulness of God's own philosophy which we ought to make our own.

Should it not be high time we had a day off, a real Sabbath holy day, from this undignified evaluation of archpagan stupidity versus Christian wisdom?

Now, in man's world, every radical change for the better seems to start with a genuine confession. I for my part confess that I have been no better than you in these matters. And I see so many of our own doctoral candidates fighting desperately with the same problems. My most important confession, however, is of a very special nature. I am duty bound to inform you of what my main deliverance has been like. Where did the Realism which was destined to set me free come from? Of course from the One who is Light. But notice: not directly from Him for all the special illuminations we are here speaking about. God be praised. You know what it may mean to be exposed to a straight flash of head-on radiation

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without any reduction. Blindness could be the result, not just temporarily, as in the case of Paul on the road to Damascus; but with permanent effect. Or something even worse could happen. A fool like me could be puffed up. And both those two reactions (blind-

ness and pride) must be regarded as rather poor forms of "realism". So, a certain medium (in a definitely nonspiritualistic sense of the term) was probably needed. A human person was chosen, once more, to serve as a suitable reflector. It proved to be a most down-to-earth one. In my vocabulary, that means both exceptionally lowly (modest) and exceptionally realistic at the same time. I shall have to tell you more about the fantastic combination of exquisite qualities in "down-to-earthness" in this Sabbath dissertation.

Of course, I need not tell you the old story about the "small light", which, from the beginning, used to lead our pioneers to the Great One. My confession may here take this plain form: I ascribe to the Spirit of Prophecy every bit of any insights I have been privileged to gather in professional fields of human knowledge I have specialized in. Again and again have I been forced to shrink back in amazement as the writings of a 17-year-old girl, without any formal education to speak of, came to my knowledge. Through document after document, this humble servant of the Lord provided me with the groundwork; that is, the pillars, the basic principles of philosophy which my teachers in academic institutions of the world had never been able to give me the slightest idea about.

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One capital aberration in the minds and in the hearts of Western men must here be cleared up -- the sooner the better. It has caused the greatest harm that could ever happen to any people. It has to do with the main pattern of thought dominating your world and mine today. So, this must come first. It will clear the way for understanding a secondary item imagined to be more difficult to grasp.

I am starting by dismantling recklessly the main pattern of thought dominating our culture today. I should perhaps say its main religion -- its only religion: SPIRITUALISM. Only after having passed by that ogre of wickedness, do you have the prerequisite for discovering its monster offspring, the ogre of ogres. I am almost too scared to name it, but I can assure you, you are finding yourself -- sword in hand -- bravely facing the very archenemy of the Sabbath. Do you think you can dispense with knowing anything, whatever, about that one? An historical moment in your life on this earth has now arrived. It is at the same time an epochal event in the history of the Sabbath. You have had an encounter with the Sabbath as the drama of dramas in the life of man and in the life of God, Himself. But, let us now take one thing at a time. Our first issue is:

## **V. "PURE" - SPIRIT'ISM -- THE ABC OF IRRATIONAL REASONING.**

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For quite a long time I did not realize how fatally you and I are led captive by that special pattern of thought, the basic one in all the Western culture to date. For, if it is contrary to the love of the truth, how could it be a harmless thing? Both intellectually and spiritually it is a murderer, or rather an assassin. For the worst thing about it is the way we ignore its presence. "To ignore", however, in the English language is a conscious and active process of choosing to remain ignorant. Unlike the French verb "ignorer" (to be ignorant) it implies an ignorance for which you must be kept personally responsible. To be lightminded is a condition that cannot pass by with impunity. We are once more in the serious field of ethics, not "mere epistemology." Remember that, in case you had now rather not take the trouble to be informed.

Please suppose for a moment that the special message of the Spirit from God is true: It is Sabbath holiness that God has provided for the purpose of healing our sin-split souls. Will it not then be an act of stubbornness to refuse to accept due information about satanic devices of human philosophy, causing you and me to be lulled to sleep by a spirit of liberalism, which is nothing but the most shameful brand of situation ethics, right in the field of Sabbath observance? Why should we act as if the Spirit of Prophecy were not there, right near, and more than willing to come to our rescue, to enlighten us?

I can only refer, with "expert knowledge", to one thing: my own erstwhile helplessness, and the help which did come. I had abandoned every hope of being accurately and meaningfully informed about the deeper nature of Spiritualism (let alone Pantheism). I found nothing guiding my search in the standard works of contemporary research. So, from that source there was certainly no chance at all that I could derive any useful clues regarding the significance of spiritualism as a world philosophy.

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I just had a vague, but intensely disturbing feeling: This must be a cruel Eros, excogitating a deadly on-slaught against the heavenly Agape. And his favorite secret weapon, invented in order to achieve the killing -- this only gradually dawned upon my mind -- was the destruction of the Sabbath.

How could I gain safe and accurate knowledge about spiritualism as well as the Sabbath? Fortunately to a Seventh-day Adventist researcher of meaningfulness in the drama-filled field of the history of ideas, there is a rare source of scholarly knowledge available: the Spirit of Prophecy. That Source is marvelously fitted to provide expert answers to the deepest questions of conventional thought.

What, then, were the most remarkable basic truths about timeless spiritualism that professional historians of the world had failed to register?

There is hardly one student of mine in those courses of Christian philosophy over the last fourth of a century who will fail entirely to have in front of his inner eye one special diagram. That is the illustrative figure of a simple road block, viewed in cross section perspective. My "Mystic Omega of Endtime Crisis" has three of those figures with detailed description of the progressive world drama graphically portrayed. Here, a single one must suffice:

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Road base of Christian Realism	
Ditch of Materialism	Ditch of Spiritualism

The two opposite ditches meet in the abyss of PANTHEISM

Once in a while, some bright head in the classroom would ask me: "Should not rather the two opposites meet somewhere up in the glorious heights of heavenly holism? Does not your sacred philosophy of Biblical totality otherwise always contend that body and soul go harmoniously together to make a whole man?"

Every time I had to answer: "You forget one thing: Materialism is not simple materiality. It is a gross perversion of it. It blasphemously claims that barren molecules or atoms are the only reality existing in that man. In a similar way Spiritualism

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is a satanic perversion of the concept spirituality. It mercilessly tears the spirit (the soul) away from its bodily counterpart claiming audaciously: 'Pure spirit is the only true reality in man.' So please remember: That cruelly abstracted 'soul' in the spiritualists' disrupted philosophy is a mere specter. It is a nonentity -- a zero. The same applies to the 'body' -- the 'purely material' -- in the spiritualist's vocabulary. It is in reality a sad zero. And now, when you add one zero to another zero, how much do you have?  $0 + 0 = 0$ . Isn't that good mathematics?" We are left with a poor Nirvana that both materialists and spiritualists seem to be longing for, the timeless and spaceless nothingness that will take away the pain of their godless lives.

Are you now astonished that I have the boldness to register ABSURDITY as one of the two main characteristics the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy have shown me in the pseudo-religion of Spiritualism? Spiritualists give themselves up to their peculiar form of NONSENSE REASONING with an air of naturalness, as if it were a matter or real science.

But there is a second quality in it, even more incredible than that, humanly speaking. That is its classical principle of AUTOMATISM, or absolute IMPERSONALISM. Please note this down as a reliable historical fact: Downright INSENSITIVITY or blank UNCONCERN was regarded, all the way from the master spiritualist, Plato, on, as a top ideal! Did you otherwise ever hear about any religious movement having the nerve to admit openly: "We base our message to the world about salvation on an ideal of utter FEELINGLESSNESS"? Imagine founders

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of a world religion -- in fact, the decisive one in the endtime battle against the heavenly Agape -- making conscious efforts to remain simply indifferent! And in that indifference they see the virtue par excellence! Just one of those conscious efforts is today visible in all the Eastern cults threatening to inundate our Western territories with their various forms of "transcendental" meditation.

Now, would it be of any real help to you to go to average members or even learned scholars in a culture so permeated by basically spiritualist concepts of man and the world in order to overcome your ignorance about spiritualism?

Let us take an example. Suppose you want to know what spiritualists, themselves, think about spiritualism: You go to a person commonly described as a "spiritualist" in the English-speaking world. You ask him (or her -- most mediums are women) what spiritualism is. He (or she) will serve you the usual nice story about some wonderful things happening to a human being at the moment of death: He goes on living -- "automatically." And it is a life a thousand times more meaningful than anything experienced so far in this miserable world.

Now, is that the classical concept of spiritualism? By no means. I mentioned the word "automatically". To a certain extent the medium does know the significance of that term. It means that the human soul is immortal (deathless) in the sense of absolute automatism. That is, a seriously significant sense. For it means that this marvelous soul has life in herself. She does not need any God who gives it to her. Oh, no! She is absolutely self-contained. The idea of

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a personal God needed for giving life, and keeping it, is as absent from the thinking of a genuine spiritualist as it is from the mind of the most hard-boiled materialist -- even the

staunchest atheist in the Kremlin. In other words, that automatism is absolutely godless. It is -- as it would naturally befit all automatism -- definitely impersonal.

Now, tell me sincerely: What do you think about that general quality of sheer impersonalism? Do you feel it goes harmoniously -- and intelligently -- together with that tremendous "meaningfulness", intellectually and emotionally speaking, which our previously mentioned spirit medium was bragging about? She kept assuring us about the automatically continued life of a human soul. It is evident enough that there must be a strange split happening to minds that are able to produce a concoction of self-contradictory conceptions as wild as this. I mean automatism and personalism in one and the same bag.

So, once more, quite frankly: What about the classical spiritualist's concept of spiritualism? Is it just as inconsistent and self-contradictory as that? You might add: Is it as devoid of intellectual honesty as that?

No. It is far more consistent in its attitude of total automatism and total impersonalism. I must be permitted to add: It is quite stubbornly audacious in its clear statement of total godlessness. You may rightly shudder at this piece of enlightenment about spiritualism, proper, you are here receiving. For, what does impersonalism really mean in any human environment, even the purely secular one? It means the basic attitude of being absolutely feelingless: that is, definitely dehumanized. It boldly informs us about the basest of all sins: indifference -- the absolute unconcern.

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Let me inform you what even outstanding spiritualists in our world today -- I could give you a number of references -- will admit without any qualm. I mean, if you approach them, particularly truly sophisticated male ones! -- while they happen to be in their professional mood of scholarly objectivity: It is no use going to a general practitioner in the art of necromancy to be duly informed in this field. How could you hope that he (or she) would tell a prospective customer what his (or her) basic idea of spiritualism is like? He knows too well a weakness that is incurable in "the man in the street." That man is a hopeless romantic. This applies, without fail, even in a tough community like ours. We are all longing for a dreamland that stern realism knows nothing about. That is not "reality" as the learned guild of classical spiritualism has imagined it for thousands of years. It is wicked connivance on the part of more learned and sophisticated members of the spiritualistic pack to keep alive that foolish romanticism of the ignorant ones.

What you and I must now finally get to know is how hopelessly unrealistic that automatism, espoused by pagan spiritualism, actually is. And above all this: how satanically cruel it is! This is what I have done my best to make plain as noontide -- and, above all, as shakingly impressive, as ever possible, in my last chapter of a book supposed to be your ABC to the second volume ("Day of Destiny I"). Why should I give an abbreviated and, hence amputated, rendering of that here? It is called

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## **VI. "SIGN OF A FREE GOD": SABBATH VERSUS AUTOMATISM".**

Now, I rather have the duty and the meaningful task in front of me to give you a faithful report of Point Number 2 which has been treacherously pushed under the rug. By whom? By you and me and initially, of course, the devil, himself. Why should all this remain covered by willful ignorance still? I am coming back to spiritualism's basic trend of an absolutely unbelievable degree of irrationality. That word expresses it more mildly

than it deserves. We did start our present discussion by speaking about this criminal foe of Biblical realism. But I did not yet inform you expressly from what special pattern of philosophy it actually stems. Now you should know: it is a basic trait of full-blown spiritualism. It is the pinnacle of its pride, an elaborate system of willful senselessness, an unprecedented pattern of nonsense thinking. Here you are in your full right to ask: How could any person in his right mind condescend to the abnormality of adopting this as a principle of favorite philosophy? And more unbelievable still: How could other persons, not so inextricably involved as members of the irrationality club, condescend to the rare dishonesty of keeping quiet about this remarkable characteristic of spiritualism as a time honored philosophy? Yes, indeed. How could they; that is, if they did have professional knowledge about it? My most likely answer would be: There is astonishingly poor knowledge. That even applies

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to the professional historians of philosophy, who are supposed to know. Of course, we all do belong to a world that "wants to be deceived." We are the born self-deceivers. So, the archdeceiver finds faithful collaborators in us. This was the tragic lot of liberalism always.

One most unfortunate coincidence, however, should also be pointed out. That is the common usage of the word "spiritualism" in the English-speaking world. That tends to increase our confusion. Spiritualism, as a general philosophy, is assumed to be identical with the phenomenon of spiritism. But spiritism is, properly speaking, limited to those more or less boisterous pranks of the spirit world. We should know, however, something important about the famous pioneer leader of the health movement in Seventh-day Adventism, John Kellogg. Although he was never known as an active spiritist in the vulgar sense of the term, he did distinguish himself as a most influential adherent of spiritualism as a basic philosophy. For this is something enveloping a far more comprehensive danger than what spiritism, with its more vulgar phenomena, stands for. Our confusion of ideas in this respect causes us to lose sight of something far more shrewd and far more sophisticated than what our modern term of "spiritualism" is believed to cover. Hence our serious danger of failing to associate spiritualism with the historic battle it keeps waging against the Sabbath! How can we get that fatal conception of human life efficiently stripped of the glorious garbs it now, more than ever, manages to adorn itself with right in our present midst?

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In the hope of shedding some relevant light on this problem, I shall relate something happening to me at the time when my first manuscript on the Sabbath, some decades ago, had been accepted for publication. It was, of course, important for R & H Publishing Association to find a competent editor for the task of making it ready to go into print. That special editor complained to me that he had difficulty in understanding certain parts of my introduction. I seemed to be operating with concepts of spiritualism rather unknown to him. By way of answer I explained to him the concepts the Spirit of Prophecy had placed at the disposal of our pioneers, regarding the basic nature of spiritualism. It then looked as if my editor had grasped the matter. He asked me, however, to rewrite certain passages making those new insights understandable to all my readers, who might also be assumed to be unfamiliar with certain aspects of the term "spiritualism", particularly so in an English-speaking environment. I supplied Spirit of Proph-

ecy references, making these important facts about spiritualist thought-forms clear to us, as far as they relate themselves to the Sabbath question. But, evidently, my editor did not have any appreciation all that enthusiastic for this additional knowledge coming to us through that source of enlightenment. At least, at the moment when the Editor-in-Chief suggested unexpectedly that the manuscript be dropped, due to its "unpopular nature", my man supported this vote of blunt dismissal!

My own opinion about this is still the same. Without those insights miraculously made available to us, we could hardly discern our way toward a full understanding of the true battle against the Sabbath happening to our modern Western world.

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The weird type of idealism platonic spiritualism stands for reveals the secret underlying reason why the Sabbath was deemed worthy of nothing but contempt. I shall show you how fantastically that "reason" for a catastrophic depreciation has succeeded in making its way right into circles bearing the name of Seventh-day Adventism. How much do you really know about the ridiculous pride taken by Greek humanism in a barren abstraction driving you and me to the vainglorious emptiness of "going beyond" ("transcending victoriously") the immediately given in a world of simple realism. To such fools, appreciating nothing but empty abstraction, how could anything as tangibly concrete as a sundown Sabbath have any chance of coming into its own? But, please do not fancy that spiritualism was destined to be the greatest disaster happening to the Western world. Only now are we somewhat prepared for a reasonable grasp of the most disastrous event of all.

## VII. THE GENESIS OF PANTHEISM.

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We are facing the most sensational case of radical irrationality, or stark madness, that has happened to the life of any people. This is also where we can see irrationality's wickedness manifesting itself in the literal sense of moral corruption. Its utter depravity, however, is revealed in its historic battle precisely against the Sabbath. I can very well understand the extreme violence of this onslaught. For, what is the Sabbath in reality? It is God's supreme plan to restore a relationship of the most intensive personalism between man and his Creator. We must here get to know something essential about the tremendous role holiness plays in that plan. Only then can we also get to know something catastrophic about profanation. One shaking, but most relevant, example is the profanation caused by Aaron's two sons, Nadab and Abihu. They made the tragic mistake of considering as a trifling matter God's solemn order to distinguish markedly between holy fire and common fire. God had given clear enough instructions regarding the kind of fire they were to use as they took part in the celebration of a holy service. Only the light-minded action of enjoying an alcoholic beverage close to this solemn moment caused those two boys to lose personal consciousness of their duty to obey the commandment to the letter.

Has our God today given less detailed information about the edges of the holy Sabbath as He wants it to be observed? Has He informed you and me less clearly as to what moment His frown will begin to rest upon us?

Here is a question that must be solemnly addressed to every individual Seventh-day Adventist, as well as to our responsible Church leadership: What is the peculiar

poison causing so many among us to have our personal conscience paralyzed; in fact, with a paralysis so fatal to our elementary sense of survival that we consider it a trivial matter to distinguish between the holy and the common in our individual lives and in our denomination's life from week to week?

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Thanks to the Spirit of Prophecy's expertise in the field of human philosophy, I can now provide you with sensational details about that poison. We shall be greatly benefited by knowing its fantastic origin, its equally fantastic nature and how it happens that you and I have been particularly paralyzed by it.

Thanks to God's revelation to His endtime children, we are enabled to understand something absolutely unique in the history of discursive thought. What has happened is the most monstrous blending together of diametrical opposites. This turned out to be the most drama-filled experiment ever performed by the wizard Eros, in the dusky laboratories of Western philosophy. (It is Plato, himself, who registers witchcraft as the professional expertise of the demigod Eros.)

In modern Agape research, specializing in an academic study of the remarkably historic phenomenon of Love, as revealed by the Gospel, Eros stands out as the great enemy of the Biblical Agape. (Cf. my book, "The Part of the Story You Were never Told ABOUT AGAPE AND EROS"; and also: "The Natural Mystery of MOTHERLINESS (The Last Hope of Survival for a Dying World)."

But, what are the dubious elements we find the special endtime god of the Western world (Eros) fusing together in his witches' cauldron? Never has the world been more helplessly lost in the uncanny regions of pagan mysticism.

Remember: I am now right in the midst of our original topic of the awe-inspiring significance of Sabbath holiness. And I am basing myself on the mysteries cleared up by the Spirit of Prophecy, relative to that topic.

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More specifically, I am dealing with the "poisonous brew" resulting today from the coming into existence of PANTHEISM as the great philosophy and the great "religion." I am addressing you as a potential member, yourself, of the rare denomination celebrating the Seventh-day Sabbath. As such you ought to be eager to get to know something more definite about the famous philosophy that was already so scarily close, around the turn of the century, to wiping this Christian fellowship out of history -- humanly speaking.

I have tried to describe that drama in more detail in my booklet, "The Mystic Omega of Endtime Crisis." Elder Frazee of Wildwood Sanitarium has admonished me -- and encouraged me -- by saying, "Remember, Brother Johnsen, it is God who has helped you to write that book."

Its sequel was "Omega II: The Satanic Dynamics of Modern Philosophies infiltrating the Endtime Church." I needed such a book as a manual for my students in a course of Modern Philosophy. Is it possible that I lost sight of Elder Frazee's admonition as I wrote that continuation, rather leaning on my own wisdom -- or lack of wisdom? One thing is certain: Our brethren in the Publication Department of the General Conference have put that piece of literature "on index" (if it is permitted to evoke a term better known from offices of the Vatican.) For an author it is not, of course, so pleasant to get on the black list in any church. But I have never doubted that those brethren had a sincere intention of protecting the sheep of the fold from unwholesome influences.

Be that as it may. My concern now is also a sincere and honest one. I have wanted to give you, quite summarily of course, just an idea about the extreme opposites that go together in order to create pantheism, the most formidable enemy the Sabbath truth has ever been exposed to. You have seen my graphic illustration of the road and its respective ditches.

Fortunately, I have already pointed out, by way of preparation, what spiritualism is like. And you know, just as well as I, what the direct opposite of spiritualism must be. Quite logically that is bound to be materialism.

Spirit and matter have always been known as regular counter poles. But they are entirely normal aspects of the simple human reality. Joining those two together does not produce any dangerous explosion or any deadly poison. As a good Christian realist you know the case of elementary human totality. Their soul and body make a harmonious whole. They are just two sides of one and the same reality called a human being. Adventism has hammered that truth into your head.

In the case of spiritualism and materialism, however, things are very different. Here many of us have a serious problem on our hands. Each one of those two is an irrational extreme. Spiritualism insists on throwing all material things to the devil, as it were. The spiritualist says, "Only spirit is real." And materialism commits a similar absurdity, only in the opposite direction. Quite publicly, it contends:

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"Only matter is real." `Spirit' is nothing but a ridiculous fantasy."

So, we can only conclude about those two philosophies: They are extreme ditches man has an unfortunate tendency to fall into. Worse than that, they are split-tingly irrational, devoid of all common sense.

Hence, it would be something dangerously lightminded to imagine that any blessed totality could come out as the result of uniting those two. In fact, either of them stands out as a regular monster, even considered without any hazardous plans of uniting them. So, I have been glad to have no difficulty in making a final report about them, historically speaking: Down through the ages, there did not seem to be any tradition in philosophical schools of considering spiritualism and materialism as natural associates. It was either one or the other that had the hegemony. In our culture of old the victor was usually the philosophy of spiritualism. But, actually, it happened to be materialism that had its heyday first. It dominated Greek philosophy almost completely at the time of tough men such as the cynic Diogenes. Only as a furious reaction against such flat materialism did the fantastic spiritualism of Plato take over the leadership, and it remains on the throne almost without any interruption through antiquity, the middle ages and modern times, practically indisputable. By and large, that is the way it looks to me. In fact, at least one thing is sure: Plain realism, the hero you might think likely to win wherever simple common sense could be permitted to prevail, does not seem to have the shadow of a chance to get the upper hand.

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In my "Omega II" I try to give an incontrovertible illustration of the fantastic way in which old Plato seems to be reborn in every new figure who mounts the Parnassus of European thought, all the way up to the present era. How could this "reincarnation" of

Ancient Greek irrationality manage to go on and on in an increasingly science-minded and even narrowly rationalistic Europe?

Some would perhaps contend: This does at least speak of a certain trend of consistency, after all.

Alas, not really. Not at all. And that brings us forcibly back to the ominous fact of that abominable mysticism of the "Merger". How could a "witches' cauldron" be a paragon of consistency? Impossible. I shall give you conclusive evidence of that by and by.

Of course, one special brand of inveterate stupidity can easily be imagined as living in relative peace with itself. So, it remains quite undisturbed within the precincts of its own fortress. This kind of uniformity is one we can accept as fairly normal, can't we? To be sure, even here there is room for serious misgivings. I never could quite manage to buy, as perfectly reasonable, an adage quite common in the province of Norway in which I grew up: "De galne har det godt." ("The crazy ones have a nice time.") The genesis of pantheism I am speaking about would present a heavy risk of spoiling even that strange bliss the radically insane ones might seem to enjoy. So, the local proverb might turn out to be a perilous falsehood. For the crazy ones are now bound to have a terrible time, I am very much afraid.

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Evidently, one thing claimed by most historians of ideas may be difficult to refute: They seem to agree that Plato did live in undisturbed peace with himself. In fact, they pretend that spiritualists are just the ones at all times who remain undisturbed. But to me that would be tantamount to saying: Timaios, that strange derailment happening to Plato's peculiar brand of idealism in his old age, was never written. But it was. If it were not, I would not be able to sit here and assign to pantheism, in this mad world of ours, a special day I call "the birthday of Western pantheism." What pleasant lullabies the prophets of the West keep singing to their countrymen! Like the false prophets of Israel in the days of Nebuchadnezzar's invasions, they seem to be saying: "That Bedlam of pantheism we are accused of, is nonexistent. It is a bad dream."

To you and me, this might be a relief. It might mean that the life-and-death battle about the continued existence of Seventh-day Adventism around the turn of the century, has not either taken place. Better still: the greatest crisis ever pertaining to Sabbath and Sabbatarians is a black dream, but certainly nothing more than a dream. So, what you and I are going through right now could be blown into thin air. How nice to interpret it as that kind of a false alarm, a wave of exaggerated pessimism. We are mistaken.

What if a bit of plain realism could get the better of us? Then we might have quite a composite image of reality. We would realize that spiritualism has been with us all the time. And materialism has settled down for good. What kind of materialism? Materialism of the most cruel atheistic kind, a hardboiled Marxist kind. It is about to engulf us with all its Twentieth Century violence, right in the core of our deepest lives.

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We might still go on flattering ourselves that we are Seventh-day Adventists. For, we do go to Sabbath school every week, don't we? Outside, however, we rather make the impression of a bunch of Freemasons, secretive to the point of deleting the name Adventist from the registers of our universities. The word "Seventh-day", of course, causes no trouble at all any longer. It simply never was there.

All prerequisites are present for having the incomparable marriage ceremony started. Bride and bridegroom are already embracing each other. The concubinage of ultimate indecency is an accomplished fact. From time immemorial naive onlookers fancied that this copulation between stark spiritualism and stark materialism could never produce any offspring. The two were imagined as too different indeed. What one failed to remember was an undeniable fact. They have an abominable lot of negative qualities in common. Let us mention, so far, that extreme madness of total disruption in both intellectual and emotional respect. Why then should it be so absolutely incredible that an amalgamation could still happen, after all? Well, their bastard offspring in the form of pantheism makes all discussion superfluous on this point. Our experts in philosophical genetics have had their doubts put to shame a long time ago. Obviously, they had scant knowledge about the master sorcerer, Eros, the arch foe of Agape, in men's lives. No man, not even that skinny bean pole, the

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philosopher, Plato, could claim to go scot-free when it comes to something merciless which the Bible calls "the lust of the flesh." If you have nothing more powerful than a jumble of barren ideas of theoretical spiritualism to protect you from falling prostrate on your belly, then you are helpless in the face of the temptations Plato used to allude to contemptuously as "the vulgar Eros." Of course, he was doomed to defeat from the beginning. As a matter of fact, had he not already, in his palmy days of apparent prosperity, as he bowed down to his proud goddess of perfect spiritualism, actually succumbed all the time to his inborn Eros leanings? So, just don't fancy that any radical change for that matter is happening to him at the spectacular moment when he is suddenly lying prostrate in front of the purple-adorned figure of a luxurious Aphrodite. The radical change is a purely outward one in spite of all its intensified paganism. The most sensational difference is that the "lusts of the flesh", in the new era of triumphant pantheism, have had a wonderful rebaptism water sprinkled upon their scabby head. From now on egocentric greed is qualified as supremely divine. Pantheism implies nothing less than this in its very name. It is "all-Godism." Everything is God. So, how could even notoriously bad things fail to be included?

1. So, what about those blessed molecules in any piece of matter? They are eternally divine, every one of them. They do not just come from God. They are God. This holds good for the nice apple you pick from the tree. It also applies perfectly to the AIDS virus that finishes very soon by killing your body, or the drug turning you into an addict unfit for survival.

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2. And what about the essence of "pure spirit"? That, too, is absolutely divine in all its manifestations. Agape and Eros, love and hate, alteregocentricity and egocentricity, are aspects of one and the same divinity. What holism! What blessed integration! Good and evil have their legitimate place side by side in spiritualism's fairyland. So, why not integrate them both in your very life style?

### **VIII. "FREE-LOVISM"**

Do you happen to know what name an angel from Heaven gave to the same philosophy some 90 years ago? The name was of topical interest just at that precarious moment for the Advent movement. A name that conveyed a definite meaning was ur-

gently needed. Ellen White tells us that she was just coming to grips with this "new" philosophy, threatening to invade the Church of God on earth in those days. One problem she was grappling with was precisely this one: What should she call this new thing?

You know the tremendous importance of precise names. Only at the moment when Adam had provided a definite name for each of the animals whose caretaker he had been called to be, only then did he have the reassuring and most blessed feeling of being on a level with his delegated task. The names given in those days were all meaningful names. They were supposed to cover an important aspect of the identity belonging to the one carrying the name. Familiarity with the name seems to be the first requisite for a true familiarity with the individual named.

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So I do understand Ellen White's restlessness and discontent. She was in desperate need of an adequate name for that restlessly creeping thing sneaking its way into the premises of our denomination. Evidently, the official name provided by professional philosophers failed to give Ellen the practical meaningfulness and the simple satisfaction she was desperately looking for. "I just did not know what to call this," she confesses in her helplessness.

But the angel knew. And what name did he release? He called it "free-lovism" or the "free love tendency" And what is the main characteristic otherwise mentioned? It is this significant one: That "new philosophy" lacks one essential ingredient: HOLINESS. It is unsanctified secularized love. In other words, it is a pure Eros phenomenon. It is at cruel war with Agape.

So, it just is not sufficient then to be like Plato and Spinoza in your search for wisdom. Barren secular knowledge -- that amputated thing the philosopher calls "pure epistemology", comes pitiably short in the life of a total human being. It just cannot be brutally abstracted from ethics, a genuinely Christian doctrine of good and evil, holiness versus profanation. It is all a matter of life or death, salvation or perdition. If you and I have made up our minds to be entirely satisfied with pure situation ethics, a definitely humanistic brand; then there is something really ominous, a sword of Damocles, automatically suspended above our light-minded heads. That is a moral doom. So, the question you should be asking already might be this one: Is the question of Sabbath from 6:00 to 6:00 a matter of situation ethics? So far this is one pointed inquiry I bring up as a practical example and we shall have to provide an answer, just as pointed. There will have to be a series of questions and answers.

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#### **IX. A PHILOSOPHICAL FARCE OF TRAGIC CONSEQUENCES MAKES REAL EPOCH IN MODERN HISTORY.**

Scholarly men, both in the humanities and in the material sciences, have a terrible responsibility resting upon them. For erroneous statements in any field of scholarly knowledge may result in catastrophes whose final dimensions we can never measure. How, then, could the principles of exact truthfulness be observed with the serious care they really deserve?

What has happened to philosophy in modern times is a definitely epoch-making sensation. And we should all know it. I shall limit myself to mentioning in a summary way the case of one philosopher whose influence has been fatal. I shall not try to

measure his share of responsibility for a tragic trend. It may be far less than some presume. For the ones most to blame may be you and me, and the entire "time spirit" that was prepared to absorb that nefarious influence. I am referring to the great wizard of modern European philosophy: Hegel: Certainly nothing has been more baneful in environments of modernistic thought patterns than that man's speculative fancies about what happens when thesis and antithesis, the two great opposites in men's minds, have their historic encounter. I say "historic" with emphasis. For the entire evolution of regular thought waves, deep deep down in gigantic world movements, is supposed to

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be involved in this succession of thought and antithought. According to Hegel it is by the virtue of an historic necessity that the two are bound to meet. And his view of that meeting is frivolously optimistic. For -- Abra Cadabra, Hocus Pocus -- what is the mystic phenomenon suddenly bound to come out of the sorcerer's hat, as a result of the blessed encounter? It is something called by him synthesis. And that synthesis certainly seems to assert itself as a blessedly sympathetic thing. The merger is the great thing that takes care of our lives, solves our most disrupting problems. Is that naive assumption realistic? Alas, no! It is obvious what a philosophical optimism as blind as that about the way problems in this world solve themselves, must lead up to, if a sufficient number of people are hoodwinked by it. There can be no doubt that Hegel is, to a large extent, responsible for just that foolish enthusiasm about the absurd and the paradoxical, that has gripped our generation. You will understand better now why I started this book speaking at such length about certain amazing inconsistencies surrounding Bacchiocchi's Sabbath books, even inconsistencies for which he, himself, is hardly responsible.

In my chapter, "The Genius of Platonism", of a book entitled "Man - The Indivisible" (Oslo University Press, 1971), I have tried to analyze that first and rather unexpected fall of the father of Occidental spiritualism, Plato, right down into the ultimate meaninglessness of regular pantheism. This must be something more than a human being's case of simple senility. It must be a Satan-inspired plan to lead subsequent generations, including you and me, into a denial of holiness that must be our total ruin. You will then understand my reaction toward secular colleagues of mine who fail to make their students aware of so many cases of false information that may cause their eternal ruin.

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But, maybe I should stop blaming my colleagues in university chairs of departments of philosophy. Should I rather direct my reproaches against teachers in our own schools? Similarly, I may have been wrong in concentrating my angry attacks against Hegelian wizards in the art of philosophical Hocus Pocus. They are making black into white and white into black, in an entirely secular environment. Should I not rather turn my serious word of admonition toward our own strongholds of anti-realism?

I already told you that a very influential and highly respected scholar of ours availed himself of his "academic freedom" to make public, both in teaching auditoriums and in religious assembly halls, the only solution he had found to a "major problem", seeming to threaten our whole denomination with splintering and disintegration. I had the rare experience of listening to him in an assembly hall in Loma Linda, presenting his "solution". I hardly ever heard anything more fantastic. And many others expressed the

same sensation. Evidently, we are not yet, all of us, prepared to go directly to Hegel to find the great master solution of our intellectual and theological problems. True, in some respects the speaker did not differ so widely at all from a bunch of Bible scholars among us, regarding the "problem". It contends briefly: Ellen White's writings say one thing with absolute clarity in one of her most famous and most widely circulated

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books; "The Great Controversy." The Bible says the "diametrical opposite." And this divergence has to do with a matter the Spirit of Prophecy points out in terms of landmarks. So, what conclusion do these men, not so familiar, at all perhaps, with Hegelian magic, draw? They simply say: We cannot rely on a prophetess who is in disagreement with the clear Word of God.

I honor them for their straightforwardness. With the premises they make the basis of their conclusion, they are perfectly logical. But what about our friend, "the Seventh-day Adventist Hegel", that I am speaking about? He is inspired by a genuine zeal to save the Church. And who would dare to deny that this sounds most positive? No doubt, he does feel that Ellen White constitutes an integral part of the Advent movement. So what if her reputation as a true prophet has to be given up? He sincerely feels that the reputation of the Church, itself, will then be shaken in its very foundation. Accordingly, he finds himself in a precarious dilemma. But fortunately, the invisibly working wizard is there, performing the magic trick that saves the situation. The conclusion is made with intuitive ingenuity: Daniel's prophecy will need a radical "re-interpretation" to adjust itself to what the Spirit of Prophecy of a more modern date has proclaimed "ex cathedra."

Do you notice which of the two "conflicting parties" is getting the worse of it, once more? It is the Bible. From whom has a professing Seventh-day Adventist learned to make conclusions of this expedient kind? Is it from a dubious philosopher of traditional spiritualist stock? Or is it, perhaps, from the great

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"Mother Church"?

This once more evokes the strange story of Bacchiocchi's Sabbath dissertation, does it not? That poor author cannot take the blame for the fact that the champions of "the Lord's Day" are so crazy about him, can he? Likewise, Ellen White cannot take the blame, poor woman, for the fact that certain people seem so immensely enthusiastic about her. That is, they are in love with her for the wrong reasons. I mean a reasoning devoid of all common sense. Now, my closest colleagues will, for instance, know about me how anxious I am that both our Church and Ellen White should be "saved" -- also, as far as the outward reputation is concerned. But, how could I ever manage to honor a logic as flimsy as the Hegelian one, put into operation with the naive purpose of "saving" us? If I thought Ellen White was in flagrant opposition to what the Bible teaches, I would have to "let her go". It is as simple as that.

How can an entirely romantic philosophy of that fantastic kind dare to air its chimeras in a Christian environment? Is this a case of American pragmatism winning the day among us, perhaps? You know what it says: "What works is right." The most practical solution is necessarily also the right one. Now the 6-to-6 Sabbath alternative asserts itself, in men's minds, as far more practical than the sundown alternative. There is

no doubt about that. So it must be the most correct one. Is this the philosophy we are more and more tempted to go by?

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#### **X. RADICAL SABBATARIANISM, THE PHENOMENON MOST IMMUNE AGAINST ECUMENISM EVER SEEN IN MODERN CHRISTENDOM.**

Many years ago I had a book translated from German into English and printed at my own expense. It so happened that I had asked a Seventh-day Adventist theologian I appreciate very much, for both his Christian faith and his scholarly realism in the field of prophetic exegesis, to write a booklet urgently needed. His solid knowledge of both the Greek and the Hebrew part of the Holy Scriptures is outstanding. I had made this good brother, who reminds me of our greatest pioneers, aware of the dangerous trends of liberalism asserting themselves in our own theological circles. So, I sent him, as examples, some of the most sensational writings produced by Brinsmead and Ford. I knew no one who could help us better than Erich Laufersweiler to stem the tide of what was here threatening to inundate our schools. In editing the English edition of the manuscript resulting from this request of mine, I called it *The Solemn Tremendum of the NECHERATSAH in Advent History*. Brother Laufersweiler also has an exceptionally wide knowledge of several modern languages, particularly in the Slavic language group. So, he has had the opportunity to consult the expertise of outstanding theologian scholars little known to the West. He has been inspired to know the actual meaning of the term "necheratsah", used by Daniel in a most important context. The word is seen to correspond exactly to the word our pioneers agreed to introduce: "THE

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INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT". What a "coincidence"! I was an SOS teacher in a school of ours in the Third World at the time, and feared that the transportation of the books would take a dishearteningly long time. I had decided to donate the whole stock (as many copies as I could afford to get printed) to the General Conference in Washington. So, I had the books sent by air freight. But, evidently, the good brother whom I had counted on to distribute the books, was not at all as enthusiastic about that piece of literature as I happened to be. So, the books were simply hidden away in a closet. Today even the closet, itself, seems to have been displaced. So, not a single copy is available. I could use one, myself, at the moment. But it is unattainable. And I cannot complain. Did I not give the General Conference complete rights to do as they pleased with the books?

I asked my good friend, now working in the White Estate, a curious question: What was it he found so bad about that booklet? Oh, he said, there was nothing really wrong with the book -- that is, as far as Biblical orthodoxy was concerned. Still, it did have one terrible quality in its disfavor: It constituted a formidable broadside directed against the Catholic Church!

I finally understood. Today, allegedly we, as a denomination, do not permit ourselves to indulge in polemics of that kind the way our pioneers used to do.

Nevertheless, I could not resist the temptation to ask one innocent question: What about "The Great Controversy?" Do we still sell it, at all? For, frankly, it is not a particularly mild treatment the children of the papacy happen to be receiving from Ellen White, fearless representative of the "separated brethren."

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Perhaps not, my friend admitted, but that must be looked upon as an entirely different matter.

Is that so, I ventured -- in what respect? "Ellen White, my dear brother, was a prophet!"

Aha, I thought. I knew I, myself, was not a prophet, far from it. And Erich Laufferweiler, too, is definitely aware that he is not one. What he evidently did not know with the same certainty was this: He failed to realize that, as a modern Seventh-day Adventist, he had disqualified himself from "speaking anything amiss" against the "Viceroy of Heaven"

Was he also to keep his mouth shut about any heresies turning up in his own church? Did brotherly fellowship presuppose his joining the club of worldwide ecumenism, incorporating even openly pagan creeds? That is the last thing Erich Laufferweiler would ever dare to do. He is too familiar with the fact that our most dangerous enemies are to be found among nominal Christians, let me add nominal Adventists.

#### **XI. STRIKING PARALLELS BETWEEN NEW AGE PANTHEISM AND NEW AGE EVOLUTIONISM. COULD THE TWO SOMETIME BE "CHRISTENED" WITH THE NAME OF NEW AGE "SEVENTH--DAY ADVENTISM"?**

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Some of those most dangerous "fellow believers" I have been speaking about, call themselves Christian biologists. In the "Old" Age, if we still recall a time as distant as that, a professional designation of that honorable kind would be synonymous with creationists. But I hardly ever saw any evolutionist proper quite as bitterly antagonistic toward true creationism as some of those. Other scholars, belonging to the life sciences departments of purely worldly schools may nourish a genuine nostalgia toward creationism. They are homesick for a meaningful theory about their lives. But they just are not able any more to make that journey home again. They simply never heard any of their erudite colleagues suggest any such possibility, particularly in our tragically paganzed Europe of today -- and remarkably enough -- in professedly religious environments -- there has hardly been any adequate notion of what a strange thing is happening at research centers of serious biology in America today. The distantly roaring wave of a forward pressing idea of creationism as an honorable scientific alternative, has been practically unheard and unsuspected on that side of the Atlantic. So, theology students in Europe have seen themselves as completely thrown upon one single way out for the purpose of achieving some poor little glimmer of meaning in life. That is precisely the paradox philosophy of those fanciful existentialists, the abra cadabra of Eros sorcery.

I shall never forget what a professor of our erstwhile "conservative" theological faculty of the Norwegian state (Menighetsfakultetet), said, after we had enjoyed our first real visit by a member of the unique team of outstanding creationist researchers from the San Diego biology school: "Fantastic," he exclaimed -- "But, I am sorry, Sir. This is too good to be true. Is anything too good to be true? Nothing, anywhere, at any time! Truth has many enemies. But, goodness is not one of them. Certainly not!

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Meaninglessness had prevailed so long that true meaning hardly had any chance of taking root. Now, of course, that is not all. Downright tragedy has for thousands of

years had a tremendous prestige in the highbrow circles of cultural "excellency" in the Ultrawestern world. So, who can bear the tedium and mediocrity of simple meaningfulness?

Notice I am speaking about environments considering themselves as highly spiritual, even top religious. And that is the cultural stratum you and I are supposed to fit into.

All this causes me to review radically the attitude I used to favor. Why should I continue to exhaust my forces; castigating secular evolutionists, pure pagans, while our own Christian fold is teaming with semi-evolutionists, or full-blooded ones. It is simply unfair to blame regular pagans for their paganism, seeing that we, ourselves, are steeped in a far more responsible heathenism. And what does it really avail? With the worldly viewpoint quite natural to non-Christians, they probably missed my point all the time. Why should they feel ashamed when I compared them to regular pantheists? What does pantheism mean to average scholars in a paganized world such as ours is today? Pantheism, as well as any other brand of humanism, enjoys a formidable prestige among learned thinkers in our cultural milieu.

Of course, my arguments, as such, against pantheism have been strong enough. But those who have a true chance of being hit hard on the head by them are Christians, or even would-be Christians.

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That should also apply in the highest degree to biology teachers in Seventh-day Adventist schools who have succumbed to the temptation of spreading semievolutionist theories. It is precisely the Sabbath that excludes evolutionism of any degree. That is why I must have the logical right to assume a better understanding among Seventh-day Adventists, even purely would-be ones, for the important statements I have to make regarding those remarkable parallels between evolutionism and pantheism:

You should first note down this fact about professing evolutionists: When you press them hard for a coherent theory about the factual existence of so many things, they actually finish by stating exactly the same opinions about matter that pantheist theorists are known to have been holding from times immemorial: Matter is divine!

What an impossible accusation against evolutionists, you may object protestingly. When did ordinary secular biologists speak about divinity, or God, at all?

Your objection may appear convincing enough on first view. But reflect now: What is the definition of the concept, God? He is the One, the only One, who has His existence in Himself. So, He never needed to "come" into existence. In fact, hardly anybody who still today condescends at all to speak about God will have any serious difficulty, theoretically speaking at least, in accepting that basic definition of God: God, if He is, at all, then He must be from everlasting. Creatures -- animate or inanimate -- are a radically different category. They had to be called into existence. They had to be created.

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Now please go to your respected pantheist first maybe, and then to your equally respected biologist. Ask them both the pretty problematic question about simple matter. When and how did that come to exist? The pantheist will not hesitate to answer: Matter has never come into existence. It has always existed. It is divine. It is God. No controversy in pantheism about that. There it is basic dogma.

And now the evolutionist biologist:

You urge him to speak up. What is his theory about matter? His theory about the coming into existence of living organisms is clear enough: Thanks to a sufficient number of combinations of inanimate molecules, finally one day the fantastic chance presented itself: A combination sufficiently complicated was finally there. The first living cell could start to live.

But, now, once more, how did those dead molecules come into being, furnishing the basic material for that automatic creation of life?

You have, in your mercilessness, left that imaginative scientist to the mercy of one single alternative. Did you realize that? He is forced to take his point of departure in the same thing that the pantheist had no qualm, whatsoever, in suggesting: Inanimate matter has existed from all eternity. In point of fact, it is self-existent, and endlessly creative. It is the Eternal One, the Creator. It is God.

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Of course, a person who has arrived at his conclusions about life all that easily does not have any room for the Sabbath commandment. He does not feel the need of any theory of holiness, emanating from a Creator-God who is personalism itself, Love itself. That is the Incredible One, who feels sorry for not only the slave and the stranger but even the cattle ("your ox and your ass") Isn't this strange? The Biblical theory of both a true Genesis and a true Exodus is so meaningful that a pure humanist just can't take it.

Now, what about semi-evolutionists in our own camp? Aren't they the specimens of the species I ought to have it out with, more than with anybody else? I am speaking about a definite showdown. In fact, we Seventh-day Adventists, as a denomination, must have every reason to settle our accounts with them. For, if ever there was a people who needed a creation record of the radically realistic Genesis type, with its literal six-day specificity, then that must certainly be the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Ellen White was among the first to point out the ridiculous inconsistency -- and the intellectual dishonesty -- of quoting from the commandment text of Exodus 20: 11, without drawing the full consequences:

"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is and rested (on) the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it."

Just what did He bless? Was it a mere myth? What did He hallow? Was it a symbolic type of day, something in desperate need of being "reinterpreted"?

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It is that crucial "wherefore" Ellen White refers to with an urgent need of straight logical reasoning. There must be an intelligent balance between what precedes and what follows, between premise and conclusion. Is God an anti-logical juggler of rather Zen-Buddhist dimensions? Evidently, He does require of you and me that we should be minutely punctual in performing our assigned work during exactly six days. And, after that, we are ordered to observe our holy day rest on the seventh with the same minute punctuality. Wherefore? What is the validating precedence? What is the literal matter the Creator refers to in order to have this made perfectly meaningful? It is His own example. What did He do then? Did He -- just to take one theoretical instance -- occupy Himself creating this earth of ours, and all there is in it, during a span of time lasting

some six million years, followed by another one million years, during which He gave Himself up to idleness, thus serving as a proper Example to you and me? What would a juxtaposition of that kind, right in the midst of a serious commandment, actually mean? It would mean meaninglessness. What would a logic of that kind be like? Ellen White characterizes the suggestion as simply unfair. So, she regards it as downright unethical. Evidently, she has been duly shown the absolutely inseparable union there is between nonsense thinking and wicked doing.

If you and I are not able to believe implicitly that God could really manage, as He persists in telling us, to have all things in this earth accomplished in the course of six literal days, then how could we believe that Jesus was able to accomplish every minute detail of change required for waking up Lazarus in the fraction of a second? Or, do we not have real faith in any of these acts?

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You may now understand somewhat better why I ask myself this serious question: Have I been right in polemicizing so vehemently against a secular philosopher such as Hegel, upbraiding him, and his famous brand of modern German spiritualism, for making nonsense-wizardry into a regular system of thought in the Western world? Could I reasonably do that and then not say one bad word about a wizardry I have every reason to fear coming up in Seventh-day Adventist education, and already making itself more and more strongly felt from year to year? That is a phenomenon more audacious than anything happening in our surrounding secular world.

There is only one argument that could tempt me to keep my peace regarding these things. Is it a valid one? Or is it a shamefully flimsy one?

Serious philosophy, with us, is a field of knowledge so utterly neglected. So, the danger of being exposed to any danger of pagan influences from that quarter might also seem rather negligible. How could serious harm come to us from something we know nothing about?

What a shallow argument in favor of dead silence. Do you still blame me for speaking up about these things? One thing strikes me as truly amazing: How few of the bad things, hiding under the cover of an incomplete modern science, escape our attention! We certainly do not miss them. On the contrary, we seem to have a wind of them where there appears to be no wind at all.

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I have duly informed you that I once committed a piece of writing called "Omega II." That book was ostracized by the General Conference Publishing Department. I may not have told you why that was done. Now, you already know. I had had the temerity to show officially about one most influential scholar, teaching in one of our American universities, how literally he had swallowed, hook, line and sinker, exactly that philosophy of Hegel, even to the point of using the very vocabulary of that speculative mystic of modern German spiritualism. I had had the straightforwardness of quoting our man verbatim. I even added the author's name. Is not that what you are supposed to do after a quotation? How can any critic polemicize against a trend he regards as false and dangerous if he does not have the openness of supplying pointed references?

Evidently, he must be prepared to take the consequences of his outspokenness. His product may be placed on the proscription list. He must accept that with good grace. There is no reason for bearing any grudge. Opinions about essential things

seem bound to vary infinitely in this world. Problems should be discussed with frankness and due seriousness.

So, now the time must have come for you as well to confront me with some most crucial questions. For instance, this one: Is there any visible sign indicating that the godforsaken "merger of the diametrical opposites" asserts itself as a capital event in the history of the Advent movement as a whole -- and in the history of the Sabbath in particular?

Exactly so.

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What I am here particularly responsible for shedding some distinct light upon in my continuation of "Day of Destiny I", is the peculiar form the mystic "merger" is seen to adopt in the case of an ultramodern ambush attack against the Sabbath. In my "Day of Destiny II", I shall entertain you with a knowledge I have gathered through painstaking study throughout my life. I hope to acquaint you with onslaughts against the Sabbath of a more or less unexpected kind -- onslaughts from without and from within. Knowledge I have gathered through painstaking study throughout my life. I hope to acquaint you with onslaughts against the Sabbath of a more or less unexpected kind, onslaughts from without and from within.

## **XII. CONCLUDING REMARKS: THE SABBATH AND THE FATHER.**

It is my two documents on the Sabbath I have here been trying to bind intelligently together with this "Interlude..". In both of them I have stressed one capital point which otherwise tends to be left out of the story: The Sabbath was from the very beginning A FAMILY AFFAIR! So, it is imperative that we should be intensively conscious of one fact: The really important figure in the entire celebration of the Sabbath day is the FATHER. So, when it says: "Remember the Sabbath day", then this amounts to saying: "Remember the Father." And, believe me: implicitly, some glory and honor, contained in that sentence, reflects back on the father with a small "f", as well. It includes any kind of true father.

And now, what does this imply, particularly, in matters of "church business", according to God's plan for man's life? Simply -- but also quite remarkably -- this: The great figure in the workshop of community building, planned by God on this earth, is not first and foremost the CLEVER ADMINISTRATOR.

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It is the TENDER FATHER.

Now our denomination, as you know, is teaming with administrators on all levels. We call them Presidents, and bow our heads respectfully in front of them, as their function rightly demands.

Particularly our General Conference is teeming with presidents on respectable levels, demanding a corresponding reverence on your part and mine.

But, since I have promised to be "outrageously frank" in this interlude, I must confide to you some thoughts of destiny-laden alarm that began to come to me more than half a dozen years ago. They have plagued my mind ever since.

It so happened that Elder Pierson felt he could no longer bear the burden of his presidency. I can understand what, exactly, is happening in our days. The crushing

burdens of the administrator threaten to oust the more human and, therefore, more tolerable ones supposed to reside in the father.

Anyway, the Advent community was somewhat unexpectedly faced with the need of finding a new chief executive, or should I say a new father. The one selected was our experienced leader of North America, President Neal Wilson. He had proved himself to be an outstanding administrator.

Now, permit me for a moment to go down with you all the way through the history of the Advent movement. What seems to have been the great concern of our people every time a new General Conference president was to be elected? To me, it seems to have been finding a person whose character impressed the electors in such a way that he bade fair to reveal himself as the "tender father" by all means, so just the one the church needed most of all.

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With this I have said nothing whatsoever about the degree in which those different General Conference presidents did meet, in practical reality, the expectations of the people in this capital respect. In fact, I have decided, rather, to shift the focus of my attention, today as well, from the presidents chosen to the people choosing them. So, the conclusion I make does not reflect on either President Pierson or on the man destined to succeed him. By the way, what knowledge did I have about Brother Wilson? Practically none that would justify any doubts regarding that man's "fatherliness", duly matching his administrative expertise. If there is something radically wrong happening to our church today, its hidden causes are to be sought in you and me - the Advent family as a whole. In other words, there must be something wrong with our "sonliness," first and last.

Let me rather be as specific as Christian realism demands, and express myself accordingly: There must be something fatally wrong with me. I could, of course, yield to a constant temptation; I could avoid referring to any individual culprit. I could say in the traditional manner: There must be something awfully wrong with the "time spirit." That is the favorite choice of utter impersonalism. Putting the blame on something so blessedly general as the "time spirit" is the usual mechanism of escape. But only through an extreme specificity can there be any hope of saying Christian realism; that is, your salvation and mine. God, it is I who am wrong, caring no bit about either fatherliness or sonliness! I am catastrophically wrong. And my wrongness just results in giving absolute priority to the ADMINISTRATOR, forgetting altogether the all-important existence of the FATHER.

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At the same time, however, another fact is indisputable: I am a child modern Adventism. In other words, there is a corporate guilt. That viewpoint does not take away the logical essence of Seventh-day Adventist Realism. Something is being radically changed in us as a people. It is a change of basic life style. Time-honored traditions are being broken. Of course, you may say it is the world around us that has changed. We are being pressed by a tough world, tougher than anything previously known. Well, does that world press you and me to lie prostrate in front of the genius of outstanding administration?

I mentioned time-honored Seventh-day Adventist traditions, making us radically different from this world for a century and a half now. I may refer to our system of a re-

markable democracy in certain fields. Any denominational worker, irrespective of skill or position in the "hierarchy", was supposed to have a salary corresponding to the needs of his household. This is unheard-of in the world. But, recently, it was decided that there should be access to voting quite exceptional salaries for certain positions in the denomination. What kind of positions? Those of certain expert administrators leading some of our institutions. Why? You may say: because of the toughness of the times. One just could not expect to get applicants possessing the expert qualities for such posts if they were not offered any more than the usual fairly democratic salary, a typical old fashioned Adventist salary. So, we changed our policy on this point.

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But, now back to the General Conference presidency. And, here there is no question of an exceptional salary. Evidently, there are aspirants enough who would accept this heavy responsibility even without any expert remuneration of the financial kind. As we all know, a new quinquennium has started, and Brother Wilson has agreed to bear the burdens for another five years.

But, what were the most remarkable circumstances of that reelection? Neal Wilson was elected by acclamation! What is "election by acclamation"? It is the most fantastic thing ever heard about in the history of administrative automation. You suddenly see a group of voters rising and clapping their hands or singing an air, and then another group emerging in another part of the assembly. Sparks of enthusiasm seem to be flying in the air, igniting new nuclei here and there. Soon the entire crowd is standing and clapping. Is that a safe sign of Christian "sonliness", on the one hand, and Christian "fatherliness", on the other?

I am afraid not. Even sober-minded realism in the field of expert administration runs the risk of suffering miserable shipwreck with an element of that kind suddenly taking hold of the matter. I feel that an election by acclamation, in the case of a business as serious as this, must be registered on the side of maladministration.

And, again the strange thing happens: The man who is supposed to be the beneficiary of that strange act of maladministrative absurdity cannot be blamed for having any active part in it, at all. The situation certainly is a meaningless one. Nonsense has taken over the reins of common sense.

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Needless to ask, what has taken over the reins of Seventh-day Adventist realism? It is light-minded romanticism. This is the tragic way I have come to envision romanticism as an ever resurgent feature in our culture, be it in the field of art or any other cultural manifestation -- particularly in the history of the Western World.

Did you notice with what firm determination Jesus refused to accept the election "by acclamation"? He was threatened with just that, on the part of His disciples and the populace inspiring them. Of course, we must sympathize, in a way, with their pathetic desire to crown Jesus King of this world. But we see him walking resolutely away, right through the intoxicated crowd of fans surrounding Him. Obviously, He knew only too well that a similarly intoxicated crowd, a few days later, would cry ecstatically: "Give us Barabbas free!" The kind of "acclamation" they had for Jesus on that day was only: "Crucify, crucify!"

The leader of the meeting at which the irregular General Conference election took place was equally innocent in this irregularity. He could only stand there at his

desk, helplessly observing the landslide happening in front of his eyes. He was left with the painful feeling that this certainly was not the way a General Conference president should be treated. Too well did he know what this new thing actually meant: The true discipline required by an orderly administration was here in for a total collapse. What could he now do to restore some degree of parliamentary decency? In his despair, he suggested that this inappropriate method of voting be supplemented by the more appropriate one. People

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who might have been lured into the sheepish act of rising, simply because all the others were behaving that way, should now still have a chance to manifest, by consciously raising their right hands, the legitimate sign, that they wanted Neal Wilson to continue in his office. Or they might be free to demonstrate, by the opposite sign, that this was not their desire.

Of course, only super optimists would expect people to go back on their first manifestation of their "choice", I mean in a way as demonstrative as this, and under the burning blitz of a limelight as fulminating as this.

### **XIII. EPILOGUE TO AN INTERLUDE: NEW AGE PHILOSOPHY MEETS OLD AGE ADVENTISM IN A LIFE AND DEATH BATTLE**

I have for some time been looking with wonder (with "great admiration", as the King James Version renders John's words in Revelation 17:6) at certain incredible things taking place in Seventh-day Adventist environment in the year of the Lord 1986. I am not all that surprised any longer at the dead silence with which my own appeals to the General Conference leadership have been met for years. What caused me to open my eyes quite widely was the violent treatment given to others, not to me. I should first mention the tough form of arrest happening to my colleague in the "warning mission", Dr. Deone Hanson, on the part of the General Conference police corps in New Orleans, Louisiana, at the Quinquennial Council last summer. That extremely modest and peaceful

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brother, as the only one, had taken upon himself the thankless task of distributing tracts giving most important information to session participants about what our dangerous enemy, the New Age Movement, actually stands for. I had met this unostentatious witness of the truth in the Heritage Department of the Loma Linda University Library, where he acquainted me with the serious research to which he was devoting all his time and all his means. I gave him a copy of my own book on the pantheism of the Kellogg crisis in our denomination: "The Mystic Omega of Endtime Crisis." I was fully aware, of course, at this late hour, that a crisis ten times more serious was spreading rapidly in our world and hitting our young wisdom-seekers in a particularly drama-filled way. Gradually, I had acquired particularly sad knowledge about an important course for college credit that had become a favorite among young Seventh-day Adventist students. The instigators of that novelty, I understand, were particularly to be found in church circles. That might scare us as particularly ominous. The organizers did not even shy away from calling it a course in New Age Thinking. That openness, however, helps me to interpret the arrangement in the mildest possible way. I immediately assumed that the reason for choosing such a name could not be downright audacity on the part of certain responsi-

ble leaders or our youth. It must rather be due to simple ignorance about what the term "New Age" stands for today.

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I am aware that the course has changed names fairly recently. For me that creates a situation only more problematic to manage. For, of course, no intelligent person would imagine that a basically pagan course can be "Christened" in the naive and original sense of the term: "being made Christian," after having been arch heathen all the time. There exists no Hocus Pocus strong enough to have a substance radically changed by means of changing just the name it bears.

There is one thing I doubt that all the responsible leaders among us could be so dangerously ignorant about. I am referring to the whole-page advertisement in major newspapers all over the world in the spring of 1982. That was an ad paid for by the Lucis Trust. Evidently, the New Age leaders managing that trust company, also, have some definite idea about the usefulness of changing names. For, originally, the name was the Lucifer Trust. The Lucis Trust of today has a large publishing firm in New York, called Lucis Publishing House. They even have an office in Upsala, Sweden. In fact, Sweden is quite advanced in all matters of this mysticism. (Norway is -- as usual -- just the turtle, always coming in last in the great race. That applies to good and evil.) Of course, it does behoove us all to bow down low in front of Uncle Sam. On the other hand, we may have little reason to envy America for being the "Biggest Lucifer Trust country in the world." Anyway, we should be forgiven if we just remain staring open-mouthed when we are one day told by a multimillion-dollar advertisement from Luci, the Great, that the return of Christ is right around the corner.

You should know, however, the sooner the better: This is not at all Christ in the sense of Jesus of Nazareth. It is the great Maitraya marching in triumphantly. That is a Messiah ushering in an entirely worldly type of salvation to an anxiously waiting world.

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To me, as you will already easily understand, it is frighteningly interesting to establish one fact: the close kinship between precise pantheism of the classical type I have introduced to you as a Christian student of the history of ideas, and -- on the other hand -- the weird type of "religion" made available to us by the New Age "pastors" coming to us "inspiringly."

Take note of what Benjamin Creme, one of the major New Age "prophets", presents as his view of man and the world in his book: "The Reappearance of Christ and the Masters of Wisdom." Once more, it is exactly the same thing taking away every bit of sound sense of reality. It is man's disruptive idea about man: the traditional pagan dualism of body and soul, matter and spirit. Where, finally, the spiritualism of antiquity is fused together with the materialism of modern times, the confusion becomes absolutely hopeless. Creme is obsessed by the pantheist idea: "Everything is God". So, "naturally", the evil forces, too, are part of "God".

The medieval gnosticism forms an integral part of Creme's heritage. Hence the gnostic idea about the "World Framer", a Creator-God of an inferior level. According to Creme, too, what we call "evil" is simply the force maintaining the material essence on our planet. But, modern man, or the divine spark in him, is now on his way out of the material. This breaking out from materiality may, in Creme's mind, mean the total destruction of our very planet (See p. 103). The Norwegian author, Torbjorn Freij ("New

Age," 1986) reminds us of something similar expressed by the astronaut, Edgar Mitchell, another member of the "New Age Club". He must have puzzled -- or even scared -- the readers of the Scandinavian periodical, "Ny Teknik", with the following statement in an interview the editor had with him.

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"A global atom war would only mean something like this: Mankind just failed their exam of grade one. That is a pity, of course, but no catastrophe. It only gets a bit more elaborate (long-winded) for body and soul to be once more united."

The moral implied, and efficiently inculcated on the minds of men today, is the same all along the line:

"Don't worry too seriously, little god-man on earth. You will arrive sooner or later, anyway. You cannot miss it. The inherent spark of divinity in you, as a positive thinker, could not fail to make you a triumphant winner in the end."

Time-honored spiritualism is surviving beautifully right in the midst of the toughest materialism in a modern age of the most audacious pantheism. What is called deep-rooted faith, however, constantly remains on the level of pure Eros concupiscence and utter secularity.

The superadministrator who announces his Messianic coming in haste, promises a transformation of our present rather decadent system: Cash payments may have to be abolished completely. Instead, every world citizen should be provided with a number, taking care of his entire identity. No part of his life should be exempted from being based on the data system

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now conquering the world. This will take care of all financial transactions, as well as the most sublime ones of the spirit world -- "The little man in the street" also needs the inspiration coming to him through a mythology fitting beautifully into the New Age image of man and the world. Therefore, the new Messianic world religion is planned as something mandatory, in the entire way he is brought up.

Believe me, there is a godlessness placed in store for you and me that is more wickedly premeditated than anything our Marxist demagogues have ever thought out.

There is one terrible fact you should know when tempted to yield to the gradual sway of the New Age myths right in our midst. That surrender means, in your case, a particularly mean faithlessness toward God. It is downright apostasy. Let us keep this in mind: In the same degree as you and I submit to it, we are simple apostates. Most other followers are not in that horrid category. For, apostasy, proper, can only happen to those who have once been on God's side. Our Bible's apocalyptic literature has a particular term to describe apostates: They are "falling stars". Lucifer was the first specimen of that species. If the same term applies to Mohammed in one place in Revelation, then he must actually once have been a Christian disciple. If so, then you can understand why Islam seems to be more fatally prohibitive to the progress of Christianity than any other pagan religion.

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In this connection, please notice the capital role of a woman by the name of Alice Bailey in the history of New Age thinking. She lived from 1880 to 1949. To begin with, she seems to have been a serious Christian. She was married to an American revival evangelist. Her own active participation in Christian work is evidenced by the fact that

she functioned as secretary for the YWCA. After a divorce, however; she was deeply disappointed and turned bitter. Evidently, she sought false comfort by taking her refuge in theosophy. The mysticism of a spiritualistic type of religiousness catching her in its dangerous net there, got her entangled in a cobweb promising relief and salvation. That is the great automatism again, the "blessed timelessness and spacelessness of Nirvana glory."

Mrs. Bailey claimed to have had telepathic contact with one of the "Sublime Masters" of the so-called White Lodge. He was the one "dictating" her 19 books. You see, don't you, to what extent automatism becomes a pattern of her life. Automatic writing has been a feature even trying to make its way right into the realm of historic Adventism.

What I would particularly like to underline, however, is something Mrs. Bailey has in common with the faithless Mohammed: She did not deny the historic personality of Jesus of Nazareth. She "only" denies that Jesus is the Christ in the Biblical sense of the term. According to her He is not more divine than You and I, or Alice Bailey, if you please. This is, by the way, a current characteristic of New Age occultism as an ideology: There are a number of Christs. And the really great one at the entrance of the Age of Aquarius is Maitraya. How can we best speed up his coming? It can happen through your efforts and mine of deep Meditation. Particularly, group meditation (so a feature of "holism" as they understand the term) is supposed to "liberate energy, stored up in the divine hierarchy." This could best take place about the time of full moon. You see the importance of astrology as a pervading element in their philosophy.

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The universal religion called Goodwill was founded in the very footsteps of Alice Bailey. Did you know that the organization, Goodwill, as a "nongovernmental one", is officially recognized by the UN?

The arch-deceiver's obvious goal in any modern education curriculum, including New Age wizardry, breaking into Seventh-day Adventist schools, is just to take away the Christ of the Bible. Do not allow anyone to fool you into believing that there is a different goal set up for that special course in "positive thinking", recommended for you. Recommended by whom? By the very leaders of your local church.

I should announce that I am releasing more terrible facts in a serious research manuscript now ready for publication. Its title is: "The Science of the Occult." Subtitle: "The Fabulous Findings of Psi Lab Tests from Westernmost USA to Easternmost USSR -- Seen in the Critical Light of Christian Realism."

That book shows with conclusive evidence how unwarranted certain interpretations of test results may be in highly accredited universities all over the world. Notice: lab tests definitely manipulated by the demon world interfering in them.

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What is it then some famous scholars in parapsychology departments from the extreme West to the extreme East claim that they have conclusively demonstrated? It is nothing less than this: There is an inborn ability in simple human beings to grasp directly any facts of the future. It is only our physical senses that limit us. However, ESP (Extra Sensory Perception) delivers us from this limitation to time and space reality. Now it has been "proven" in the laboratory that "dualism is the fact about man." This means that man has an inherent capacity to place himself where he can perceive future events.

Now you should know for sure that the monistic anthropology the Bible teaches, from cover to cover, goes brazenly against this body-soul dualism of pagan "thought". Small wonder that Holy Writ abounds in texts showing that God only has knowledge of the future in the sense of true prophecy, or "precognition", as the parapsychologists express it.

My faith in Biblical philosophy was decisive for me on this point as on all others. So, I naturally assumed that there must be some serious error committed in experimental labs of modern psi research. It must be possible to detect the source of that error.

At the same time, there had to be something fearfully wrong with you and me, in our basic philosophical views; that is, our views about God, about man, and about the world. For, in our denomination, the following is today an indisputable fact: Literature produced in all earnest, on the highest level of Seventh-day Adventist theological scholarship, and published on the highest level of responsible editorship, actually claims that God has no possibility of knowing what man will make up his mind to do in the future in the most serious fields of human behavior.

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Now, do you know that there is one thing, above all, with which prophecy deals? Of course you do. It is the question of what men will decide to do in the future. Well then, is Biblical prophecy just a matter of divine guesswork?

No wonder our denominational interest in prophecy -- for instance in evangelistic campaigns -- is having an all-time low! I mean compared to what happened in the days of our pioneers.

Do you think it strange that I felt like comparing two fellows? On the one hand the typical psi researcher in modern science; on the other hand the theological writer of ours just mentioned. I wanted to know something more about the respective ditches they find themselves in regarding the topic of foreknowledge in the extreme sense of the term.

Well, you say, we as a people strongly disagree with that would-be Adventist writer.

Is that so? Then, why has nothing been officially stated to recant the publication of such a book, and to warn our young people against being poisoned by its blasphemous message? I have begged the brethren in Washington for years now to do something about this, and many other serious matters resting heavily upon our conscience, individually and collectively. Not one word comes my way in reply to my request.

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The last 20 pages of my manuscript cited above are dedicated to an equally serious question. That is about a particularly nefarious heresy being inculcated today upon the receptive minds of our young students. It is commonly referred to -- and often with considerable respect -- in present-day theological circles among us, as the Moral Influence Theory. In effect, it states that it was not strictly necessary that Jesus must die in order that you and I should be saved through His substitutionary sacrifice on the cross. In my book I go to the medieval origin of that heresy. I actually go back to a most fascinating figure of the Church and of Scholastic culture in the Middle Ages. As a whole I have called him the "most non-Christian Christian in Christianity". I ought, perhaps, rather to call him "the most unfatherly father of hard-boiled disputation theology in me-

dieval scholasticism." Only in Twentieth Century seminaries could you expect a greater "un-fatherliness."

I am speaking about Peter Abelard. His "master stroke" in theology was the blasphemous effort of taking away the idea of the LAMB in Christianity. Could that be a worthy pattern for Seventh-day Adventist theologians to imitate?

Peter Abelard was the product of a Church who -- in spite of all her Mary cult, had lost every morsel of her original motherliness.

A book actually taking up the very heritage from Peter Abelard has appeared in the same Seventh-day Adventist publishing house that published the one previously mentioned. So, for years I have felt it to be my duty to urge responsible leaders in the General Conference to exert the discipline necessary to put an end to such teaching and such publishing in our most representative institutions. What we must fear greatly is the curse resting upon us as a denomination, if we do not take due measures in cases of blasphemy as flagrant as these. The sadder I must be that not one word is deemed necessary in answer to my many inquires of this troublesome kind.

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Now, will the readers of my "Day of Destiny II" feel equally pestered by a similar importunity on my part? I am very much afraid that some will. But, is that a valid reason for me not to publish it? Perhaps, on the contrary. So far, I can only say: It is a book on the Sabbath asking unusual questions. The very title shows this: "Does the Sabbath have a future -- and that homeland?" More crucial still: Is that future -- and that homeland -- of the kind for which intensively longing human hearts fell naturally bound? To me this sounds like questions of genuine childliness, and genuine fatherliness.

#### **XIV. CONCLUSION.**

I am glad I could finally manage to speak as openly as this about things bothering my conscience so seriously. So, I have got a certain settling of accounts will myself. And this just before I am now resuming my examen philosophicum courses for the Norwegian university students. They used to be courses at our mountain farm in Alpes de Provence. But, France today appears, more than ever, as an environment quite untouched by the wholesome spirit of Christian realism, more so, in fact, than the most ultra-pagan Adventist in France. But, many of them are pitifully similar to you and me. In them, sad to say, there is a discouraging lack of the spirit of true internationalism, which is an indispensable mark of true Seventh-day Adventism.

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English is the great world medium of hearty communication, into which the Advent Movement was born. That "lingua franca" is still destined to carry the three angel's messages about Sabbath holiness with dramatic urgency to the ends of the world.

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