Continuing from our previous issue, in tracing the landmark Bible truths, the messages that brought them, and the ministries that were implemented to convey the messages, we review now Seventh-day Adventist history from the 1880’s into the 1890’s. We are building the setting for the multiple messages around 1905 regarding the importance of this history and the necessity of republishing the pioneer witness.

Finally the Lord confronted the believers in a marked way, as the message of “the faith of Jesus” was proclaimed. It was the neglected landmark, given as part of the third angel’s message some 40 years prior, but not appreciated, understood, studied, or experienced as God intended. The light of this message uniting law and gospel began to build in the mid 1880’s. By 1886 it was identified as the message that would lighten the earth with God’s glory. This confrontation reached a high point at the General Conference Session held in 1888 at Minneapolis, Minnesota.

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This final of the end-time messages encompassed the work of all preceding five messages. Collectively Scripture pictures them as the Elijah message, the final application of Malachi’s prediction of the work of calling the world to repentance (“turn the hearts”) and to worship of the true God, “before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.” This truth of “the faith of Jesus” must be restored before a people are prepared for Christ’s coming, for it is what accomplishes that preparation, as it takes our focus off ourselves, and en-
ables us to stand in His strength alone. Super-abounding grace is shown to exceed abounding iniquity, as faith working by love endures to the end. The lawlessness that is maturing at the same time tests and highlights such love. The self-sacrificing love of many will sadly wax cold as the demands of iniquity increase. But those who endure will give a witness to the entire world of this gospel. Then the end will come.\textsuperscript{4}

Time of Immense Importance

We turn now to consider the last thirty years of Ellen White’s life, in the context of the above-mentioned landmarks, messages, and ministries. As we do this, we will discover an amazing sequence of events. We need to understand these in detail. Our understanding of this segment of history determines largely how we value and grasp the very foundations of our work, going back some forty years earlier. Inextricably interwoven with this history and the significance of what God was doing was the decision by God to use Ellen White as His messenger for the first seventy years of this movement. These convictions (God was leading this movement, and God was sending messages through Ellen White) greatly stand or fall together, as case history after case history has shown for the last 150 years.

Understanding historical events from afar is always a challenge. It is much like putting pieces of a puzzle together, building little by little a picture that can be seen only when enough of the pieces are assembled in the correct order. The events and statements included here are not an exhaustive collection by any means, but do provide a compelling and coherent view of this period of time, a paradigm, if you please, giving meaning to the Advent movement and sobering insights as to why we are still here. These are intimately tied to our initial purpose in this paper, to show more completely the importance of the pioneers, and why Ellen White repeatedly called for their witness to be heard. These calls experienced a crescendo centered around the year 1905. Let us assemble some pieces of the puzzle. We will first consider the evidences of the significance of the neglected landmark and the message that brought it to us.

As noted, at least two years before Minneapolis Ellen White was told that the message that was uniting “the law of God and the gospel of righteousness” was the message of Revelation 18, which would lighten the earth with glory.\textsuperscript{5} Thus, if received, it would prepare people for Christ’s coming and its associated events.\textsuperscript{6} As she first heard it in person at Minneapolis, she confessed, “Every fiber of my heart said, Amen.”\textsuperscript{7} The work of the Advent Movement begun over 50 years before, to prepare out of all the world a people for Christ’s coming, was going to be realized!

However, from the first glimmering of this light, it was opposed. Except for Ellen White, it appears this message was resisted or poorly appreciated by all of the first generation Seventh-day Adventists still alive.\textsuperscript{8} The fact that God was sending it through two men of the second generation, E. J. Waggoner (son of a pioneer) and A. T. Jones (a convert of 14 years), bothered some.\textsuperscript{9} The same people were concerned that what was being taught was an attack on the pillars of the faith, “the landmarks,” when in fact it was the opposite. It was a message unfolding a neglected pillar (“the faith of Jesus”), which would enable, following the metaphor, the finishing of the house. (See box “Metaphors of Great Significance.”)

From his sick bed in Battle Creek, the General Conference President G. I. Butler sent telegrams to the delegates assembled for the General Conference Session at Minneapolis. Ellen White referred to these in a letter she wrote a month after the conference to a man whose false reports to Butler had prejudiced him against the message and the messengers.

…You warned Elder Butler—a poor sick man, broken in body and in mind,—to prepare for the emergency; and in that conference Elder Butler felt called upon to send in telegrams and long letters, “Stand by the old landmarks.”\textsuperscript{10}

She commented on the incident again a few months later, and clarified in much greater detail the issue of the landmarks. It is this document above all others that gives us the outline of these landmarks, and clearly alludes to the historical process that brought an understanding of these Bible truths.

While the Conference was in session at Minneapolis, there was coming over the wires from B. C. [Battle Creek], decided messages from Brother Butler to bring the people to a decision then at that meeting, on the controverted point of the law in Galatians.

In Minneapolis God gave precious gems of truth
Metaphors of Great Significance

Various Bible metaphors are used to illustrate the reality of what God was wanting to accomplish.

“Landmark” refers to fixed objects that mark out the land to be occupied, the spiritual territory God’s people are to move into and inhabit, calling others to join them in that location. This is God’s domain, His kingdom.

“Waymark” denotes something indicating the path one is taking by marking it in some way. This pictures the experience of God’s people as a journey, avoiding sidetracks and ditches while moving toward the goal, the city of God, where He dwells.

“Block, ” “peg,” “pin,” “pillar,” “platform,” “foundation,” and “foundation stone” speak of how a building is put together, every part of which is essential. This describes God’s people as building a temple of truth, by discovering and living the truth about God. It is a spiritual dwelling that is their abode, and which in a very real sense is made up of these very people who are themselves called the temple of God.

The nonimmortality of the wicked is an old landmark. I can call to mind nothing more that can come under the head of the old landmarks. All this cry about changing the old landmarks is all imaginary.

Now at the present time God designs a new and fresh impetus shall be given to His work. Satan sees this, and he is determined it shall be hindered. He knows that if he can deceive the people who claim to believe present truth, [and make them believe] that the work the Lord designs to do for His people is a removing of the old landmarks, something which they should, with most determined zeal, resist, then he exults over the deception he has led them to believe.\(^{11}\)

What evidence do we have that this message coming in 1888 was the neglected landmark, “the faith of Jesus”? Consider the following statement, one of many Ellen White made regarding what had been neglected, and what was being presented.

The Lord is not pleased to have man trusting in his own ability or good deeds or in a legal religion, but in God, the living God. The present message that God has made it the duty of His servants to give to the people is no new or novel thing. It is an old truth that has been lost sight of, just as Satan made his masterly efforts that it should be.
The Lord has a work for every one of His loyal people to do to bring the faith of Jesus into the right place where it belongs—in the third angel’s message. The law has its important position but is powerless unless the righteousness of Christ is placed beside the law to give its glory to the whole royal standard of righteousness. “Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good” (Rom. 7:12).  

These statements make it clear that the core understanding and experience which God’s people needed would flow from the proper relation between the law and the gospel, or as Rev. 14:12 puts it, “the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” The concern of those that opposed the light was that the concepts being presented were an attack on God’s law, especially because of how “the controverted point of the law in Galatians” was being explained. Ellen White went so far as pointedly to deny in 1890 that the Galatians issue was a landmark.

The law in Galatians is not a vital question and never has been. Those who have called it one of the old landmarks simply do not know what they are talking about. It never was an old landmark, and it never will become such. These minds that have been wrought up in such an unbecoming manner, and have manifested such fruits as have been seen since the Minneapolis meeting, may well begin to question whether a good tree produces such evidently bitter fruit.

As we had neglected “the faith of Jesus” (a phrase that occurs at least four times in Galatians in the context of the law), when this missing light was brought to the attention of the people, and its relation to the law clarified, it was mistakenly concluded as an attack on the law. Clarifying the role of law in salvation always necessitates an understanding of the gospel.

As this theme was explored and presented by those who accepted the message, much light shown forth. This is seen specifically in the experience of W. W. Prescott, who preached a sermon entitled “The Law in Christ” in Australia in 1895. God impressed Ellen White at that time that the message of Galatians was highly important as it shines light on this connection of the two landmarks, “the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” She immediately (after this sermon was published) wrote to Uriah Smith, one who was still opposing this light. She emphatically stated to him the significance of what God was doing, and the devastating consequences from such opposition.

“The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ, and to flee unto him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord’s message through Brethren Waggoner and Jones. By exciting that opposition, Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world.

Attacking versus Restoring a Landmark

Simply put, the message that would have restored the neglected landmark truth of “the faith of Jesus” was mistakenly thought to be an attack on the landmarks. We could say in an attempt to defend the law, they rejected the gospel. There have been multiple historical precedents for such a mistake, but such lessons from the past made the position much less excusable.

The past messages conveying the landmarks needed the fresh message (the Loud Cry Message) emphasizing the neglected landmark. Observe how Ellen White stated this shortly after Minneapolis.

Suppose that you blot out the testimony that has been going during these last two years proclaiming the righteousness of Christ, who can you point to as bringing out special light for the people? This message as it has been presented, should go to every church that claims to believe the truth, and
bring our people up to a higher stand-point. Where are the builders that are carrying forward the work of restoration? We want to see who have presented to the world the heavenly credentials. God gives every man a chance to take his place in the work. Let the people of God tell what they have seen and heard and handled of the word of life. Every worker has his place; but God does not want any man to think that no other message is to be heard but that which he may have given. We want the past message and the fresh message. Let the Spirit of God come into the heart. O that we may realize the value of the price that has been paid for our salvation! I entreat of you to come nearer to God, that you may take hold of the message for yourselves.

The struggle involved recognizing that the advancing light was indeed part of the edifice of truth, and not an attack on it. This has always been a challenge for God’s people. The pioneers themselves had walked that narrow path, of accepting through diligent study and the guidance of the Spirit new light, while not rejecting the light from the past, and while rejecting errors on every side. But this experience from the 1840’s was not continued, and its lack was vividly seen in the experience of 1888 and the years following.

There are men among us who profess to understand the truth for these last days, but who will not calmly investigate advanced truth. They are determined to make no advance beyond the stakes which they have set, and will not listen to those who, they say, do not stand by the old landmarks. They are so self-sufficient that they cannot be reasoned with. They consider it a virtue to be at variance with their brethren, and close the door, that light shall not find an entrance to the people of God. It will require heavenly wisdom to know how to deal with such cases. Light will come to God’s people, and those who have sought to close the door will either repent or be removed out of the way. The time has come when a new impetus must be given to the work. There are terrible scenes before us, and Satan is seeking to keep from our knowledge the very things that God would have us know. God has messengers and messages for his people. If ideas are presented that differ in some points from our former doctrines, we must not condemn them without diligent search of the Bible to see if they are true. We must fast and pray and search the Scriptures as did the noble Bereans, to see if these things are so. We must accept every ray of light that comes to us. Through earnest prayer and diligent study of God’s word, dark things will be made plain to the understanding.

The opposition to the message also sprung from the fact that it was unnatural to the fallen human nature, and laid the glory of that nature in the dust. Without the support of the gift of prophecy, the message would not have been heard to any significant degree. But for three years following Minneapolis it was sounded by the messengers the Lord had raised up, A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner, backed by the endorsement of the Lord through Ellen White in person.

The resistance to the message in the name of defending the landmarks actually led to a very serious attack on these very landmarks some 15 years after Minneapolis, as we will show. Thus it appears that the fear expressed by the first generation workers who rejected and resisted the Minneapolis message actually came to pass as a result, at least in part, of their own course of action. The opposition to the concepts and/or experience of this landmark had far reaching consequences, with which we are still living today. It will be seen that it was the fallout of this rebellion that left the church vulnerable to counterfeits and frontal attacks.

Amazingly, God in His wisdom, as the fruit of the rebellion matured, turned to and called on these very workers, the remaining first-generation laborers, to recount what they had seen in the early days. For it was these pioneers who had seen the beginning of the work, had sacrificially participated in the process of laying down the foundations, and were solidly convinced that God was in the movement.

The delay caused by the rebellion also resulted in the pioneers passing off the scene, and their living witnesses being silenced regarding the landmarks and our
history. Thus it was that the Spirit repeatedly called for republishing the pioneer witness, for reprinting of the writings, and recounting of the stories, of those who had already died. These calls reached their peak of intensity in the years clustered around 1905. However, the first indications of the importance of such work were given in the previous decade. Let us retrace this history as an introduction to the appeals to recall and reprint.

Need to Remember

While attacks on the church were nothing new, the confusion that was coming in as the result of the spiritual resistance within the church to the gospel message and its practical application, and the opposition to Ellen White’s ministry which such resistance occasioned, necessitated this work of reaffirming the fact that God was indeed leading the movement. The need for such recounting was addressed in this context as early as 1890 in the shadow of the rebellion of 1888.21

God repeatedly through Ellen White’s ministry endorsed the Minneapolis message that came in the years around 1888. As noted, she had stood since the Minneapolis meetings solidly by the light God had sent through A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner, and had extended her influence to support the work God was doing through them. Thus those who rejected the message also had to reject in some degree the agency that was validating the message through voice, pen, and presence. That is, those who refused the light of 1888 were logically led to question Ellen White’s inspiration. Faith in the gift of prophecy given her was seriously undermined. Even her long-standing associate, Elder Uriah Smith, refused in a significant way the light and the testimonies that had been sent to him to counsel and correct him.22

Ellen White sensed the need for someone with living experience in the rise and progress of the work and who also stood firmly for the testimonies, whose influence would serve “to overcome this unsettled state of unbelief.” This she stated in a letter on October 7, 1890, to the General Conference president, Elder O. A. Olsen.

The influence of Elder Loughborough is valuable in our churches. Just such a man is needed, one who has stood unwaveringly for the light that God has given to His people, while many have been changing their attitude toward this work of God. I say let Elder Loughborough do a work that is suffering to be done in the churches. The Lord would have his voice heard as was John’s, telling the things he has seen, and that which he has heard, which he himself has experienced in the rise and progress of the third angel’s message.

...Let Elder Loughborough stand in his right place, as a Caleb, coming to the front and bearing a decided testimony in the face of unbelief and doubts and skepticism. We are well able to go up and possess the goodly land....

Do not fasten Elder Loughborough in a corner anywhere; do not bind him down to any one special conference.... What we need now is to cherish Elder Loughborough to make as far as possible his experience serve the cause of God in a wider sphere.23

The unbelief referred to here continued to develop, showing itself in relation to others who should have been allowed to “stand in [their] right place.” In 1891 Ellen White and E. J. Waggoner were both removed from the United States by sending them to mission assignments oceans away in opposite directions. Ellen White went to Australia. E. J. Waggoner was sent to England (“some of our people were well pleased to have him removed”), and a virtual ban was placed on publishing his work in Battle Creek.24 Such resistance against the message and messengers must be seen for its role in what transpired over the next 15 years, and which extends to our day. The issues are the same; only the dates and names have changed.

While she was essentially in exile in Australia, Ellen White continued to pursue the same themes. From her far-off spot, her pen was increasingly active.25 She repeatedly addressed the message of righteousness by faith, especially its practical applications. She had barely arrived “down under” when in January of 1892 she picked up the theme of ancient Israel and its lessons for us who are in a similar situation, on the edge of Jordan.

Now when we are just on the borders of the promised land, let none repeat the sin of the unfaithful spies.... The work which the Lord had prepared to do for them to manifest His greatness and His favor to His people could not be done because of their wicked unbelief and rebellion. Shall it be thus in these last days, just before we enter into the heavenly Canaan, that God’s people
shall indulge the spirit that was revealed by ancient Israel?26

(To be continued)

1 EGW 1888 Materials, pp. 165, 166 Ellen White quoted her angel guide speaking in 1886: “There are but few, even of those who claim to believe it, that comprehend the third angel’s message, and yet this is the message for this time. It is present truth. But how few take up this message in its true bearing, and present it to the people in its power! With many it has but little force….

There is much light yet to shine forth from the law of God and the gospel of righteousness. This message, understood in its true character, and proclaimed in the Spirit, will lighten the earth with its glory.”

2 EGW 1888 Materials, p. 217 “The commandments of God have been proclaimed, but the faith of Jesus Christ has not been proclaimed by Seventh-day Adventists as of equal importance, the law and the gospel going hand in hand. I cannot find language to express this subject in its fullness.” She repeatedly stated that the law had been preached, but the faith of Jesus, here equated with the gospel, had been neglected. This is more fully explored later in this document.

3 Mal. 4:5, 6

4 Matt. 24:12-14

5 Ms15, 1888 (November 1888, in EGW 1888 Materials, p. 166)

6 “Satan has been having things his own way; but the Lord has raised up men and given them a solemn message to bear to His people, to wake up the mighty men to prepare for battle, for the day of God’s preparation. This message Satan sought to make of none effect, and when every voice and every pen should have been intensely at work to stay the workings and powers of Satan there was a drawing apart; there were differences of opinion.” (EGW 1888 Materials, pp. 210, 211; see also pp. 422, 423)

7 Ms5, 1889 (June 19, 1889, Sermon at Rome, New York, entitled “Christ and the Law,” in EGW 1888 Materials, p. 349)

8 This observation is based on Ellen White’s comments through the years as to who were messengers of this message. Though some first generation workers confessed their mistake in opposing her at Minneapolis, evidence is lacking that they ever grasped the message and proclaimed it in the power of the Spirit. Ellen White’s experience at the beginning of the message appears to have set the tone for what happened through the rest of this window of opportunity. “I tried at the meeting in Battle Creek to make my position plain, but not a word of response came from the men who should have stood with me. I stated that I stood nearly alone at Minneapolis. I stood alone before them in the conference, for the light that God had seen fit to give me was that they were not moving in the counsel of God. Not one ventured to say, ‘I am with you, Sister White. I will stand by you.’” EGW 1888 Materials, p. 354 (Ms30, 1889; June, 1889)

9 G. I. Butler spoke of them as “young men fairly fledged “ in his 10/01/1888 letter to Ellen White (Manuscripts and Memories of Minneapolis, pp. 92, 93)

10 Lt8, 1888 (December 9, 1888, in EGW 1888 Materials, p. 187)

11 Ms18, 1889 (in EGW 1888 Materials, pp. 516, 518, 519)

12 Ms30, 1889 (June 1889, in EGW 1888 Materials, p. 375; see also pp. 212, 217, 367, 430, 724, 728)

13 Ms55, 1890 (in EGW 1888 Materials, p. 841)

14 Gal. 2:16—“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” Gal 2:20—“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Gal. 3:22—“But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”

15 Lt 96, 1896 (June 6, 1896, in EGW 1888 Materials, p. 1575). See also 1895 Evangelism, Resources from a Period of “Manifest Demonstration of the Spirit.” This compilation of the W. W. Prescott Armadale sermons explains the historical and thematic connection between Prescott’s sermon “The Law in Christ; Or, the Relation Between the Law and the Gospel” and this letter to Uriah Smith. In addition it provides an overview of Ellen White’s statements on the blending of the law and gospel, and the connection between the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

16 Observe that both Christ (Matt. 5:17) and Paul (Rom. 3:31) were accused of doing away with the law as they
taught righteousness by faith. Ellen White observed this tendency in her sermon “Christ and the Law” preached the summer after Minneapolis (June 19, 1889) at Rome, New York. (See Ms5, 1889, in EGW 1888 Materials, p. 337 ff.)

17 RH03/18/1890, “Morning Talk,” given 02/04/1890 (in EGW 1888 Materials, pp. 545, 546; edited from Ms9, 1890)

18 ST05/26,1890, paragraph 12, in article “Candid Investigation Necessary to an Understanding of the Truth”

19 Lt73, 1896 (October 12, 1896) (in 20MR117)

20 See extended documentation in Lest We Forget, Vol. 9, all four issues.

21 This characterization of the 1888 event was given to Ellen White by the angel that forbade her from leaving the Minneapolis Conference prematurely. See EGW 1888 Materials, pp. 1067, 1068; compare pp. 310, 314, 323, 323, 367, 688, 846, 1067, 1169, 1344, 1345, 1369, 1666, 1744; also PC154, 10MR277. She continued to view what was happening as rebellion and insubordination as late as the end of 1901, as noted in the historical overview that follows.

22 Consider the condition of Uriah Smith described through the following repeated references to him, all before October 1890. EGW 1888 Materials, pp. 86, 336, 417, 437, 438, 593, 596, 599, 604, 620, 621, 625, 628, 642, 643, 676, 684, 704. The following are references to Smith within the very letter next quoted, to Olsen, that shows his “position and work” with others was to “unsettle the faith of the people of God”: pp. 714, 715, 717. Smith later confessed his error, but there is no evidence he grasped the message and ran with it.

23 Lt 20, 1890 (October 7, 1890, in EGW 1888 Materials, pp. 716-719.) The entire letter is recommended reading; it is found on pp. 714-719. See also article “Faithful Eyewitness”, Lest We Forget, Vol. 6, No. 4, pp. 1, 2.) Notice in this letter the references to biblical characters that were eyewitnesses at critical times, especially the time to enter Canaan. It is well here to remember that Ellen White told Elder Loughborough in 1878, “You have an experience valuable to the cause of God. It must be made to tell for its full value.” (The Great Second Advent Movement, 1992 edition, p. 484)

24 White, W. C., in WCW Letterbook 19, p. 344

25 The total yearly number of letters and manuscripts she wrote increased from 134 in 1891, the year she moved to Australia, to 433 in 1899, the last full year she was there. After declining in 1900 during her move back to the United States, the number returned to 400 or more per year the next three years, reaching a lifetime high of 472 in 1903. We will graph this trend in the next issue as we consider a significant event in her life in 1898.

26 Ms6, 1892 (January 5, in PC141-143). She quoted Caleb’s words (“the language of faith”) to illustrate what is needed.