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Lest We Forget

“We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.” LS196

A Second Look at—

THE ADVENTIST PIONEERS

which thy fathers have set.” Prov. 22:28

by Fred Bischoff

The Seventh-day Adventist church came out of the larger Advent movement, whose message was a shaking for the Christian church at large. The revival of interest in the second coming of Christ was a clear fulfillment of Bible prophecy, being the development of a connected path of light that was shining brighter and brighter since the reformation of the 16th century. The prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, anchored firmly in history (the past fulfillment of portions of these prophecies), were leading in one clear direction—the events surrounding the return of Christ to this earth. Each line of prophecy in both of these prophetic books led the Bible student to the same conclusion, the end of the world order in the establishment of God’s kingdom on earth. The time in which these Advent believers found themselves living was reckoned to be “the hour of His judgment” which at long last had come, based specifically on the time prophecy of Daniel 8, understood in the light of Daniel 7. Thus they proclaimed the message of the angel of Rev. 14:6, 7 in the context of the time stated in Dan. 8:14, “unto two thousand three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.”

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Editor’s Note: We apologize for the delay in publishing these issues. In order to continue the numbering and dating of the volumes, we are continuing in sequence following those previously published, although the dates are well in the past from the present.

THE IMPORTANCE OF

“Remove not the ancient landmark,



Editor's Note



For 10 volumes *Lest We Forget* has highlighted our past by reviewing the importance of our Seventh-day Adventist pioneers, those “who knew what it cost to search for the truth as for hidden treasure, and who labored to lay the foundation of our work.”¹ Each issue covered the life and work of those whom God used to contribute something to this movement.

Again and again in *Lest We Forget* we have shown the providence of God as through faulty individuals He poured light from heaven that scattered the darkness of ages of apostasy and began the preparation of a people to meet Christ at His second coming. As we have recounted, some of these individuals did not stay with the movement in its continued development, and in its wilderness wanderings as the time of preparation was prolonged by unbelief.

In brief, though to this point we have retold our history through the experiences of those people God used, we can now show how these stories are simply the interweaving of three main threads: (1) the messages that embodied these truths, (2) the landmark truths revealed in Scripture at that time, and (3) the ministries that were developed to carry the messages. All three of these have outlived the individuals who were first involved with their development. And all three God will use to finish the work begun.

With this new volume we change the approach of reviewing our history. Instead of mainly biographical sketches with accompanying contributions, we will present an ordered recounting of the landmarks that were discovered at that time. We plan to do this in the following two ways: reviewing the historical setting for the discovery of the landmarks, and republishing what the pioneers themselves wrote on the landmarks.

First we will give an overview of our history from the 1830's through the early 1900's to give the setting for Ellen White's statements that not only identified these landmarks but also called for the witness of the pioneers to be republished.² These next issues of *Lest We Forget* will serve to summarize from various viewpoints the past 40 issues of the periodical. Rather than producing a standard index, we will endeavor to summarize the information on the pioneers we previously published by the following:

1. Thumbnail sketches of each that will include the reference to the published issue(s) of *Lest We Forget* that covered their lives, with the location of their timeline; their background prior

to 1844; their experience after “the passing of the time”; the landmark they were used of God to introduce; and the service they rendered to the developing church

2. Family details, that is, to whom they were married, and the children they had
3. A master timeline table that integrates all of the dates mentioned in *Lest We Forget* into one historical flow
4. A “Landmark Family Tree” which shows who gave which Bible truth to whom
5. Lessons from the mistakes of the pioneers, as we come to see them as “men of like passions”
6. References used throughout the first 40 issues of *Lest We Forget*, providing good resources for further study

Following that extensive review, we plan future issues in which we will let the pioneers themselves “speak ... by reprinting”³ what they wrote on the identified landmarks.

It should be evident that our commission for this work is the clear instruction from the pen of Ellen White. We make no apology for seeing and tracing the core meaning and thread of our history as revealed to us by God through her writings.

As we began the original issue of this periodical with an article entitled “The Importance of the Pioneers,”⁴ so we make this transition by considering in greater detail how important they were, in light of the Bible truths and experience to which God was leading them.

¹ White, Ellen, “The Work for This Time,” *RH05/25/1905*, paragraph 21

² These statements came in the last 30 years of her life. As explained elsewhere, they cluster mostly around 1905.

³ White, Ellen, “A Warning Against False Theories,” *MS62*, 1905, paragraph 19

⁴ *Lest We Forget*, Vol. 1, No. 1, First Quarter 1991, page 1



THREE INTERWOVEN THREADS

Three threads woven together tell the history of Seventh-day Adventists:

(1) the messages God sent from heaven to this earth to be proclaimed by these people everywhere

(2) the landmark truths they discovered in the Scripture messages, and

(3) the ministries these dedicated people were providentially lead to de-

Messages

The messages that contained the landmark truths were, in historical order with approximate dates,

- (1) *the First Angel's Message (1831),*
- (2) *the Second Angel's Message (early summer 1844),*
- (3) *the Midnight Cry Message (late summer 1844),*
- (4) *the Third Angel's Message (Oct. 1844),*
- (5) *the Laodicean Message (1852), and*
- (6) *the Loud Cry Message (1888).*

Commandments of God in the Most Holy Place, with the Sabbath glowing in the heart of the Law. Thus the Third Angel's Message was sounded which brought the Sabbath and the Non-immortality of the wicked to the main stream. Amazingly neglected in all of this was the Faith of Jesus. The Laodicean Message came to affirm this landmark (the

Landmarks

The term "landmark" was used in 1889¹ to describe the Bible truths God revealed in the early years. From this statement we see seven interrelated landmarks:

- (1) *the Second Coming of Christ,*
- (2) *the Cleansing of the Sanctuary,*
- (3) *the Three Angels' Messages,*
- (4) *the Commandments of God,*
- (5) *the Faith of Jesus,*
- (6) *the Seventh-day Sabbath, and*
- (7) *the Non-immortality of the Wicked.*

Ministries

The ministries, or methods, the Advent people were led to develop and use, in order to carry the messages which contained the landmarks, were in order of development:

- (1) *Meetings (public and private),*
- (2) *Publishing,*
- (3) *Organization,*
- (4) *Health, and*
- (5) *Education.*

velop in order to carry the messages to the world. Our history shows how the pioneers dedicated their lives to these messages, landmarks, and ministries.

Interwoven

The movement began in a study and focus on the Second Coming of Christ, proclaimed under the First Angel's message, with the Second Angel's message and the Midnight Cry message coming in the months just prior to the passing of the time. Intermingled with, and adjacent to, this major current were other smaller currents destined to join it in their full power, namely the Sabbath and the Non-immortality of the wicked. After the passing of the time, the light of the Cleansing of the Sanctuary in heaven began to shine, which revealed the

gold most clearly embodies it), but the work was not accomplished. Finally "the fresh message" of the Loud Cry came to join with "the past message" and proclaim the "faith of Jesus."² Understanding these events and what followed is of exceeding importance for us to grasp our identity and mission as a people.

How were these messages to reach the world? From the earliest days of the advent movement, the light had been shared in public and private meetings.³ This method of spreading these truths, of evangelizing the world, will be used to the end. At the same time that the messages were being proclaimed and studied more deeply, the other ministries of the church were developed as other vehicles for the messages.

The Advent message from its earliest beginnings had used the printed page to proclaim the news of Christ's soon coming, with many periodicals and tracts

sharing the prophecies pointing to 1843-1844. Some years after the passing of the time, Ellen White had a vision November 1848 of the need to publish the light of the third angel's message, and that it would grow into streams of light encircling the globe. In July 1849 the publishing work began, and grew through the 1850's, with much activity centered around it.⁴ This ministry, which would include the various ways the published works are distributed and sold, is still a major way the messages are carried to the world.

Due to the needs of the publishing work and other property used by the Sabbath-keeping Adventists, the importance of organization became apparent, and was discussed. Ellen White was given instruction to rebuke those opposing it. Organizing began in 1860 (First General Conference gathering, name chosen), continuing in 1861 (SDA Publishing Association organized, first local conference organized, Michigan), and in 1863 (General Conference organized).⁵ This ministry still exists to facilitate the spread of the messages, and in addition to overseeing the general work of the church, also functions to bring godly order to all ministries.

Due to the major health needs of the workers, Ellen White had a vision in 1863, and began to share light on physical laws. Though some had been temperance promoters from the earliest years of the Advent message, and though Ellen White was shown some of the truthfulness of these positions as early as 1848, the breadth of understanding as well as practice had not been part of the movement. In 1865 she wrote her first six health articles on "Disease and Its Causes," the same year James White had his first stroke. She had another major vision on healthful living later that year, and yet another one early the next year. The General Conference session in 1866 voted a resolution on health reform, and the Western Health Reform Institute was established, the first of many health facilities.⁶ Unhealthful living cut short the lives of more than one of the pioneers.⁷ This ministry, the right arm of the message, is still the means by which doors are opened and the body, soul, and spirit are unitedly sanctified in preparing people for Christ's coming. The ability to grasp and experience the spiritual truths of the messages is very dependent upon clear minds that come from carefully following the laws of the body.

Due to the needs to educate the young people to become workers, schools were begun to teach the mes-

sages as part of the curriculum. The first school was established in 1872, becoming Battle Creek College two years later. Another school was begun in New England in 1882, with many other schools being established in the following decades.⁸

As stated before, all three of these, the messages, the landmarks, and the ministries, have outlived the individuals first used by God with their development. Thus as important as the pioneers were, we miss their importance if we do not grasp all elements of these three threads. God is a personal God, and deals with persons, not just principles, proclamations, and programs. But these three areas are not distractions from the most important thing. Rather they are the means to convey the truth about what type of personal God our God really is. It is in this way these seemingly impersonal threads are alive with personal meaning. In fact, our significance as individuals is grasped and appreciated to the degree that we die to our selves and enter into proclaiming His glory as entrusted to us in these threads. Again let us be reminded, God will use all three to finish the work begun under the pioneers, until the entire earth is lightened with His glory.

God is the Master Weaver. He is producing a beautiful tapestry that when finished will proclaim His glory, self-sacrificing love, to the world. We each can be involved in carrying threads of light through this sacred work. We are all in the fabric, either light bearers, or sadly carrying dark threads which will only highlight by contrast the light and glory. May we catch His light and carry it!

¹ MS13, 1889 (see *CWE30* or *EGW 1888 Materials*, p. 518); the historical background for this manuscript, and an analysis of the paragraph listing these points will be examined elsewhere.

² RH03/18/1890, "Morning Talk" Feb. 4, 1890, (edited from *Ms 9*, 1890); (see *EGW 1888 Material*, p. 546)

³ The majority of people covered in *Lest We Forget* past issues were involved in public meetings. See for example *Lest We Forget*, Vol. 6, No. 1 which highlights M. E. Cornell, an early SDA evangelist.

⁴ See article "Streams of Light, The Publishing Work," *Lest We Forget*, Vol. 5, No. 3, p. 3ff. Specific individuals involved in the SDA publishing work covered in *Lest We Forget* past issues include Roswell F. Cottrell,

A Second Look at—
THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ADVENTIST PIONEERS

(Continued from page 1)

Landmark

Second Coming of Christ

Message

First Angel's Message

Lest We Forget

William Miller (Vol. 1, No. 2, Principles of Bible interpretation; Second Coming)

Joseph Bates (Vol. 1, No. 3, Second Coming)

Charles Fitch (Vol. 2, No. 3, Second Coming)

George Storrs (Vol. 1, No. 4, Second Coming)

James and Ellen White (Vol. 5, Nos. 1-4; the Whites were involved in all of the landmarks)

Message

Second Angel's Message

Midnight Cry

Lest We Forget

Introduction (Vol. 1, No. 1, Second Angel's Message, Midnight Cry)

Joseph Bates (Vol. 1, No. 3, Midnight Cry)

Charles Fitch (Vol. 2, No. 3, Second Angel's Message)

S. S. Snow (Vol. 3, No. 2, Midnight Cry)

Ellen White (Vol. 5, Nos. 1, 2, 4, Testimony of Jesus)

The clarity of the Biblical evidences was augmented by the manifest moving of the Spirit, as the message swelled announcing the imminent coming of Christ. At first, the time of His return was expected to occur between the spring of 1843 and the spring of 1844. After this period passed without His return, opposition to the message mushroomed. The Advent believers perceived such opposition as a clear sign that time had come to proclaim the message of the next angel of Rev. 14, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen" (vs. 8). And with a new understanding of the tarrying of the bridegroom in the Matt. 25 parable, the announcement of the coming took on the urgency and power of "the midnight cry" as they realized the Jewish Day of Atonement would occur that year on October 22. But with the passing of that precise time when Christ was expected to come, the Advent movement itself was shaken, with only a "little flock" continuing in the path illumined by the light of the midnight cry. The Lord in His great mercy sent a precious message through the gift of prophecy to "the Advent people" to direct their eyes to Jesus.

This shaking that came to Christianity at large and to the Advent movement in particular resulted from the prophecies that unfolded an understanding of the sanctuary and its teachings about God's dealing with sin, particularly the final stages. It was seen that the time prophecies pointed to the final fulfillment of the events foreshadowed in the Day of Atonement, events centered in the "true tabernacle"¹ in heaven, but decidedly connected to this earth as well. While the second coming of Christ to this earth occurs during this Day, it was not the first event of this Day. Of necessity Christ's coming was to be preceded by the preparation of a people to pass through the events leading up to and including meeting Him.

¹ Heb. 8:2

Landmark

Cleansing of the Sanctuary

Lest We Forget

Hiram Edson (Vol. 3, No. 1, Sanctuary),

O. R. L. Crosier (Vol. 4, No. 3, Sanctuary)

This preparatory work was comprehended in the prophecy of the sanctuary being cleansed,¹ and was directed from the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary. It had been symbolized by the cleansing work of the Day of Atonement given Israel at Sinai. Its fulfillment would be the final application of the blood of the sacrifice of Christ that had been offered earlier. This closing work would be followed by the banishing of the scapegoat, understood to represent Satan. It was the message regarding this cleansing, and the call to follow Christ into the Most Holy Place by faith, that shook (and continues to shake) Christianity and the Advent Movement. Most refused to continue on that path, and of necessity had to abandon the very principles of prophetic interpretation that had led the Christian church from the days of the reformation to that time.

Those who were willing to accept the Bible truth of the sanctuary in the context of the Day of Atonement, and “searched for the truth as for hidden treasure”² were rapidly rewarded with a flood of light from Scripture, with the necessary assistance of the gift of prophecy. The essential and eternal nature of the law of God was grasped as they realized that the tables of the law were preserved in ark of the covenant in the Most Holy Place (Rev. 11:19). The testing truth of the seventh-day Sabbath dawned upon their growing understanding and experience, as they saw it in the heart of God’s law. And the reality of the wages of breaking that law was seen to be not an eternal life of torment, but the opposite of eternal life, what the Bible called the second death.

The rejection of this third angel’s message by the majority of those who had proclaimed the soon coming of Christ resulted in delaying the flood of light that would have quickly prepared the world and ushered in Christ’s return.³ This rejection and delay, which followed the pattern of Israel of old in their entry into the earthly Canaan, sadly continued to be repeated in the decades and centuries that followed, as we shall see. But initially the delay involved time within the lives of those involved in this work from its beginning. Only as it entered its longer phase was it seen to extend long beyond any of their lives. And “the delay” is not an entity that has a life and duration of its own. It is dependent on the corporate experience of God’s people. It was not necessary at all, but when it occurred, it could have been relatively short. There was no inherent need,

as we shall also see, for it to extend centuries.

The failure experienced by the early Adventists has been repeated in a larger sphere and with much greater responsibility by their spiritual descendants. Sadly Miller’s dream included this human failing, and points us to the One who alone can recover the scattered gems of truth. The reality of what the Lord wanted to do was made clear as early as 1850 when Ellen White was shown, using the metaphor from Miller’s dream, that “the man with the ‘dirt brush’ has entered.”⁴

From this highly significant reality we can see that the core, essential lesson for us today is learning what happened in the first years and decades of the third angel’s message. Otherwise, we cannot see aright our path today, and follow where Christ is leading. Above all else, this provides the absolutely necessary context and identity for the Advent movement some 150 years later.

¹ Dan. 8:14

² *MS135*, 1903 “Establishing the Foundation of our Faith” (3*MR*413); also see “The Foundation of Our Faith” (*SpTB*02, pp. 56, 56; quoted in 1*SM*206)

³ 4*SP*291

⁴ *EW*48; see this metaphor in William Miller’s dream *EW*81ff.

Landmarks

**Three Angels’ Messages
Commandments of God
Sabbath**

**Non-Immortality of the Wicked
Message**

**Third Angel’s Message
Lest We Forget**

Joseph Bates (Vol. 1, No. 3, Law, including health; Sabbath)

Rachel Oakes Preston (Vol. 4, No. 1, Sabbath)

George Storrs (Vol. 1, No. 4, Non-immortality of wicked)

Stephen Pierce (Vol. 2, No. 2, Law)

William Farnsworth (Vol. 3, No. 3 Sabbath)

continued...

Roswell F. Cottrell (Vol. 4, No. 2, Sabbath)

J. H. Waggoner (Vol. 4, No. 4, Law, including health, relation to Gospel)

James White (Vol. 5, Nos. 1, 2, 3, Law, Sabbath, Sanctuary)

The experience of the Advent believers paralleled in an amazing way the experience of the disciples of Christ. Both were led by God to proclaim a message of the coming of the kingdom, based on a time prophecy in Daniel. One preached Christ's first coming, and the other, His second. Neither understand fully the message of truth they were presenting, and when the event arrived of which they preached and to which they looked, they were sorely disappointed. Both were led back to Scripture for a deeper understanding of what had actually occurred, and both were dependent upon personal instruction from Jesus to enable them to understand Scripture correctly. Both needed to see and enter into what was presently occurring in their day as prefigured in the sanctuary system. And both could follow Christ in His present work only as they experienced true repentance and genuine faith.

However, the parallel experiences diverge at this point. The disciples accepted the testimony of Jesus, which involved seeing Him and themselves in a clear light, and they entered into repentance and remission of sin, were united, and then received the outpouring of the Spirit, which empowered them to take the gospel to the world. The Advent believers in contrast lost their experience of earnestly searching for present truth, of following the Lamb wherever He went, and became Laodicean, the essence of which was the inability to accept the testimony of the True Witness regarding their condition. For a while a revival occurred when the message to the angel of the church of Laodicea was presented in the 1850's. But the work was not deep.

Message
Laodicean Message

The outward growth and development of the church continued as it was led by God to organize and expand. God in mercy blessed the fledgling movement. However, the core spiritual experience languished. Especially lacking was the application of what Scripture calls the gospel to their teaching and experience in the context of the sanctuary message for our day.

In 1858 two testimonies were given that provide the framework for what we see as the essential features of our need to understand this history and by extension, to grasp where we stand today. One testimony looked back, and warned anyone not "to move a block or stir a pin" of the three angels' messages, and affirmed how God "had led" and placed the Advent people "upon a solid, immovable platform."¹ The other testimony looked forward to a future message that would prepare God's people and empower them to give the final warning, when "the earth was lightened with his glory."²

Thus we need to see that as the time was extended and the delay increased for the accomplishment of future work, the need to witness to the truthfulness and validity of the past history of the movement increased in importance. Several factors, each of which built in intensity as time continued, contributed to this necessity. The pioneers began to die, the second generation who had not witnessed the early events was growing in number, and the testing of heresies continued apace. Fourteen years after the previous testimonies, in 1872 at age 80 Elder Joseph Bates, who had worked with the Whites from the mid 1840's, died, the first key eyewitness whose living testimony was silenced.

As early as 1878, this need to witness to the past was expressed to J. N. Loughborough, at that time 46 years old but with 25 years experience in seeing miracle after miracle in the beginning years. He was told by Ellen White, "You have an experience valuable to the cause of God. It must be made to tell for its full value."³

(To be continued)

¹ EW258, 259 "I saw a company who stood well guarded and firm, giving no countenance to those who would unsettle the established faith of the body. God looked upon them with approbation. I was shown three steps,—the first, second, and third angels' messages. Said my accompanying angel, 'Woe to him who shall move a block or stir a pin of these messages. The true

understanding of these messages is of vital importance. The destiny of souls hangs upon the manner in which they are received.' I was again brought down through these messages, and saw how dearly the people of God had purchased their experience. It had been obtained through much suffering and severe conflict. God had led them along step by step, until He had placed them upon a solid, immovable platform."

² EW277 "Then I saw another mighty angel commissioned to descend to the earth, to unite his voice with the third angel, and give power and force to his message. Great power and glory were imparted to the angel, and as he descended, the earth was lightened with his glory.... This message seemed to be an addition to the third message, joining it as the midnight cry joined the second angel's message in 1844."

³ *Great Second Advent Movement* (1992 edition), pp. 484, 485

Lest We Forget

R. F. Cottrell (Vol. 4, No. 2, Organization)
(see James White for more on Organization, Publishing, etc.)

M. E. Cornell (Vol. 6, No. 1, Evangelism)

J. N. Andrews (Vol. 6, No. 2, Publishing, Evangelism; Sabbath [book 1873])

George Amadon (Vol. 6, No. 3, Publishing)

J. N. Loughborough (Vol. 6, No. 4, Evangelism, Administration)

Uriah Smith (Vol. 7, No. 1, Publishing, Administration)

S. N. Haskell (Vol. 7, No. 2, Administration, Evangelism, Education)

G. I. Butler (Vol. 7, No. 3, Administration)

A Second Look

continues in Part 2 in the next issue.

Footnotes continued from page four

J. H. Waggoner, James White, J. N. Andrews, George Amadon, Uriah Smith, A. T. Jones, E. J. Waggoner, and W. W. Prescott.

⁵ See article "S. D. A. Church Organization, Why and How," *Lest We Forget*, Vol. 4, No. 2, p. 8. Many of the SDA individuals in *Lest We Forget* past issues held some administrative position in the church organization and contributed as delegated representatives at General Conference Sessions to the operation of the church.

⁶ See article "The Gospel of Health, A Practical Necessity," *Lest We Forget*, Vol. 5, No. 4, p. 3ff. Others noted early or later for their contribution to healthful living include Joseph Bates and J. N. Loughborough.

⁷ See article, "When God Speaks," *Lest We Forget*, Vol. 5, No. 3, p. 8.

⁸ See brief references in *Lest We Forget*, Vol. 5, No. 3, p. 6; Vol. 7, No. 2, p. 2; Vol. 7, No. 3, p. 5.

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