

Pagan Thought-Forms and the Role of Spirit of Prophecy

Observations of Carsten Johnsen

www.CarstenJohnsen.org

[Bold supplied; italics in original]

I may as well confess my own view on the matter, my own firm conviction, based, as I hope, on thorough observation and conscientious research: That dualism is nothing new in the drama of our European history of ideas. It forms an integrating part of the arch-false duality which, in spite of Christianity's intensive fight against it, has insinuated itself into the highest places of Christendom. Nothing could have a heavier share in the responsibility for the fact that our culture is soaked with **pagan thought-forms**. The spiritualistic irrealism it has spread over Occidental lands has caused a confusion which hardly a single one among us has managed to escape from without hurt. For our deepest cultural heritage in the Western world is just that nightmare spook of which we feel the deadly weight in our inmost lives.

Agape and Eros, p. 62.3

It may sound bold in the midst of a Greek-inspired culture to speak about the humble God. Throughout our lives we have imbibed the arch-**pagan thought-forms** of platonic idealism with all its vain-glorious insistence on climbing, climbing--in one's own power--to the stars. What glory could there be to us--children of a Hellenist world--in meekness? But it is God Himself who uses this description about Himself: "Learn of me. I am meek and lowly in heart." Matthew 11:29.

Agape and Eros, p. 79.4

In order to appreciate more fully the character of the Christian Agape, it will be good to get to know something in further detail about the abysmal depths of the Platonic Eros with its icy message of systematic unconcern as the great philosophical ideal; that is, what **pagan Western thought** calls "idealism."

Agape and Eros, p. 186.2

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.

Crucial Events in SDA Theology Today, pp. 88.5 - 89.1

Misfortune of misfortunes: the miserably disrupted human heart seeks its eventual "peace" and "rest" in a truly fantastic compromise. That was a brain child more fantastic, indeed, than

either of its parents. Of course you are justified in asking with incredulity: How could there be any compromise at all between extreme spiritualism and extreme materialism? Still the bastard offspring of that shamelessly unnatural union is a historical fact, and the name of the bastard is pantheism. It must have been a hard-pressed spiritualism and a hard-pressed materialism that could amalgamate to form pantheism. Here the peak is reached of all absurdity: Matter itself is consecrated as being "from eternity", and "incorruptible", and "absolutely divine".

How could a monster of such dimensions be born at all from thinking human brains and feeling human hearts? This is a milestone, indeed, in the history of **pagan thought**. For here nothing less than the total inertia of the physical world and the total inertia of the "spiritual" world have had their historic encounter. The respective absurdities of the meaningless extremes in automatism have merged together into one great super-automatism, one great super-meaninglessness.

Day of Destiny, p. 31.1&2

According to the French theologian, Alfred Vaucher, Christian theology has made three different approaches over the centuries, in its gigantic effort to give some kind of logical justification for the perpetuated fact -- the institution of Sunday in place of the Biblical Sabbath:

- 1) An endeavor to show that the whole Decalogue is incompatible with Christian concepts of morality, and has to be abandoned.
- 2) An endeavor to show that the fourth commandment is incompatible, and has to be abandoned.
- 3) An endeavor to show that a certain "part" of that commandment is compatible, and has to be abandoned.

It is mainly to this third approach that we shall try to give our most thorough examination, as it relates to our Christian culture, infiltrated by **pagan thought-forms**. Indeed, it is this third alternative in which the embarrassed theologian -- whether Catholic or Protestant -- places his greatest hopes of a logical rescue. We shall see with what philosophical genius the Church has put into function a device of the most subtle abstraction. In fact, no Platonic idealist could have performed this trick with greater expertise.

Day of Destiny, pp. 108.7 - 109.4

This tendency to dichotomize comes naturally to Western man, because of his prevailing **pagan** culture, governed by the **thought-patterns** of Platonic idealism.

Day of Destiny, p. 110.4

To the great Hebrew realists, to whom the task was confided to give verbal expression to God's message of truth, it has appeared a self-evident thing that such an interpretation must be accorded to "time", as well as to "eternity". In fact, to them eternity was nothing but *unending time*. The two are not made up of different stuff. It is **pagan** spiritualism that insinuates into the minds of Occidental Christians that eternity is *timelessness*, and nothing else. It is again Plato who has left us his heritage of **thought**. It is not Jesus Christ.

Briefly, I would not hesitate to assert: It is again just our inveterate **thought-pattern** of **pagan** idealism that has gradually made it appear to us as if time were, in itself and quite inevitably, a negative dimension. Little by little we have been tricked into believing that time is an element in which original man, sinless man, cannot have any chance whatsoever of feeling perfectly at ease. A curious idea has been deeply rooted, namely that time, as a category of existence, is bound to come to an end! An entirely "new dimension", philosophically speaking, is

supposed to supplant it; that is, an element crushingly "superior" to it, called "eternity". In other words, the time element which the Creator once devised for Adam's existence, appears to have turned out to be something like a sad mistake, on God's part. "Time is bankrupt!"

Is that trend of **thought** biblical? Is it endorsed by one single author within the canon? Not so far as I have been able to discover.

Day of Destiny, pp. 119.6 - 120.2

"God has no history". In my opinion, a formulation of that kind smacks of spiritualism and therefore should be avoided. The same applies to "timeless truths." I think what is here actually suggested by the intelligent men who use the term, is that those truths apply to all times. So they are what the German language would call "allzeitig" and not at all "zeitlos". In some people's minds it might be a most confusing expression to say that God "has no history". In the first place this might dangerously obscure the fact that God is the One who precisely did not think it unworthy to go into history, even man's history, and stay there, not only "till the Crucifixion", but for the rest of His life, that is, eternally, during a future without end. As far as God's relation to human history is concerned, it tends to convey a dangerously erroneous idea, I think, to say that "He is too completely and utterly real to have one." Where does this notion stem from that there is something more or less antagonistic to reality in the essence of history? That notion certainly has no birth-right in Judeo-Christian **thought**. There is much reason to fear, on the contrary, that our proneness to make formulations of that kind is rather due to the influence exercised upon our **thoughts** and our **thought-forms** by the prevailing spiritualistic trend of **pagan** philosophy in the Western World. It is platonic spiritualism which, from the beginnings of our culture, filled us with this weird yearning toward an unknown region we might call "non-time"; that is, the "hope not to be always rationed in that way". In what way? In the way our Creator has seen perfectly fit for me: the "time" way, the "history" way. Realistically considered, I think there is only one theoretical possibility of escaping the extreme human-ness of that "rationing"; that is to become God oneself, not the God of the Bible, but Plato's God (the Idea). That would presuppose the "divine" spark in human nature which **pagan** idealism has always spoken about as an original endowment in man. Man, from times immemorial, enjoyed thinking of himself as eternal. To him that meant "timeless", platonically and spiritualistically divine: that is, gloriously free from all "rationing" in terms of the limitations imposed upon creatures by the "time bondage". Please permit me to repeat my protest against this philosophy.

Let us repeat: Time as such is not a negative, a despicable thing. No-no! What fills time is decisive. Sin has filled man's time for millennia now. That is why time has been contaminated -- and accordingly depreciated as base -- "in itself". In other words, its notorious "inherent vileness" is a quite gratuitous assertion. I say this because I just have to vindicate the cause of the Sabbath, the cause of God! For the Sabbath is time, and God is the Creator of the Sabbath.

Day of Destiny, pp. 124.3 - 125.1

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hast formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God... For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night." [Psalm 90:2, 4]

In other words, God is not limited by definite periods of time, like creatures are. He is the infinitely superior one, the "Ancient of Days" who has the perfect overview over all events, past, present, and future. He is without beginning and end, endlessly different from creaturely beings, limited men, totally dependent on the Eternal One for their very existence.

This is altogether Biblical philosophy. But what do philosophizing theologians often mean by their "timeless" and "spaceless" God? Where **pagan** platonic **thought forms** are prevailing, our theologians put something very different into the words they here use. According to them, God's existence simply cannot have anything in common with the time-space realism of this world. Time and space, they think, belong exclusively to a world of creation and generation. Such a world is "necessarily subject to the hazards of emergency and decay", and to the more or less "despicable" process of change, a phenomenon which is under no circumstances supposed to happen to God. God, it is inferred, could never be subject to the vicissitude of change. If He were, He too would be a victim to corruption. This is the immediate conclusion. Is it Biblical and realistic?

Day of Destiny, p. 126.6-8

I have come to the conviction that it is just the peculiar thinness (rarification) of the atmosphere, spiritually and ethically speaking, that permits two creeds as heterogeneous as materialism and spiritualism to rub shoulders without any serious clash of disagreement. This happens in the semi-religious ambience of pure humanism, nowhere else.

In the stern realism of Christianity as a unique, absolutely incomparable form of spiritual manifestation, there is no toleration whatsoever for that rarification of the human consciousness. The awareness of mortal sin on the one hand, and the equally keen awareness of what perfect holiness demands, on the other hand,--these two together constitute, in Christian realism, a sense so acute, so irrepressible, so irreconcilable, that there is no bargaining possible. This is the very meaning of intensive personalism as a concept of Christian theology and Christian anthropology. Any attempt to reduce that awareness of the sinfulness of sin, or the awareness of the holy, as contradistinguished from the common, this is nothing but the lurking irrealism of a humanism insinuating itself into all media of **pagan thought** and **pagan** feeling, whether in its spiritualist (idealist) variety or its materialist variety.

God, the Situation Ethicist, p. 84.3&4

The conclusion the committee has drawn from that faithless premise is exactly the same you and I, heirs of a **pagan** culture, arrive at only too naturally: "Because of this, no set of moral generalizations can substitute for individual conscience" (Ibid.) [Statement of Principles for the Interruption of Pregnancy]

I know what a good and sympathetic maxim this was meant to be. Still, the temptation is so close at hand to interpret it as follows: The poor faltering human creature's own subjective notion of right and wrong is bound to be the only judgment throne for deciding the matter in the last analysis.

An introduction of that dubious kind impresses me as a scary one. But it is not a committee over in America somewhere that scares me. What scares me most of all is my own self. For how could I fail to realize to some extent that this entire and thoroughly **pagan** trend of **thought** is MINE? It is a property to which I have the full and inalienable title. As a co-heir to Plato's and Kant's kingdom, I have a special access and a special right to that **paganism**, which no one can take away from me. At least no one save Jesus Christ.

God, the Situation Ethicist, p. 148.7-9

I would say without hesitation: the most conspicuous deficiency in **pagan thought**, by and large, is its failure to have a due appreciation of creation. It is not without reason that creation takes such an important place in biblical theology.

Now, precisely God's determination to "take the risk," is what so many critics charge against Him. What they fail to realize is the boundless significance of creation. In fact, the most tragic deficiency in **pagan thought**, is its fatal failure to have a due appreciation of the marvel of creation. Not only creation on the highest level, the calling into existence of intelligent beings, is an infathomably great event, but even the creation on a lower level with its endless variety of species and forms, is beyond all measure significant!

The Maligned God, p. 17.3&4

For what is the essence of Greek spiritualism at the apogee of Plato's philosophizing splendour? It is entirely different. Just consider the genius of that idealist prophet emerging to unfold the striking message of his most extraordinary theory. Of course, in reality that theory of the Idea - in a proper environment of **pagan thought** - is not so strikingly extraordinary at all. In fact, it is too fundamentally pagan, pagan through and through, to be really extraordinary. Plato only introduces into our World of the West what had existed for ages in more ancient civilizations of human history: that is, the inexorable extremism of a genuinely pagan 'otherworldliness'.

Man the Indivisible, p. 135.1

We shall see, in our next book, how little that Eros of **pagan thought** actually has in common, by and large, with the Christian Agape. Here we must mainly limit our examination to the part he plays in the properly secular Beauty cult of both Grecian antiquity and Italian Renaissance.

Man the Indivisible, p. 260.2

However, in order to make it clear to you how the Spirit of Prophecy restored my faith in the Word of God as a source of realism I could depend on 100 percent, I must first give you some brief information about the diametrically opposite, the irrationalism of the leading philosophical trend of our Western civilization. That is, the age-old tradition of a humanism which is **pagan** through and through, and which has given itself the beautiful name of idealism. I am dumfounded now to discover how thoroughly that type of idealism, which is just a synonym for spiritualism, has penetrated the basic thinking of every one of us. Our minds are so sick as a result of the **pattern of thought** pervading this philosophy, that we are hardly able to understand, offhand, anymore, the philosophy the Bible teaches on every page. The first Christians could understand it easily. But you and I have been so heavily imbued with the **thought forms of pagan dualism** that our thinking has to be reconditioned or geared back to a **pattern of thought** in harmony once more with Biblical realism. The Spirit of Prophecy messages, so marvelously geared to the outward form of expression peculiar to twentieth century people, and yet remaining perfectly in accordance with the realistic substance of Biblical thinking evidently accomplish the wonder of making it possible for twentieth century people, and yet remaining perfectly in accordance with the realistic substance of Biblical thinking, evidently accomplish the wonder of making it possible for twentieth century man to appropriate that realism of old.

The Mystic Omega, p. 6.2

We should never flatter ourselves that pantheism is something we can fully understand. It is too foolish, indeed, for that. And foolishness can hardly ever be properly understood. All I can say is this: It must have been a pretty hard-pressed spiritualism, and a pretty hard-pressed

materialism, too, that could finally amalgamate to form pantheism. Here the all-time peak of absurdity as a virtual doctrine, taught by demons and by men, must have been reached. You know what that doctrine of pantheism actually preaches don't you? It solemnly proclaims that matter itself is from eternity. Matter is incorruptible. Matter is absolutely divine.

How could a blaspheming monster of such dimensions be born at all from the hidden depths of thinking human brains and feeling human hearts? This is "milestone," indeed, in the history of **pagan thought**. For here, believe me, nothing less than the total inertia of our physical world and the total inertia of a would-be spiritual world have had their historic encounter. The respective absurdities of the meaningless extremes in automatism have merged together, as it were, into one great super-automaton, one great meaninglessness.

The Mystic Omega, pp. 51.4 - 52.1

"The Lord speaks to human beings in *imperfect speech*, in order that the degenerate senses, the dull earthly perception of earthly beings may comprehend His words. Thus is shown God's *condescension*. He meets fallen human beings where they are. The Bible, *perfect as it is in its simplicity*, does not answer to the ideas of God, for infinite ideas cannot be perfectly embodied in finite vehicles of thought." (1 *Selected Messages*, p. 22; emphasis supplied)

In this passage we should not onesidedly focus our attention on that admittedly most remarkable sentence: "the Bible...does not answer to the ideas of God." Such onesidedness might encourage in us a spiritualistic trend in our thinking which we are only too prone to entertain. We should, in the midst of it all, keep in mind those words so harmoniously blended into it: "The Bible, perfect as it is in its simplicity,..." If what are we here being assured? Of the important fact that the perfection of the Bible is not, by any means, impaired, or reduced, by its simplicity. Granted: simplicity is here accounted for in terms of "condescension." But if we imagine that condescension is to be regarded as an inferior element, then we have not yet learned the ABC's of Biblical philosophy. We are nothing but proud spiritualists. For the God of the Bible is a God who takes exquisite pleasure in just condescending. Condescension, in Christianity, is calculated to aid creatures on a lower level of intellect and discernment to appropriate still the message of love and mercy God has for them. So please notice: not for one moment should the idea be permitted to linger in our minds that the Bible has run the risk of becoming in some way "less perfect" (for instance, in terms of theological genius) because it was "doomed" to stay that simple! No, no! That is an entirely **pagan thought form**.

The Mystic Omega, p. 77.1&2

4. The Pantheist Unflinchingly Branded as an Impostor--Both Intellectually and Morally Speaking

Particularly if we go straight ahead to the specific case of Kellogg's pantheism, we should have no difficulty in pointing out the purely intellectual deficiencies hallmarking it as philosophically inferior and unworthy. It just too clearly reveals itself as nothing more than the age-old illusionism of **pagan thought** at foolish war against the eternal realities, as they are in Jesus Christ, the Master Mind of creation and providence.

Now, of course, the pantheist would certainly be offended already by this attack against his philosophy on purely intellectual grounds. But he might still, to some extent, have the generosity of extending some kind of forgiveness to us regarding that sort of attack. For it would be considered as attacking him in his own field. There is one thing, however, that he would be more likely to regard, not only as irrelevant and ridiculous, but even as clamorously unfair: That is to

be called a "free lover." How could anyone justify an accusation as strange as that? Who could immediately find an overwhelming significance in it? Your question is fully legitimate.

The Mystic Omega, p. 105.1&2

So my Omega series has one purpose. It is to demonstrate the destiny-laden role of philosophy even in your little world and mine. It is my responsibility to do my best to show, particularly to the young who are growing up among us, what has been the nefarious influence of **pagan thought-forms** in every stage of the deviations happening to our denomination. What has actually taken place was bound to take place from the moment on that we permitted **pagan thought patterns** to penetrate our minds and our hearts.

Omega II, p. 3.4

I have become increasingly impressed over the years by the profound knowledge available to you and me about this main-stream phenomenon of all Western philosophy. It is a unique enlightenment for which we are endlessly **indebted to the Spirit of Prophecy**.

Now why have not theologians in general in the Christian Church become more consciously aware of a matter as essential as this for a due understanding of the rash conclusions theological scholars have tended to draw right in the core of those tremendously important questions so intimately connected with our Lord's call to holiness?

I have found one urgent answer to give to that question. The fatal error which even some outstanding representatives of our own teams of Biblical research have succumbed to, can be epitomized as follows: It is an alluring **pagan** outlook on life that has been inculcated upon our minds and hearts. By what? By an education steeped in the traditional quagmire of proud Graeco-Roman Eros philosophy. As long as we, in our studies, follow this pattern of **thought**, we are bound to fail. Invariably that was the sad lot of all those who used to find their great intellectual ideal in the Romantic charms of a **pagan** sentimentalism. What else than tragic failure could happen to a Christian theologian who permits himself to indulge in moods and manners inspired by what is most profane in classical European culture? Vanity of vanities! Clinging to such sham values in religious life is nothing less than an insult against the basic ideals of pristine Biblical realism. There just is not any way a theological researcher with so little Christian backbone could avoid being led astray.

Omega II, pp. 8.5 - 9.1

You may now entertain the idea that "fortunately there has never been any question of a *leap into the absurd* as a suggested *way out* among scholars within our own ranks fighting the hard battle over the Preadvent Judgement and the significance of 1844. I shall very briefly give you evidence that this may happen even to the best among us.

I am not here speaking about temporary whims, playing with the moods of scatterbrains, lacking all scientific training or every established method of scientific research. No, let us rather take the instance of a most well-balanced member of our research teams, charged with tackling the major problems SDA theology has been facing during these last decades. I am referring to Brother R.F. Cottrell. It would be impossible for me of course to quote verbatim from this man's writings, in defence of my own standpoint against his, without mentioning him by name. Here nothing should be pushed under the rug. What I am fighting, in Brother Cottrell's thesis, is something he has been teaching openly, for instance in normally announced lectures in our two universities. So it must be evident that I have the perfect right to go against them with similar openness, in this book which I am sending out as some sort of open letter to my good Brother

Raymond. In fact, I consider it not only as my right, but as my sacred duty to tell candidly and emphatically how serious I consider the matter to be. And it is a message I particularly insist that our young people -- the intellectual ones, and the *not* so intellectual ones -- should have opportunity to hear. Please be careful, young friends that you do not follow in the footprints of us old fellows uncritically. You must carefully and diligently compare every bit of our teachings with the teachings of the Bible, the great handbook in Christian realism.

I should admit from the beginning that after having got better acquainted with the extensive work this now retired scholar has accomplished for the denomination through the positions of great trust he has held, I understand the great respect he enjoys, and the exceptional *licentia docendi* he is being granted. I understand it, although I am not able to accept it as fully justifiable.

In the same sense I can very well understand the alternative of escape which that prominent leader among our Bible scholars has here eventually chosen, and which he recommends for his fellow-researchers. But at the same time I fully realize that his choice is the ultimate in **pagan** absurdity, the most daring race into **patterns** of **thought** invented by modernist philosophy that has ever been witnessed in the history of our denomination. At least I for my part have never seen any teaching disseminated among us that was more clearly inspired by the arch-**pagan** heritage of Western philosophy.

This is a particular reason why I feel duty-bound to give a particularly prominent place to a discussion of Cottrell's philosophy, as a way of introduction to the general treatment which later has to be given to the entire complex of extraordinary happenings now taking place within most respected circles of our denomination.

I have not, so far, seen any writer treating these particular things with the openness and philosophico-historical thoroughness they certainly deserve. It is not only in lectures presented publicly in our two universities in America, but also in semiofficial papers in our midst, having a wide circulation, particularly among our intellectuals, that Cottrell's views have had a broad publicity. So I do not see any intelligent reason why a critical review should not have an equally wide distribution. For I must repeat: never did I observe anything more symptomatic of the boldness with which **pagan thought**-forms may insinuate themselves into the sacred halls of an ultra-orthodox Protestant Church.

At the same time I fully realize how tempting this "way out" must appear to those who have really come to the conclusion, after years and decades of careful and conscientious study (under the leadership of just such inspiring leaders as Brother Cottrell), that the Bible and the EGW writings pronounce "mutually exclusive" ideas about Jesus Christ's most important ministry. The temptation must be increasing every day to agree with their outstanding colleague, also in the solution he arrives at as the only possible one. For it is in a way a solution which may appear relatively sympathetic to those who still have a deep respect for Ellen White and the **Spirit of Prophecy** writings in the history of Seventh-day Adventism.

The first time I myself had the extraordinary experience of hearing this "solution" of the "insoluble problem", presented (in a lecture given at LLU), was in the spring of 1980.

To me, with the studies of ancient and modern philosophy as my background, it immediately appeared as a proclamation of ultimate desperateness. It was something I had never had sufficient imagination to expect in our denomination. My feelings might be described as somewhat similar perhaps to those of John, the revelator, where he says (Rev. 17:6b): "*I wondered with great admiration.*"

Omega II, pp. 10.1 - 11.5

"If God is called the living God, if He is the ground of the creative process of life, if history has significance for Him, if there is no negative principle in addition to Him which could account for evil and sin, how can one avoid positing a dialectical negativity in God himself? Such questions have forced theologians to relate non-being dialectically to being-itself and consequently to God." (*Systematic Theology I*, pp. 188-199.)

"He That Hath Ears to Hear, Let Him Hear."

Suggestive phrases such as the ones quoted, ought to be a sufficient indication that Tillich has an entirely different basis for his theology than the Bible has for its peculiar concept of God. The real trend is hidden in a miasma of speculative philosophy's most cryptic language. So relatively few students perceive how thoroughly unbiblical it is, how absolutely **pagan** that author's **thought-forms** are--how downright atheistic his philosophy is, in spite of his reputation as the "greatest Christian theologian in our century."

Omega II, p. 44.3-5

What would be so bad about a blunt denial of hopeless opposites that do exist? The inevitable consequence of that would always be a simple collapse of intellectual integrity. We know what was destined to happen in a country right in the heart of Protestant Europe. Germany once was a bulwark against the paganism introduced by the Hellenistic tradition. Luther's reformation movement first realized that Europe's **pagan** education system of Greek origin was destroying true Christianity in European schools, but that educational reform was doomed to shipwreck, due to a relapse into the same paganism. Germany is today a country doomed to become among the most tragic ones in the Western World, thanks to its stubborn adherence to the destructive **patterns of thought** established by classical Greece with its spiritualistic intellectualism. From Europe the same deleterious trend made its way even to the United States of America, but that is another story.

Omega II, p. 62.2

Don't let us attribute to Kant an originality of **thought** he does not really deserve. Why should we modern Western men, in our natural vainglorious pride, fail to recognize that we hardly have anything, in terms of sophisticated intellectualistic thinking, which we have not inherited from the Greeks, our great fathers in all arts of **pagan** incantation?

Just permit me this little question: What does Kant present to us that was not already to be found in his gigantic predecessor Plato?

You and I should know well enough by now what kind of especially adapted philosophy the devil had machinated and successfully launched very early on European ground, in order to crush the sacred, realistic **pattern of thought** constituting the only true philosophy of the Omniscient One. I am speaking of course about the giant battle between the false wisdom launched by **pagan** man and the unadulterated truth as it is in Jesus, the faithful Witness, the only truth that is mighty to save. In other words, I am again referring to platonic idealism as the great anti-reality philosophy of the West, destined to mold the thinking of Occidental men, right down to the time of the end. And now please do not feel so sure that this special pattern of counterfeit wisdom in the West has nothing to do with what is happening to your crisis and mine. It has very much to do with that, even in its farthest ramifications, pertaining to details in that ominous polarization taking place in our denomination today. Imposters in the field of **thought** are not necessarily as original or unique as our historians of philosophy will tend to described them.

Omega II, p. 65.4-6

The Strange Phenomenon of Sola Reformatio

The term "sola reformatio" is mine. But the trend I want to express by it is not particularly mine. At least I do not hope so. In fact, it is just another aspect of dualist thinking. By "sola reformatio" I mean: to be perfectly satisfied with the Reformation, desiring nothing beyond that. Being a child brought up in a milieu of Western paganism, I must of course admit that this pattern of pagan dualism had got the better of me as well, for a long, long time, in spite of the fact that I was also brought up in the sheltered milieu of an Adventist home.

The serious question I here want to take up is the following: What have you and I got to brag about? Can we truthfully today deny that we are internally disrupted? I mean as individuals, as family groups, and as a people. Where have we gone wrong? How can we come back to normal? Is there any remedy strong enough to make us whole again? Our brokenness, you see, is not that of the Christian *Metanoia*, the contrite heart. It is rather that of the coldest and most hard-hearted *Autarkeia*. That is, self-sufficiency, the great ideal of Plato, but certainly not of Jesus Christ.

It is our philosophy that has gone wrong. Let us take due note of the fact. Our outlook on God and man and the entire world is no longer that of the Biblical philosophy. For that philosophy is a consistent philosophy of harmonious totality. Ours, however, is a tragic disintegration in all essentials. Our theologians today are inclined to call it just "polarization". That may not immediately sound so terribly sinful. But is there any greater sin among men than that of being *poles apart*, just in matters where they ought to be most closely together? Such "apartness" (Apartheid) is nothing less than a tragedy, where true life demands unity, integration, perfect oneness in the faith.

How could anything as bad as this happen to us? How in the world of wonders, since our foundation from the beginning was the Word of God and the philosophy of *wholeness* and *holiness* (words of the closest etymological connectedness), the only rock-bottom realism any philosophy has ever known? I have applied myself to finding plausible answers for a long time: As children of a hopelessly intellectualistic race we have been simply permeated by **pagan thought forms**. By and by, our very hearts have become paganized through and through. I know what I am speaking about. For I am a member of the group. At the same time it so happens that I am becoming increasingly conscious of the hideousness of that paganism which has become part and parcel of our heritage.

None but knavish sadists, or tyrants greedy of power, could find such a condition of the church enjoyable. Still one thing is true: Sometimes a crisis may be the introduction to a change for the better. I am speaking about *KRISIS*, not about *KRIMA*, the other *NT* word for the English "Judgment". *KRIMA* is Doom. *KRISIS*, however still has some blessed hope left in it. The hope is that an ever so drowsy person may finally wake up. It is a question of life or death.

Why a Positive Attitude toward the Spirit of Prophecy Becomes Our Only Safeguard Against Disruptive Interpretations of the Type: "Sola Reformatio"

First, what is the actual nature and the particular seriousness of that disruption tearing us asunder at the present time? In my book *The Maligned God* I have spoken, at sufficient length, about Luther's unfortunate formulation "sola fide" (pp. 160-203). That is part of a larger "solus" theology which we may call the disruption of "solum Novum Testamentum": "the New Testament only". To give you an idea of the stubbornness with which it has maintained its spurious wisdom, let me quote a passage from Anders Nygren, the great ultra-modern prophet of

the splitting wedge type of Christian **thought**, within main-stream Protestantism. Nygren speaks with great emphasis about a Christ who lets "Christianity emerge from Judaism as a completely new religion."

"Christian fellowship with God is different in kind from that of Judaism. And therefore Christianity, in spite of its historical connection with Judaism, and in spite of any other bonds and affinities between them, is a *fundamentally different thing from Judaism*." *Agape and Eros*, p. 68.

It is nothing less than the oneness of the Bible that is here in jeopardy. Nygren simply thinks he is justified in "regarding the dependence of Christianity on the Old Testament as a *disaster*" (p. 255). There seems to be no question whatsoever of a harmonious transition from the Old Testament to the New. A necessary "*tension*" between the two is the best he can suggest.

Today, more than ever before, it becomes evident that the **Spirit of Prophecy** was absolutely necessary for you and me in order to protect us from a spurious and disruptive philosophy, such as that of Nygren. How deeply he has drunk from the sources of modern philosophers, such as Kierkegaard and Kant, becomes evident when we consider one of his most persistent ideas, namely that of Agape being first and foremost a fundamental motif of the most extreme *irrationality!* (See my book: *The Part of the Story You Were Never Told About Agape and Eros*, pp. 52 to 59: What is the Essence of Nygren's thesis about Agape as *the Great Unreasonable One?*) To Ethics maybe the most dubious thing is that Nygren's concept of Agape virtually explodes all known barriers of *law* and *justice*:

Strange that it should seem relevant to Nygren to go with visible pleasure even to the super-heretic Marcion of the second century in order to find his great model of a "separatio legis et evangelii".

With regard to that "separation of the law and the gospel" for which Marcion had become so famous, Nygren says with manifest admiration and approval:

"In this respect he (Marcion) displays far keener insight than any of his contemporaries." p. 332.

And here comes his almost incredibly outspoken statement about the need of evaluating *justice* in an entirely new way:

"It is futile to try to eliminate from this Parable (the parable by Jesus about the workers in the vineyard, Matthew 20) that which is offensive from a juridical point of view. The offence only ceases when the principle of justice itself is eliminated as inapplicable to the religious relationship, and this is precisely what happens in the Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard. It is equally futile to try to find a *motive* for God's love for the lost. The offence of this only ceases when we realize that God's love for the righteous is just as "unmotivated", since it is characteristic of God's love that it is not evoked by its object, it is not motivated." (pp. 88, 89)

How can anyone dare to state in plain words: Agape is a love that *makes mockery of all attempts at rational motivation*. It is modern theologians who are bold enough to make that kind of mockery, not Agape. It is modern theological best-sellers, like Nygren's "*Agape*", containing so many gems of truth right in the midst of its fatal errors, that have led many of our best theologians and ministers astray. They have fallen miserable victims to this spurious idea: "You cannot hope to have the slightest understanding of Agape until it dawns on you that the concept of justice must be kept carefully apart from it." If your philosophy and mine is not better than that antinomianism, then how could we entertain any hopes of coming back to the old paths where our basic philosophy is made truly whole again, and hence truly saving.

Personally I know for sure that I have nothing to brag about. The **Spirit of Prophecy** was my only chance to be led into a living knowledge of Biblical realism. If you think otherwise about

your own abilities, I think I have experience enough with SDA students, to entertain highly justified doubts about your special abilities in this respect. Not once have I come across an Adventist Bible student who managed to grasp fully the far-reaching facts of Biblical realism in this endtime era, without a humble faith in the great God-given science of the **Spirit of Prophecy**.

How the Great Disruption Operates

Could we modern Westerners be at all expected to grasp the fulness of Christian philosophy, the Bible's life-saving and totality-saving realism, by means of the Bible alone (*sola Scriptura*)? My answer would be: Ideally we could. But please remember: *with you and me today it is NOT the ideal that bears sway!* We ought to know that pretty well by now. Our Christ-flavored **paganism** is the worst brew ever invented. So our hopeless heritage of hellenized Christendom gets the better of us, whenever we are left to that "precious aloneness" of ours. "Alone" here means one thing: without any special intervention of the Spirit.

The reformers may cry "*sola Scriptura*" as much as they like. The historic record is there to testify that *they themselves* never managed to arrive at certain truths that were destined to become absolutely crucial in the drama of the endtime. I am speaking with boldness and full conviction about (1) the *Sabbath* and (2) about the specially prepared divine Agent of wonder-making service of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. Of course those truths were entirely contained in the Bible from the beginning. There is no denying the fact. But history is there to tell us about another fact: They were not to be grasped until the end, and then actually in spite of human perversities culminating in the world as a whole.

Praised be the God of perfect providence who had laid such perfect plans for you and me that even we should have a perfect chance to have heaven's matchlessly realistic philosophy come to fruition in our otherwise arch-**pagan** lives.

Of course the Scriptures are not in any way to blame, then, for the fact that a *special* portion of the divine Spirit was indispensable in order to save us.

What does it benefit you to have a book on your shelves, styled in a vernacular you only understand with great difficulty. You may have grown up in an environment in which that more ancient way of expressing one's ideas has become rather obsolete. What you need desperately is a guide formulating the essential ideas in a language more close to you. Some refuse to accept such a guide for reasons of sheer pride. The fact of the case is that they simply adore almost anything they find rather ambiguous, rather obscure. That leaves more room for individual interpretations. Again we have to do with the intellectualist's strange inclination toward mysticism. I am treating this topic in my booklet: *Mysticism and Charisma - Tragically Deceiving Moods of Sentimentalism Pervading the Arch-Enemy's Fight Against Old-Fashioned Seventh-day Adventism Today*.

The **Spirit of Prophecy** messages form an indispensable part of the totality making up life itself in the particular case of your destiny and mine at a time like this. Leave it out of your life, and you may be lost. Could you really content yourself with what any main-stream Protestant denomination has acquired in terms of sound Biblical anthropology and advanced theology? Then how could you expect God, the Lord of the endtime, to deem you worthy of the name of a Seventh-day Adventist? With such a faithless attitude you are heaping shame on that peculiar God's glorious name.

Who among us, by the way, can claim that he is guiltless in this respect? Is it not high time God's name be washed clean? It is your sins and mine that have caused it to be covered with

filth, in fact so thickly as to become illegible to crowds of people who need desperately to read it, in all the pristine glory of its original characters. The vindication of God's reputation is the most urgent purpose of the great special event of the redemption drama, taking place in the Holy of Holies of the heavenly sanctuary today. God's name is destined to be washed entirely clean, *with or without* your free will contribution. In the latter case your *crisis* will turn into regular *doom*. In the former case there is cleansing and restoration happening to both *your* name and *God's* name.

Omega II, pp. 88.2 - 92.4

In the next booklet of this series we shall come down to the nitty-gritty of revealing details regarding the drama that is taking place among us. We shall let the Spirit of Prophecy unveil the trends of **pagan thought*** and pagan action that is trying hard to destroy our denomination. That is, we shall let the Spirit lead us back to the Bible and its simple realism. That Spirit is not a fanciful "reinterpreter", filling our hungry souls with some empty set of mystic reinterpretations. No, the Spirit of Prophecy is the great Interpreter. And the Interpreter's job has always been just to give a faithful translation. He will translate into unmistakable, familiar terms that original language which our rebellious hearts, darkened by millennia of pagan infiltration, are now having such incredible difficulties in understanding.

***Pagan thought** is, with me, a euphemistic expression for what should realistically be called pagan thoughtlessness. That of course is a term coming very close to stupidity, for it has to do with a definite stupor, a certain paralysis of the normal senses.

Omega III, pp. 92.1

[Compiler's note: This "pagan thought" is precisely the "daily" that Daniel was shown. Our SDA pioneers clearly saw this prophetic term as meaning paganism. Carsten was particularly used by God to show how the Spirit of Prophecy unveiled the pagan skeleton beneath much "Christian" philosophy. This restoration of truth and the gospel is integral with the cleansing of the sanctuary that Daniel was shown would take place, which will occur by *agape* being restored to its rightful place in our thoughts and hearts, in our understanding of salvation and the gospel, in our lives.]

10 April 2014