

The Mistic "Omega" of End-Time Crisis

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The Shaking "Alpha" Experience of the SDA Church
around 1900 , Now Followed by its Announced
Sequel: the Dreaded "Omega"

Is the terminal phenomenon of end time apostasy already endeavoring to sneak into our church? What do we know about the nature of the "Omega"?

Perhaps after you have read the last chapter of this book on unprecedented trends of *Vain Intellectualism Creeping into SDA Education*, you will realize more fully why the author (for ten years a professor of Philosophy and Christian Ethics in the Theological Seminary of Andrews University) believes that the mysterious matter can be pretty clearly identified today.

Then you will also understand why an article of his in the *Advent Review*, on which that chapter has been based, was destined to provoke such a remarkable response,-on the one hand, ardent approval, on the other hand, harsh remonstrations.

A continuation of this book will endeavor, with the help of God and many humble believers in the simple Word of Biblical Wisdom, to tell, in the unassuming way of Christian realism, the part of the story you were probably never told about the "problem" regarding issues like the Investigative Judgment and 1844.

The same author will there be disclosing--still in the radiant light of plain Scriptural realism, placed side by side with some equally plain facts from the history of Western ideas in recent years--incredible things, just now in the process of emerging within circles of SDA intellectual.

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By Way of Introduction:

My Little Story about the Present Picture

One day as I was teaching my course of Christian Ethics to a class of M.Div. students at Andrews University, I happened to mention that not only did I intend to publish the handout prepared for that day, entitled: "THE MYSTIC OMEGA OF END-TIME CRISIS" but I was also dreaming of a particularly dramatic drawing to illustrate the seriousness of the topic. I had already given my students some definite idea of the hectic events having happened around the turn of the century, when Kellogg was trying to introduce his "new philosophy." You have certainly heard about that shrewd category of pantheism which in those days was on the point of wiping out of history the very name of SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM

Ellen White gave to this section of a fierce onslaught against the Seventh-day Adventist movement the remarkable name of the "Alpha." And she added that it would soon be followed by the "Omega." Those names certainly were not her own invention. She must have depended on higher Sources of knowledge in this case, as well as on so many other occasions of her ministry.

Particularly her anticipation of that future "Omega" seemed to fill her with great agony. Why? Evidently because that section of a burning trial for Seventh-day Adventist theology was destined to represent a still more subtle attack against the people of God in the end-time battle between good and evil, truth and error, God and Satan.

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It was at this point of my lecture that I made the more or less casual remark that my imagination was playing with the ideas of some kind of "beast," representing the "Omega" with a maximum of graphic vividness. It could be a huge poisonous spider or why not a monstrous ink-spewing octopus. Both creatures, I felt, had heads reminding very much of the letter Omega (Ω) of the Greek alphabet.

At the close of my lecture a sheet of paper was suddenly making its way from the back-row seats of the seminary chapel somewhere, and all the distance up to my desk. I was almost scared to stand there all of a sudden face to face with the dreadful octopus which my words, expressed a little while ago, had obviously conjured up in the artistic fantasy of one of my students. In a way that artist had actually outdone himself, it seemed. In his extreme eagerness to procure for me the monster I seemed to be looking for, he had produced an octopus with nine arms instead of the usual eight. So the specter here drawn to represent the spurious Omega of end-time crisis had actually emerged as some kind of hitherto unknown species, almost a new creation, which we might call the "Omega Nonopus." I accept it, as it now stands, without criticizing any one of its biological abnormalities.

By the way, I did not at that time manage to have my student turn up to confess what he had done, and how he had done it. In a class of about one hundred he could so easily slip away and remain anonymous. Today, if he happens to see this book with the threatening octopus on the front page, he still has the opportunity to report to me so that he may receive the royalties his artistic genius deserves. Perhaps, however, he will prefer to still remain silent and not "confess." He might have some reason to fear that the only thing he would obtain in his due share in the debts incurred as a result of his present publication.

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There is little reason to expect, you see, that my book will turn out the best-seller of the year. Its very topic might prove too unpopular for any such success, the more so if the author should dare to suggest that the "Omega" phenomenon, announced as a future event, may be a fact of the present today.

Nevertheless, in the last chapter of my first inquiry I shall be doing my best to find out some historical facts in order to know for sure whether the Omega announced by the Spirit of Prophecy is already right in our midst.

To arouse your attention, if possible, regarding my topic and the illustration devised for it, I may finish my introduction by simply pointing out what I find so seriously striking about an octopus as a symbol of the forces of evil in our world. The

most dreadful feature of the strategy adopted by that creature is the way it suddenly troubles the waters of an otherwise fairly clear sea. After the whole area has suddenly been filled with that dark and intransparent liquid the octopus spreads around, you have a terrible disadvantage if you happen to be its enemy, the victim of its evil intentions. You just do not have any precise idea of where your mortal foe is to be found with the movements of his cruel tentacles. So also with battles you and I happen to be carrying on with the enemy of enemies, that most shrewd, unfair fighter who is the cruel adversary of every human soul.

**DO NOT FORGET THE FALSE ALPHA, A FORM
OF SPIRITUALISM VERY FEW AMONG US
HAVE THE NECESSARY KNOWLEDGE
TO DISCERN AND SHUN**

A Remarkable Concept of Spiritualism among the Pioneers of Adventism

It has been a fascinating experience to me, as a student of the inroads of spiritualistic trends in our Western culture, to become better acquainted with the incredible broadness, as well as the boundless depth, of the conception some of our outstanding Adventist pioneers had of the many-headed monster: SPIRITUALISM. I must admit the great surprise that came to me when, as a historian of ideas, I had opportunity to compare Ellen White's knowledge about spiritualism as a basic philosophy, to the common knowledge about it possessed by Americans in general, and by Seventh-day Adventists in particular. Her insight was seen to stand out in an admirable way in this field, as compared to the conceptions of spiritualism we ordinary SDA members have espoused. She would even put to shame, in this respect, the great majority of scholars among us, and scholars in the world as a whole. I partly ascribe this to the deeper knowledge our students of the Bible, during our pioneer days, generally possessed in the field of Biblical thought, as compared to an increasing number of would-be philosophers of the present day. And one might in that number include an increasing number of theologians and other scholars within our own ranks, graduating from universities of the world around us. It must have meant a wonderful asset to our pioneers to have in their midst, the live reality of the Spirit of Prophecy, which is, of course, the Spirit of boundless wisdom and boundless goodness.

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Almost as early as the time when the SDA movement made its initial steps toward becoming publicly established as a distinct denomination, we do find in the EGW writings, passages clearly proving that exceptional broadness and exceptional depth of thought I just mentioned. Was such depth and such broadness due to any learned inquiry, in the usual sense of the term, on the part of Ellen White? Had she in any systematic way gone into the history of Oriental and Occidental philosophy? No. The messenger of the Lord obviously had more immediate-and more reliable-sources of information at her disposal.

Please permit me now to share with you some features of my personal experience. My specialty as a student of spiritual movements has led me into close connections with outstanding scholars in my field of knowledge. I have had to admire their untiring efforts to penetrate the secrets of human thought. With impeccable

methods of historical research they have applied their genius to the discovery of the sinuous paths both Eastern and Western philosophies have taken in the mysterious lands of a distant past. But still they have failed to see what Ellen White saw, at one single glance, so to speak; namely, the real nature and the formidable impact of the philosophy called spiritualism on what we today like to call with a certain pride, "our cultural heritage."

Of course, we do realize that this woman had no opportunities-and probably no passionate desire either-to familiarize herself with the intriguing technicalities of philosophical studies in the traditional sense. Nevertheless, very obviously, the essential features of the giant battle between Christian realism and pagan idealism, shaking the Western World in its deepest foundations through ages and ages, had become common knowledge to Ellen White's gradually more and more wide-spanning mind. God Himself had opened to her a horizon of general wisdom which was admirable. So she was amply provided with any specific detail of the historical facts that might prove necessary for an overall view in any given case.

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You will understand my inability to speak about these things in an entirely detached and impersonal way, which seems to be the great ideal of contemporary scholarliness. The whole matter has interfered too strongly in my life for such "objective detachment" and "scholarly impersonalism" to be carried through. One of the great experiences of my existence has been the gradual discovery of the matchless philosophy of the Bible. I call it Christian Realism. And I must repeat that I have never come across any realism in the whole wide world apart from that one. That philosophy of realism, however, was brought into focus in my mind and my heart at a time when I needed it desperately in order not to give up my faith in a meaningful world order; that is, my faith in the Bible as an infallible guide to a philosophy that really makes sense.

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 irrealism 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.

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I am convinced that nothing could be a more wonder-making means of helping us to mature, as it were, or -better expressed- to be come healed (become whole) in terms of realistic thinking. Maybe for the first time in our lives we have the surprising experience that old Biblical thought forms impress us as perfectly worthy, not only in religious, but also in intellectual respect. They are once more perfectly acceptable to modern man without requiring one bit of that hocus pocus business of a "reinterpretation" ritual which so many Western theologians today think indispensable in order to "make" the Biblical thought forms acceptable. The myths and the symbols can vanish into thin air.

Today I tell my students without hesitation that if I have made any contribution whatsoever to the philosophical enlightenment of our day, I owe it all to my study of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. The way that Spirit dealt with the "new philosophy" of the "Alpha" at the time when some of our most learned men insisted on introducing downright spiritualism into our historic movement of Seventh-day Adventism, was to me an overwhelming evidence that the supreme Master of realistic thought is, all the time, and in all fields, our omnipotent and omniscient Leader: Jesus Christ.

But in order that you should really appreciate the way I tell that story about the devilishly planned invasion of pantheism into the territory of Seventh-day Adventism, I must give you some basic notions about the all-out war between true philosophy and false philosophy now approaching its peak of culmination. I intended the following pages to serve as an appendix to my book, *The Mystery of the Seventh Day*, and so I called it:

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EPILOGUE OF A CHRISTIAN THINKER SICK AND TIRED OF HUMAN THOUGHT

Now, however, I think it might render better service as a sort of foreword to my story about the "Alpha." An so I call it:

PROLOGUE OF A CHRISTIAN THINKER SICK AND TIRED OF HUMAN THOUGHT

1. The Birth of Non-Reason and the Birth of Non-Ethics Mean One and the Same Cursed Birthday

All I here write on ethics and epistemology is bound to deal with this one crucial question: Is there an outlook on human life, an outlook on the universe, and an outlook on God, that is realistic and also meaningful?

You may wonder why I elaborate so much on this question of the OUTLOOK, particularly the OUTLOOK ON GOD. Is man's view of the reality around him all that important? We shall soon see just how important it is. Try to grasp one fundamental of the realistic philosophy: It is your outlook-on life, on the world, on yourself, and particularly on God-that constitutes the "window" of your realism, if you possess any at all. When God first made man, He immediately equipped His earthly cabin with that kind of a window on reality.

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But remember: that window through which you look out upon God, is exactly the same window through which God looks 'in at you. And what could be more important in your life-even decisive to your eternal destiny-than the way God looks at you? What I mean to say is simply this: your "Outlook" is yourself. It is the way God is bound to see you, nothing more, nothing less. For this constitutes your innermost being, your deepest character, the core of your essence as a creature of God. For here there is one fact you must grasp: Your various "outlooks" are something you decide for yourself. They are the web of your very character, for the weaving of which you are entirely responsible. And all those "outlooks" of yours are tied up in one single bundle, as it were. That is the way you happen to look upon your 'God. Your conception of the Eternal One, you mighty Lord and Master, this is the decisive matter in your life. No wonder that the Bible speaks so emphatically about faith. Your faith in God-or your lack of faith in Him-this is the quintessence of your whole outlook, your only transparent "window," your only possibility of a contact with reality. Of course, the conclusions you here gradually make about the essence of God decide whether you can have confidence in Him or not.

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Men sometimes seem to fancy that they can arbitrarily cut this "inward" facet of their very selves apart from their own "outward" realization of themselves; that is, apart from the way they realistically "come out" in their "works" reality, their external expression of their inward essence, this is "not all that significant." For "the important thing," to the spiritualistically reasoning fancy-monger, was always his deep interior, and nothing but that. Traditionally, it was assumed that what practically "came out" in the open in terms of external deeds, a visible behavior, was something "different," something rather irrelevant and insignificant. But let me warn you: This is a part of the very same irrationalism that is bent on murdering Christianity, by simply spiritualizing away its concrete reality. The truth is far more realistic than that Nirvana dream. According to Biblical realism, a man's outward actions are just simply the "body," the concrete substance, of inward faith. Now, if you insist on making faith bodiless, you are yielding to the same irrational spiritualism. You despise the body like pagan idealism has always done. Your ideal is not *incarnation*, but rather, *discarnation*. You are partisan of the bodiless specters. You foster the spirit of the anti-Christ. You insist on cutting reality into separate parts. And the part called the body, this is something you are trying to squeeze out as unworthy, utterly despicable. You are bent on denying to inward faith any chance of its becoming flesh and bones, of realizing itself in a bodily substance, of "coming out," of "coming down," like Christ Himself came out and down. You are a representative of pagan pride rather than of Christian humility.

I am sure you do not really want to be on that side of the fence. You want to be in realism, Christians realism. Christ, however, always insisted on men being men, on their having bodies, on their coming literally out, as tangible, visible men, who can be made responsible for whatever was "done in the flesh."

What else, by the way, would you expect from a Judge who insists on fair and open public judgment? Did you ever read in the Bible, according to *what*, creaturely beings are to be judged? Does it say: in the great judgment scene you will be judged according to the interior state of your hear and mind; in other words, according to your "faith," or your "lack of faith"?

No! God *could* have said something like that-I theoretically admit it-that is, provided He Himself intended to be the *only* One really concerned, the only One deemed worthy of respect and of a personal opinion, in the whole universe. For admittedly, He is the Sovereign One. He is the One who "knows you from afar." He is the One who searches out your heart and your kidneys, the deepest secrets of man's innermost mind. Read the Psalm 139 *in extenso*, about God, compared to man. He would actually not have needed to "wait until you came visible out." He might have judged you with perfect justice without calling one single witness. But does He do that? By no means. God insists that every man should have his case meticulously tried in an open court, in front of a crowd of witnesses, witnesses on the same creaturely level as that defendant himself. Do we fail to see these things in their great historic setting? Let us overcome this failure, the sooner the better: *God is the One who is accused in every creature that appears in judgment.* The great accuser is Satan. And what is the crime God has been accused of by him? It is of the worst negligence and irresponsibility that any judge could make himself guilty of: the poor defendants, allegedly, "were not given a fair hearing," God did not permit anyone among the convicts' own peers to bear an impartial testimony in the "poor victims'" favor. So what Satan accuses the divine Judge of is a judiciary system full of dictatorial secrecy and injustice. Now God has determined to "put every card on the table." And you can see why: a whole universe is going to see what the matter is all about. Do you see also, then, why He explicitly proclaims that the "deeds in the flesh" in this case should be made the decisive criterion for life or death with any man? The apostle John was shown in a mighty panorama the solemn scene of that final judgment: "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works." (Revelation 20:13)

This being made the great basis for man's final condemnation or acquittal is understandable enough. Those actions in the individual's practical life are the only facts visibly and tangibly perceived by all. This stands to reason. By the way, where in the world did you ever meet an intelligent administrator of a public court who said:

In the criminal case before us we are not going to make the visible, tangible acts in the defendant's life decisive as the foundation of our evidence. No, gentlemen, this would be too materialistic, too narrow-mindedly realistic indeed. The important thing, you see, is the thought of man, the secret motives *behind* his actions. What was the criminal's secret intention? We must make the spiritual reality of the *interior* man the foundation for our judgment. So please listen members of the jury, do not go by anything as superficial as that kind of material evidence, left behind by the concrete witness of Mr. So and So's *actions* in his visible life. You must believe me when I assure you that this man who is now to be judged had motives of love in his deepest heart, even when he committed acts of obvious hatred. His actions are not the decisive criterion. To demand consistent actions in the outward life of this kind of an idealist, that would be narrow-minded and unfair.

What an absurd way of speaking! No intelligent judge would ever run a judiciary process on the basis of those hidden movements theoretically assumed to be present in the criminal's heart. Spiritualists may call this his "inner truth." But it is all nonsense.

For that defendant's real self "within him" never happened to be any different from what immediately "came out of him." In fact, please tell me: what should here be so "spiritually inferior" and "methodologically wrong" in judging a man on the basis of his manifest external actions? You won't find any "spiritual inferiority" or any "methodological wrongness" there, unless you happen to be just that hopeless spiritualist and unrealist who assumes there must be a gulf fixed between the theoretical interior and the practical exterior of a man's life. That separation is a figment of the derailed mind. In reality, the inward thoughts and the outward acts are just two sides of one and the same inseparable reality. In Biblical anthropology there is no priority of the inward over the outward, nor vice versa. There is perfect oneness between the two. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." Proverbs 23:7. His potentiality is his actuality.

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So let us now have a good look, then, precisely at man's intimate thought. Let us go to the theater in which that blessed interior "comes out," or "peeps out," or however you would like to put it. In my vocabulary that is his "outlook." But to look *out*--I assure you--is not stay *in*, hermetically; no, not even for a split second. It is, on the contrary, an irrepressible action outward. To *be someone* is immediately, inevitably, to do *something*. To *look* is to *do*. Don't fool yourself into believing that you can look, and still remain passive, neutral, non-engaged. And the little prefix "out," put in front of that "looking," can have only one logical effect: it accentuates the "outward" trend, the "other-centered" orientation of all human actions. The most silent prayer of a person, his most secret cry of distress, is an action. You *do* something when you pray, or when you cry, don't you? Or what kind of a specter do you imagine yourself to be, anyway?

Now, to be more specific about the case at hand, what does the current outlook of man happen to be like in our Western culture? That ought to be a very meaningful specification of our inquiry. For this world culture was precisely the environment in which the religion of the Bible was destined to come dramatically to the fore. Here, more than in any other part of the world, the true Judeo-Christian outlook on God was to meet its own destiny in signal confrontation with a pagan humanity. Christianity was to pass its decisive test just here, in the Western world. It is as though Christ insists on meeting you and me. In our part of the world momentous questions for the destiny of our globe as a whole were to come up and be decided, for time and for eternity.

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2. Realism Versus Unrealism, the Destiny-Laden Alternative for a Series of World Cultures

I shall try to make my historic review clearer by means of a simple illustration. To its fundamental structure I shall gradually keep adding new features, as we develop our vista.

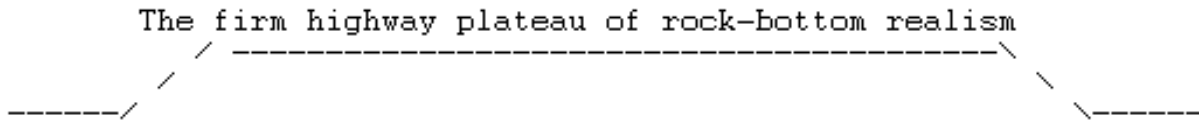


Figure 1

This even line at the top of my first drawing represents realism. I have imagined it as a concrete road body. On it, traveling men as supposed to plant their feet, firmly and safely. The movement here is not supposed to be from left to right, notice that. Neither is it from right to left. That would only appear to end abruptly in a steep ravine. But the road of realism never ends in a ravine. What you should see in my illustration is the *cross section* of a road body. And you do know what any normal road tends to have on either side, don't you? In the case of roads we call those the ditches. They are depressions that are not entirely unknown to human lives either, are they? I mean, human lives as they tend to turn out in this present world. Anyway, to keep to the literal construction of roadbeds, we are not at all astonished to find, in roads, to the right side and to the left, a sizable ditch. Now, of course, we do not commonly think of the normal travelers as occupying that peculiar part of the road structure, do we? On the other hand, with human beings you should be prepared for almost anything. As a matter of fact, on the highway of human life there always tended to be a pretty marked inclination to "land" somewhere in the "depressions." I would almost dare to say: Among the vast majority of life travelers, there is, strange enough, a downright predilection for the ditches. The ditch stands for the extreme. And among men there has from times immemorial been a veritable cult of the extremes.

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That is precisely the normal turn things will tend to take in a world of unrealism; so in the very world we are here speaking about: To be in love with the ditches is the traditional characteristic of an unbalanced life. In that life you should not expect any sound sentiment to prevail. No, you should, rather, be prepared for an infatuated sentimentalism to reveal itself in man's existence. It is quite a mystery to observe people developing a veritable craze here. What are they crazy about? About the ditches.

And now I am coming back to my illustration, which has to be extended. I have to give you some specific new knowledge about the ditches.

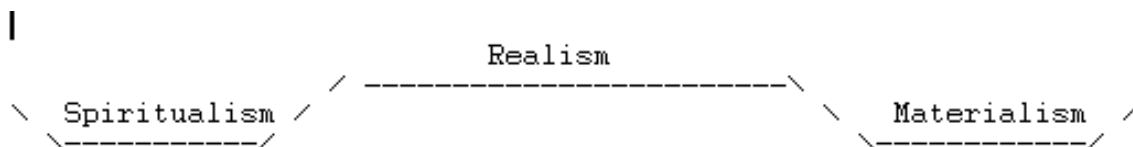


Figure 2

As you see, we are now putting labels on our ditches. I would not say that we have "christened" them, though. That would be a bit too much of a misnomer. For the names in this case are as pagan as anything could ever be. I just hope you will not find them too "learned."

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Let me reassure you: We are not here in the field of learnedness. We are in the field of simple stupidity. That may *appear* learned; it may appear thought-stirring and profound; but it never *is*. The perversions of realism are not truly philosophical. They never were. In fact, I'd rather give, both to the ditch of Spiritualism and to the ditch of Materialism, the name of *anti-philosophy*. Let us not ascribe depth of thought to what is just foolish. That would procure too much prestige for foolishness.

"But why should there be two opposite kinds of foolishness," you may certainly ask. "Is there no oneness in foolishness?" No, that is the last thing you should look for in any perversion of sound human thought. The very character of unreasonableness in human thinking is splitness, not oneness.

Of course, it may seem kind of sympathetic that the perversions present themselves in such a modest number, after all. Why no more than *two* of them? Well, it so happens to the road as well, doesn't it, that it has two ditches; not four or five or a dozen. Now, if a ditch in our terminology corresponds to an unreasonable extreme, we all know what usually happens in the world of extremes: wherever man goes to one extreme, there always happens to be the possibility of an *opposite* extreme. The simple movement of the pendulum has taught us this from times immemorial. This pattern then also avers itself in the case of human beings going astray from the royal highway of realism.

3. The Secret of the Two Ditches

Let us be happy then if our study of human unreasonability can limit itself, in our special case, to two focal points only: Spiritualism and Materialism. Now, first, what do we know about our culture in spiritual respects? All along the line it has had one striking trait: it has been extremely *spiritualistic*.

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"Oh, really," you may interject questioningly, "I thought the Western world distinguished itself as just extremely *materialistic*."

Well, that, too, is undeniable.

"But how in the world," you go on unperturbably, "can the same culture be extremely spiritualistic and extremely materialistic at the same? Are not spiritualism and materialism diametrically opposite trends, and therefore mutually exclusive?"

Your question is again very much to the point. How could any intelligent researcher manage to reconcile two statements as apparently contradictory as the above ones about one and the same world? How could there be any possibility for spiritualism and materialism to coexist?

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The answer to those questions is not quite as problematic as it might appear on first views. We must only know something tremendously important about spiritualism in the first place. Most people seem to be pretty ignorant about it. And it is imperative that their ignorance should come to an end. For this has to do with the great mystery of the ages: There has been something fabulously strange happening right here. Even among most intelligent people--and people sincerely concerned about the things of the spirit, may even outstandingly well-versed in both theology and philosophy--I have found, in our world, a remarkable ignorance about some crucial facts regarding the true essence of spiritualism. To even the best among Christian men that ignorance might prove fatal, if not overcome. I feel in duty bound to press the button of full alarm in front of this peculiar type of "out-look," the spiritualistic one. In fact, spiritualism does not possess one bit in it that could be deemed worthy of the name of "out-look." It just does not look out at all, either on the *world*, or on *God*, or on *any reality* whatsoever outside man himself. To speak about "windows" in the case of spiritualism, would be absolutely nonsensical. For it is an absolutely windowless structure. Pure introspection would not demand any windows, would it? The radically introspective thinker is the one who closes his eyes to all realities outside. So of what use could windows be to him? Plato, the great initiator of spiritualism in our Western world, said: "Only the soul can see the soul." Now, what kind of psychology or philosophy of man would that naturally engender? Would it say: "Now let us go OUT into the world by which we are surrounded. Let us make experiments in nature. Let us get a grasp of empirical reality." Oh no, not at all. What is really suggested is, rather, this slogan: "The truth of the real world is *in* you, exclusively there. So shut your eyes, and just contemplate. In yourself you have all that is really worthwhile."

I am here dealing with spiritualism as a time-honored tradition of pagan man's remotest past--and with spiritualism as prodigiously accelerating force of the present. There could not be a more serious theme facing human beings in our day. And it is a theme right in the focus of what this present work on Omega is all about. In fact, there could be no hope of even beginning to understand what the Alpha stands for--nor what has historically happened to it--as long as no definite light is shed upon this intriguing phenomenon: Spiritualism.

4. A Catastrophic Common Trait Hallmarking Either Empire of the Ditches: Interior Disruption

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Materialism and spiritualism both distinguish themselves as splittingly *one-sided*, to express it mildly. It might seem hard to tell which of the two is the more dangerous enemy to plain Christian totality, or to the harmonious many-sidedness and fair equilibrium that life absolutely demands. But what is at the root of that splitting one-sidedness of the spiritualistic "outlook? There is, in spiritualism, a downright mania for leaving the mild and congenial coasts of everything that is humanly harmonious and rock-bottom real, in favor of the barren desert of utter emptiness we might call *vain abstraction*. I shall soon amply demonstrate to what extent this maniac trend has constituted a main disruptive factor in our culture from its first beginning. There has been a downright passion for tearing reality into shreds, burning it up in the fire of pure abstractions.

"But," you say again hesitantly, "could this possibly apply even to the relatively soberminded philosophy of hard-core Western materialism, as well?"

Yes, definitely so. In the first place, you should get to know that materialism is not soberminded in any acception of the term. Materialism is blind. It is splittingly disruptive in its own peculiar way. Let us just as well take that case of hopeless splitness first. Materialism is a bare-facedly atheistic philosophy. Its anti-God profession of faith is--let us admit it--infinitely more straightforward and "honest" than that of spiritualism has ever dared to be. But where does it land? What is its essence?

A. What does Materialism Daringly Proclaim?

Materialism renders itself guilty of concentrating its attention exclusively on matter, "pure matter," that is. It desperately strives to detach, as it were, that "part" of reality from the totality of a true world. It boldly pronounces matter to be the only reality ever known to exist. Matter is one. Matter is all-important.

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B. What does Spiritualism Daringly Proclaim?

Spiritualism, in its turn--and with an equally unwarranted boldness--insists on disengaging something weird and phantomlike, something invisible and intangible, from the realms of the visible, tangible world around us--or in us. What is that mysterious something? It is called "pure spirit." And now, what is said about that "pure spirit"? It is solemnly announced as the only knowable reality. Matter is not real. Bodies are despicably unreal. Only spirit is real.

C. Finally, What Must You, the Christian Realist, Declare, Contrary to Those One-Sided Extremes?

In the first place, do you realize how hopelessly disruptive they both are? Each one of them in its own peculiar manner simply tears apart the very world our loving Creator has been pleased to entrust us with. And this vandalism is perpetrated with a stubborn naughtiness and with an apathetic unconcern making the crimes doubly criminal. There is a cynical disrespect of *creation* pervading them both. That is, no doubt, the source of their vanity and the basic cause of their negative attitude toward all that is sacred and sublime in the world the God of the Bible has made for the comfort of His human child.

In fact, *creation* is the new inspiring concept that epitomizes the essence of the Biblical outlook on both God and the world, as opposed to the "outlook" in pagan movements, by and large. Here, to be sure, is nothing less than the crux of the matter, the whole difference it makes to be truly God-oriented in one's search, rather than to wallow in the mire of a blasphemous godlessness.

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5. Biblical Realism, an Inspiringly Different Philosophy

Now, first of all, one thing should here be openly admitted. The Bible certainly is not any regular manual in diverging philosophies about what is real, and what is not. That Book does not specialize in learned speculations about the various ways in which we may look upon our world. Holy Writ does not at any time make itself the partisan of any philosophically formulated world view. On the other hand, however, its conception of life, and of the world, is not something we need to entertain any doubts about. The Bible reveals a firm philosophy, fundamentally different from each one of those disruptive ones we have here drawn into focus and qualified as basically un-Christian, nay anti-Christian.

And now the more specific question: In what, exactly, does their common battle against the Christian outlook consist? We have mentioned one main divergence: that of disruption versus totality.

Let us here mainly concentrate our attention on the spiritualistic outlook as contrasted to the Biblical one. In fact, of those two disrupters (materialism and spiritualism), spiritualism is by far the more insidious one. So I must first give that trend a through treatment. Only then can I tell the fantastic story about the "abyss." This here means the secret meeting place where spiritualism and materialism join together in mystic wedlock.

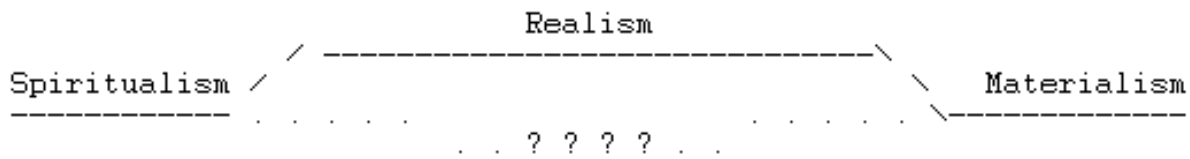


Figure 3

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Here you will see that my illustrative sketch has anticipated, for the two secret lovers, a meeting place, already. It could hardly be assumed to be somewhere above the realms of Christian realism, could it? It is bound to be somewhere deep, deep below. Where? So far, I am not yet prepared to tell you. We must temporarily leave, as an open question, the more abysmal facts of the cryptic relationship between spiritualism and materialism, lords of the opposite ditches. To most people spiritualism happens to have enigmas enough all by itself. Let us now observe some of *that* movement's perversive effects on the erstwhile pristine pureness of primitive Christendom.

6. What are the Fatal Facts about Spiritualism?

First, there is this one lamentable thing: spiritualism is the "outlook" which turns out to be no out-look whatsoever. I am, of course, here concerned about one thing first

and foremost: man's outlook on God, the supreme reality of his life. Now, how does spiritualism look upon God? In the most criminally blasphemous way ever possible. It leaves man with two options, each one of them equally dismal: either God is sheer nothingness, or He must be the most heartless Being ever imagined, a despot so inhumanly wicked that human sadists would have no chance to compete; a monster so ferociously cruel that the beasts of the Apocalypse would appear like lap-dogs and innocent pets in comparison with Him. It is this picture of divine unconcern, inherent in spiritualism's "God," that has inspired men to state: "If God does exist, He must be Satan."

"But, please explain!" You burst out impatiently, "I never heard anyone giving this as one of the main characteristics of spiritualism. In my environment spiritualism means something entirely different from that."

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I sympathize with you. For I know your environment. I know the confusing effect of its very vocabulary when it speaks about "spiritualism" and the concept of the "spiritualistic." Conversational English, ever since the days of the sudden rise to prominence of modern spiritism, has insisted on using the term "spiritualism" almost exclusively to describe the more or less flagrantly disreputable things happening in the necromancer's dark chamber. We all know the "spiritualist" medium's dubious attempts to let surviving men "enter in contact with their dead relative or friends." We also know the ignoble jumble of physical phenomena that are reported to be taking place in certain houses, mysterious rappings without any demonstrable physical cause, tables swerving in midair, materializations of pure ghost, and so on, and so forth. Such are the associations aroused in the average English-speaking person's mind when he hears the term "spiritualistic."

Now please do not misunderstand me. I am not here to tell you that all those more or less gross, more or less disreputable phenomena have nothing to do with spiritualism as a trend of thought. For they certainly do. Modern spiritism is, in its fundamental root, entirely one with spiritualism as a general time-honored philosophy. But spiritualism--mark that down in your mind and memory--is something infinitely more than this. It can be something infinitely *more distinguished and noble-looking, and therefore also infinitely more deceptive*. It is likely to deceive even people of the genuinely religious, the genuinely spiritual-minded kind, if they are not protected by true knowledge, the only lasting protection. Please remember that spiritualism is a time-honored philosophy of the Western world. Its decisive breakthrough in our culture started in the venerated academic atmosphere of a philosophical genius, who radically changed the thinking of the West. That was the master idealist, or the master spiritualist, Plato. And now, what is the essence of that thinker's idealism and spiritualism?

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7. *The Inhumanity of the Spiritualist Outlook*

Take spiritualism's way of looking upon that inviolable totality the Bible calls a *man*. For thousands of years dualist philosophy and dualist theology have preached the blasphemous doctrine that bodies, if created by any God at all, are a deplorable mess. And so they have been from the beginning, if they *had* a beginning. The creation of

bodies is audaciously declared to be a pitiable mistake on the part of whoever had the unforgivable idea to produce such gory monsters.

The only perfect thing--and congenitally so--in a human being, according to them, is his Soul. The Soul is a spark of the divine essence. She is goddess in her own right. But here again the satanic conception of divinity comes out in its own tragic way. For what are, in spiritualism, the qualities that are supposed to possess the rare virtue of surviving eternally in that Soul? You must absolutely get hold of this my dear reader: What does basic Western idealism--and all consistent spiritualism, for that matter--believe about the human SOUL and its peculiar kind of survival?

Does memory survive? In other words, should you expect to recognize your dear ones if ever you happen to see them again? By no means. Why not? Because personal memories are always memories of just this or that individual person, this or that individual thing, happening at a specific time, in a specific place, and in a specific way. Such specificity is not deemed worthy of any survival. Survival is general and impersonal, whatever that may signify. I am not sharp enough in my discursive intellect to tell you. Do feelings survive? Of course not. In fact, they are seen as one of the most despicable things in the whole wide world. But what about

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love then? To be sure not. Love is one of the passions that go along with bodies, just like hate and jealousy. Such passions are the very source of all suffering. Already its marked specificity ought to tell you that love could never make it in that super-"spiritual" world of the pure idea. The object of your love, you see, if you are a normal being, is always someone or something. It is a personal being, an individual thing. But personalism and individuality are abominations to the sacred spirit world. I am speaking of the world of Plato, the philosopher in antiquity; of Meister Eckhart, the "Christian" mystic in the Middle Ages; and of Conan Doyle, the spiritist, in modern times. Please get the fundamentals of "Western idealism straight in your mind. You must accurately know what, in the last analysis, all spiritualistic world religions regard as really unworthy of eternal survival, and therefore also unable to survive.

But what survives then?

Pure intellect, nothing else. That is an intellect feeding on nothing but barren abstractions. The driest formulas of pure mathematics--oh yes, *they* would be adequate candidates for survival in that lonely desert of the perfectly "purified" soul. For instance: "The square root of nine equals three." That would be a truth sufficiently "uncontaminated" by the world of matter and of human emotion to survive in the hereafter. This concept does not disturb you emotionally, does it? You can live with it without being extremely unhappy. Of course, without being extremely happy, too, I take it.

Frankly, are *you* eager to have this kind of survival? Would you feel overwhelmingly thankful to the strange god who had granted it to you?

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The dehumanization implied in consistent spiritualism is an appalling thing, seen from a simple human viewpoint. It lets all lights go out in utter darkness. In my opinion, the man who does not feel an honest urge to wage a holy war against it, is not a real

man. For spiritualism's frigid plan to drive personal creatures into the night of absolute impersonalism is a crime against humanity. More than that, it is a sacrilege. It constitutes a relentless downgrading of God Himself. For its ideal, not only for men, but above all for gods, is the ultimate automatism. Would you be happy to become an automaton, a feelingless robot among other robots, producing nothing but interminable formulas, for which there was no application whatsoever any longer? Formulas, you see, become meaningless altogether at the moment when all hearts have died out. Imagine a whole world filled with nothing but data machines. What a concept of happiness and of human worthiness, not to mention the worthiness of God!

I have not yet asked the curious question how on earth thinking and feeling human beings could find it worthwhile to engage on a road as desolate and heart-rendingly void as that, leading right down to the spectral nothingness of Nightland Nirvana. An honest question demands an honest answer. But that answer is too terrible, too despairingly tragic to express.

And still we soon have to express it. Before we come to the end of our story, we definitely must give an adequate answer. That seems to be an urgent necessity, particularly at a moment in history when waves of spiritualism, even originating in the Far East, keep rolling on and on, like a prairie fire across Western lands. Like a new Pied Piper from Hamelin this cruel witchcraft goes on and on, alluring a crowd of inexperienced youth into its diabolic delusions.

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8. Worst of all: Every MORAL Standard is Torn Down

Spiritualism is non-ethics. It is anti-ethics. This is a contention for which I shall have to give valid evidence in due course. But now this question: would it be immediately possible to discern any direct plausible connection between that demoralizing effect of spiritualism and its apparent total rejection of matter as a God-given value? Let us look at that more closely right away.

I have already stressed the fact that spiritualism, apparently--I must once more add that qualifying adverb--has a great contempt for physical bodies.

You see, to contain bodily elements is to be "contaminated." For bodies, according to the blueprint of platonic paganism, are essentially evil and despicable. Or let us, rather, not express it so vehemently: Spiritualists are, in fact, far too superficial and light minded to condemn anything with heartfelt vehemence. In this they are basically different from the Biblical prophets. The latter condemned sin and sinners with the vehemence of the honest heart. Spiritualism, on the contrary, is bland and blithe, like all humanism. That movement has hardly ever run the risk of disturbing anybody with its moral sternness. It never hands any. So let us, rather, express its negative attitude toward bodies--and toward all material things--in a more easy-going way, and still a way that hits the mark. It may sound nonsensical in your ears, but that is not contrary to spiritualism. Nonsense is a favorite form of intellectual life there. So let us try, then, to form our sentence: to spiritualism *matter is immaterial*.

What do I mean? I mean exactly what I say. Matter is thought of as the one thing that *does not matter*. What matters then? Nothing but spirit matters, "pure spirit," that is!

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Now I do not by any means want to reduce the seriousness of this insidious assault against matter. It is a subtle attack against material bodies of all kinds. It is the blunt condemnation of all visible worlds. How could we accept an evaporization scheme so wickedly thought out, and so treacherously launched against all that is humanly visible, tangible, realistic on our world? So do not get me wrongly. I do not for one moment suggest that this attempt, on the spiritualist's part, to do away with all matter, is just a minor misdemeanor. No, no, it is a serious crime. It is an intentional reduction to a blank zero of a world that the God of heaven has lovingly devised and miraculously made for man's enjoyment. God's dream has been to enjoy it through eternity together with us. And then, all of a sudden, what God has prepared with such loving care, is branded by men as *impure*, and inherently so. For notice this is the quality constantly attributed to matter: matter is basically impure! That is blasphemy, nothing less.

What those self-established giants of the spirit haughtily infer is that they themselves are the "pure ones. This, too, is, again and again, the attribute given to the invisible world they claim as their own, the world of the bodiless specters, a world the "pure soul" has made for itself without any aid from an interfering God.

Now let us have a somewhat close look at that blessed "purity" of the "purely spiritual," as spiritualism thinks of it. For comparison, we should all know what the Bible means when it says, "keep thyself pure." 1 Timothy 5:22.

Who shall ascend unto the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and the righteousness from the God of salvation. (Psalm 24:3-5)

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What an illuminating word on the meaning of purity: purity of the hand and purity of the heart; ethical relationship all the way through; righteousness from God, the only source of man's salvation! And what a background for casting into relief the sombre character of *impurity*: it is vanity and deceit. It is a life in faithlessness, whoredom, in a literal as well as a spiritual sense, unfaithfulness toward men and God (Revelation 14). How could it be pointed out with greater clearness that impurity has above all a moral connotation. Here there is a gulf fixed between the Christian and the spiritualistic value scale. Spiritualism insists with so great obstination on the a-moral, that it end up diving head-foremost down into the mire of the actively *im-moral*.

You might say: With a total lack of moral inhibitions the body is abandoned to the devil and its own lusts. The spiritualist can do this with a boldness the realist could never mobilize; for all the time the spiritualist places an unlimited confidence in his own acrobatic ability to keep his own celestial "spirit" absolutely separate from that vile body.

Of course, in reality even a sorcerer of that caliber cannot escape from the inexorable effects of the law of totality. His subtle theories about the nature of man do not help him one bit. They are, rather catastrophic. For what is this "soul," the only part left to him in life? According to his own theories, the "spirit" he boasts of is a "reality" cut so *thin* that it is perfectly transparent. Thanks to his masterly expertise in "spiritualization," the naked "soul" element in him finally reaches a degree of *thinness* so extreme that it finishes by dwindling into sheer nothingness. Consequently, his "spiritual content" actually turns into a mere illusion, the substantial nonentity of the abstracting

mind. In other words, he falls a victim to his own ideology. Such a man would need a faith in the body *more* desperately than anybody else.

So please grasp the full extent of the tragedy in this philosophy. Its "logic" must be clear to all people.

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With a grain of common sense: If "spirit," in the traditional spiritualist meaning of the word, is man's concrete reality, irreverently and inconsiderately cut down to a slice of sheer nothingness by the abstraction expert's fabulous slicing machine, then we should know pretty well already what it virtually means when he boldly states: "*Spirit is the only thing that matters.*"

And this is exactly the crude idea which the original master spiritualist, Satan, has been overzealous to insinuate into men's minds all the time. This is anti-ethics and anti-epistemology in one. It is nihilism in religious garb.

Ellen G. White has described spiritualism more strikingly than any other author I know. I cannot but admire the terse formulation coming from her pen. It exposes that philosophy's pervading essence and secret meaning to the broad daylight of frank investigation. It does this with a realism that must be painful indeed for the arch-deceiver. How could that serpent of old be expected to swallow it down? He couldn't. He is furious whenever anyone reveals the true facts about spiritualism to those who might be its likely dupes.

Spiritualism asserts that men are unfallen demigods; that "each mind will judge itself"; that "true knowledge places men above all law"; that "all sins committed are innocent"; for "whatever is, is right." and "God doth not condemn." The basest of human beings it represents as in heaven, and highly exalted there. Thus it declares to all men, "it matters not what you do; live as you please, heaven is your home." Multitudes are thus led to believe that desire is the highest law, that license is liberty, and that man is accountable only to himself." *Ed.*, pp. 227, 228.

So it would be a grave mistake to imagine that this age-old trend to "spiritualize away" the concrete reality of the world--and of the heavens as well--is just a matter of human stupidity. No, there are greater forces involved; the confederacy of non-ethics.

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There is one paramount fact we should never forget; the SPIRIT, in the Christian sense of the term, was such a stirring, life-creating reality that Satan's only chance of waging any efficient war upon it at all, consisted in finding a counterfeit to it. This only viable choice was to devise a sham spirit thus trying to neutralize the gracious virtue of Christian spirituality, making it utterly void and ineffective. That device was spiritualism.

So this is the blunt practical truth about "spiritualization," wherever and whenever it is launched as a pagan "rescue" maneuver for the "salvation" (actually self-salvation) of the human soul: It invariably avers itself as an annihilation of all human totality and all meaningfulness in human life. This is the arch-deceiver's ingenious and insidious trick of pulverizing every tangible fact of the realistic world given by God to man.

A most remarkable thing about this about this super-spirituality is that it appears to get along most marvelously with trends of the grossest materialism. Should we be so overly surprised at this? Actually not. We have seen that the two movements agree splendidly in one thing; they are both outrageously unrealistic. Unrealism is one thing in which all paganism eventually excels. Christianity is the only philosophy in the history of our world that consistently excels in realism. And this is not difficult to understand. For it is the only one that consistently dares to face all the facts. Realism demands courage. And courage is dependent upon grade. We shall look more closely later at the plausible reasons for man's reaching out for sheer unrealism. There must be something apparently most rewarding and most attractive about the extremely unrealistic. I say apparently. Men content themselves with appearances, or apparitions. Christianity demands more. Things are supposed to have real substance and to make real sense.

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9. Do Specific Codes of Ethical Behavior Make Real Sense?

I mentioned this in my quest for meaningfulness relative to specific commandments. One of the greatest questions moving the longing hearts and the truth-seeking minds of human creatures has been: Do things in man's world make demonstrable sense? What is it all about? Is there an intelligent purpose, a true meaning? Or does it all end in nothingness, evaporation, a blotting out of every pattern of personal identity in the endless sands of eternity; in short, meaninglessness?

It is interesting to note that one of the great fears of the leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist movement in its pioneer days was the threatening danger sensed to be winding its way into the movement, stealthily, and apparently with perfect dignity. It came in the form of a philosophical type of spiritualism. Its true nature, however, was precisely to take away the meaning, make Christianity meaningless.

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Notice, for instance, how perfectly well Elder James White knows the concept of the "spiritual" in that negative sense of a mere pseudo-spiritualization, a "spiritualizing away" of something basically realistic. In an article in *the Day Star* of January 24, 1846, he takes issue with "spiritualizers," *who deny the reality of the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ, "those who spiritualize away the existence of the Father and the Son, as two distinct literal tangible person, also a literal Holy City and throne of David."*

Very early in her ministry Ellen White, too, availed herself of the term 'spiritualist,' or the somewhat ambiguous adjective "spiritual," to characterize that obviously Satanic trend of "spiritualization." The context is so clear that there is no danger of failing to see what the epithet means: "I have often seen that the *spiritual* view took away the glory of heaven and that in many minds the throne of David and the lovely person of Jesus have been *burned in the fire of spiritualism.*" *Early Writing*, pp 77-78, emphasis supplied)

Of course, this is "spiritual" in the Platonic idealist's sense, the pagan philosopher's sense.

Now, it is not strange that, in an age when man has climbed the ladder of vain sophistication rather than realistic knowledge, he feels that certain notions of the child about God are too childish indeed. The trick of allegorization is chosen to make these Biblical things "meaningful" to the minds of the learned ones. But to the child the result may be that meaningfulness, as he is bound to see it, is entirely lost.

A fear of making the future inheritance *seem too material* has led many to *spiritualize away* the very truths which led us to look upon it as our home. Christ assured his disciples that he went to prepare mansions for them in the Father's house. (*Great Controversy*, pp. 674-675, *emphasis supplied*)

Modern theology is particularly inclined to practice the type of symbolism which virtually results in an evaporization of all tangible reality. The true child is bound to protest against such practice: "Heaven is not a *vapor*. It is a place. Christ has gone to prepare mansions for those who love Him, those who in obedience to His commands come out from the world, and are separate." (Letter 253, *emphasis supplied*).

I do not doubt for one moment the noble intentions in the minds of some idealist thinkers in the ancient Occident when they settled to cast their lot with the "vapors." Even a long time before Plato, imaginative men of the West dared to postulate that human beings possess an immortal soul. In other words, one "part," at least, of man's essence was supposed to have, in itself, the congenital ability to "tear itself loose" from matter and time, and to soar up into the imagined glorious land of spaceless and timeless bliss. In this "vapor" they endeavored to find some degree of meaning.

10. Who are the Most Responsible?

And now, let us not be *too* hard on the aberrations of those Gentiles. Poor human beings! Many of them were engaged in a desperate search for meaning just like you and I. And they did have a considerable handicap as compared to us. We are privileged beneficiaries of the gospel light. Thanks to this blessed lamp on our pathway, we can enjoy the incomparable hope of a literal, tangible event of full resurrection. That is, the physical certainty that, although we are liable to die one day, and most realistically so, we shall also see a day when we, in equally realistic way, come back to life. We are to stay alive from that moment on, not as empty ghosts, but as whole men. The Greek philosophers who formed the anthropologies of our Western culture had no direct information of this blessed hope in terms of an entirely meaningful salvation. They did not know that an almighty Creator-God has made provision for man to have his identity preserved in such a total and absolutely realistic way, that a weak creature would one day be able to say triumphantly: "It is I myself, Lazarus, the twice dead one, physical brother to Martha and Mary, from the hills of Bethany. It is I, who am standing here alive once more before you, and before the same Jesus Christ, my beloved Redeemer." What a blessed realism the true child of the gospel had appropriated. I do not say that those men of *Greece* would necessarily have accepted this realism. For Christian realism does have its "seamy side," I mean as seamy men conceive of

"seaminess." To the sentimental daydreamer who used to be high on the enrapturing pathos of "inevitable" tragedy in human life, Christ's realism says: "Stop it. Be a man, a redeemed human creature! Your melancholy moods and romantic resentments have no valid foundation in my kingdom."

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This is what sentimental men are urged by Christ to give up completely. But who is willing to do that, even in exchange for life itself? Self-pity is one of those "sweet moods" men naturally just refuse to part with, once they have gotten addicted to them. The unfortunate thing, you see, about unrealists is that they fall in love with their unrealism.

This ought to give you an idea about how humanly impossible it must be to save a creature as sentimental as man. He will just go on clinging spasmodically to the solution he has invented for himself, his own puny philosophy of survival. That is how he arrives at his own incredible "solution." He insists on surviving as that bodiless, feelingless, dutiless dummy the tradition demands. What a "deliverance" from the pangs of a guilty conscience, what a "heavenly bliss" on that day when he finally manages to "transcend." Meditation exercises, of Occidental or Oriental make, render that trick possible. Man is "miraculously" delivered from the troubles of both conscience and consciousness.

It should not be difficult to see how the annihilation of ethics here becomes an historic event. The birth of non-ethics is a definitive fact wherever spiritualist philosophy enter upon the scene. Evidently, to some people--maybe to all natural men--the most intolerable hardship you can inflict upon them is that of possessing a truly personal conscience, a truly personal consciousness. For that, of course, also implies the fact of a personal responsibility. It implies realistic feelings of personal guilt for all evil deeds deliberately done. How in the world could you then expect natural men to be natural lovers of intensive personalism? They are rather apt to hate it, both as a quality in themselves and as a quality they are bound to assume, at their rare genuinely alert moments, in the nature of the Supreme Being who has called them into this personal kind of existence. A God who is truly personal, you see, can only be faced in a personal way, by personal creatures. But in the current cases, that would mean the constant threat of a literal punishment inflicted upon them, on the part of a literal holy God.

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Do we realize what a crying urge there must naturally be in the hearts and minds of such guilty men for the magic "salvation" brought to the land by "operation Vapor"?

And now one more serious consideration at the same time; what else is equally bound to take place at the very moment when the blessed magic of that all-obscuring mist (vapor) is made operative in the spiritualist's life? We should all know by now what is supposed to happen, with automatic precision, as soon as that magic from the miracle kit of pagan idealism has been switched on: the human soul is "delivered." From what? From all pain. From the pain of the body, the pain of the flesh. From the pain of deeds performed in the flesh. The soul is free like a butterfly leaving its miserable cocoon. What a nice "reward" resulting from the pulverization of man as a person. What a glorious "victory" of the unreal Vapors over the hideousness of reality.

Now some of you may think that spiritualism does not teach this doctrine exactly like that. You might think that the impersonalization process is something that

realistically is supposed to happen only at the moment of a person's death. Only then does man achieve his "relief" from the pangs of personalism. You are wrong in one particular respect; that is a most important respect: the magic effect of spiritualist philosophy is far more efficient than you ever thought. It does not become effective only at the moment of death. No, my friend, its effectiveness is in full operation already in life. And it covers the whole ground of human life. Mark you: spiritualism is a package plan. Once you have said yes to its weird invitation to the semidarkness of its cunning approach, you can no longer pick and choose. You must simply accept every item included in the package. Spiritualism is a total option. The disintegration happening to your very life as a result of your state of willed weightlessness in the empty land of the pure spirit is henceforth instantaneous and universal.

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In the spooky and still realistic light of this historic happening to the lives of individual men, you may also better realize what was due to happen to the holy Sabbath, left in the hands of unholy men through the ages of history. What would be automatically bound to happen to that institution, in a cultural environment where the general principle of pure-spiritism was tragically accepted as the basic outlook? You have no reason to be surprised. It ought to be self-evident how utterly badly the Sabbath would thrive in that rarified atmosphere of vanishing bodies and emerging ghosts.

It would be downright foolish to forget that the Sabbath is simply *one* with time and space. It just could not expect to breathe and be kept alive in a vacuum of perfect timelessness and spacelessness like that. For those conditions are what only spiritualism presupposes as a basic *must*. "Operation Vapor" was bound to cause, not just a certain obscuration of the Sabbath, but rather, its total eclipse. Intelligent men must understand this elementary self-evidence. Some seem to think that pagan dualism only applies to a splitting up of the human totality in terms of body, on one hand, and soul, on the other. That is a dangerously narrow conception of dualism. For it causes you to flatter yourself that you are a great monist at the same time that you may happen to be the dupe of a cutting up of human reality in fields in which this veritable laceration becomes fatal to the decisive truths of the deepest doctrine of salvation, according to the gospel of Christ. In fact, ethics may once more be on her way to the slaughterhouse. And I may have no idea that I am the cruel master of the slaughter.

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11. Specific Ways in Which Spiritualist Dualism Managed to Abolish Ethics in Post-Apostolic Times

Any historian will be astonished at the moment when he discovers in what shrewd ways the unrealism of dualist philosophy gradually managed to beat down the bulwarks of Biblical ethics in terms of an implicit obedience to the ten commandments. Here I must first make a few comments on the concept of Christian realism as I understand it.

"Christian realism?" I seem to hear you repeating with incredulity and almost with exasperation, "What is that, now? I have been reading my Bible for years and years, and quite attentively so. But never did I come across such a word as 'realism'

there. What can I make of all those isms, all those distinguished terms from the speculative studies of erudite men in the world? What has 'realism' got to do with living Christianity?"

A tremendous lot, my dear friend. You seem to assume that no such term is to be found in Holy Scriptures. You are mistaken. You will admit, I am sure, having come across the word 'truth' in your Bible. You will even admit it is a key concept, embracing the Scriptures from cover to cover. But what is that "truth" if not a simple synonym for "realism" in modern terminology.

To be quiet exact, "realism" is something even more shakingly personal than the truth as an objective fact. It is the existentially decisive attitude certain men (relatively few in number) tend to adopt *toward* that objective reality. The Bible has a special term for that destiny-deciding attitude. It is called "the *love* of truth." That is as good a term for "realism" as any historian of ideas could desire.

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In the second chapter of 2 Thessalonians we learn something very important about that sacred realism: It is something man *receives* or *refuses* to receive. If he receives it, he is saved. But that need of 'receiving' shows one thing very clearly: it is not something he has in himself. It has to come to him from outside. The love of the truth is a gift from God.

Now what about those who do *not* receive it, and rather perish? The apostle describes their unrealism very strikingly: It is "the deceivableness of unrighteousness." Doing wrong is always an act of self-deception. So we see the destiny-molding role of Christian realism. It is a matter of life or death to every man, whether he has it or does not have it.

Now let us listen to the apostle Paul giving most significant information about what happens to man as he abandons himself either to the spirit of realism or to the spirit of unrealism. To realism he gives the name: "mystery of godliness." The diametrically opposite of that in the Bible is the "mystery of iniquity." It is most informative to compare those two "mysteries." First, what can we conclude about the very term, "mystery"? "Mystery" certainly is not an unambiguous concept. Mysteries may be wonderfully positive, or frightfully negative. This is going to teach us something of capital importance about the crucial significance, in the last analysis, of realism versus unrealism in the present world.

12. "The Mystery of Godliness"

That wholehearted spirit of absolute truthfulness is not only equated with the open-minded concession that God exists. No, it goes infinitely beyond that general statement. It is a spontaneous and unreserved willingness to go all the way up--or all the way down, if you prefer to express it that way--to a most radical expression of truth about

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God. It is also a most specific utterance of truth, and one that is obviously absolutely indispensable for man's salvation: full realism in this cases states freely and

with firm conviction: God has made Himself man. He is truly Emmanuel, "God with us." God has-oh, what an overwhelming idea!--established forever His dwelling among men.

This is, indeed, something infinitely greater than simply admitting that God is. It states in breathtaking terms of concrete realism, 'how He is'. In strains of thankfulness and praise it shouts out: God is love. He is love in the most extreme, the most remarkable form love has ever taken: Humility; that is, a total bending down to "humus," to man's earth. That can never be simply the dry theoretical announcement of an objectivistic fact. No. It must be a song of jubilee: "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth" (Exodus 34:6).

In other words, realism here suddenly becomes synonymous with man's spontaneous participation in the great vindication of the maligned God. The downtrodden One has again become the great sensation of the world. He has revealed Himself as the Lamb of God, slaughtered from the foundation of the world. That is the God who even stepped down to the ultimate depths of humiliation, letting Himself be a God on trial. From that trial He has come forth as the provenly Righteous One, the Sacrifice without a blemish. At the moment when this unfathomable truth dawns on the minds of well-intentioned and honest men, realism becomes an entirely new experience to them. The love of the truth is a force that grips them, transforms them entirely. From being man-centered, that is, more or less humanistic searchers of the truth, they become God-centered ones. Uppermost in their hearts is now only this question: "What can I do for God, for Jesus Christ, the Man of matchless charm? How can I beat the drums, proclaim, with maximum effect, to every intelligent creature I come across on my way: God is righteous. God is good. He is perfectly righteous, endlessly good. And there is none beside Him. This is the only thing that really matters in the whole world, the full vindication of the lovely name of the downtrodden God. Before this theocentric spirit has entirely overcome the natural anthropocentricity in man, realism has not yet had any penetration to speak of in the human heart.

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Now, does the Bible tell us anywhere that God's realistic coming in human flesh, His bottomless descent into the world of pitiable men, really did constitute that signal peak of all realism? Does Scripture inform us that Christ's incarnation is the great mystery, the positive mystery, *the* "mystery of godliness"? Yes, here is the apostle's clear statement: "Without controversy [in other words, here is what no truthful witness could ever deny or gainsay]: Great is the mystery of godliness: *God was manifest in the flesh* (1 Timothy 3:16).

So--without controversy--the wholehearted proclamation of the mystery of Christ becoming literal man, a full man in flesh and blood and bones, this is the climax of all realism. It is the truth of the ages that must be received in love. There must be a glad willingness in the true realist to accept to the full this stupendous reality. What must not be yielded to, under any circumstances, is the sophisticated attempt at spiritualizing away that glorious fact of a divine condescension. So the great cornerstone, the infallible criterion of Christian realism is right here. You must believe in the concrete reality of the tangible, visible flesh. Even God Himself has not disdained to appear in human form. That is what He has solemnly proclaimed with His own words. Any realism definitely presupposes that candid straightforwardness with which the child of

God takes, at its face value, the simple Biblical word about God's total coming down, His literal tangible coming down to you and me. In other words, there is no room whatsoever left open for giving to basic Biblical truths of this concrete order any kind of spiritualistic interpretation. Its tangible, palpable, rock-bottom realistic nature manifests itself in the way man himself, in his turn, "comes out," literally, visibly, tangibly, and palpably in his own practical life from day to day.

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How does man "come out"? He comes out in the straightforwardness of a childlike literal *obedience to the will of God*. And how has the will of God come out from times immemorial? It has come literally out. That is why Christ says loudly and distinctly: "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). He could not say anything different from that and still, Himself, remain realistic. That *obedience* on the part of man is the "*incarnation* of his *love* for his Lord and Saviour. The spirit of total commitment is bound to come out in the *body*, a live reality of flesh and blood and bones. That is, it must certify itself in living action. Pure theory-that is, the specter of downright *dis-carnation*, a spiritualizing away of all genuine acts-this will never do in the kingdom of Christian realism. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearer only, deceiving your own selves" (James 1:22). This is the plain talk of practical realism.

13. The Mystery of Iniquity, Bottom Level of the Pit of Unrealism

And now the negative formulation of an exactly corresponding message about ultimate reality in men's lives: "Every spirit that confesseth *not* that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is *not* of God: and this is the spirit of anti-Christ, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now is in the world" (1 John 4:3; similarly 2 John 7).

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Again the Bible turns with vehemence against the stubborn unwillingness of the spiritualist to accept the simple fact of the incarnation. His deceptive message, from the first dawn of pagan philosophy, was the illusory, vain idea of a discarnate Saviour, turning even Jesus Christ into a mere ghost, a bodiless specter. And it is a tragic lack of that elementary *love of the truth* that manifests itself in this stubborn denial of Christian concreteness and rock-bottom reality. It is a miserable failure, in our super-adult humanity, to conserve the simple candor of the confident believer in Jesus Christ. Adam and Eve had originally received the full gracious gift of that simple love of the truth, which is the child's candid trust in God, the loving Creator and Sustainer. But then one day-through the wiles of a spiritistic medium-a pitiable snake-they were allured into throwing away the precious realism. They suddenly failed to confide in the literalness, the unobtrusive concreteness of God's simple Word.

Be attentive here, for this tells you what constitute the core and very essence of spiritualism as a worldwide philosophy: It means an insisting egocentric desire to spiritualize away the tangible reality of God's living Word, ignore its simple message, distort and reject its plain command. Please remember that basic definition of spiritualism. Grasp its simple significance the sooner the better. It will stand you in

good stead, as we proceed in our search for factual knowledge about the mysterious paths of the spurious Alpha and the spurious Omega.

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You see, there is something absolutely fundamental you must get to know and understand concerning the "mystery of iniquity." It is not only the suddenly failing *ability* to believe. It is gradually insinuating *desire* to *doubt*. Thus it becomes nothing less than the "*Mystery of iniquity*," something implying a definite guilt, a terrible personal responsibility for an attitude of evil self-deception. It turns, in the end, into nothing less than the *mystery of lawlessness*." Did you hear about that? It is simply another translation, and a perfectly warranted one, of the same original term. That, however, is ostentatiously and shamefacedly, the spirit of *willful* unbelief, the spirit of *active* disobedience. It is the titanic rebellion originating in the wicked depths of the father of lies. The process is bound to be the same in every instance: A willful refusal to see what you are plainly *shown*, is exactly parallel with the willful refusal to *do* the *deed* you are plainly *told* to *do*. That rebellious rejection of *knowing* what is right, is perfectly the same as the rebellious rejection of *doing* what is right. Accepting the right knowledge and accepting the right deed is one and the same thing. If we were to express this in philosophical terms we would say: Epistemology and ethics is one inseparable whole. That is, popularly speaking: The willingness to *know* your duty is inseparable from the willingness to *perform* it. It is mainly your heart--your deepest outlook--that decides what you will accept to know, as well as what you will accept to do.

The sophisticated ones will have us believe that no man can be blamed for how much he understands or fails to understand. "This is not the field of any moral obligation or ethical responsibility," they try to tell you. But their assumption--or presumption--is a spurious one. We all have intelligence more than enough to understand what God demands of us in our lives, if we just want to. And we also have God-given willpower enough to just accept to be made what He' has promised to make us, if we just place our will on the side of His will.

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14. What is Infidelity? Get to Know the Meaning of a Remarkable Term

The simple failure to believe in the God of the Bible is, by that Book itself, qualified as "infidelity."

The word "infidel" apparently means two fairly different things at the same time. Exactly the same applies, by the way, to the more English-sounding synonym "faithless." To be faithless is, of course, bound to mean, in the first place to lack faithfulness. Isn't that equally true? The infidel is one who comes short in his fidelity. If you are faithless (an infidel) there is something basically wrong with the way you behave toward your fellows, or toward God. You are a person "in bad faith." That definitely indicates something fundamentally bad about your moral character, not just about your "intellectual" inability to believe this or that fact, this or that doctrine. Some people claim that they just do not manage to believe. They are "honest doubters." They are unbelievers simply because the thing they are asked to believe in, to them, appears unbelievable. But faithlessness, or infidelity in the Biblical sense goes far beyond this rational, intellectual level of an "honest doubt." The faithless one, the infidel, is the one who is no longer true, either to himself or to the other ones. He is

unfaithful, so a person in whom the others, on their side, have no reason to believe any longer. He has simply proved to be faithless in the most moral sense of "unfaithful." That means unreliable, untrustworthy.

Here there seems to be something rather different from simple unbelief, something definitely more blamable. I say there "seems to be." For, in reality, is it so widely different after all? I doubt it. According to the rules of Biblical realism no person can in any degree

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abandon his moral faithfulness without abandoning, in the same degree, his simple faith; that is, his belief in the things that are worthy of belief, and described by the Word of God as such. And vice versa: no man can jeopardize his intimate faith, for instance, his faith in God above all things, without, at the same time and in the same degree, jeopardizing his faithfulness, his fundamental allegiance to God. Those matters are, in other words, inextricably intertwined. They hang together like pea plants. Their togetherness is, in fact, so intimate that it would hardly be an exaggeration to say they are virtually one and the same reality. The reactions of the brain cannot be severed from the reactions of the heart. Belief is bound to be a heart affair more than anything else. Faith and faithfulness are one.

So if you should one day arrive at the weird conclusion that you are not personally blameable for losing faith, in the true religious sense--or for failing to have any such thing at all in your life--then you had better be told at once: Your reasoning is vanity. It is just as nonsensical as if you insisted on saying: "I am boundlessly unfaithful. I admit it. But that is no fault of mine."

Remember with what quality unrealism is equated in Holy Writ: It is the "mystery of lawlessness." What is here more mysterious than anything else, is the automatic effect on men of their own refusal to receive "the love of the truth": They are suddenly assaulted by "strong delusions that they should believe a lie" (2 Thessalonians 2:10). See how deadly dangerous it is, then, to carry on a protracted experiment in unbelief, in willful unrealism.

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THE BLAND EROS FIGURE OF PANTHEISM, PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD, SNEAKING RIGHT INTO SANCTUARIES WHERE, SO FAR, HE HAD NEVER DARED TO RAISE HIS SHAMELESS HEAD

You probably remember my unfinished series of simple drawings intended to represent the highway road body of Christian Realism with those famous "ditches" on either side, one standing for Spiritualism and the other for Materialism. You were also told that those opposites happen to meet somewhere. I had even drawn a line from each "ditch" downward to some kind of cryptic meeting place. But I had covered that area where they converge with nothing but a large number of question marks. I told you I was not yet prepared to inform you exactly where the two disruptive pagan movements meet. But now I am somewhat better prepared. I think it is high time, not only you and I, but the whole world, philosophers and common mortals, get to know this: The

extreme philosophy of spiritualism and the extreme philosophy of materialism meet in pantheism. The great omniscient God of infallible revelation has provided for our deep contemplation another name, namely, "free-lovism." That will soon constitute for us a topic for captivating study. But first of all now I must try to answer a question I imagine you must be aching to ask:

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**1. Why Should A True Spiritualist Feel Any Need of Making Any Approaches
Whatsoever Toward Materialism?**

That, you see, is not at all a purely hypothetical inquiry. For it is a historical fact that most extreme representatives of spiritualism as a major philosophy of the pagan world, have done exactly what the question implies. They have made spectacular attempts to make the opposites join or melt together. I describe the fantastic case of Plato in my book, *Man the Indivisible* (Oslo University Press, 1971), chapter: "The Genius of Platonism." And still more elaborately in my book, *The Part of the Story You Were Never Told About AGAPE AND EROS, not yet published. In his old age Plato wrote a book called Timaios*, certainly the most fantastic and the most revolutionizing one of his entire career as a philosopher which I have never heard one single historian of philosophy point out: Plato becomes a '*pantheist*'.

But why, why, why! Probably for the simple reason that he is too much of a genuine adherent of pure-idea-ism (that is, pure-spirit-ism) can hardly help feeling the weird attraction exerted by simple matter (the world of material creation) on any human being. Even an abstracting genius of Plato's caliber could not avoid having moments in his life when the alluring temptations of the body tended to become too strong for him. And during such moments it is not easy to maintain one's faith in the theory that matter does not really exist, or that bodies are an absolutely negligible thing in human life. In short, if those are the only arguments man is able to mobilize in favor of a resistance against the lusts of the flesh, then I can very well understand that the chances for the spirit to come out victorious are rather slight.

So a sort of brand new philosophy embracing both spirit and matter would seem to suggest itself as an imperious need. The sad thing is, however, that the forthcoming "synthesis," which, in this historic game of a dialectical hocus pocus, is supposed to make the thesis and the antithesis join in mysterious wedlock, is bound to be just as empty as each one of the two entities composing it. My students, who have overheard me so many times saying that a person's soul and body are only two

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sides of one and the same totality, often think they have a most problematic question with which to disarm my eternal "doctrine of oneness" or "dogmatic monism." How come, they say, challengingly, that pantheism's ingenious combination of spirit, on the one hand, and matter, on the other hand, should not be wholeheartedly accepted as producing exactly the same totality you constantly speak about?

I am sorry--that is all I can say--You are perfectly wrong when you assume that the pantheist actually proposes a realistic merger of body and soul, matter and spirit. Please remember: what the professional spiritualist operates with is not at all real spirit. By no means; it is "pure spirit," and that is absolute emptiness. A spiritual reality from

which you cut away every bit of material concreteness, is no longer any spiritual reality at all. By no means. It is a specter, a ghostly nonentity. It is a zero, nothing more. In the same way, the body (for instance, of a human being) which the professional materialist speaks about, is no body at all. That, too, is a mere abstraction, so a blank zero. And you know, what sound mathematics arrives at when one zero is added to another zero. That makes zero, not one bit more. So the totality here achieved is total nothingness. And still I must remind you about one most important fact: Nothingness is not the worst thing you could achieve. The worst thing is minus infinite. That is what pantheism has achieved.

2. The Bottomless Shamefulness of the Birth of Pantheism I always used to wonder greatly where pantheism could have had its birthplace. How could it be engendered at all, if radical spiritualism and radical materialism are its father and mother? For, as we all know those two are opposite extremes. One of them proclaims pure spirit to be the only reality, the other proclaims pure matter to be all that exists.

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How could such antagonists "come together" to engender anything whatsoever? Well, we should not forget: the two do have some very important things in common, after all. So they might still have some secret meeting place. This was the idea directing my mind as I used to draw those graphical illustrations of the "road" on the blackboard in front of my students of philosophy. Right and left were the "ditches." And from those extremes of spiritualism on the one hand, and a materialism on the other, some lines certainly had to be drawn. And the lines were supposed to meet. I felt instinctively it would be absurd to draw lines upwards, converging somewhere at the top, far above the middle of the road of Christian realism. So I drew the lines downward. And I realized I could not go downward far enough to give a true illustration of the abysmal depth of the place where those two equally disrupted "lovers" might be imagined as "meeting each other."

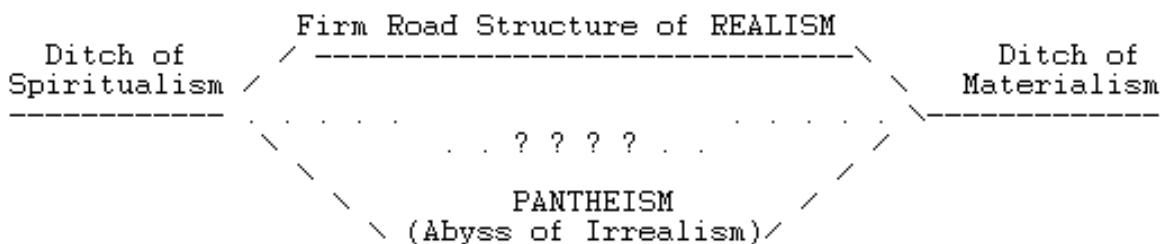


Figure 4

It is simply below all real places of a world of sound human senses we must imagine that "locus" of a cryptic rendezvous between spiritualism proper and the darkest materialism; that is, between the superstar ideal of "pure spirit" as the exclusive "value," and "black" matter ("matter as such," matter "per se").

Do you realize something of the tragedy of tragedies here implied? It is the miserably disrupted human heart seeking its eventual "peace" and "rest" in that abyss of philosophical disruption: Pantheism. Never has there been a more fantastic compromise devised. Pantheism, you see, is a brain child more monstrous, indeed, than either of its parents. So intelligent human beings have all good reason to ask with incredulity: How could there be imagined any compromise, any "synthesis" whatsoever, between those two obnoxious extremes we have been contemplating?

And still the bastard offspring of that shamelessly unnatural wedlock is a historical fact, and the spiritual movement it represents is a fearful reality we have to accept, not as a fatality we should get resigned to, but as a demon we have to fight with resoluteness and wisdom from God.

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.

3. A Spiritual Relative: Pen-Sabbatism

Since it is bound to be a capital point to show the cruel intentions the "Alpha" movement had of dethroning the Sabbath truth, I cannot help but repeat in abbreviated form some odd facts I have elaborated on in my work on the *Seventh Day, a Mystery Interfering Crucially With the Basic Structure of Elementary Ethics*. There I have tried to demonstrate how strikingly a similar historic unicum, namely Pan-Sabbatism, rises into prominence at a given stage of the spiritual, or rather spiritualistic, evolution, and finishes by floating like an incredible banner from the top of the man-made Pan-Sanctuary's flagpole.

Now, what all those pan-isms actually say is very much the same thing. It could be epitomized in one sentence once more: *"It makes no virtual difference."* What makes no difference? *"It makes no difference whether or not there is sin in your life."* Why does that make no difference? *"Because with God and with the entire material world nothing makes any difference. For God is the world, and the world is God. The holy is profane and the profane is holy. It is all one huge mass. There is no distinction anywhere worth mentioning. To distinguish would immediately presuppose a personally conscious and order-arranging-arranging mind. But personalism is an anomaly and a bad dream. And order is fortuitous and self creative. Progress is an inevitable surging up of goodness and glory happening all by itself. So just as the holiness of the Sabbath has automatically 'split over' into all the other days, so God's general holiness has 'split over' into the material world, making it all holy. Hence sin and profanity are non-existent. Personal responsibility and personal guilt are evils of a diseased imagination. Such taboos have been luckily overcome in the blessed kingdom of pan-holy-ism."*

This is largely the message all varieties of the "all-god" theory endeavor to inculcate on our minds. Small wonder that it was Seventh-day Adventism that was destined to unmask the bastard daughters of spiritualism as they had never been unmasked before.

4. Adventist's Repeated Clashes with the Spirit of the Spurious Alpha

The kind of spiritualism that has proved particularly dangerous to God's people from the beginning was not so much the coarse and crude one adopting the form of downright spiritism. No, it was rather the more curious type of "spiritualization"; that is, a sort of pseudo spirituality, which has kept pervading our Western culture during millennia: the sophisticated philosophy of an idealism having nothing to do with ideals in the normal everyday practical sense, but rather, with IDEAS as mere abstractions. At the time that our great pioneer John Kellogg tried to introduce it into the very core of our denomination, Ellen White referred to it repeatedly as the "New philosophy." In what sense was there anything so particularly "new" then about that age-old trend of spiritualizing away the concrete reality of a practical everyday world of common human senses and to reduce God's personal

intervention in human lives and in the lives of all living things to an allpervading general Force inherent in nature? The new thing to her was that this philosophy of an automatically working power for good was now striving to make its way right into precincts of particular holiness where it had never so far been expected to raise its audacious head. "There is a strain of spiritualism coming in among our people, and it will undermine the faith of those who give place to it, leading them to give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils" (Letter to Kellogg 253, 1903).

Not that this intensive awareness of a battle against a most cunning philosophical type of spiritualism was something happening to Ellen White, only at the time when

Kellogg boldly set forth his ideas of pantheism. "Ever since I was seventeen years old, I have had to fight this battle against false theories, in defence of the truth. The history of our past experience is infallibly fixed in my mind, and I am determined that no theories of the order you have been accepting shall come into our ranks" (bid.).

In the days of her capital literary production, the Conflict of the Ages Series, Mrs. White was most intensely aware of a dark, mysterious trend, something floating in the air, so to speak, and hovering ominously over the Occident. It awakens particular associations in my mind to know that it was precisely in the '*Great Controversy*' she wrote those significant words: "A fear of making the future inheritance seem too material has led many to spiritualize away the very truths which led us to look upon it as our home. Christ assured his disciples that he went to prepare mansions for them in the Father's house." (GC 674-75).

Is there any possibility of a similar danger in our day, even right in the midst of the church and its most influential institutions? Or even this question: Is there, perhaps, a complex of new dangers, or the same

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old dangers appearing in a new and unexpected pattern? In order to have some light shed on these topical questions, we must first try to go somewhat deeper down to essential facts about the one already introduced. Is there something applying to you and me in the nature of that philosophical idealism which, since the days of Plato, has threatened to undermine Western man's very sense of reality, spiritualizing away the very substance of a world his Maker and Redeemer has been pleased to place him in?

What has caused us to become spiritualists in this destructive sense of the term? Does it have any connection with our general failure to take a full pleasure in the Creator's minute plan for our lives. It is a well-known fact that man insists on being something entirely different from what his Maker meant him to be. God intended man to be, not a super-soul with divine attributes, not a one hundred per cent autonomous, self-dependent (self-sufficient) being, but precisely a man; that is, a God-dependent creature, endowed with intelligence and volitional freedom. I mean freedom to serve and to find fulfillment in that service to the other ones.

History is teeming with evidences in one negative direction: Other-centeredness (alterocentricity) is simple out of the question wherever the spiritualistic trend in a movement finishes by asserting itself, rank and rife. That irreconcilable enmity between spiritualism of any brand and genuine Christian other-centeredness never fails to prove itself. Spiritualism invariably ends up being blatantly and morbidly self-centered. And of course, nothing could be more inherently human than that, as men naturally happen to be today. In other words, spiritualism is not something you should think of as the rare exception.

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5. *An Historic Rendezvous: Hyper-modern SCIENTISM and Age-old SPIRITUALISM meet in VANITY*

I entertain no doubts that our denomination is on the verge of passing through the most critical moments of its entire history. When I here say Scientism, I include in

that term not only a falsification of the natural sciences in a spiritualistic as well as a materialistic direction, but also the satanic pride creeping into the hearts of an intellectualistic elite climbing to the "top of the ladder" in such human sciences as theology, psychology, philosophy (ethics) and sociology. Some of our theologians and historians seem to think that God, at the time when Ellen White was writing the 'Great Controversy and other parts of the Conflict of the Ages Series, guided His special messenger so poorly that essential parts of those highlights in her literary production would need a thorough revision in order to be in harmony with the Bible, not to mention the sky-rocketing level of methodology demanded by the humanistic sciences today.

Notice that I am here speaking about the intellectualistic, not the intellectual; the spiritualistic, not the spiritual; the scientific, not the genuinely scientific. I am speaking about the spurious, not about the true value.

Let me ask you one pertinent question: Do you think that blessedly unsophisticated teenage girl, giving expression to serious thoughts about heaven and hell, about good and evil in a tremendous world of reality, did possess, in herself, a greater stock of professional background knowledge about philosophy, Oriental as well Occidental, than the average found in her natural peers? If not, then why did book *Early Writings* every time she ventured upon subjects of deep philosophy or the history of that philosophy? Her ventures of that kind happen ever so often here, as well as in other writings of hers, but never does she come out with a single statement that would expose her as an ignoramus. On the contrary, I am going to show you cases that can hardly fail to fill a sincere and honest historian of ideas with admiration. Where the God of heaven is permitted to lead a writer in charge of an important message, there is no reason to fear that a major revision will be needed for the main points of that writing.

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But why, then, do those heavy doubts about the reliability of the Spirit of Prophecy writings on points as significant for a clear understanding as God's perfect historic plan of man's redemption, assail some of our most well-known theologians at a time like this?

This is nothing to wonder at so greatly. It is a characteristic of eschatology that it never appears more unbelievable than in the very day of the eschaton itself. Our time is the time immediately prior to the most realistic unfolding of events which Seventh-day Adventists for more than one and a quarter centuries have heralded as the supreme highlight of Christian end-time history; that is, the literal coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven and the first large-scale "space journey" deemed worthy of prediction in Holy Writ.

How could a time like that fail to be a time of crisis par excellence for Seventh-day Adventism? To be, or not to be, that is the question, the crucial question for every single Seventh-day Adventist today. Our very sense of identity is now at stake. Are we to succeed in defying, in our personal minds and hearts, the intrusive notion of a "delay of the parousia"? Can we go on exclaiming valiantly with Peter: "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness" (2 Peter 3:9).

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Here I am actually right in the midst of the spurious "Omega" motif. A people who have come out as veritable victors from the "Alpha" battle and hold fast their victory, should have nothing to fear from the "Omega." But of course, the two battles

are one and the same battle. The two victories are one and the same victory. In either case, it is a question of vanquishing the most insidious spirit of spiritualism, the trend to spiritualize away the concrete contents of both a literally valid Seventh-day Sabbath and a literally appearing Christ in that approaching cloud of an incandescent whiteness in which not one single angel of heaven is missing.

Are you and I to survive in the midst of this coming splendor? Are we to survive in the judgment hour that precedes? Or are we to die the most miserable death on earth; that is, on our way, already today, down into the valley of decision, simply "burned in the fire of spiritualism"?

There is drama in Ellen White's striking expression. There is downright tragedy in some of the apparently most peaceful metaphors she uses in these contexts. Take for instance, that simple phrase: "Heaven is not a vapor. It is a place. Christ has gone to prepare mansions for those who love Him, those who in obedience to His commands come out from the world and are separate" (*Letter 253*). What do you think that term "vapor" stands for? Well, do you imagine that it is an insignificant thing for a personal creature like man, bound for a literal heaven beyond the nebulae of Orion, to simply evaporize? You should stop to realize that it is the dearest dreams of his human heart that suddenly vanish like a vapor at the very moment he joins the "spiritualizers" who "spiritualize away" every literal glory of a concrete heaven. What being, endowed with personal feelings and personal thoughts, would opt for a beyond which must be expressed in terms of such a philosophy of simple evaporation? Ellen White's statement above is a cry of protest. At the same time it is a cry of triumph: "Heaven is not a vapor. It is a place."

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But please notice: it is precisely the most learned and "refined" among men who tend to make heaven a vapor. And they seem bound to do it. Why? It is an indispensable prerequisite in order to manage, in due course, to somehow reduce the judgment scene observed by Daniel and a series of other clear-sighted visionaries, to a mere vapor as well.

Let us grasp this significant fact about that sophisticated "refinement" happening to concepts and things, intended to make them "less coarse" for the delicate taste of enlightened men in an enlightened age: That deadly attack, right in the midst of our church, was not an attack from the grass roots. No, the "alpha" clearly distinguished itself as an attack from "above," academically speaking. It was a scholarly elite, one may safely say. It was spearheaded by a small group forming a sort of vanguard of our most learned men at the time, within the precincts of the natural sciences, and a group raising those material sciences to a level of sublime philosophical grandeur.

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Was it, however, an attack of the open kind directed immediately against such vital doctrines as the Sabbath, or the Second Coming of Christ? No, that would have appeared too rough, indeed, to have any chance of succeeding. If ventured upon, it would have aroused a formidable resistance, for it would have meant too spectacular and too sudden a blotting out of our very name as a people: Seventh-day Adventists. In the incipient stage of the "Alpha" onslaught, it is even doubtful that the leaders themselves planned any such crude withdrawal from the basic tenets of Seventh-day Adventism. But about the devil's plans there is no need of entertaining any doubts of

that kind. The firm objective of our most real enemy, Satan, was to undermine the very pillars of the faith in all its distinctiveness. Of course, even in the hearts of his human agents the essence of that spirit of destruction directed against the very landmarks was already active. About Dr. Kellogg, Ellen White explicitly stated that he had "lost sight of the distinguishing truths of this time."

6. How Could the Seed of Pantheism be a Lethal Threat Against the Sabbath?

The gradual knocking down of the bulwarks is an incredible thing. Here again it is our gnostic pride in our own intellectual accomplishments that prepares us psychologically for entering, without any serious pangs of guilty conscience, the track leading down to wilful transgression. Any doctrine intimately connected with personal sanctification is then in the danger zone. For nothing could be more foreign to spiritualism than that peculiar phenomenon: sanctification. "The enemy will bring in false theories, such as the doctrine that there is no sanctuary. This is one of the points on which there will be a departing from the faith" (*RH*, May 25, 1905).

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Nothing is more frantically feared by spiritualism than the notion that specific things have been concretely set aside by a personal and holy God as similarly holy. A definite sanctuary in time (the Sabbath) would appear just as loathsome to the spiritualist (pagan idealist) as the idea of a literal sanctuary in space, the Sanctuary of the New Jerusalem. Time and space are equally despicable to him. They seem too earthbound to be deemed worthy of any attention on the part of "pure spirits." Only "eternity," in terms of *timelessness*, and infinitude, in terms of *spacelessness*, are considered spiritual enough. On his supreme level of "spirituality" the lowly things of a literally created world are all subject to doubt and disrespect. For the spiritualist philosopher knows nothing about the Creator-God who *made* those things respectable by the very fact of calling them into existence. The strings of attachment binding God to the affairs of man's everyday life are wholly implied in the infinite love of a personal Father for His children. His existence is not at all, of course, dependent on them. But their existence is entirely dependent on Him. He has wanted it that way, so that He may enjoy their intimate company all the time. This is the Bible's view of God. The pantheist view of God is entirely different. He is a God inseparable from nature. If Kellogg and his associates had their way, they would have led the denomination into the cult of a God who is just a "force," a mere abstraction. Ellen White knew this and trembled at the thought:

"A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into cities and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath of course would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure. (bid.)"

7. An Unbiased Evaluation of the Alpha Group in Seventh-day Adventist History

The unprejudiced historian who looks at the destine of such men as Kellogg, Jones, and Waggoner can hardly avoid being seized by a feeling of sadness and compassion. This was the attitude of Mrs. White during the years of a tragic development taking place in those men's lives. They had had a bitter struggle in favor of causes that were entirely noble and just, in themselves. We know the fight Kellogg, for instance, had been forced to put up in order to push forward the great tasks he was eminently qualified to perform for our denomination.

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Narrow minded resistance was the response he met on the part of many brethren in responsible and influential positions. The same applies to Waggoner and Jones during a most important stage of their ministry. Such bitter opposition naturally engenders in the person who meets it, a tendency to assert himself in ways that are not according to the Spirit of God. Among many possible reactions, I am thinking of ne that is regrettably frequent: the tendency to go to extremes, thus terribly harming the good cause for which one has been so valiantly fighting. This was certainly the case of Waggoner and Jones in their "righteousness by faith alone" battle. Such extremism is bound to elicit, from the Spirit,-that is, Justice and Love in perfect balance,-a sincere endeavor to restore the equilibrium, so urgently necessary for peace and prosperity. That implies the necessity for the Spirit to approach the persons in question with some straightforward warnings and reproaches. And if the devil has his way in the hearts of the warned and reproached one, a spirit of pride is the traditional reaction. I am speaking about a tradition as hoary with age as the history of evil itself in our world..

What we should here, however, particularly turn our attention toward is a peculiar human reaction taking place quite often just at this stage of the development in man's heart. Man, in the fully realistic realms of his consciousness, knows that the reproach and the warning coming to him is faithful and true. But that may be a most unpleasant knowledge. So he succumbs to the temptation of starting parley with the unrealistic realms of a consciousness with contours rather vague and confused. The result of that is a gradual alienation. And what alienation means, first and foremost, is that you become alien to reality, above all, the reality of God, the eternally Living and supremely Personal One. The desire to have a less personal God is inherent in every man's nature as a more or less conscious guilt-haunted sinner. Hence the gradual gliding down into that painless paradise of a more or less automatic Nirvana, whose God, as well, is more or less an Automaton. This appears to the sinner the safest city of rescue any guilt-troubled man could ever be bound for.

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Of course, there must be an element of sad resignation, also, implied in this solution, finally arrived at by a human soul who has previously been vibrating with intensive joy and fulfillment at the thought of a complete salvation, as the Word of God portrays it in graphic terms. But the smooth flowing of the river of time seems to "heal" wounds of so many kinds. The Nirvana edition of heaven is accepted as a tolerable makeshift.

Moreover, in a mind as alert and intelligent as that of Dr. Kellogg, there may have been intensive pleasures compensating, to some extent, for the loss he must have suffered by abandoning his faith in simple theism, which is the great philosophy of unrestricted personalism making the life of a realistic Christian such a glowing marvel. It is evident that Dr. Kellogg had feelings *great intellectual superiority* when he compared himself to many of his previous brethren in the faith. *A pride and self-sufficiency of this kind may have been one of the main reasons for his downfall in religious respect.* The superman glory described by Goethe in his drama of "Faust," a sort of imitator of Lucifer of old, has caused many a genius of human intellect to be led into abrupt ruin. Let us again have a look at a message directed to him by God through the instrumentality of His humble servant: "You [Dr. Kellogg] have followed the enemy step by step, striving to look into mysteries too high and holy for your comprehension. Then in your teaching, the Holy One has been brought down to man's scientific, spiritualistic ideas" (letter 253, 1903).

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It is evident that what Ellen White here speaks about is not science, but precisely scientism. For man's "scientific ideas" may so easily become something having little to do with true science at all. And that kind of pseudo-science is immediately placed side by side with spiritualism. It was some of the leading men in the field of natural sciences in our young denomination who were to become the first and most influential representatives of the new philosophy.

It seems to be a peculiar feature of the history of heresy that it has prospered greatly where men, properly and originally belonging to the sciences of nature, have for some reason or other decided that their real realm of outstanding scholarliness is rather that of philosophy and theology or related humanistic studies. The unfortunate result has sometimes been that they finished by becoming dabblers and mere charlatans in both groups of learned research.

Otherwise the tradition among experts in the natural sciences has rather been to exclude themselves from any "contamination" with things as "impossible to treat scientifically" as those of the spirit. So we are rather astonished sometimes when we discover that a natural scientist is precisely the one who most eagerly joins the group of those making heroic efforts to spiritualize away the concrete realities of this world.

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8. Intellectualistic Pride Makes Us Ripe for the End Time "Omega."

At this point I feel I should demonstrate an important fact of the present epoch which very few of the people among us--Christians or non-Christians, the laymen or the learned--seem to be aware of. We simply tend to ignore the tremendously significant truth that spiritualism and evolutionism are close relatives. I do not hesitate to say: The ideal of modern science (or rather scientism) as it unfolds in the theory of *evolution*, is exactly the same any attentive observer can see in the spiritualist philosophy with which we are here dealing.

Here you may object with incredulity: How could the idealist (that is, the traditional platonic) philosophy of our culture and realistic modern science tend toward the same erroneous conclusions? Your wonder is justified. You must not forget, however, that ancient philosophy and modern science do have a common origin in one

important respect: They both originate in *man*. And man is *vain*. That inevitably makes him foolish and unrealistic. So it just happens that the typical scientist--the great hero of our modern Occident--has faithfully taken over the major part of the vanities of the intellectualists of old. He has fallen fatuously in love with the same disruptive abstractions.

In fact, hardly in any other cultural environment has the grip of vain intellectualism been more merciless and total than in the present civilizations of the Western World. Never has man been more infatuated with a downright cult of disruptive abstractions than today. Just take a critical look at our much lauded Western education. Take the IQ tests as an eloquent example. You know those "infallible" inquiries which are supposed to measure a child's potential for "success" in a harsh world. The great question for each one of us seems to have become: Where do I find my place on that fateful scale between imbecility and genius? Well, what *kind* of intelligence is it that those tests consider really worthwhile? The answer is not difficult: A purely abstract type of intelligence is the great cry. Who asks about your practical intelligence, your religious intelligence, or any other type of everyday human qualifications? For those who have made up their minds to reach the top, one thing is in demand: the ability to tackle abstractions. Do you know where we have got that fantastic prestige held by "pure reason"?

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It is part and parcel of our "precious" heritage from pagan Greece. Do we realize, however, that this paganism is on the verge of extirpating the last vestiges of Christianity in Western lands? Are we aware of the cruel war waged by pagan idealism against the philosophy of God Himself, the one He insisted on teaching His own people, and still teaches through every page of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy literature? Beware of catastrophe, dear fellow believers: The war I am speaking about is threatening to annihilate us as a people and as individual Seventh-day Adventists. Only God can deliver us.

9. An Incredible Ideal among Modern Men: AUTOMATISM

I have felt in duty bound to point out, to the best of my ability, the surprising, but never-failing goal of the sundry types of spiritualistic vanities to which we seem prone to succumb all the time: It is the mysterious everything (pan=all) which crumbles into nothing. It is the incredible bliss of nonentity.

Now, what is the stupendous principle on which this whole philosophy "rest"? It is just automatism. How are things supposed to happen, if they do happen? All by themselves. They are not created. They just evolve. This, then, is the masterly solution our world has arrived at for its many problems, material as well as spiritual. The tragic principle of automatic evolution has turned into a veritable *Weltanschauung* (the great outlook on the world). I call that a God-forsaken outlook: It is willfully God-forsaken,--forsaken by God as a result of man's willfulness.

It is difficult to understand why any Westerner should think there is any need here in the West of importing spiritualism from the East. Our domestic specimen of the species is not all that different from the

Oriental one, and we have more of it than we can handle. No one should need to fear, either, that our own variety must be branded as less spiritualistic. The two match each other pretty well.

It is somewhat shaking experience even to go back in history and look at some of the details of the Alpha drama of Seventh-day Adventism. And the question arises in my mind: Was it Plato or was it Buddha who seemed to be resurrected in the form of John Harvey Kellogg? Some might tend to think it was rather Schopenhauer, a modern Westerner. Personally, I tend to feel that he was somewhat different from all of them, although in essential respects he does belong to that philosophical section. Kellogg's famous (or ill-famed) book, *The Living Temple*, gives some, but not all information about the kind of his philosophy.

Spicer, Secretary of the Mission Board at that time, writes in a letter to a friend, as follows, about Kellogg and his manuscript for his book: "I believe the author means better than he says, but I confess I did not like the terms he uses. It is easy to give people the impression that reason and philosophy are sound guides. We must pull the other way."

Shortly afterwards, it so happened that Dr. Kellogg requested Elder Spicer to come and see him. They spent the whole Sabbath afternoon together. Spicer still had no thought that there could be any really serious differences of opinion in the matter. With the heartiest of friendly feelings he sat down with the author of that strange book. But before he knew what had happened, he found himself in the midst of a discussion of the most controversial issues. In his "Memories and Notes" on *the Living Temple* Controversy, 1938 (How the Spirit of Prophecy Met a Crisis, Ms., Seminary Vault, Berrien Springs, Michigan), Spicer writes about the matter in these terms:

Instead of things in the book being inadvertently overdrawn because of employment of scientific terms, unfamiliar to most of us, I learned that the teaching was conservatively stated in the book: that the teaching was really of intent to signify that God was in the things of nature."

Kellogg would, for instance, suddenly ask: "Where is God?" Spicer would naturally answer: "He is in heaven." To his understanding that was where the Bible pictures the throne of God, with all the heavenly beings at His command, as messengers between heaven and earth. But now he was told that God was in the grass and the plants and the trees. The pantheist physician pointed with his hand at the lawns in front of them, with plants and trees, visible all around, as they sat there on the open veranda.

"Where is heaven?" I was asked. I had my idea of the center of the universe, with heaven and the throne of God in the midst, but disclaimed any attempt to fix the center of the universe astronomically. But I was urged to understand that heaven is where God is, and God is everywhere,--in the grass, in the trees, in all creation. There was no place in this scheme of things for angels going between heaven and earth; for

heaven was here and everywhere. The cleansing of the sanctuary that we taught about was not something in a far-away heaven. The sin is here (the hand pointing to the heart), and here is the sanctuary to be cleansed. To think of God as having a form in the image of which man was made, was said to be idolatry. (Ibid.)"

The spiritualism here propounded is far from being something entirely unknown to you and me today. Or what do you say? It was certainly not unknown to Elder Spicer, either. But he had had to leave his local church and visit mission lands far away from his Western homeland in order to become familiarized with that trend of spiritualizing away both heaven and hell. In Kellogg's mind there was no more room for heaven as a literal place and the temple there as a literal sanctuary with a literal sanctuary service, even a service divided up into definite sections; both beginning and ending at definite moments in historic time. It was only as a missionary to India, a pagan land, influenced during millennia by the spiritualistic philosophy of the Oriental master

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spiritualist Buddha, that Spicer had had the dubious pleasure of observing the essence of pantheist ideas at close quarters. He was, of course, prepared to meet such ideas in such an environment. So he had not been overly surprised. What caused him surprise was, rather, the fact that here, at the present moment, the man he was listening to, teaching with the most serious emphasis, the same kind of ideas about a divine personality dwelling in every blade of grass and every shrub, was a leading brother in the SDA movement.

Trying to get the import of it all, it seemed to me these ideas set all earth and heaven and God swirling away into mist. There was in it no objective unity to lay hold of. With scripture terms and Christian ideas interwoven, it seemed the old doctrine of the Hindus--all nature a very part of Brahma, and Brahman the whole.

Over against this mysticism I found it good to let my mind lay hold of the concrete picture of Scripture and of the Spirit of Prophecy. I urged that there is a place called heaven; and there God's throne is; and there the personal God is, as He, person, is not in all places. There is the Garden of Eden, translated to heaven before the Flood, with trees that once grew on earth, as real and tangible in heaven as when they grew rooted in the soil of Eden on earth. The redeemed, in immortal flesh, can walk in the midst of the garden, and go up to the throne and see the Father's face, and they can go from the throne down through the garden. The picture of little "*Early Writings*," with their concrete descriptions of the verities of heaven and the new Jerusalem, and the scenes as the redeemed first enter there, were a blessing to me after that interview."

What a tremendous philosophy of Christian realism that sturdy pioneer of ours, Elder Spicer, missionary to India, has given expression to in those touching lines. I can see in my mind the pensive figure of that rock-bottom realist of the Seventh-day Adventist faith as he finally got away from his interview with a new and unexpected adherent of modern mysticism. He solemnly confides to us the fact of which he felt thoroughly convinced at that moment: Not a single truth of the Advent message could ever be fitted into the philosophy which John Harvey Kellogg had embraced. As Elder

Spicer had been sitting there on the porch of the pantheist's house listening to that man's newborn

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creed, he had had the feeling as though one light after the other was on the verge of being put out altogether. This suddenly reminded him of a description he had read many years previously. It was about a visit paid to Schopenhauer, the pessimistic philosopher of Germany, by Robert Buchana, literary man of London. After his visit to Frankfurt, that poet closed his report with these lines:

"As one who walks in gardens of the feast,
When the last guests trip down the lamp-hung walks,
To music sadly ceasing in the air,
And sees a dark hand pass from lamp to lamp, quenching their brightness,
So I seemed listening to his voice of cheerless prophecy.
Turning with a sigh, I left him in the graveyard of his creed."

In Elder Spicer's experience of that unforgettable afternoon, there had been a similar agonizing specter of a hand passing ruthlessly from lamp to lamp, leaving the silent passage in deepest darkness, a darkness which the comforting brightness of the third angel's message was no longer permitted to penetrate.

All Adventists are not as firmly grounded in the hope of our wonderfully realistic truths about a literal heaven and literal New Earth, as Elder Spicer was. Therefore, we cannot afford to have any of our teachers or preachers proclaiming to us a message reminding us of something very close to that kind of hopelessness. Whether it is "transcendental meditation" or any other gadget that is used to render us mature for pagan spiritualism's Nirvana nothingness, right in the midst of a Christian environment, then that sneaking easternism in Western lands is a direct crime. In any land in which pantheist mysticism appears, it is Satan's crime against mankind. It is the shrewd "big ones" machinating to lead the unexperienced little ones astray. It is a cruel taking always from the child everything that could ever be dear to him. It is recklessly tearing away from his life the last bit of meaningfulness in which he always rejoiced and put his trust. There could hardly be any more wicked "putting out of the lamps" than this deliberate endeavor to kill the simple believer's faith in a personal God and a realistic better world.

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How could anyone who sees such hideous crime happening among us, condone it? Should we connive with the villains who perpetrate such wicked deeds? How can we keep silent when God's name is so cruelly blackened right in front of us? We must cease to be so "merciful" to the wolves that devour our lambs. That is not mercy. On the contrary, it may be the worst act of mercilessness we could ever have a part in.

10. The Faith of the First Adventists, Gloriously Childlike and Realistic

To understand the shaking character of the alpha, it is imperative that we first realize the significance of a Christian outlook on life which is ardently childlike in the simplicity of its concreteness. And just in this respect I can hardly think of anything more refreshingly anti-spiritualistic, in terms of a buoyant, triumphant Christian

childlikeness of the soundest down-to earth type, than that graciously simple way in which Ellen White (or Ellen Harmon) professes her faith in the personalism of God in *Early Writing*: "I have often seen the lovely Jesus, that He is a person. I asked Him if His Father was a person and had a form like Himself Said Jesus: "I am the express image of my Father's person" (p. 77).

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The sturdy realism and the buoyant meaningfulness of the graphical concreteness making its way so intelligently and so valiantly in a passage of that kind does not have its origin, though, in the human child, properly speaking. No, it stems directly from God Himself. The outstanding merit of the present case is only that the fundamental realism of God as a Person is permitted to come out without any disturbing trace of adult sophistication. It is communicated without guile, without any perverse distortion of the original facts. Pay close attention also to the way the messenger of the Lord describes the vision she had been given of an event shown to prophets of God thousands of years earlier.

I saw a throne, and on it sat the Father and the Son. I gazed on Jesus' countenance and admired His lovely person. The Father's person I could not behold, for a cloud of glorious light covered Him. I asked Jesus if His Father had a form like Himself. He said He had, but I could not behold it, for, said He, "If you should once behold the glory of His person, you would cease to exist." (Ibid., p. 54)

Few Adventists today have any adequate idea of the tremendous significance of these passages in terms of the realism of Christian philosophy here being expressed. I am not only thinking of the words chosen, such as "form," "person," "express image," etc., but the deeply thought-provoking way in which philosophical concepts of this grandeur are here being used in order to establish a clear and firm foundation for rock-bottom realism as the indubitable philosophy of Seventh-day Adventist.

By the way, there was a historical sequel to his most candid formulation of an amazing graphicalness pertaining to the reality of God the Father, as well as God the Son. You should know about the objections it elicited among some readers, or at least a strong desire for further explanations. This explains why you will find a noteworthy additional statement in the second edition of the same book:

"On page 551 stated that a cloud of glorious light covered the Father and that His person could not be seen. I also stated that I saw the Father rise from the throne. The Father was enshrouded with a body of light of glory, so that His person could not be seen; yet I knew it was the Father and that from His person emanated this light of glory. When I saw this body of light and glory rise from the throne, I knew that it was because the Father moved. I therefore said, I saw the Father rise; the glory, or excellency, of His form I never saw: no one could behold it and live; yet the body of light and glory that enshrouded His person could be seen. (Ibid., p. 92)."

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In other words, there was no lack of plain logic or interior coherence in the statement the writer had made from the beginning. Her realism on a simple human level was impeccable.

Now, did Ellen White "shed" that spirit of audible, visible, tangible concreteness of Biblical outlook on the world, on man, and on God, as her mind gradually "grew up," and she reached the stage of maturity where she could give the fullness of her

intellectual energies to the literary tasks imposed upon her, such as the Conflict of the Ages Series?

Take for an example what she writes about the significance of the term "man created in the image of God," in *Patriarchs and Prophets*. In what respects has the Creator made his human creature, to a most important extent, similar to Himself? That marvelous likeness applies to the spiritual, the mental, and even the physical features, of man and God. Would *you* have dared to go that far? Not as an average child or a culture having Plato, not Christ, as its philosophical father.

It is fascinating, and a source of great enlightenment to a historian of the traditions of our Western World, and the thought patterns established by that world, to notice certain details contained in the above quotations. Don't miss, for instance, the intimate connection that is tied between "being a person" and "having a form." It seems to be assumed as self-evident that you can hardly entertain much hope of "being a person," if you do not "have a form." That self-evidence is no negligible insight considered from the point of view of consistent realistic philosophy. We do not even need to go to a comparatively realistic philosopher like Aristotle in order to establish this as a sound assumption.

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It is intellectually comforting, indeed, to come across an author conserving the simple realism of her basic thought forms throughout life. That is a demonstrative challenge to the many intellectuals who find it necessary to "grow up" in terms of becoming more spiritualistically sophisticated in the same measure as their intellectual achievements progress. One cannot help but admire Ellen White's unalterable character, as far as that side of her personality is concerned. But, of course, what should be really admired here is not Ellen White, but God Himself, who has inspired her. For this is not Ellen White posing as the great model of invincible simplicity and unflinching realism. It is God. Ellen could only be infinitely thankful for the grace He had enabled her to receive in terms of an unflinching confidence in His ability to save to the uttermost. Not for a moment did she need to doubt that the One who had created her as an individual person, was also able to conserve that personal identity. What is left in God's hand is well taken care of. That conservation of the individual creature's identity is, of course, entirely based on the Creator's ability to conserve His own identity. And we have sufficient evidence that *His* ability in that field has never failed. The "resurrection of the body," as the formulation of an age-old confession of Christian faith has put it, is realistic guarantee that God is in full control of any needed preservation of identity. Ellen White's implicit confidence on this point comes out with wonderful clearness in "paradise Regained":

Adam is reinstated in his first dominion. Transported with joy, he beholds the trees whose fruits he himself had gathered in the days of his innocence and joy. He sees the vines that his own hands have trained, the very flowers that he once loved and cared for. His mind grasps the reality of the scene; he comprehends that this is indeed Eden restored. (*Great Controversy*, p. 674)"

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Some "advanced" theologians, even within our own ranks, seem to look down with pity upon the "naive souls" who identify God's Word with a book. I recall one of them raising a Bible in his hand as he was standing on the rostrum of an auditorium in

one of our most prestigious schools, saying: "You are not so naive, are you, as to imagine that this is the Word of God?" To him the "Word of God" was something far less concrete, something far less visible and tangible, something far more "spiritual." I would rather translate that as "spiritualistic." Calling the Bible God's Word appeared to that learned theologian just as immature as the "childish naivete" of regarding heaven as a material reality, a specific place in an astro-physical universe. But if this is childishness, then the whole philosophy of Biblical realism is childish. The prophetic Word of God speaks very definitely about the literal moving of the throne of God from one place to another one. True enough, that throne is firmly enough established in the New Jerusalem, the Holy City of God. But the city itself is scheduled to be moved at the end of a definite period of time, the great millennium. Could there be any serious doubts about the material reality of that city? Of course, this does not prevent it from being a spiritual city at the same time. God never called into existence anything that was un-spiritual. So if we understand the term "spiritual" in the wide and most total sense of Biblical realism, every good thing is spiritual in its own blessed way. It is spiritual in view of its meaningfulness. And that meaningfulness is infallibly included in an intelligent Creator's providence. It is also, then spiritual according to its intention, which is in harmony with God's plan of perfect well being for His entire creation. How could things as God made them, just fail to have their spiritual angels? We must only know that being spiritual has never, in God's vocabulary, been synonymous with being ghost like. It does not have the connotation of necessarily being stripped of all material substance.

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As readers of the Spirit of Prophecy writings, we have all heard about something thought-stirring called the "open space in Orion." That is even a term employed by professional astronomers. And you certainly would not suspect *them* of having in mind some kind of "spiritual" space. They are no fancy-mongers. They are, most of the time, realistic scientists. Exactly the same spirit of realism is peculiar to Ellen White, or rather, to the omniscient and omnipotent Creator who knows every single detail of what He has put into space, and gives His creatures important information about it. Well, what we are solemnly told is that the throne of God, in what we currently call heaven, is located somewhere in that specific direction. In other words, that is the special "corridor" through which we must expect our Saviour to be coming down toward earth at the time of His second advent. And it is the same "corridor" through which we ourselves, if we remain faithful, are going to pass, with Him and His multitude of angels, on our way to that same heavenly Jerusalem, the glorious city which, exactly one thousand years later, is destined to come "down" to this literal earth, still a planet in rebellion, but for coming millennia of a glorious future without end, the very center of the galaxies of God, where He has decided to dwell among men.

Now, does this agree with that rather spiritualistic world view entertained by liberalist theology as we observe it around us, and sometimes even right in the midst of us?

Of course, we should admit that it is possible, as well, to be just *too* literal, narrow-mindedly literalistic, in one's interpretation of heavenly things. And that literalism, too, might in a given case be due to a lack of true spirituality. There may, for instance, be a definite danger in assuming uncritically that everything in the Bible has

been expressed in an absolutely perfect form of speech. That would rather presuppose that God has not condescended to avail Himself of men, as we know men today, as instrumentalities through whom He makes His counsels known to mankind. For men today have no inherent perfection. It would also presuppose that those to whom He wants to convey his message by means of the written word, are men of perfect understanding. But neither presupposition is right.

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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 one-sidedly focus our attention on that admittedly most remarkable sentence: "the Bible...does not answer to the ideas of God." Such one-sidedness 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.

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The Bible has *not*--for the sake of that proverbial simplicity of its composition--been forced to become less reliable in its realism. So please do not entertain any vain idea that there might remain some great task for the "advanced theologian" to "de-mythologize" it, or "re-mythologize" it. (Some will call that smart trick of finding a way out by going into myth theology, simply "re-interpretation." That would sound less opprobrious, they seem to think. In reality, however, it is exactly the same thing: it is making the great leap into absurdity, into meaninglessness.)

Biblical realism is so radically different. In it there is no need of any super-sophisticated amendments in order to save simpleminded earth-born readers from the "naivetes of their base realism," raising them up to the new level of a land of "greater spirituality."

It is typical of our present Western super-culture that we tend to drag along with us some secret fears that the human authors of the Holy Scriptures have made certain overstatements of the rather boastful or imaginative kind that children use to indulge in. But please notice how the above Spirit of Prophecy passage continues: "Instead of the

expressions of the Bible being exaggerated, as many people suppose, the strong expressions break down before the magnificence of the thought, though the penman selected the most expressive language through which to convey the truths of higher education."

This is remarkable, indeed, but certainly not in favor of a more sophisticated spiritualism, but rather, in favor of an exuberant down-to-earth realism. What a queer situation: The straightforwardness of the Bible is, in fact, such that the "highly educated ones" just hesitate to take it at its face value. They fear that certain "exaggerations" may be lurking here and there, certain "crudities" of childlike expression. So those bold expressions must first be "leveled down" a few notches in order to be "more intelligent" and not offend the "delicate minds" of the "educated ones."

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But here, then, the Spirit of Prophecy bluntly informs us that the alleged "delicacy" of those "finer intelligences" is nothing but sheer sham. The realistic language of the Bible, so far from being a crude exaggeration, represents, rather, a series of pale understatements. There is a factual "breakdown" wherever the dramatic and colorful descriptions of Holy Writ endeavor to measure up to the magnificence of the full reality. True, the penman did select the most expressive terms of vigorous realism at his disposal in a human (and even fallen) world. Still he comes pitiably short of God's tremendous reality. He can give but a poor shadow of those tangible, palpable marvels "which God has prepared for them that love Him" (1 Cor. 2:9). Let us now dive right down into some striking historical facts of the spiritualism in its "alpha" garb threatening the very existence of our denomination about the year 1900.

THE PANTHEIST MONSTER IN CROUCHING POSITION, READY TO DEVOUR US

We must now observe in living action the capital traits characterizing the type of spiritualism trying to gain foothold in the SDA church through the influence of Dr. Kellogg and his closest associated in our principal medical and educational institutions.

Was Dr. Kellogg himself a spiritualist in the popular sense of the term? I could immediately relate a story told by an eyewitness, and giving a somewhat startling answer to that question. But this is not essential, at least not so far. Kellogg has not at all become famous for getting involved in that "plebeian" type of spiritualism which excels in the rapping noises from empty closets. We do not know that he particularly associated with spiritualist mediums who give themselves up to the secret excitements of making tables dance, or causing heavy bodies to float, meaninglessly, in mid-air.

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Dr. Kellogg was a man of science and of elevated human culture. To such persons spiritism of the baser category does not seem to have any very great appeal. At least in Kellogg's day the science laboratories of serious universities had not yet opened their doors to the serious examination of those strange physical phenomena, otherwise limited to the dark corners of the seance chamber. I am, of course, referring to the modern research phenomenon of Parapsychology. (I give full attention to the most important challenges of modern parapsychology in my work: *The Science of the Occult. Its Revolutionizing Findings, Seen in the Light of Christian Realism.*)

When Kellogg was on the verge of introducing spiritualism into Seventh-day Adventism, this was in the capacity of a purely philosophical spiritualist, a pan-theist of the time-honored type known to have wandered, for centuries and millennia, peacefully among the pillars of temples and churches.

However, here one point should be emphasized: Ellen White never was a dupe of the superficial idea that this "finer" type of spiritualism was a less dangerous one. It was with a particularly worried mind she took issue with the speculative niceties contained in Kellogg's historic book, '*The Living Temple*'. She did that openly and peremptorily. She publicly hallmarked it as an entirely misplaced, absolutely unwarranted ideology, an intruder, a dangerously contaminating foreign body: "We need not the mysticism that is in this book" (1 *SM* 202).

The background for the formulation was that some of our members seemed to think that just this was what we particularly needed. To Mrs. White, however, the mystic atmosphere pervading Dr. Kellogg's new contribution to contemporary literature, was a thing to be dreaded more than any literal fire or pestilence: Those who entertain these sophistries will soon find themselves in a position where the enemy can talk with them, and lead them away from God.

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**1. "The enemy can talk with them." What a Striking
New Concept of the Old Biblical Term:
A Familiar Spirit**

According to this, even a purely philosophical type of spiritualism-or quite particularly that type-becomes an element that prepares the person who embraces it for a communication with the devil. That is, a "new" and most efficient *spirit medium* has been found.

In substance, you see, this is exactly what the Bible alludes to when it speaks about "familiar spirits." Dr. Kellogg was in the process of familiarizing himself with something weird which he did not know something he *should* not know, something having no proper place whatsoever in the family of God. Spiritualism of any shape or form is man's presumptuous first step toward rendering himself *familiar with the evil one*. You begin to have familiar chats with the devil himself. You speak to him "face to face," almost as Moses is recorded to have spoken with God,-without any due comparison otherwise, of course.

It is evident that Sister White was most personally concerned about that young man's soul, as well as about the fate of the whole denomination. In a letter written in the most crucial year of this development, she writes: "You have been walking in crooked paths. You have lost the moral image of God. But there is hope for you. You may still turn your feet into the right path" (Letter 253, 1903).

Already in the earliest years of our denomination the servant of the Lord had trembled with fear at the sight of similar dangers. The, as well, persons in the church whom she knew and appreciated, were getting entangled in the meshes of an equally cryptic spiritualism. Her words of admonition to them are shivering with the fear of fatal injury, something almost impossible to repair.

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"I have seen that some who have been deceived and led into error, will be brought out into the light of the truth, but it will be almost impossible for them to get entirely rid of the deceptive power of spiritualism. Such should make thorough work in confessing their errors and leaving them forever. *EW*, 77-78.

We can hardly think of that impressive statement in connection with the particular spiritualist we are here dealing with and his gradual entanglement in the net of an increasingly hopeless trend of thinking. Let us have a look at what he says as comparatively early as the year 1897 in an address to the General Conference in session. Notice his gliding into trends of pantheist thought:

Gravitation acts instantaneously throughout all space. By this mysterious force of gravitation the whole universe is held together in a bond of unity...We have here the evidence of a universal presence, an all-wise presence, an all-powerful presence, a presence by the aid of which every atom of the universe is kept in touch with every other atom. This force that holds all things together, that is everywhere present, that thrills throughout the universe, that acts instantaneously through boundless space, can be nothing else than God Himself. What a wonderful thought that this same God is in us and in everything! *General Conference Bulletin*, Feb. 12, 1897, p. 83.

We may wonder how many persons in Dr. Kellogg's audience on that occasion were conscious of something dramatically new, making its appearance in a General conference session of Seventh-day Adventism. Those who had not heard his voice would still have the opportunity to get acquainted with his ideas. For that particular thought of "God in everything was only further emphasized in his forthcoming book, *The Living Temple*: "God is the explanation of nature,-not a God OUTSIDE of nature, but IN nature, manifesting himself through and in all the objects, movements, and varied phenomena of the universe" (p.28).

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Elder H. G. Daniels, President of the General Conference in those critical times, draws out the inevitable implications of such formulations, as a lethal peril for elementary Christian orthodoxy: Such teaching would make God personally responsible for all the temptations and unholy desires that move within the sinner, leading to the grossest sin" *The Abiding Gift of Prophecy*, 1936, p. 333).

2. A Mere Child Could Draw the Necessary Conclusion from Pantheism to the Concept of God Himself as the Origin of All Sin

It is common knowledge how Kellogg again and again used an interesting figure to illustrate his idea of God in Everything. Suppose, he would say, that you were having a large shoe in front of you. Then suddenly you could observe small shoes coming out of it one after the other. What would you naturally say about that big shoe? You would say: There must be a shoemaker in it. Now what about nature and what we observe coming out of it? Take the grass. There must be a grass-maker in that grass. This is God.

A story I told about a similar illustration he used in front of his two children. He directed his little daughter's attention to the head of her little brother John, saying: Do you see what comes out of John's head? It is hair. So there must be a hair-maker in that head. That hair-maker is God.

Now it so happened that the little girl knew about several other things as well that seemed to come most naturally out of that stubborn little head, evil things she had observed time and again. Who then had made those things? God, would be the immediate conclusion. For is not He, according to pantheist thinking, the only One existing in everything? If everything is God, then sin also must be divine.

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This, then, was the dangerous implication of Kellogg's pantheist trend of thought, which Elder Daniels perceived, and the tragic effects of which made Ellen White's heart tremble with agony: It would lower the Holy One of Israel to the level of sinful men, blasphemously making Him responsible for the basest impurities to be found in human hearts.

The pantheist looking at a stone has the apparently sublime thought: the stone is in some wonderful way divine. That may sound like a most spiritual and edifying idea about stones. But what is it that here happens in reality? Is it the stone that rises up to the level of the God genuine theism knows? By no means. It is God who is dragged down to the level of the stone. So He has been stripped of all personality, whether good or bad. Therefore, as far as the *guilt* for sinfulness is concerned, considering the matter in the pantheist's own perspective, it might be more appropriate to express the salient point as follows: It would hardly make any sense any more to claim that either God or man is personally responsible. For a totally impersonal type of consciousness (I am now consistently keeping to that ideal of a "universal consciousness" which has such tremendous prestige in any religion of the Nirvana kind), a consciousness as badly stripped as that, just cannot logically be assumed to be burdened by any personal responsibility for anything that happens in the whole wide world.

Of course, it then becomes simply nonsensical, according to this spurious trend of reasoning, to even mention any moral relationship at all toward anything one does or fails to do. Evidently that freedom from responsibility is the greatest--and the only--boon that would encourage the pantheist to launch out into the philosophy of pantheism. Consequently it is also tacitly accepted as a core value of his ideology, that personalism must be condemned as an anomaly.

In fact, to speak meaningfully about morals, presupposes a high degree of downright Christian personalism as a *conditio sine qua non*.

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To a genuine pantheist the question of "guilt" can only mean one thing, namely, that one has not yet managed to get entirely rid of one's pestering shackles of personalism. The systematic fusion with the bliss of "universal consciousness" (the World Soul) is all one has to look forward to. That--and that only--is envisioned as capable of relieving guilt-haunted human minds of their guilt-feelings. What an ingenious device for the taking away of sin! What a deliverance and redemption! Nirvana is the great Heaven, automatism the only God.

Now you must not fancy that this primitive trend of wishful thinking, this simple escape mechanism, is something overtly expressed by any member belonging to any fraternity of spiritualism, official or unofficial. Most of them, you should know, are highly cultivated and scholarly-minded men. Such a confession would be something too

childlike, indeed. And childlikeness is the one thing men of our culture and in our generation fear more than anything else. But that means a deadly fear of what constitutes the very essence of the Christian Spirit. For in Christianity the child is the great ideal any genuine follower of Christ must apply himself to realize, even in his life as an adult. And he must know that, in so doing, he will be going stream-upwards all the time, fighting this way against the mighty currents of a culture having the entirely opposite ideal. But what else could you ever expect in an environment as super sophisticated and science-intoxicated as this pagan Occident?

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3. *Our Desperate Need of the Right Balance in Our Reactions*

To be sure, in some more religious-minded strata of that highbrow elite, the reaction may be the comparatively sound one directed against superficiality in terms of crude materialism, a bent so commonly observed in the large philistine crowd. We must wholeheartedly sympathize with much in that reaction. We should sincerely try to understand it. Ellen White did. She defended "the doctors" wherever she saw them to be on the side of true righteousness, and a true progress of the cause of God. But she also perceived the deadly danger lurking the trend of a gradual loss of the ingenuous childlikeness of the Christian child. This is the rationale behind her previously mentioned warning: "A fear of making the future inheritance seem too material had led many to spiritualize away the very truths which led us to look upon it as our home, Christ assured his disciples that he went to prepare mansions for them in the Father's house" (GC 674-75).

Obviously, our Western ideal of spirituality is still the Platonic one. We are so anxious to be "spiritual" in this super-adult sense that, in a given case of emergency, we may be ready to drop the whole childlike realism of all true religiousness.

Now, being natural heirs of this same anti-child, pro-adult culture ourselves, we should never think that we are supremely exalted above all it stands for. Without divine protection our very realism may be submerged as a result of a certain *pride in pridelessness*, a certain downright baseness posing as lowliness. We must know that it does not come naturally to any one of us to admire the simple candor of the truly religious child. May the God of heaven have pity on every one of us. He knows every one of our cultural handicaps and the tempting pitfalls of our specific milieu. He is fully cognizant of the fact that, whenever we try, in our own way, to be "spiritual," it is a pagan idealistic variety of spiritualism we constantly tend to achieve. Our ideal is to be "like the other." And we do have an inkling of what they would think about us if we had the boldness to be different from them. Then they would immediately reject us as those who don't "measure up." That is self evident. For a true Christian realist would always appear not sufficiently materialistic for the materialists. Your old fashioned Christian candor would hardly seem to make you acceptable to any "decently intelligent" ambience of modern times. You profess to believe in a literal incarnation of the divine Spirit. That is just too narrowly Biblical. Modern man is simply not prepared to buy a philosophy as "naive" as that.

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4. *The Ship and the Iceberg. An Illuminating Drama in SDA History*

Those who are eager to be provided with striking details about the essential nature of the "Alpha" and the "Omega" of spiritualism as a subtle and sudden onslaught directed against the very heart of Seventh-day Adventism in the last days of its history, should turn with studious and carefully scanning minds to the information provided by *Selected Messages*, volume 1, pages 200ff., as well as to the eighth volume of the *Testimonies*. This is the drama of spiritualist infiltration right in the living core of God's church on earth. And it is described in the most stirring terms by Sister White herself. Every detail is vibrating with significance for a battle we still have, a battle beating its furious crescendo right up to the time immediately prior to the coming of Christ in glory. The mastermind behind the scheme, then as now, was Satan himself. The purposive plan, then as now, was to wipe Seventh-day Adventism out of the annals of human history. And humanly speaking, this plan was on the point of succeeding. Then, in the nick of time, came the intervention on the part of a personal God, the God who leads history to its triumphant end. The servant of the Lord related a strange and noteworthy dream she had. That dream caused her to write a message as fast as her pen could go across the pages. The orders it contained were dispatched to the leaders of our denomination. It all focused on certain "efforts of the enemy to undermine the foundation of our faith through the dissemination of seductive theories."

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Mrs. White had recently read an incident about a ship in a fog meeting an iceberg. For several nights she had slept but little. We understand why: The destiny-laden attack of pantheism against the strongholds of our faith was an acute one now. To be or not to be--that was the question for the SDA church. How should the defence be organized? A faithful analysis of the dream in question demands its quotation in extenso:

I seemed to be bowed down as a cart beneath sheaves. One night a scene was clearly presented before me. A vessel was upon the waters, in a heavy fog. Suddenly the look-out cried, "Iceberg just ahead!" There, towering high above the ship, was a gigantic iceberg. An authoritative voice cried out, "Meet it!" There was not a moment's hesitation. It was a time for instant action. The engineer put on full steam, and the man at the wheel steered the ship straight into the iceberg. With a crash she struck the ice. There was a fearful shock, and the iceberg broke into many pieces, falling with a noise like thunder to the deck. The passengers were violently shaken by the force of the collision, but no lives were lost. The vessel was injured, but not beyond repair. She rebounded from the contact, trembling from stem to stern, like a living creature. Then she moved forward on her way.

Well I knew the meaning of this representation. I had my orders. I had heard the words, like a voice from our Captain, "Meet it!" I knew what my duty was, and that there was not a moment to be lost. The time for decided action had come. I must, without delay, obey the command, "Meet it!"

Let us watch closely the most striking features of this simile of the iceberg, representing the dangers of spiritualism threatening the very existence of God's chosen people in the days of the end.

First: What would be the attitude generally assumed when a ship's crew happen to sight an iceberg ahead of them? Is it to make full speed straight forward? I should say not; it is, rather, to reduce one's speed as efficiently as feasible, and then to turn

aside. It is to withdraw,, as soon as one can-to avoid every contact with that looming monster ahead. But in the present case the very opposite of this normally anticipated command was suddenly heard, "Meet it!"

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What is this now? Is this Christianity, the only realistic movement in human history, suddenly stripping off every trace of its historic realism, or even denying the very rudiments of common sense?

Let us admit openly that the reaction of the leaders here described does not immediately impress us as the normal one we would expect to meet in the everyday behavior of common-sense people. The order given by the captain, and obeyed by the crew, is certainly a far cry from the commonplace pattern. But then, please notice another thing also: The danger suddenly emerging in Ellen White's dream-and there parabolically represented by a towering iceberg, is no commonplace pattern. But then, please notice another thing also: The danger suddenly emerging in Ellen White's dream-and there parabolically represented by a towering iceberg, is no commonplace danger either. Realistically speaking, what possibilities were there, at that late crucial moment, of avoiding the collision? None whatsoever. The hard reality was too close at hand. And even if that front-to-front clash could have been eskewed, as an immediate threat, the iceberg would have remained there, looming as a potential killer for any moment of the future. Sailors know the irresistible pull exerted by those surging waves caressing a huge iceberg in a troubled ocean, or rather, beating violently against that stubbornly rising rock in the midst of the sea. A vessel already finding itself too close to that treacherous piece of firm and apparently peaceful land, will be dashed to tine morsels.

Briefly, what was here the only hope of "avoiding" the iceberg as a mercilessly crushing foe? It was to pierce it-grasp the bold initiative to split the insidiously lurking monster with one single concentrated blow. Of course, such a predicament demands courage, determination, instantaneous action. It demands a spirit of unflinching fight, the moral bravery of a head-on encounter. If realism does not include calling spiritual realities by their right names, then it is not realistic at all.

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I just mentioned an "insidiously lurking monster." Is that the way an iceberg should accurately be described. In my main study during recent years, in the field of the history of ideas, circling precisely around the topic of rock-bottom realism versus shaky mysticism in our Western World, I have repeatedly taken my recourse to two adjectives, which the mysticism in our Western World, I have repeatedly taken my recourse to two adjectives, which the mystics do not like me to mention in connection with *them*. But I have insisted on pointing at those two qualities nonetheless. For even to non-religious readers or listeners, they may convey an intuitive notion of what I have definitely found to be the bare essence of spiritualist movements in any culture. They are the epithets "hard" and "cold." Any normal person will know, from his deepest life experience, what those two qualities have meant to him as a human being, thrown into a world he has never personally chosen, a world that rarely impresses him as too merciful: *hard* and *cold*.

Now what in your physical world could be imagined as combining those two qualities more impressively to the human senses than just an iceberg? If you were to

make a sober statement about the character of an iceberg, what more adequate terms could you ever choose?

At the same time, however--right in the midst of its adamant hardness and its icy chill--that iceberg is also imposingly calm and peaceful. But listen: what kind of calm, what kind of peacefulness is this, after all? Is it the sweetly comforting kind that gladdens the heart of the human child? What is even our tough and hardy Arctic sailor's immediate impression of that peculiar type of "peace" and "tranquility," afforded by an iceberg? Ask any person who has firsthand knowledge about that heavy colossus, just "peacefully" floating on and on. I ought to add, *casually* floating, *meaninglessly* floating, on and on--an island adrift across the lonely oceans.

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To me no image would seem more eloquently representative of the automatism I have tried to describe to my students, not only theoretically as a blind, ineluctable corollary to all consistent spiritualism, but as a tragic reality gliding into men's very lives; that is, the great inertia, the ultimate deadness, the sombre fatality--all those lugubrious horrors following in the wake in the God-forsaken traces of a demon-controlled spiritualist wave. This is precisely what the realistic historian of present-day movements finds to be gaining an unprecedented momentum in Occidental lands. The fundamental motif of an unparalleled egocentricity looming like a worldwide schizophrenia, seems to be invading our Western peoples.

It is the diabolical cunning of that purposive process of non-life which is represented with horror-evoking realism by the similitude of the lugubrious iceberg in the prophetic vision of the end-time history of Seventh-day Adventism. The contrast effect of the image is suggestive indeed: What could look more reassuringly innocuous than that bright little island of glittering ice? Yet its mere being there is all that is needed to constitute a mortal peril for the human traveller on the ocean of life. God made man a living, intelligent creature with a sensitive, compassionate heart, capable of reflecting His Master's goodness and mercy. He was certainly not destined to be either hard or cold, either automatic or inert. He was not to be just aimlessly floating by, in a passive, indifferent, haphazard fashion, on some god-forsaken sea of utter meaninglessness. He was not to appropriate those lethal characteristics of the drifting iceberg.

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So one more searching question: Why do so many men who notoriously find themselves in the bewitching embrace of a spiritualistic type of religiousness, look so externally calm, so apparently peaceful, so gracefully self-possessed? The answer is not a far-fetched one. How could any violent shock or demonstrative inner passion happen at all to a being, encompassed on all sides, so to speak, by the constant presence of that gigantic mass of ice, which he himself has come to resemble so faithfully? Whoever lives in an ice house is bound to finish by being exactly as "calm," in the sense of dead, and "peaceful" in the sense of lethargic. In order not to be painfully disturbed by the presence of the iceberg, you yourself have to be just as impassive as *it* is. In order not to be killed by it you must be dead already. The danger of dying is only for those who still happen to be alive,--to some *degree* alive, at least. For the demons of death and destruction to be meaningfully concerned about you at all, you must still be meaningfully moving around. You yourself must still be personally concerned about matters of life and death. The potentialities of a sudden shock, a

crushing collision with formidable icebergs is reserved for the vessels that are still on their way, those which still possess some definite course of their own, the inherent dynamics of a perceptible forward more. Spiritualist philosophies have no dynamism. They have no direction, no aim. Spiritualism is as static and aimless as non-existence. Nirvana is just another name for non-existence.

Third consideration, and certainly not one bit less serious than the former ones: The iceberg provides an outstandingly appropriate image of spiritualism because it has a particularly dangerous quality: It is *invisible*. Not *entirely* invisible. But that partial visibility does not reduce the danger of its invisibility. The iceberg, you see, is invisible without professing to be so. It keeps boasting, as it were, of its openness, its outspokenness, its frank nature. But its true nature is secrecy.

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You are certainly aware what part of the iceberg I am referring to:

There is a submarine branch to the business and that is the really bulky one. Less than one-third of the ice is above the water. The rest is constantly submerged. You never can tell its form or its real volume. You never can predict exactly when or where you may suddenly bump into its hidden horns, and be reduced to a wreck before you even sense the danger.

It is hardly necessary to ask whether spiritualism has any corresponding qualities, qualities of such a serious nature that the image of the iceberg would impress us as a worthy one, an image susceptible of teaching us many a desperately needed lesson, regarding the Alpha,--and the Omega.

Is it finally beginning to dawn upon our confused minds what the great counterfeit religion of our world today, the pseudo-wisdom of Eastern and Western philosophy in its ultra-modern garb really stands for? Do we see, as we actually should--in order to escape personal involvement, and personal annihilation--the true contours of that ominous specter? Do we realize the literal presence of that most realistic dragon, engaged in his most realistic life-and-death struggle against the Captain of the hosts? God forbid that we should fail to discern, and thus be unprepared for, the battle entering upon its Omega phase among us. Our only way of salvation is: "Meet it, meet it!"

“UNHOLY SPIRITUAL LOVE” -OR “THE FREE LOVE TENDENCY”

To Ellen White that brief command, "Meet it," was the signal for herself, as well, to take action. So far, the Spirit had held her back from action in terms of an open full-scale intervention. Things evidently had not, until that moment, come to their full fruition. Only God knows with certainty when a development has matured sufficiently so that it is time to Him to intervene decisively.

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What a relief. What had been wrongly represented as "a sound and natural progression," could finally be disavowed as an imposture. Some interpreters had actually pretended that Ellen White had said the same thing as Dr. Kellogg about a divine presence in every living thing. Now she could more openly reject that accusation: In the controversy that arose among the brethren, regarding the teachings of this book [The Living Temple], those in favor of giving it a wide circulation declared: "It contains the very sentiments that Sister White has been teaching." This assertion

struck right to my heart. I felt heartbroken; for I knew that this representation of the matter was not true. 1 SM 203."

1. The Enormous Difference between Ellen White's Statement about God and Nature and the Statements Made by Kellogg

What had Ellen White said that "resembled" Dr. Kellogg's theories, his pantheism so fatally fraught with a trend toward absolute impersonalism? Nothing. She had simply tried to show that God's love speaks to the individual human being through every blade that His mighty creative act has called forth for our joy and consolation. This is not pantheism. This is, on the contrary, stressing the personalism of God, showing Him as the great and merciful One who is outside and above every object of His creation, including, of course, that tiny blade. The blade is just an instrument in God's hand, permitting His constant current of creative power to go triumphantly out to it, keeping it alive and beautiful, for the benefit of other creatures, including man. To make God identical with the blade can only mean to reduce Him to an impersonal thing devoid of all individuality and of all independent life.

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This was the painful insight Ellen White had once more, when she and her son sat down one day to peruse the pages of that sensational publication she kept in her drawer, unopened, for many days. Her son insisted that she ought to read it, after all. How could she condemn it and veto its imprimatur if she had not yet deemed it worthy of being read? Finally she yielded to his desire, not because she felt she needed any information it could give her, but simply in order to satisfy and reassure the other one. Her comments on the experience that resulted are eloquent:

As we read, I recognized the very sentiments against which I had been bidden to speak a warning during the early days of my public labors. When I first left the State of Maine, it was to go through Vermont and Massachusetts to bear a testimony against these sentiments. The *Living Temple* contains the Alpha of these theories. (Ibid.)"

The wording here would seem to indicate that Kellogg's philosophy formed an incipient part of a whole, a negative totality. What would the rest of it be like? Our curiosity is only aroused. It is not being granted any satisfying answer. Ellen White has only these words for the inquisitive reader: "I knew that the Omega would follow in a little while, and I trembled for our people."

What she says about the Alpha should suffice to make us thoroughly uneasy. In a letter of August 7, 1914 she writes about the drama it constituted in her existence: "The thought of the errors contained in this book [*The Living Temple*] has given me great distress, and the experience I have passed through in connection with the matter has nearly cost me my life."

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And she goes on to state why it seems imperative to speak with such dramatic earnestness about it to her fellow believers: She insists on their taking it just as seriously as she does herself, for the sake of the victory of eternal truth in our lives at a time of crisis: "We must firmly refuse to be drawn away from the platform of eternal truth, which since 1844 has stood the test." Do these words ring a bell in the minds of Seventh-day Adventists in the destiny-sealing 1980s? It should be evident enough that the questions here at stake are nothing less than those of the heavenly sanctuary and

the end-time sanctification of individual persons for whom it has been erected. We are faced with the "platform of eternal truth." But that is a platform from which we can be drawn away, any day our personal determination to stand firmly fails. It is a question of the landmarks, the basic verities having received the solemn name of present truth.

Ellen White's letter goes on, and again touches the mystic contours of the Alpha and the Omega:

I am instructed to speak plainly. "Meet it," is the word spoken to me. "Meet it firmly and without delay." But it is not to be met by our taking our working forces from the field to investigate doctrines and points of difference. We have no investigation to make. In the book, "Living Temple" there is presented the Alpha of deadly heresies. The Omega will follow, and will be received by those who are not willing to heed the warning God has given.

Our physicians upon whom important responsibilities rest, should have clear spiritual discernment. They are to stand constantly on guard. Dangers that we do not now discern will soon break upon us, and I greatly desire that they shall not be deceived. I have an intense longing to see them free in the Lord. I pray that they may have the courage to stand firm for the truth as it is in Jesus, holding fast the beginning of their confidence unto the end."

What does it mean in this context to "be free in the Lord"? That freedom is obviously the opposite of the fetters with which the spirit of the evil one binds human consciences and human hearts that have permitted themselves to start gliding into the mystic realms of a proud titanism which constitutes the very mystery of spiritualist infidelity. I have already called your attention to the fact that infidelity or faithlessness means two things at the same time: It means a willful giving up of one's basic faith (the fundamental verities you believe to be true), and that abandonment immediately signifies *unfaithfulness*. Faithlessness is always treason. It basically has to do with a treacherous and dishonest attitude toward someone. It is letting miserably down some person who is particularly close to you. It is high treason, for the Person who is let down most miserably is God Himself.

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For a while it may even look as if that treacherous deal is a complete success. But God is not deceived or permanently left in the lurch. The devil's triumph is but temporary: "He [Satan] will bring in everything that he possibly can to carry out his deceptive designs. But the Lord will raise up men of keen perception, who will give these truths their proper place in the plan of God" (*Special Testimonies*, series B, Nos. 5, 2 and 7, p. 55). Notice, it does not say that God will raise up "scholars." Academic scholars are sometimes the ones whose perception is as dull as a dummy.

2. "Free-lovism"--a Striking Substitute in Spirit-of-Prophecy Terminology for the Learned Term in Recent Theological Research, of the "Celestial EROS" to Characterize the Fundamental Motif of Occidental Spiritualism"

I shall now discuss what has impressed me so lastingly regarding the mane given by the Spirit of Prophecy to the whole movement of pantheism. Then I must first

remind you once more what that Spirit points out as the most tragic thing happening at the moment when pagan spiritualism manages to pervade the very atmosphere of Christendom. It is a systematic vaporization of that fundamental personalism which is the core of Christian philosophy. Ellen White expresses it thus:

The spiritualistic theories regarding the personality of God, followed to their logical conclusion, sweep away the whole Christian economy. They estimate as nothing the light that Christ came from heaven to give to John to give to his people. They teach us that the scenes before us are not of sufficient importance to be given attention. They make of no effect the truth of heavenly origin, and rob the people of God of their past experience, giving them instead a false science (1 *SM*, pp. 201-2)

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It is obviously very hard for most intellectuals to realize that a false science, or a false theory in any field of human thought, in a given case, may turn out to be a most grievous sin. But this is what reveals itself conspicuously precisely in all forms of implicit adherence to automatism, such as evolutionism in biology, buddhism in religion, and platonic idealism in philosophy. A person does not choose his outlook on life at random. His choice is a motivated one. And motives are a matter of character. We have already wondered what might be the secret heart motive for really desiring to have both God and one's own person depersonalized. We found no logical reasons for this. To the most decisive attitudes in men's lives we often find nothing but psychological reasons. And this may have very little to do with any reason, properly speaking. *Mundus vult decipi*, says a well-known Roman proverb: The world actually insists on being deceived. This is a fact. Do not ask for the reasons. In spiritualism un-reason is an ever-occurring leitmotif.

Of course, you may have every good reason to wonder particularly how it comes to happen that even God's people could be tempted to find something strangely appealing to them in this invariable trend in spiritualism toward blotting out the personal character of both God and man, making the individuality of either one fade out, simply disintegrate in the endless ocean of that joyless and sorrowless Nirvana. But why should we wonder so greatly? Dr. Kellogg and his associates were just sinners like you and me. And do you not think that they were even aware of it? You and I are painfully aware of our sinfulness,--at our more lucid moments, aren't we? And now, why should we suspect those emerging pantheists in our denomination of being so dumb that they should be without an awareness which otherwise comes as an elementary intuition to all men: Personal consciousness means personal responsibility.

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In the case of the impenitent sinner that means personal guilt, and personal punishment, on the part of a personal God. Where is the sinner who would not look for an escape as easy as possible away from such a predicament? Biblical realism knows no other solution than the one the Gospel of Jesus Christ outlines. Pagan irrealism suggests a pseudo-solution: the wild flight into impersonalism. Now the name for a theology realistically assuming the reality of a personal God is *theism*. The common name for a theology of the spiritualist type insisting on God being impersonal is pantheism. One might, of course, coin a more english-sounding name for that, for instance: All-God-ism. This would imply that all things are God. So nature itself, or the universe,

is God. However, there might, of course, be more significant names. To Biblical theology precisely *ethics* is of enormous significance. So a name of a strongly *ethical* connotation would seem far more to the point.

Personally, I could not help being overwhelmed by a curious sense of significance, as soon as it began to dawn upon my mind why just certain names had been selected by the Spirit of Prophecy, replacing the commonly known name, as it were. There is no reason to think that the current name of pantheism was unknown to Mrs. White. At the beginning of this century she was no unexperienced child any longer, to be sure. That applies to her capacity as a writer and as a member of her cultural environment. Intellectually she was a grown-up person. But spiritually and religiously she had, nevertheless, still retained the indispensable characteristics of the genuine child-the child of God. This child in her was certainly aware of aspects to the matter which the philosopher and the intellectualist fail to register. Even she herself did not probably-of herself-always have too clear a grasp of all that this included. It is the humble Christian child in Ellen White who admits frankly: "At first I did not know what to call this strange thing."

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But the Spirit of Prophecy knew. The Lord instructed His messenger to name the phenomenon which was causing such a stir and so serious trouble, "*free-lovism*." Isn't that strange? At what other time during the whole history of philosophy was the pantheist theory ever called by such a name? Never, as far as I know. So let us try to get the significance of this event. The "new" trend of thought introduced into a circle of Seventh-day Adventists by Dr. Kellogg was termed: "freeloveism," or "the free love tendency," or, or, "unholy spiritual love."

Now, what on earth does this have to do with pantheism,--or with spiritualism of any form it is known to have taken in the history of philosophy? Notice: we cannot here limit our concept of "spiritualism" to the narrower type of spiritualization for which our modern times have become so famous: "spiritism." For, as we shall soon see, it is the spiritualist philosophy as a totality which has been branded in the remarkable way by the Spirit of Prophecy.

On one point here there would hardly be any difficulty to make any intelligent person agree: Those strange terms containing "free love" as their substantial element, do represent, in a most striking way, the idea of a certain lightness in man's character. They are soberingly suggestive of a certain fluttering dance "from flower to flower." That "butterfly lightness in man's character. They are soberingly suggestive of a certain fluttering dance "from flower to flower." That "butterfly lightness", as a metaphor, is strikingly associated with infidelity, or superficiality of character.

Of course, first and foremost, it suggests infidelity and superficiality in matters of romance, properly speaking. That is Eros in terms of what Plato distinguishes as the "Vulgar Eros." But I must here be perfectly permitted to equate it with the general characteristic I find in the type of human being I have called "the playboy of the Western world." And his extravagances of indulgence are not necessarily limited to sex.

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Any kind of moral looseness must here be included. No particular kind appears in isolation from the others. But, admittedly, as soon as the word "morals" is mentioned, our thoughts tend to go in one direction: sex.

And, of course, this association is not unwarranted, or "unbiblical," or "un-Christian." Oh no, it has a firm foundation in the Bible and in the core of Christianity. All the way from Genesis to Revelation you will find ethical unfaithfulness of all kinds in human life encompassed in one single concept: that of adultery or whoredom. It is all just one thing: *in--fidelity*, *faith-less-ness*, being untrue to your Lord and Creator.

Just another all-inclusive formulation of creaturely wickedness is that of "idolatry." But even that massive block of human sinfulness has been given a synonymous expression. It has been figuratively expressed in a most graphically illustrative way. The Bible describes it as man's wicked bent to "go a-whoring" after other gods.

No wonder that the proponent of the "new Morality" in modern theology (I am quoting Joseph Fletcher in his book, *Situation Ethics*) dares to turn his protest even against "John of Patmos." He blames that apostle for having contributed his "unfortunate" share toward a "narrowing down of the concept of sin to place an exaggerated emphasis on *sexual sin*."

Admittedly, the Revelation speaks in most humanly suggestive terms about the "woman arrayed in purple and scarlet, bedecked with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of the abominations of the impurities of her fornication." Obviously, the ideal image opposite to this is the men who "have not defiled themselves with women."

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But why, why, asks the situation ethicist with downright exasperation, do we all connive with this one-sided trend of making sexual promiscuity the sin of sins?

Let us make one thing clear: where the Bible sets the pattern, there is no propriety in using the term "connivance." For whatever the *Bible* leads out in, can never be blamed as a trend of onesidedness or a wrong line of action, on the part of either God or men. If the Bible makes whoredom a capital term and a capital subject in matters of sinfulness, then the point should be well taken. There must be some important lesson to learn from this constant focusing-in on the adultery theme.

In certain respects there ought to be some prospects of a sensible dialogue even with the most radical "new moralists." What about a fair consensus on this point: The Bible does speak with admirable openness about sex. No trace whatsoever of any prudery there. If sex, as some noisily blame, has become "such a mess," and this sometimes for the very reason that it was "hushed up," then one thing, at least, should be pretty sure: The Bible writers can hardly be accused of having produced that mess. For one habit is absolutely unknown among them. That is the habit of "hushing up." Biblical symbolism certainly does *not* shy away from referring to man's marital life, either in a positive or in a negative way. By the way, let us be careful not to think in terms of any far-fetched "symbolism," where Holy Writ uses its unpolished language about men. Adultery here means unfaithfulness, nothing but that.

If we do not yet know the essence of the act of fornication, it is high time the Bible be permitted to teach us what it signifies. Otherwise it is premature to engage in a debate on that matter at all. And if the Bible bluntly informs us that we are essentially unfaithful--that is, faithless persons, virtual infidels--then please don't let us come and pretend that it has spoken to us in terms of vague metaphors, a mystic code of incomprehensible circumlocutions. The Word of God is, on the contrary, straight to the point, and that often rather in a most unpleasant way.

3. Does the Term Employed by Ellen White's Heavenly Instructor Make Sense?

Now back to those special expressions introduced by the Spirit of Prophecy. Do they make real sense? How could the Holy Spirit of our intelligently intervening God hit upon terms as strange as those, to describe the pantheist's real nature. For, actually, what he is boldly called is simply a *free lover*. That is no negligible claim. Of course, it is a whole area of moral attitude that is being mapped down by means of those words. What then does the pantheist stand for? He is the most remarkable extremist among all human cultivators of the spiritualization technique. In fact, his philosophy is the very end-product of all consistent spiritualism. So if he is pinpointed as *the free lover*, then here there must be quite a register of "love" scandals due to be unveiled by and by.

But what we must now first of all be aware of, is the reaction you should be prepared to encounter in the pantheist himself at the moment when anyone would dare to call him a "free lover." To him that would appear as the scandal of scandals. In his mind this would seem a veritable "action for libel" of great dimensions. And who would be the alleged culprit, bound to appear in the defendant's dock this time? The Spirit of Prophecy! Who else? Was it Ellen White who invented the "bad names"? By no means.

Let us not be unprepared, then, for that kind of libel, directed against "that kind of a Spirit." The typical philosopher will not hesitate to say with ardent indignation,--or maybe, rather, with simple contempt: Why do those un-philosophical fools suddenly consider a matter of purely intellectual nature from an emotionally moral point of view? This is an entirely unwarranted twist."

Is it? Is the Spirit of Prophecy wrong in suggesting that the really bad thing about pantheism is to be found exactly in the realm of moral attitude? There is sensual libertinism hidden in the secret depths of what men here try to pass off as a merely intellectual or academic category of truth. If you are a somewhat alert reader of the Spirit of Prophecy writings, you could hardly fail to observe one peculiar word turning up again and again, precisely in connection with those various ways in which man may choose to conceive of the world. That is the concept of "indulgence." The one who stubbornly denies that this term has its moral connotations would either have to be a fool or an obstinate liar.

But what in the world, then, you may say, does pantheism actually have in common with that well-known weakness of sensual indulgence which certainly is not first and foremost a weakness of the intellect, but a weakness of the heart, a definitely moral weakness?

In my capitalizing on the needs of greater Christian realism in our lives, I may sometimes here mainly have stressed just a sort of intellectual deficiency as my reasonable indictment against spiritualism of any shape or form. I have made it a point to unveil it as a flagrant case of downright irrealism and a miserable illusionism, having no claims to scientific credibility. I think it is right to point out that spiritualism thus, intellectually, is a poor alternative of systematic thinking. To begin with that emphasis is a must. For that illusionist quality of spiritualism, as an option of thought, is certainly

one aspect--a sort of "by-product"-which should not be ignored. And to validate my contentions here has been a relatively easy task. But let us now stop for a moment to see if intellectual weakness" and "moral weakness" do not go pretty much hand in hand.

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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.

First then, how do we commonly imagine a pantheist? I assume, in advance, that you do imagine him very much the way calm and generally soberminded historians of religion and philosophy have described pantheists down through the ages. If one specific case is needed here, by way of illuminating example, let us take Spinoza. You could hardly pick a more famous or a more representative case of pantheist thinker in the whole history of Occidental philosophy.

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Now, let us at the same time imagine you yourself as a student of modern philosophy. It so happens, let us assume, that you have just given careful study to the life history and the main works of that serious thinker, Baruch Spinoza. There should be nothing wrong in having fixed in your mind some clear image of the man who has been the subject of your study for a long, long time. So in front of your major professor you are now simply asked to characterize, through some well-chosen words, that old pantheist and his still older pantheism. Then you suddenly say, "There is one thing that strikes me in the life and work of Baruch Spinoza; that is his free love tendency."

Imagine the astonished look on the face of your professor at the moment when you have released, for his instruction, this peculiar piece of information about the pantheist and his pantheism. And suppose you made a statement to the same effect in a circle of fellow students, what would they say? They would not say one word. They would just laugh you to scorn. Still, it is just about this movement -and about these men- Ellen White speaks in those very terms, in those morally disparaging terms.

Her brief verdict decisively stigmatizes spiritualism and spiritualists, pantheism and pantheists, as "ungodly teaching, ungodly teachers." And what does that ungodly teaching bring about, practically speaking-for the teachers and for the taught? In the same context I notice a most thought-provoking statement: "Ungodly teaching is

followed by sinful practice. It is the seducing bait of the father of lies, and results in the impenitence of self-satisfied impurity" (8T, 293).

What indication do we have that pantheism is the ungodly teaching par excellence? There are so many kinds of anti-God Teaching. How does pantheism stand out among all possible kinds? In what respect is the doctrine of an impersonal God even worse than the teaching of no God at all? And why does our text state that, as the inevitable consequence wherever pantheism is rampant, just the "*impenitence of self-satisfied impurity*"? Does it apply to a person who outwardly is as "morally irreproachable" as we know Spinoza? This is what we have to try and find out with certainty.

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5. How Far is It In Reality from Egypt to Sodom?

In a handout of mine on Marxism as identical in spirit with a certain atheist type of extreme leftism in France, definitely pinpointed in Biblical prophecy as the "bottomless pit," I have called my students's attention to a significant fact: In Revelation 11:8 the "great city" of modern Revolutionism (the furious revenge of the proletarian masses, now finally arrayed in a most efficient way against their exploiting masters) is called, not Babylon, But Sodom and Egypt.

Now, in the first place, why Egypt? That ought not to be so difficult to grasp. It says "spiritually" Egypt? That ought not to be so difficult to grasp. It says "spiritually" Egypt. The spiritual relationship to Egypt in this case can hardly be anything but atheism. Old Pharaoh's voice is here the one that has kept echoing down through all subsequent centuries: "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His word, to let Israel go. I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go" (Exodus 5:2).

And in the second place, why Sodom? Sodom stands for the ultimate in moral dissolution.

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The special relationship between Egypt and Sodom should then be equally simple to grasp. I have formulated it as follows: What has first come to be "spiritually Egypt," will soon automatically become "spiritually Sodom" as well. This became evident even as early as at the time of Cain and Nimrod. Man starts out denying the reality of a living God in his life. The inevitable consequence of this is that he by and by

throws all moral restraint overboard. It ends in total corruption. The same sequence of events can easily be demonstrated in the case of Paris during the Great Revolution. And history may still have time enough to demonstrate its validity for Moscow as well. Moral dissolution, or its final phase of a spectacular collapse, often turns up with furious suddenness. Of course, we know very little about the precise spiritual situation of any group of population, particularly so in more or less hidden countries like Russia and China. There may be more genuine religion (and the leaven of moral soundness resulting from that) in Moscow and Peking, than there is in New York and Los Angeles, for all I know.

Above all, there may be considerably less of spiritualism in the "hidden" areas than in the openly known ones. And what we should here come back to, is our special

discussion of pantheism, its peculiar nature, hidden or openly known. Let one thing be openly admitted at once: Pantheism is not, normally, by any means, that noisy, unbridled proclamation of the death of God, or rather the eternal non-existence of God, which we have got to know from some revolutionary high quarters, theological or political. It is not a denial of God, fretting and fuming with bitterness against some clerical group of hypocritical God-believers. No, pantheism has always been a calm and dignified philosophical speculation about God, actually proclaiming that everything is God. All nature is from eternity, and inherently permeated by His very essence.

So how then, you may ask, could pantheism reasonably be represented as a trend of inherent wickedness, and particularly--don't let us forget the strange specificity of the accusation--a trend pregnant with the almost hopeless state of willful *impenitence*, - and, how was the last part of the sentence formulated, -*self-satisfied impurity*?

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Now, what if we look upon that latter term, also, as an image derived from man's sex life? Would that seem a farfetched reference? I should say not. And what would this imply? The implication is as clear and as terrible as you could fear it: The thing we have no deal with is described in terms of a "spiritual self-abuse," or "self-pollution."

Self-abuse is, it would seem to me, a particularly striking synonym for pantheism. For the term does not only mean simple masturbation. It rather comprises any kind of "abuse of oneself, one's powers, one's faculties" (Webster); that is, the perversion, we might safely say, of any God-given endowment in man.

I notice today among Seventh-day Adventists, particularly in circles of higher education, for instance in the field of modern psychology, sociology, and related field of humanities, a curious tendency of becoming terribly uneasy and apologetic, wherever the question of Ellen White's description of masturbation comes up. This, they seem to say, is too bad to be mentioned in an age of physiological and psychological enlightenment such as ours. In a meeting recently where some of our top psychologists were discussing that awkward topic, there seemed to be an almost complete consensus that Ellen White's treatment of the sin of masturbation would have to be left aside as something rather obsolete. There seemed to be a frighteningly poor realization that masturbation is a sinful habit, endangering a person's ability to enter into a fully meaningful relationship, in accordance with God's sacred plan for man's sound orientation in life; that is, an other-centeredness (alterocentricity) without which there can be no wholeness, no holiness, no salvation (compare the Germanic word for salvation: Heil). The alternative to these positive essentials is just perversion, disruptedness, eternal perdition.

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The important thing to know about pantheism is that it perverts, disrupts, annihilates. Of course, that is the trend of spiritualism on any level of its development. How does it perpetrate that fatal act of perversion, disruption, and death? Essentially by just numbing man's natural fear of God ("natural" here in the sense of originally God-given). Pantheism manages that ten times more efficiently than traditional atheism has ever done. Atheism proper has a rather overt and noisily militant character. So, in a way, it possesses a certain degree of fairness and straightforwardness, after all. Pantheism has a far more shrewd scheme of operation. You are gradually relieved of

your awareness of the existence of a jealous God, almost before you have any idea about it. You are imperceptibly conditioned to do without the reality of a personal God. Every natural urge of indulgence in you is secretly enlisted for the purpose of making the dethroning of God appear as the great boon, the great need of your life.

Man's attitude becomes more and more a-mortal before it becomes downright im-mortal. So before a person has sensed any serious danger, the spiritual cancer of a literal impenitence is so far advanced that it is past cure.

Impenitence is, of course, the diametrical opposite of the spirit of *repentance*, the great *metanoia* which the Bible speaks about as the only but absolutely indispensable prerequisite, on the part of man, in order for God to save him. We realize then, don't we, the intimate connection between two things: on the one hand man's stubborn determination to choose his own way, "do his own thing," and, on the other hand, that gradually increasing callousness or insensibility of the heart which constitutes the very essence of spiritualist impersonalism.

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It is exactly at the moment when the inestimable value of living personalism grows dim in our hearts, due to ungodly teachings about God, that we have the daring to let ourselves glide into the forbidden paths of self-indulgence. What could be more guilty than that? What could be more comparable to the deleterious sin of self-abuse? God created man for an intensively personal, a gloriously meaningful relationship-with Him and with our fellow creatures. What sin could ever be worse than a self-centered perversion of that dignified proper use of all human powers, given by God for man's creative self-unfolding in an environment so lovingly instituted for the common good, not for egocentric seclusion.

This is all the battle is about between the Christian Agape and the pagan Eros. Eros is the great self-centered phenomenon of this world. Eros means nothing but man's hopeless indulgence in himself, his own senses, his own righteousness, his own ways, all things detached from their meaningful relationship to God.

In the philosophical tradition of the West that obstinate man-centeredness is exactly what has received the comparatively honorable and pleasant-sounding name of Eros. In Seventh-day Adventist end time charismatics, however, this godlessness was destined to be branded one day with other names, more popularly understandable names, more daringly outspoken-and at the same time more spiritually significant-names: "free-lovism" and "unholy spiritual love."

The Spirit of Prophecy did not need to wait until the Swedish theologian Anders Nygren, with his famous book, *Agape and Eros*, had introduced into modern Protestant theology an important inquiry into the essence of those two types of love as fundamental motifs at constant war with each other down through the ages. That inquiry, which certainly has not yet reached its culmination, did not begin until a couple of decades after Ellen White's death. But she had better sources of information than any human theologian, either in the past or in the present. Nowhere in purely human writings will you ever find the marvelous insights that hit the core of the matter with dumfounding precision, and with a common sense understandability which is a blessed relief.

6. The Eros Motif's Merciless War Against Holiness

Small wonder that the pointed names of "freeloveism" and "unholy spiritual love" hit the weak heads and the sentimental hearts like a thunderbolt. For those names make it glaringly clear exactly what it is that happens to be so tragically deficient in the pseudo-religious self-efforts of our world's "spirit"-infatuated humanists: Such men invariably tend to think they have no use for God's radical interference in their lives. They foolishly insist on being "free," free from the One in whom man has all his freedom, if any at all. They sense no vital need of the Spirit of the living God, the Holy One who persists untiringly in His plan of making man holy, also.

Along what road of transforming virtue does He plan that His creature should acquire that state of holiness? Well, along the last road man himself would ever think of as feasible and desirable. That is the road of obedience. So just the narrow path God blesses with His personal and almighty cooperation.

"Sanctification through obedience?", some may repeat head-shakingly. "Aha, I see you are now on your way back to that eternal law of yours again."

Yes, I am on my way back to that eternal law, to the spirit of law-abidingness that never grows outdated because it is forever the blessed attitude of the child of God, the son-Father attitude. Some may think this an awfully tedious and slow-winding itinerary, but it is the one leading to the goal:

Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, a day, but of a lifetime. It is not granted by a happy flight of feeling, but is the result of a constantly dying

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to sin, and constantly living for Christ. Wrongs cannot be righted nor reformation wrought in the character by feeble intermittent efforts. It is only by long, persevering effort, sore discipline, and stern conflict, that we shall overcome. We know not one day how strong will be our conflict the next. So long as Satan reigns, we shall have self to subdue, besetting sins to overcome. So long as life shall last, there will be no stopping-place, no point which we can reach and say, I have fully attained. *Sanctification is the result of lifelong obedience. (AA 560, emphasis supplied).*"

And lest anyone should think that it is by pure accident sanctification is mentioned in so close connection with obedience, let us add at random some other passages from the same author.

True sanctification means perfect love, perfect obedience, perfect conformity to the will of God. We are to be *sanctified through obedience to the truth. Our conscience must be purged from dead works to serve the living God. We are not yet perfect; but it is our privilege to cut away from the entanglements of self and sin, and advance to perfection. Great possibilities, high and holy attainments, are placed within the reach of all. (Ibid. p. 565, emphasis supplied).*

Sanctification "through obedience to the truth," that is Seventh-day Adventist realism. It has a constant war to fight against anti-rational sentimentalism.

"Sanctification does not close the avenues of the soul to knowledge, but expands the mind and inspires it to reach for truth as for hidden treasures" (CT 223). *Truth is a life-changing force. "Truth in the heart cannot fail of having a correcting influence upon the life" (Ibid., 223). "Holiness is not rapture; it is the result of surrendering all to God; it is doing the will of the heavenly Father" (MB, 149). The same word, "rapture" is also*

found in Acts of the Apostle. Again it is used to show what holiness is not. Obviously there is in human beings a special temptation to confuse the concepts here:

Holiness is not rapture: it is an entire surrender of the will to God; it is living by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God; it is trusting God in trial, in darkness as well as in light; it is walking by faith and not by sight; it is relying on God with unquestioning confidence, and resting in his love. (AA 51)" You may safely draw one capital conclusion from all this regarding the rock-bottom philosophy of Seventh-day Adventism: There is no mystifying antinomianism in its attitude toward the sanctified life. The Spirit of Prophecy is never ashamed of speaking about the law. On the contrary, this is a topic dwelt upon, not only with awe and reverence, but also with joy and admiration. In this respect it emulated the enthusiasm of David when he wrote the longest chapter in the whole Bible, the 119th Psalm.

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God calls for men, for those who in His sight will be true. Reform must be brought about in the churches. There is now great need of reinstating in the hearts of men and women and old-time reverence for the ten commandments. Through obedience to these commandments humanity is to be sanctified, that the results of skepticism shall not be strengthened, but that the foundations of our faith shall be manifest, and all the precepts of God's holy law enforced. (*Sons and Daughters of God, 194, emphasis supplied*).

True sanctification is harmony with God, oneness with Him in character. *It is received through obedience to those principles that are the transcript of His character, and the Sabbath is the sign of obedience. He who from the heart obeys the fourth commandment, will obey the whole law. He is sanctified through obedience. (6T 350, emphasis supplied).*

Why do I dwell so emphatically and so lengthily on the topic of sanctification in a review of the mystic current of spiritualism among us in past and present? For two reasons. In the first place, sanctification is insisted upon as an absolute must for the people He is to save into the kingdom, while the same sanctification is what human beings insist on *not* having by any means. In the second place, the very fact that we insist on not being "encumbered" with sanctification, this is what inevitably makes every one of us naturally prone to accept the allurements of pantheist teaching and pantheist practice.

Certainly to linger at the negative elements of this matter overly long is a temptation too, that we have been warned against very strongly (*Counsel to Editors*) There was a time when our ministers were preoccupied by the pantheist ideas of Kellogg. In their public efforts evidently they tended to draw detailed pictures of that attractive human theory of pantheism in front of audiences who had not, as yet, been exposed to that particular allurements at all. This was not a timely forum for the topic, and particularly not the way it was usually handled. That is the context in which the testimony was given "To Editors of our Periodicals" (Letter 179, 1904). At the same time, Ellen White felt an urgent need to be very explicit herself in front of our own people, just with regard to those theories to which they had been so dangerously exposed.

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Is there any reason to be less explicit today in front of our own members, or even large groups of non-Adventists? To many of our contemporaries that humanly attractive aspect of modern mysticism is rather the only thing they do know about. Now the full spectrum of its soul-destroying implications must be solemnly presented to them. But in the midst of it all, the very opposite of this devilish delusion must be presented. And that is the beauty of holiness, the uncompromising sternness of the Spirit our Holy Bible speaks about, and the incomparable happiness coming to those who choose to *obey*.

The plan of sanctification has now entered its ultimate end-time phrase. So today, it is becoming more intimately related than ever to the signal questions of Sabbath and Sanctuary, and, in fact, to every single landmark doctrine of Seventh-day Adventism. It is this gigantic plan of God that the evil one has tried-and is trying- to neutralize ("evaporize") by means of his false Alpha and his false Omega, devices he has had the audacity to introduce in the midst of the church at its most critical moment of history. Please remember then: it is sanctification in terms of a personally sanctified life, and this only, that constitutes the realism capable of ousting spiritualism.

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I have now done my best to explain why the Spirit of Prophecy gave certain more or less mysterious names to this significant category of spiritualism in its end-time phases. But now what about the names "Alpha" and "Omega"? About those you may still have mainly one notion: They are "enigmatic, mysterious, past finding out.." So it is high time, before I finish this little manuscript, that I fulfill my promise to give some kind of explanation, as far as I do have any explanation at all.

A MYSTERY SEEMS TO BE CLEARING UP

Mysticism is a field of investigation studded with crucial questions, a formidable ocean strewn with perilous rocks. You may be studying its development, as I tried to do, all the way from Meister Eckhart in the Middle Ages to our own brother in the faith, John Kellogg, at the beginning of the twentieth century. You may even go far beyond those limits in either direction. In fact, you may concentrate your attention inside or outside the realms of the remnant church. One thing will stare you in the face all the time: the logical crux.

Let me be entirely frank: even the very terms here chosen by the Spirit of Prophecy appeared to me as a problem impossible to solve. How could it be meaningful to speak about an "Alpha" and an "Omega" in this rather negative way?

From the Bible I had gathered the knowledge that those two words are used as descriptions of God Himself, by Himself. As such they certainly do have a hush of the great *mysterium tremendum*. They are awe-inspiring in the utmost degree. But they are certainly not negative, in any way.

Behold He cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: And all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. (Revelation 1:7, 8)

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How then, could the same names be considered appropriate to describe something as helplessly finite and downright despicable as the human aberrations into the labyrinths of demonic fraud and foolish creaturely self-aggrandizement? God alone is worthy of being qualified as the First and the Last. He only is the Self-existent One, the God everlasting. Again the Bible is our source of orientation: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Psalm 90:3).

So definitely God is the only One about Whom it could rightly be said that He is the Beginning and the End. And even that is not entirely right. In fact, it is a miserable understatement. It is an awkward adaptation to human insufficiency, a pitiable effort, on the part of a human vocabulary that is bankrupt, to express the infinitude of God. Properly speaking, to say that God is the Beginning and the End is directly misleading. For God is the one who is characterized by having *no* beginning, *no* end. What we should know as creatures, however, is this at least: He is the very Source of *our* beginning, and He leads us on and on toward a glorious end in the destiny of our lives. That is the "end" in terms of a meaningful goal, a definite purpose (*telos*) rather than a definitive stop. That is why He constantly calls our attention to a decisive juncture of time called the eschaton, the last thing, the day of consummation, the time of the end. That is decisive for us. It is decisive for Him also, for it is inextricably wound up with the Creator's vindication of Himself. The maligned God is washing off His name the ignominy of the slander attached to it by malignant creatures during thousands of years. This is the solemn scene of historic justification in Biblical eschatology. What should the *Necheratsah* (German: Scheidegericht), the Investigative Judgment, the great latter-day Yom Kippur mean if not just that historic restoration of the Sanctuary ("Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the Sanctuary come to its rights" Daniel 8:14). This is the great justification of God's cause as the eternally righteous One. But it so happens that God's cause here coincides with man's cause. When man, by a historical necessity, is pushed down into the valley of crisis and final decision. God's purpose is that man should come out as a victor; that is, he makes up his mind to let Jesus Christ have His great way of justifying him. Justification, exactly like sanctification, happens in stages. It is a historical reality. It is just one of the trends of spiritualism to imagine that there is something unworthy-even downright materialistic-about anything that is dependent on *time* for its realistic happening. It is again pagan idealism, not Biblical realism, which has taught us that our God operates in a world of pure spirit; that is, a world of absolute timelessness and spacelessness. I have tried to show, in *The Maligned God*, with what dexterity the forces of spiritualist deception are trying to introduce their nonsensical dualist philosophy even right into the doctrine of righteousness by faith. Faith is being described as a sort of pure interiority detached from every time-space reality (works).

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This shrewd manipulation I had known for quite a long time already. But what appeared to me like mystification still, was just those terms used by the Spirit of Prophecy relative to the historical events of end-time delusion. How could it happen that great names, like the Alpha and the Omega, which the Bible reserves for the uniquely good One, were here used to designate the ruses of the uniquely evil one?

Then one morning it dawned on me how this might be accounted for. It was on Thursday, the fourteenth of February, 1974. This happened to be the same day about which the South American Division had announced to me something that impressed me as serious and significant.. (I assume the similar announcements from them were made to my colleagues, maybe about other dates) They were having a special prayer band, and on the special day mentioned, my name was to be especially taken up by way of intercession.

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One thing is certain: As I awoke that morning an idea struck my mind making clear and problemless to me what had so far been rather unclear and problematic. I saw that the mystic "Alpha" and the mystic "Omega"-as they had been foretold by God through the Spirit of Prophecy-were simply counterfeits of the genuine. And just those names have their specific sense, in the case of the false as well as in the case of the true. The enemy's attempt is to pervert the very concept God has conveyed to us in His revelation to us through His Son Jesus Christ. We must just hold fast the significance of the "Beginning" and the "End" as focal points.

What does the Alpha stand for in terms of the genuine character distinguishing the Creator from the created ones? He simply is the Beginning, the Originator of all things. That means *creationism*, nothing less. And *what*, in Seventh-day Adventism, directs us backwards in time toward the great fact of creation? The seventh day. Now, what about the "Alpha" of Dr. Kellogg's mysticism? Did it distinguish itself as particularly anxious to fight the spirit of scientism, sweeping like a devouring prairie fire across the civilized world just in those days? I am speaking, of course, about Darwin's theory of the origins and the tremendous impact this had in terms of blotting out God, a personally interfering God, as the age-old Biblical explanation of the "Beginnings." No. Kellogg is on Darwin's side!

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1. Does Pantheism Have Anything in Common with Evolutionism?

There has never been a parallelism more evident and spectacular in human history. What pantheism stands for in theology corresponds exactly to what evolutionism stands for in biological science. The great common denominator is automatism, the most fantastic ideal ever happening among creatures, otherwise endowed with thinking brains and feeling hearts. There is a weird satisfaction in establishing that things happen "all by themselves." They are not created. They just evolve. It is the mysterious nothing spontaneously developing into everything. And that everything has the decent habit, as some people think of decency, of creeping back, just as aimlessly, into the weird Nirvana hole of just blank nothingness again. Evolutionists think they are realists. But they are just spiritualists who are ignorant about their own spiritualism.

Plato's idea has an exact replica in Darwin's species. Just as the spiritualist idealist of pagan philosophy finds the pure idea, the general concept, to be the only reality worthwhile, the only value worthy of eternal survival, so the modern evolutionist finds the general species to be the only value worthy of survival and of being called real in the world of dogmatic biology.

According to creationist philosophy and creationist science, this is widely different. In fact, according to any realistic philosophy having a grain of sound common sense and a grain of spiritual meaningfulness still left in it, the great reality and the great value in life has its foundation in the individual, the concrete being of flesh and bone and blood.

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But what prestige does that specific creature have in the evaluation of an evolutionist the theorist? Its prestige is close to nothing. To him the "real thing," the thing upon which even life itself is said to place a premium, is again that admirable entity: the Species. "Just look at "Mother Nature," says the theorizing (and you might safely say spiritualizing) biologist, "What is *her* obvious attitude toward the individual? She does not care one bit about the survival of the individual. The conservation of the species is her sole concern."

Notice here how elegantly, and with what firm conviction, myths evolve in Western thinking. The fact is, rather, you see, that Nature does whatever she can for the individual. "She," if you insist on the pagan habit of personifying "Nature," instead of coming right out realistically saying *the Spirit of the living God*,-does a marvelous job, fighting against heavy odds, keeping us alive as long as ever possible under the present conditions. What is it that kills you and me? It is sin, a foreign intruder, whom we have permitted to intrude.

Do you see, then, the formidable impact of inveterate pagan dualism even right in the science of life (bio-logy)? Do you feel the icy chill of this ancient dualism-or bridgeless chasm-established by idealists of old and perpetuated by modern scientists who seem to have grown just as callous and merciless as their teachers way back in antiquity. They have all succumbed to Satan's cruel falsehood about an "impassive God" who has no compassion whatsoever with individuals and their aching hearts.

The neutrally observing historian of ideas can only stand back in amazement and marvel at the cocksureness with which that frigid human myth about the "crushing superiority of the species over the individual," could come to be heralded as almost an axiom of scientific research. With what right is here the general value (the pure abstraction, the concept of an invulnerable species) being crowned as "crushingly superior" to the individual one? Is it with the right of philosophy or with the right of natural science? Neither of the two.

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Who has told modern man what nature's sole concern is about the species? In the first place, what do we sophisticated children of a scientific age actually mean when we say "nature"? I wonder if we do not, ever so often, say nature for the simple reason that we are ashamed of saying God. We are just overflowing with words of praise and enthusiasm about all those incredible wonders "nature" performs. But just notice one thing: that terms, in this strangely "euphemistic" sense, is absolutely unknown to the Bible, and also to the Testimonies. In Christianity, you see, no elaborate circumlocutions of that "bashful" kind are ever needed. They are not even allowed. The concept of "Mother Nature" as a sort of "Creator" of all things would only obscure-or explain away-the fact that Jesus Christ is the One who performs all wonders worthy of

our zeal and eloquence, our heartfelt thankfulness. How could any intelligent person be genuinely *thankful* to a general idea, a pure abstraction?

A superficial group of bio-scientists, infatuated with the infinite excellencies they assume to be inherent in the species, seem to imagine that the life of the species here on earth could go on for ever and ever. That is a curious assumption, a foolishly fallacious assumption. For if something has gone wrong with the individuals, that wrong will infallibly assert itself in the species as well, as time passes. Something most serious did go wrong with man. He fell into sin. So he had to die. He became a corruptible being. Immediately the process of death started in him. And of course, exactly the same gradual process of death started in the very life of man "as a species." The species called "man" would have been extinct a long time ago if things had been permitted to have their natural course. It is only due to God's particular intervention in man's favor that mankind has been enabled to survive. As a natural consequence of the self-destructive properties inherent in sin, the human race would have disappeared from the surface of the earth a long time before God had carried out His historical plan of a large-scale vindication. So he had to intervene. The present consummation of God's spectacular plan to save man, and at the same time to vindicate His own name as the perfectly Righteous One, is nothing less than a marvel.

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2. Conclusion Regarding Satan's Plan for the Mystic Alpha

The mysticism introduced by Kellogg's "New Philosophy" had the main purpose of obscuring the concrete reality of a literal Creator of all things in nature, so precisely the historical facts which the celebration of a holy Sabbath was intended to fasten in our minds and hearts.

Do you see the devilish plan here machinated in order to annihilate in us our blessed awareness of the great God of the *beginnings*? Think of what it would have meant to you and me if the forces of evil had managed to reduce our God and Saviour to such an evaporating mist in our minds, a concept so pantheistically rarified that all personal values are bound to die. The Spirit of Prophecy points out very clearly that the pulverization of the Sabbath commandment-and consequently a pulverization of our faith in an almighty Saviour God-would have followed without fail.

Now do we see similar attempts, attempts of the Alpha category, made by men of science in the midst of the church? And do those attempts have any impact in terms of a new attitude toward the prophecies? Do we realize what we virtually say when we call in doubt the significance of an "old-fashioned" Adventist attitude toward the issue of prophetic revelation as a whole? We are simply saying: "Our God is not a God who is all that concerned about specific historical facts, such as concrete chains of prophetic time which have to be fulfilled to the letter. He is not a God of the intervening type, the personally engaged type. So let us grow up and adapt to a new age. Prophecies belong to those things with which we busied ourselves in the childhood days of our denomination. Today we ought to have reached a more mature stage of our development. So let us leave those primitive phases to our pioneers of a distant past."

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Is this the secret reasoning with which we push aside our duty to continue, with the unabated zeal of the pioneers, the scrutiny of the prophecies of the end time, above

all. We may seem to have braced ourselves against Kellogg's pantheistic variety of spiritualism, at the same time as we lend ear most willingly to the infidel suggestions of scientists of a slightly different mold. It was an unfortunate extremism constantly repeating itself in the church, that she either burnt her scientists at the stake or raised them to the pedestal of omniscience and infallibility.

3. The Fatal Effects of Accepting Meaninglessly Long Periods of Biological and Cultural Prehistory

Most geologists and biologists of the world do not seem to feel sorry at all at the evidence they think they find of infinity periods of a "struggle for life" on our planet. Biblically speaking, however, this is bound to be an absolutely meaningless infinitude and an absolutely meaningless struggle. I think we must welcome it as a favorable sign if our own SDA geologists, biologists, and historians feel pangs of apprehension, or at least some serious hesitation, at the moment when they may be facing the *apparent* evidence, at a given moment, of some 100,000 years of life on earth. Why? For a very obvious reason: If "irrefutable facts" around us should one day seem to force us to admit the existence of such a relatively vast period of prehistory, then what about our traditional concept of meaningfulness? I am considering the matter from the viewpoint of that heartaching concern the Bible assures us that our heavenly Father has for His suffering creatures here on earth.

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Let us for a moment evaluate what this means. How long time of fairly well-registered history do historians today reckon, approximately? Not much more than some five thousand years. And what do they see prior to that? Something they call dark prehistory. The adjective "dark" here is not badly chosen. If that "darkness" goes too far back, it very soon begins to be synonymous with a rather meaningless fight and suffering. Do we realize that? If so, then the idea implied will very quickly assume a character just as meaningless as that endlessly protracted "struggle for life" and that "survival of the fittest" which the modern paleontological sciences speak about. There is no theory of godlessness worse than that. Now take that "conservative" figure-as our paleontologists have begun to call it-of some 100,000 years of "demonstrable" life on earth. If you subtract those five thousand years of "known history" from that, how much do you have left of "demonstrably" ongoing prehistory, presumably darker and darker the farther you go back? (And when I here again avail myself of the qualifying word "dark," then you should fairly well be able to guess what qualities I am again thinking of.) What do you think about 95,000 years of that kind of darkness?

If God says that He needed some six thousand years of human history in order to have His plan of salvation develop in the way that can ensure the full vindication of His downtrodden name, downtrodden by angels and men, even then we may feel something like a sting and say: What an awfully long period of time to leave the whole creation "groaning" and "travailing" in pain (Roman 8:22). Still we may bow our heads patiently and reverently, adding: Let Him take His time.

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But what now when that time of "divine experimentation" grows into 100,000 years? And remember, this is what even some men of "our own" dare to call a "conservative figure." When you approach them under conditions of a more confident

mood they will release the opinion that we here have to do with *several* hundred thousand years of "demonstrable life on earth."

How could our human hearts cope with anything as cruel and as tragic as this without our having access to sedatives at least of the magnitude pantheism or some other kind of Nirvana anesthesia has to offer to us? And what next, after we have reluctantly finished by swallowing down those "few hundred thousands of years"? In these matters "a few hundred thousands" seem to have their own mysterious ways of increasing into a corresponding number of millions, and from there into infinity. But now I am arriving at a danger which is threateningly real to your life and mine even in the case where just a few thousand years (say, two or three, -see how modest I am?) are added to what the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy teach:

**4. A Disrespect of Minute Accuracy Regarding the Beginnings,
Affords Precedence for an Exactly Corresponding Disrespect
of Accuracy Regarding Events in the Time of the End**

If you get into the habit of thinking that a few thousand years more or less matters so little as far as the *beginnings* of human history is concerned, you are *eo ipso* dangerously close to the notion that "a few thousand years more or less" at the end of that historic period does not matter so terribly much either. This gradual way is the surest one leading a person right to the shores of liberalist theology. I am now, of course, thinking of the famous (or infamous) idea of the "illusion of the Parousia," as Thorleif Boman sees it, and as Albert Schweitzer used to see it. In both cases an infatuated love of learned abstractions always has caused otherwise intelligent men to spiritualize away the realism which is a *sine qua non* of the Christian religion. The curious thing is, however, that this spiritualism invariably presented itself as so much more "broadminded" than the Biblical realism. Those "broadminded" ones tended to look upon themselves as the only scholarly elite amid a "bunch of illiterate peasants."

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With this fatal trend of spiritualizing away the capital verities of the end time, for instance, precisely through those alluring theories of a "delay of the parousia," you may have guessed that *we have definitely passed from the deception of the Alpha to the deception of the Omega*. He who is not only the Originator but also the Consummator (the fulfillment) of our faith has promised to come literally back to earth to fetch us, that where He is, we may be also.

On that same morning of 1974 which I previously mentioned, a little later, I reached out my hand for the book which that year was the day-by-day manual for morning worships. I read the Spirit of Prophecy text assigned for that same fourteenth day of February. I was reading it aloud to my wife. And what were we to come across in that text? There was a passage about the sonship we have as a result of the message to men about Christ's incarnation. Together we become a family of brothers and sisters in Christ. The incarnation doctrine, our only safeguard against the anti-Christ, is fundamentally at war with the shallow spiritualism, and equally also the shallow materialism, which both raise their scabby heads in the pantheist movement.

Just as the Sabbath is our great highlight of the beginnings, so the doctrine of the Second Coming is the highlight of the theology of the end time. Do you see how literally

the spurious Alpha and the spurious Omega are striving to blot out the very name of *Seventh-day Adventism*?

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Are you aware that from the very beginning there were voices suggesting a cancellation of that name? But the Spirit of Prophecy said NO. In other words, God said NO. He wanted just that name. Why? Because the whole message to the remnant was epitomized in that name. Today, as well, there are people who feel that a "more ecumenical name" would be better. The first part of the name we now have, the "Seventh Day," stresses, not what "all Christians have in common," but rather, what a "peculiar sect" insists upon. This is their spurious argument against the first part of the name.

And now, what are the arguments brought up today against the second element of our name, that of "Adventism"? "In the earlier days of the history of our denomination that name may have been good enough," they say. "We could still manage to identify ourselves with it. But today there is a new delay of the parousia (the increasing period of time having elapsed since 1844)". This, allegedly, makes the term "Adventist" a rather "poor concept of identification." Did you ever meet a more flimsy argument?

This is the tragic trend Peter warns against, the sophistry for those saying: "Where is the promise of His coming?" (2 Peter 3:4, ff). Of course, that trend has been tragic enough in Christendom all through the subsequent centuries. It simply made Christians fail to realize that in practice the coming of the Lord is as close to every man as the day of his death, or any day when the sand runs out of the hourglass of His special time of probation. But more tragic than ever is that spurious doctrine of the "delay of the parousia" at a time when the world as a whole has come to its end in a demonstratively historic way. Poor theologians who at a time like this will still be teaching the myth theory about "the failure of the parousia." And poor parishioners who will still be accepting that kind of a myth precisely at a time when He, the great Omega of realistic Biblical eschatology, Jesus Christ, is literally appearing in the clouds of heaven.

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If the spurious Omega is a philosophy attempting, by degrees-and through various maneuvers of eliminating one end-time prophecy after the other, just spiritualizing them away with the sophisticated dexterity of a supper-academic elite, to simply evaporate the whole Advent, then what worse thing could ever happen to Adventism? Adventism without an Advent, what novel type of pure ghost is that?

5. Is Vain Intellectualism Creeping into SDA Schools?

Christ's words in Matthew 23:5-12 are a timely warning against certain forms of human self-centeredness quite deeply rooted in every one of us. For it the Alpha was nourished by a spirit of intellectualism and proud self-dependence, scholarliness without God then certainly the Omega is not less efficiently brought into position of destructive attack by that very same spirit. It is the spirit of humanist self-glorification:

All their works they do for to be seen of men: They make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feast, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi."

"Doctor, Doctor," is the striking rendering found in a modern Hungarian version. That is exactly the way "Rabbi, Rabbi" should be translated in this case, order to render exactly the meaning of Christ's words for people in our environment today. They stand for something like: "Most Learned Master Teacher."

Jesus adds: "But be not ye called Rabbi: for One is your Master [Teacher], even Christ, and all ye are brethren." Please notice the contrasting alternatives: Doctor, Doctor, versus Brother, Brother!

I once used to think in my youthful ignorance that mainly institutions of the *world-*and in some *limited areas* of the world-were infected by the vain habit of "declining one's titles," as a French expression aptly describes it; that is, repeating them vain gloriously on all occasions and in all possible forms, starting with the nominative and ending with the ablative, as a grammar student is required to do. Only the purpose is a different one in the modern intellectualist's case. It is to feel assured that his public has been duly impressed by every facet of his learnedness.

Would it be fair to say that the intellectualistic distinction between "Doctor So-and-So" and "Mr. So-and-So" is just a "European phenomenon limited to "wordly" environments only? I never had any doubts that it had deep roots in my own dear Europe.

A friend of mine once had to approach a certain professor in a German university. My friend knew the customs of "good" behavior. So he was very careful to address that personality as "Herr Dr. Schmidt." But the professor corrected my friend most severely: "Nicht Dr Schmidt, bitte, Ich bin *Dr.-Dr. Schmidt.*" *The poor student had failed to point out that the scholar he was talking to had two doctorates, not just one.*

I do not want to infer that France, another country in which I have been living for some time, is necessarily free from such intellectualism. But I recall a convention arranged some years ago for university graduates of our two European divisions. I was asked to give one of the lectures. I availed myself of the opportunity to pay some due homage to our generous French host on that occasion, by way of introduction to my topic. The "problem" of public address, of the kind I have here mentioned, happens to be practically unknown in France. The man you meet may be a member of l'Academie Francaise, or he may be a garbage collector in the streets. He is always addressed in the same way,-simply *Monsieur*. I feel France is thus blessed with a particular degree of intellectual democracy after all, thanks to this tradition. We cannot deny that the great French Revolution did have some wonderful ideals, for instance, just those of equality and brotherliness. Are we as a denomination in danger of forgetting those? Perhaps some kind of experience, just as shaking as a revolution, is necessary in order to remind us of our own best traditions.

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In my address, at least I did feel moved to express my gratitude for the privilege of staying in a country in which forms of public greeting were as simple and democratic. I need not tell you that our French brethren were far from offended by my words of appreciation. As I already mentioned, however, there were also some other nations

represented in my audience. There were Americans, Do you think they all enjoyed my remarks on the Dr.-Dr. (Rabbi-Rabbi) topic with equal wholeheartedness? I am afraid not.

Now please permit me to give you a wider background of my personal experience, as regards the subject I have dared to bring up in connection with the mystic Omega. I taught in a Norwegian SDA College for about ten years. During that period of time I happened to be the only teacher in that school who had completed a university education. (In fact, I was hardly called to teach there *because* of my education, but rather *in spite* of that. Our brethren in those days obviously had a somewhat different way of evaluating things. And gradually I am beginning to realize more fully that their old way was not at all so foolish as it may now appear.)

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First, I should here assure you: in that old mission school, as far as titles are concerned, I was just Brother So-and-So, like any other worker on the campus. Another title was never imagined or dreamt of in that environment. After those first ten years, however, it so happened that I was away from the school for some years. And when I returned, I discovered that in the meantime some changes had taken place. During my absence a couple of new teachers had been hired. They, too, happened to have a completed university education. The first time I now heard my name called over the loudspeaker system of the office, I had a surprising experience: *Would "Lector Johnsen" please come to the office!"*

"Lector Johnsen," I wondered,-that certainly sounded rather strange in this old milieu. Well, I soon had to establish the historical fact that our administration personnel had found it appropriate-presumably in accordance with the "increased status" of a progressing school, to abandon the old form of address of Brother So-and-So." Instead of that outdated "ecclesiastical brotherhood," we had now got something I was inclined to call an "intellectual caste system." Our teachers had officially been divided into two separate groups, very similar to the ones you know quite well from, for instance, our American colleges and universities of the present day: on the one hand there are those addressed as "Doctor So-and-So," and on the other hand, the "Misters So-and-So." In other words, the "gulf fixed" between those who have had the good fortune to "complete their education" and those who must, sad to say, be labeled as "*not* having completed their education."

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I immediately went to the office superintendent, inquiring why this remarkable distinction had been deemed necessary. Here something quite interesting and important should be noted; I have observed a similar phenomenon on various occasions: It is not necessarily always the teachers who take the initiative to introduce those watertight bulkheads that seem destined to divide a faculty into two inexorably separate parts. Sometimes it is, rather, a more neutral category of people, perhaps such who have no academic degrees at all themselves, or not even the personal ambition to acquire them. But obviously, they do have an immeasurable appreciation of their presumed value as an efficient means of boosting up the prestige of schools which do not otherwise suffer from any exaggerated amount of popular prestige.

Now, of course, I had to admit at one that there might be every good reason to increase the academic worthiness of our schools, and also to improve its general image

in the public mind. I may as well admit that if I were to apply for a position demanding a certain degree or quality I might possess relevant to the post in question. This is realistic business. It is a matter of communication, having obvious value both for me and for the institution I want to serve. So there would certainly be a lot to praise and approve in the very attitude our office personnel had manifested. At the same time, however, I had to point out to them, clearly and emphatically, that in my particular case, the change of things they had established meant a serious problem rather than an actual improvement. In fact, if I was to go on feeling at home in that school, the innovation they had devised, with the very best of intentions, no doubt, would have to disappear. And I was confident that hardly any faculty member would seriously disagree with me. For any teacher's true well-being as a colleague among colleagues, something was bound to be of far greater significance than any imagined increase in individual or collective honor,-namely, a democratic and true brotherly relationship toward one's fellow workers. We could all get along perfectly well without those nice titles, as long as there were far more important things at stake.

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It should be inserted, by the way, that I had a particularly weighty argument in my arsenal by that time. A strange experience has happened to me in almost every SDA school in which I have had the privilege of teaching (in more than half a dozen countries over the years): There always seemed to be some teachers having practically no university education to speak of, and still distinguishing themselves as conspicuously superior to us "learned one," both with regard to scholarly knowledge and the ability to teach. There will be a sad day for SDA education when those "autodidacts" may be looked upon as superfluous. So far they still assert themselves strongly in a number of schools. My question in our present context was: How could I bear the inconsistency of being pointed out as superior to such fellow teachers, every time a person addressed us, separately, or side by side?

Elementary pedagogical insight will also have its evident arguments: Why should we, in front of our students, tear down the respect they should have for their teachers, by reducing the latter to a sort of second-rate make-shift personnel by actually saying something like this: "For that teacher over there we have no better title than just "Elder." That means: he is far from the ideal of this school. He is not really what you students are entitled to claim in terms of expert teaching. He still has a long way to go before he can get up to the level of this teacher over here, Dr. So-and-So." Students are not dumb. They catch the implied ideas behind the words very quickly.

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Well, you say, should we not use any titles whatsoever then, except in our dealings with worldly authorities? On the contrary, I do admit the usefulness of certain titles on relevant occasions, even right on the campus. What could be more informative, and therefore useful, than saying to a student, perhaps a newcomer: Go to Dean So-and-So, or Principal So-and-So. Or: This is the office of Professor So-and-So, or Pastor So-and-So. All these titles are meaningful in the sense that they do tell something essential about the profession, the practical function of such-and-such a person. They convey to you some information of vital importance about his everyday life, and the special capacity in which he may enter you life as a fellowman.

But here I am concerned about a title of a fairly different order. I would be surprised if you have not bumped into the problem areas, or the awkward situations, of which it is pregnant. I am speaking about the title of "Dr. So-and-So," -not Dr. in the sense of physician, for that too, would imply a concrete profession, the very mission in life of the person thus referred to, so a definitely meaningful and information-providing title. No, no. What I am here speaking about is "Doctor" in the sense of Ph.D., Philosophiae Doctor. What meaningfulness or mission in life does that contain? I do not deny that it has its meaning and its mission at the moment when I (or my employer) hand in an application to some authority or any office appreciating just that degree of learning. But here I am concerned with the matter in terms of that "Dr.-Dr.-Dr." we mentioned a moment ago, so a quite audible roll of the drums, whirling in the air, every time when a person of such excellency is addressed. What concrete information does that provide? Practically nothing positive whatsoever. Whether the degree he earned was a doctorate concentrating its research on the guttural consonants of some dialect in the Caucasian mountains, or a dissertation dealing with the computed prices of vacation cabin lots on the moon around the year 3000, on this point nothing is told.

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The only thing that title tell-in fact, the only thing it was ever intended to tell-is the precious news that the person concerned has reached the pinnacle of erudition,-in some line or other,-an erudition existing for its own sake, as it were: "honoris causa," if you know what that stands for. You ought to know. And some SDA universities ought to know what a doctorate "honoris causa" really means. It means "for honor's sake," just that and nothing else. It is a doctorate for the glorification of a human person, and not a single bit beyond that.

I am arriving at my main reason for choosing that title of "Dr.-Dr.," with the peculiar emphasis given to it in our present milieu, as the most striking symbol I could ever hit upon to represent just the ever-increasing vanity inherent in a disruptive dualistic culture, a paganly idealistic and hopelessly spiritualistic culture. For notice: that person so insistingly pointed out as a "Dr. So-and-So" has precisely the rate distinction of being some kind of "Doctor in general." He is "Doctor" in a most curiously abstract fashion, something obviously rather detached from any concrete practical reality, from any profoundly human sense (let alone a Christian and spiritual sense). The way the title is used, and reduplicated, should be evidence enough that it serves no meaningful purpose. If it has any goal whatsoever, it must be that of setting one group of people off against another group.

Perhaps the worst thing you could see, in that respect, is when the phenomenon of "Dr.-Dr." ("Rabbi, Rabbi") manages to wiggle its way right into our Sabbath School and church service bulletins: After Mr. So-and-So has offered prayer, Dr. So-and-So will preach the sermon. How does that sound in your ears?

Or did you ever notice what is referred to by some advertising campaigns as a great reason why you should choose this or that college for your "alma mater"?: The percentage of Ph.D.'s there is larger than in any of the others.

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But what about the old phenomenon of "Brother So-and-So" then. To what obscure corner of the earth has he--poor fellow--been deported? Of course, we do still

come across the rare vestiges of his existence in some "archaic" letter from some hoary secretary in the GC: "Dear Brother N.N."

On some of our SDA college campuses there seems to be just two alternatives left: Either you are a "Dr. So-and-So"; that is, you have "arrived," the great objective of your life has been reached. Or you are still just a deplorable "Mr. So-and-So"; that is, you have not "arrived."

The weird ideal of this splitting dualism is efficiently inculcated on the mind of any teachable student. He learns his lesson, no mistake: The thing really worthwhile in life is to be a "Dr. So-and-So." You must climb to the top of the academic ladder, earn the precious right to be addressed in that special way. Only then can you feel sure you have entered the land of endless bliss. Only then can you afford to relax, settle down to some useful service.

Are we in the process of losing our sound senses, of being haunted by a terrible nightmare? Permit me to give you a glimpse of my first impressions on arriving at the campus of one of our largest colleges in America some years ago. I had been called to the post of Professor in German. Some office workers whose desks I naturally had to pass on that occasion puzzled me a little. They seemed to be actually uneasy about something. I understood later that almost every newcomer on the faculty caused them the same awkward predicament: How could they find out, preferably without asking directly, whether the new teacher had a doctorate or not. For evidently it was looked upon as something very close to a mortal sin to address a new man as Mr. So-and-So if, actually, he did not at all deserve that "humiliating depreciation." Such treatment of visiting scholars would almost appear to be a valid reason for dismissing the offender from his service in the office. I was glad I could set that team of faithful personnel at ease. In my case they could be entirely reassured. I would not take any actions against them even if they committed the misdemeanor of calling me Mr. Johnsen without my actually deserving it. Moreover, as I had come to look upon it--and I did hope I had understood my English fairly well--being called "Mr." did not that imply an infinity honor? I had always thought this meant I had been pointed out as a gentleman. So, from a strictly civil point of view, what more could any man expect? On the other hand, I went on in my candid plea, if they themselves were Adventists, and if they thought they could accept me, too, as one, then I would be still happier to hear them call me Brother Johnsen.

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I think we did have some entirely irregular and anonymous "Brother So-and-So" club started at that time,- and for all I know a "club" like that may still be going on even today with its stubbornly archaic speech forms, just as the Norwegian school I mentioned still appears to have loudspeakers that persist in saying, "Will Brother So-and-So please come to the office." And this in spite of the fact that almost every teacher there by now has "completed his education."

I remember one special colleague of mine in a school of ours in the States. For a long time he managed to keep me at a certain distance, thanks to his rigid and unflinching "Dr. So-and-So." But then finally one day we had a most cordial conversation together. We finished by revealing to each other things we had never thought of mentioning before, namely, what true feats of service each one of us had the heartfelt desire to be able, someday, to perform for the Lord. At last my colleague exclaimed: "Oh, how glad

I am that we could speak about these things together, Brother Johnsen." That unexpected greeting of "Brother" on that day went right to my heart like a promise of new friendship, a warm handclasp of hearty brotherliness.

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But what, then, has caused the disappearance of that time-honored title of Christian fellowship handed down to us as a precious legacy, not only from our pioneers in the Advent movement, but as a tradition older than the church fathers themselves? I have tried to ask some students on our campuses why *they* are so careful to avoid this form of address. Some will say openly, "It is just that long tradition that repels us as the 'bad thing' about it. We cannot be that old-fashioned today. Such obsolete phrases as 'Brother So-and-So' simply do not seem to fit into the twentieth-century language; for remember," they will give as a reason, "we are here in a publicly accredited American college. We are not an isolated group any longer. What if some non-Adventist should happen to be around overhearing the talk? What would *he* think if we started speaking about our "brethren"? Do we not look peculiar enough in the eyes of the world, even without those out-of-date features?"

Well, I do not doubt for a moment that new developments are creating new problems, some of them even sincere problems, for our students, and for all the rest of us. And I am not forgetting our administrators. What problems do *they* have, causing *them* to drop the "medieval" forms of address we hardly see surviving any more, even in more intimate groups? Is all this just sound sign of modern adaptation? Or is it a symptomatic trait of a gradual downhill process, a process in our very lives, of general secularization? Is there a trend which could be called the "dechristianization of Seventh-day Adventism"?

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Or could any other and less alarming reasons be produced for our increasing failure to proclaim, with the childlike openness of our forefathers, that joyous fellowship of belonging to a peculiar group of Christian brotherhood? Personally, I would very much like to find some mitigating circumstances to account for even the fact that we seem to be most disturbingly "Dr.-Dr." conscious people in the world.

From my first Adventist college experience in America I happened to come to one of the most famous university campuses in the country, a school counting a dozen Nobel prizes among its faculty members. I asked a lady in the reception office if I could meet a department head (a really distinguished scholar in his field). She spoke to the man and then laid down the receiver, saying smilingly: "Mr. N.N. is waiting for you in his office, Mr. Johnsen."

I was dumfounded. Not because of the appellation, "Mr. Johnsen." I ought to be able to take that with fair equanimity, particularly on a foreign campus. But what about "Mr." N.N.,-the famous scholar! How on earth was it this lady had had the boldness of expressing herself with reference to him? Did she not have any decent reverence for the lofty peaks of expert scholarliness?

I soon found out that simply every man on that campus was addressed as Mr. So-and-So. What a discovery! And I was even to find out that a whole group of other highly selective universities had similar habits. What a shock to me, an ignoramus,

accustomed, so far, only to the code of manners prevailing in self-conscious colleges belonging to a denomination which some people still describe as a "cult."

After this eye-opening experience I seriously had to ask myself the disagreeable, but rather pertinent question: Are we as a people internally disrupted by some ominous kind of inferiority complex which others have overcome a long time ago? Is that the true reason why we insist on "declining our titles" (the whole grammatical gamut down from nominative to ablative, just repeating our dear little "Dr.-Dr." glory in all fashions and forms)?

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In one way that explanation might be a comparatively promising one, or at least have some tinge of attenuating circumstances. For then there might be some hope that things would change for the better after a while; that is, once we have finally grown up, leaving behind us our "childhood diseases." A time might come when we sense no more need of laboriously boosting up our "lacking dignity" as SDA educators by maneuvers of sheer vanity. But his, too, is probably a dubious way of looking at our problem. Should we not, rather, go to the Bible, and try to find out there: Why are we so furiously anxious to "receive honor one of another"? (John 5:44)

We do not need honor, there is no doubt that that. No man in this world (or in any other) can live without honor, without a certain vital glory. The whole Scripture testifies to that fact. The Question is just this one: Where should our desperately needed honor come from, the only glory that avails? It must come from God. For we are sinners and thus have precisely "come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). And now, to whom will God give honor? "Them that honor *me* I will honor" (1 Samuel 2:30). So let us have this one great concern then: to honor God. Thus all our personal honor problems will be taken care of most effectively. We shall have an ample supply of just that one great thing we would otherwise be lacking: the honor of the really honorable One.

But then some other definite change will take place in us: We must become children again. When I taught in our school in Austria (Bogenhofen) once upon a time, I had a rare experience of those heartily childlike ones. By all the students I was immediately addressed as "Uncle Johnsen." The title my wife received was, of course, "Aunt Johnsen." Our principal was just "Uncle Steiner," and his wife was "Aunt Steiner." Humanly speaking, I never felt more profoundly honored in any school. To me these were titles of human warmth. They impressed me as truly meaningful. They were definitely distance-eliminating. It takes a real child to overcome the distances. It takes a child to realize the warmth and meaningfulness of both fatherhood and brotherhood.

Do you now understand the great objection I have to our present use of the title "Doctor" in its relentlessly intellectualistic sense: It will always tend to be humanly cold and distance-creating. It is too "adult" for the child of God.

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There is one ominous feature in our church today causing me more serious apprehension than maybe anything else. That is, the senseless scramble among our youth for degrees of the highest learning, acquired in thoroughly paganized institutions, brooding places of infidelity. And this is followed up by an equally senseless uncriticalness on the part of administrators who immediately welcome them into positions in which they may exert a fateful impact on the young lives entrusted to their

tutorship. What is being fostered is a generation of sophisticated super-adults. And we know the Laodicean characteristics of that generation. It is being neither cold nor hot. It is this religious indifference which causes us to be entirely blind in our self-conceit. We think we are rich and well clothed, whereas in reality we are utterly poor and naked.

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It evidently takes a child to have the realism of realizing the fact of nakedness. That is what the Danish author H.C. Andersen has demonstrated in his famous little story, KEISERENS NYE KLAER (*The Emperor's New Clothes*). *All the grown-ups have got into the weird game of imagining that the idea of clothes is absolutely equal to the clothes themselves.* In the whole empire it has become a taboo to acknowledge-and particularly to mention-that the emperor is just stark naked. But then finally the child enters upon the scene of the story.. And suddenly the plain truth is realized. It takes the natural courage of a child to speak up about a nakedness which an entire community seems to have agreed upon denying.

Hopefully the Lord will once more speak to us through the mouths of babes and sucklings, helping us to see that we, the "most learned ones," are stark naked. It may then finally be made plain that the "freedom" they claim ("Academic Freedom" is the great word) is just an Eros type of freedom, having nothing whatsoever in common with the freedom as it is in Agape, that is, in Jesus Christ.

Once the sky clears up again after the vanishing fog of "Omega" mysticism, we shall know that the sonorous titles of academic glory which our false inferiority complexes caused us to worship, was nothing but a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.

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