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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." LS 196

THE THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE

by P. Gerard Damsteegt*

The Sabbath and the Advent Experience

During the formative years of the Sabbatarian Adventists the Sabbath was integrated into the Advent experience through three closely related themes: (1) The restoration of all biblical principles before the Second Coming; (2) the sanctuary theology; (3) the third angel's message.

1. The Restoration Theme.

The first ones to associate the Sabbath with the Advent experience were Preble and Bates. In 1846 Bates, in addressing himself to Adventists, pointed to the necessity of the restoration of the Sabbath before the Second Advent. He said: "I understand that the *seventh* day Sabbath is not the *least* one, among ALL the things that are to be restored before the second advent of Jesus Christ, seeing that the Imperial and Papal power of Rome, since the days of the Apostles have changed the seventh day Sabbath to the first day of the week!"

[Bates declared,] "... That there will yet be a mighty struggle about the restoring and keeping the seventh day Sabbath, that will test every soul that enters the gates of the city, cannot be disputed. It is evident the Devil is making war on all such. See Rev. 12:17." [See also Acts 3:20, 21; Isaiah 58:12; and Matthew 5:19.]

Both James and E. G. White endorsed the restoration theme but placed it in the context of a preparatory work to escape God's final wrath. Later the theme was integrated into the third angel's message through the Elijah motif.

2. The Sanctuary Theology.

The sanctuary theology of Edson, E. G. White, and Crosier facilitated the acceptance of the Sabbath doctrine and the third angel's message. . . . It was felt that Rev. 11:19 was an indication that the heavenly sanctuary, like the earthly sanctuary, contained an ark with the Decalogue in the most holy place.

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P. G. Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission*, W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1977, excerpts from pp. 138-142. *Used by permission.

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE: *RACHEL OAKES PRESTON, the Seventh Day Baptist woman whom God used to direct attention to the Bible Sabbath.*

THE THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE

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This typology provided an argument for the perpetuity of the Decalogue. In 1849 . . . [E. G. White] revealed that through the change in Jesus' high-priestly ministry the attention of God's people had been directed to the most holy place, resulting in a deeper understanding of the relevance of the Decalogue. Because of this additional light, she said that they were "being tested on the Sabbath question"; in fact, it was not until after the Disappointment that the Sabbath became a test for God's people. Thus the Sabbath doctrine was incorporated into the sanctuary theology and, being a test, it achieved major importance in the emerging theology of mission.

3. The Third Angel's Message.

The special message affirming the validity of the Seventh Month movement and proclaiming the restoration of the Sabbath as a test, in the context of the imminent Second Advent and God's wrath, was the message of the third angel. . . .

During these formative years the relationship between the sanctuary theology and the third angel's message could be described as follows: Both had their roots in the Advent movement and affirmed the validity of the Seventh Month movement and the Decalogue. The sanctuary theology, however, drew attention to the significance of the Decalogue in the context of Rev. 11:19, while the third angel's message pointed to the importance of the commandments of God in the setting of Rev. 14:12. It was especially the preparatory function of the sanctuary theology for the acceptance of the Sabbath that brought about a close association between Christ's ministry and the third angel's message. . . .

The Sealing Message.

In January 1849, E. G. White identified the Sabbath with the "seal of the living God" (Rev. 7:2) and Bates explained that this interpretation was based on identifying the Sabbath as a sign (Ex. 31:13, 17) with a seal. . . .

In the context of the sealing angel of Rev. 7:2 Bates further developed J. White's 1847 refer-

ence regarding the typological implications of Ezek. 9 for the time just before Christ's return. Bates related the activities of Ezek. 9:2-4, picturing a man, clothed in linen with a writing case in his hand who was commanded to go through the city of Jerusalem to put a mark upon the foreheads of the righteous, to those of the sealing angel of Rev. 7:2. In another Old Testament reference, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples" (Is. 8:16) he saw a prophecy of the sealing message with implications for the remnant described in Rev. 12:17, who "keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. . . ."

The logical consequence of interpreting the Sabbath as "the seal of the living God" was to call the third angel's message, with its emphasis on the commandments of God (Rev. 14:12), the sealing message. Although Bates had referred to a relation between Rev. 7:2 and Rev. 14:6-12, it was E. G. White who used the term "present, sealing truth" in the context of an exposition on the third angel's message. In more explicit terms J. White expressed himself about "the sealing, separating message—the cutting message of the 3rd angel of Rev. 14 chapter. This third angel bears, in its flight, the sealing mark, the Sabbath, to the saints, while it reaps the awful doom of those who receive the opposite mark,—the first day of the week." The sealing message, being equated with "present truth," was a sign of the times indicating that the believers were living in the "sealing time" which was to last until the end of Christ's sanctuary ministry when God's Sabbath-observing people would be sealed with the seal of the living God for protection against the "burning wrath of God, in the seven last plagues." At the completion of the sealing all the sins of the believers were considered to have been blotted out.

Summary.

Initially the theological arguments used in support of Sabbath observance were somewhat similar to those employed by Seventh Day Baptists. . . . Soon, however, these Sabbatarian

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God's
Sabbath-
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THE SABBATH

by J. M. Preble

HOPE OF ISRAEL

Wishing for the truth on all subjects connected with Christ's coming, I would present a few thoughts on the Sabbath. . . .

In speaking of the Sabbath he [Wm. Miller] says, "Its being contained in the ten commands, written by the finger of God, on both tables of the testimony, graven on stone, to be a sign forever, and a perpetual covenant, proves, in my opinion, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that it is as binding upon the Christian church as upon the Jewish, and in the same manner, and for the same reason." *Life and views*, p. 157. . . . Again, he says, p. 160, in speaking of the Sabbath as a sign, "*It is a sign because God has given it to us expressly for the purpose . . .*" "*to be a sign between me and them,*" *i. e.*, between God and the children of Israel. . . . Another question will evidently arise:

Who are the children of Israel? I answer, while the first covenant was standing they

were the children of Jacob, descendants of the twelve tribes; but that covenant they broke. See Lev. 26:2,15; also Deut. 31:10-16. This covenant was broken as Moses had foretold. Then Jesus Christ brought in a new covenant which continued the sign of the Sabbath, and prepared another people, by writing his law upon their hearts. These now are the true Israel; for the changing of the subjects never did, nor ever can, change the moral law of God. Therefore Paul argues the circumcision of the heart, and says that "They are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, in Israel shall thy seed be called; *i. e.*, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Now if the children of God are the true Israel, and if

Jesus Christ brought in a new covenant which continued the sign of the Sabbath, and prepared another people, by writing his law upon their hearts.

the Sabbath was given as a sign forever, and a perpetual covenant . . . , how can it be abolished while there is one Israelite remaining to claim the promise? You have evidently noticed, that all the difficulties on the Sabbath question among Christians have arisen from the foolish, judaizing notion, that Israel means only the literal Jew. But when we understand Israel to mean the people of God, its difficulties. . . all vanish at once. . . . The moral law was never given to the Jews as a people exclusively, but they were for a season the keepers of it in charge. And through them the law, oracles, and testimony have been handed down to us. . . .

Then, says the objector, we are under the same obligation to keep the sabbaths of weeks, months, and years, as the Jews were. No, sir; you will observe that these were not

included in the decalogue; they were attachments, added by reason of transgression, until

the seed should come, to whom the promise of one eternal day or Sabbath of rest, was made. "Therefore there remaineth a keeping of Sabbath to the people of God." Only one kind of Sabbath was given to Adam, and one only remains for us. . . . All the Jewish sabbaths did cease, when Christ nailed them to his cross. (see Col. 2:14-17.)

. . . There is a clear distinction between the creation Sabbath and the ceremonial. The one is perpetual; the others were merely shadows of the good to come, and are limited in Christ. . . .

If we keep the first day as "a sign," I do not see how we can have our thousand years' rest in the new earth, till the eighth thousand years, as the first day would be the eighth, reckoning in successive order from creation.

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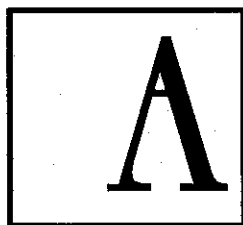
An Undaunted

Woman

Rachel Oakes Preston
1809-1868

by Marlene Steinweg

•
Rachel
Oakes
was used
by God to
bring the
Sabbath
to the
forefront.
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At a time when the women's liberty movement was at least a century in the future, it required a woman of firm conviction to be

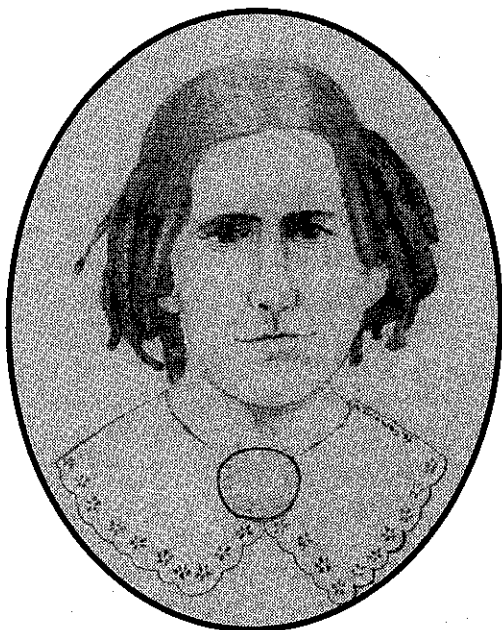
willing to speak her mind to the visiting minister. Rachel Oakes was just such a woman. Elder Frederick Wheeler had made a statement which obviously contradicted his practice. Widow Oakes had found it to be extremely difficult to remain seated during that communion service in the small advent chapel at Washington, New Hampshire, when Elder Wheeler had admonished his advent congregation to keep all the Ten Commandments. Thinking it best not to interrupt the service, she waited for a more appropriate opportunity. But when it came, she told him, "I wanted to tell you that you had better set that communion table back and put the cloth over it, until you begin to keep the commandments of God. You yourself constantly break one of them! You observe the pope's Sunday instead of the Lord's Sabbath!"^{1,2}

Not long after this, in March of 1844, Elder Wheeler became the first sabbatarian advent preacher. It is believed that he introduced the subject successfully to T. M. Preble. Preble,

in turn, wrote an article on the Sabbath [See page 3, this issue.], entitled *The Hope of Israel*,³ which influenced Joseph Bates to begin keeping the Sabbath.

Who was this undaunted woman whom God used to begin such a chain of events? Rachel Delight Harris was born in Vernon, Vermont, in 1809. She was just seventeen when converted, and soon afterwards became a Methodist. Most likely she was very young when she married Amory Oakes and moved with him to Verona, New York. In Verona she began studying about the Bible Sabbath. In spite of efforts to the contrary by the Methodist minister and her husband, she became an observer of the Bible Sabbath and joined the Seventh Day Baptist Church, thus revealing her independent thinking and principled action.

When her daughter, Delight, in early 1843, accepted a teaching position at Washington, New Hampshire, Rachel, now a widow, decided to go stay with her. Rachel and her daughter probably lived with Daniel and Patty Farnsworth, the parents of William Farnsworth. While in Washington, Rachel wanted to attend church, and in the absence of a Seventh Day Baptist congregation, she joined in the Sunday worship services at the nearby advent



chapel. Undoubtedly she planned to and actually did share with the members there her reasons for keeping the Bible Sabbath. They, in turn, sought to convince her of the importance of believing that Jesus was coming that year. Rachel found it difficult, however, to believe that Jesus would take to heaven a group of Sabbath breakers, and so held back from full belief in the advent as preached by the Millerites. And they thought Sabbathkeeping was of little importance in comparison with the great second advent message. Not until after the

disappointment on October 22, 1844, between the months of November, 1844, and January, 1845, did William Farnsworth become the first of a small group of about fifteen members of the Washington church that began keeping the seventh-day Sabbath.

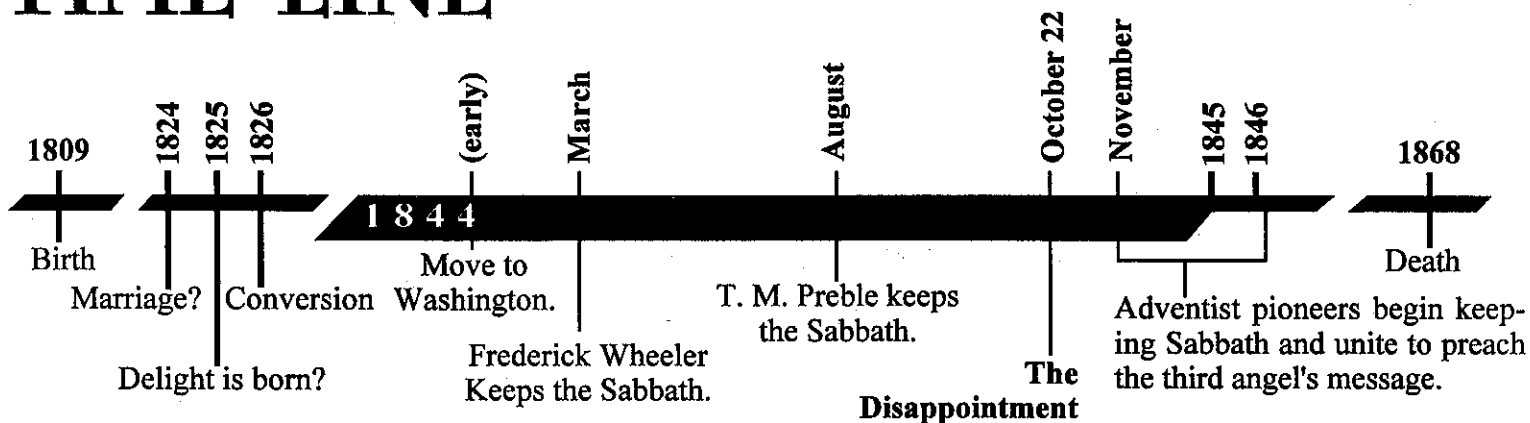
By the summer of 1846, the seventh-day Sabbath had been combined with the doctrines of the second coming of Christ, the heavenly sanctuary, and conditional immortality to form the four foundation pillars of this group that was later to be named the Seventh-day Adventist church. The Spirit of Prophecy, as manifested in the person of Ellen G. White, lent a strengthening influence as the doctrines were studied and prayed over.

Meanwhile, in Washington, New Hampshire, Rachel met and married her second husband, Nathan Preston, and later they moved to Vernon, Vermont. Until 1868, she resisted the invitation to join the Seventh-day Adventist church. Her daughter, Delight Farnsworth, became a member. Others from the Washington, New Hampshire church must have kept working with and praying for her. Perhaps that is why, shortly before she died, she decided to follow the teachings of

the Seventh-day Adventist church. This decision was recounted at the funeral service held by Elder Haskell⁴, in February, 1868. Thus this indomitable woman who was used by God in a remarkable manner to bring the light of the Bible Sabbath to the forefront, went to her rest a member of the remnant church. The impact of her interview with Elder Wheeler early in 1843, and her influence in favor of the seventh-day Sabbath in Washington, New Hampshire, and the precise timing of the introduction of Sabbathkeeping in relation to the prophecies of Jesus' second coming, worked to lead the pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist church into the understanding that the seventh-day Sabbath is a distinctive feature of the third angel's message and will be the final test of allegiance to our Creator-Redeemer.—• M.S.

- (1) Maxwell, C. M., *Tell It to the World*, Pacific Press Publishing Association, Boise, Idaho, 1976, p. 68.
- (2) Spalding, A. W., *Captains of the Host*, Review & Herald Publishing Association, Washington, D. C., 1949, 107.
- (3) Preble, T. M., "The Hope of Israel," reprinted in the *Review and Herald*, August 23, 1870, p. 73-75.
- (4) *Review and Herald*, Obituaries, March 3, 1868, p. 190.

TIME LINE



Our Readers Write

Farnsworth (LWF, 3:3): Your writer did a nice job of patching together all the conflicting stories of when the Sabbath was first discussed at Washington, NH, and by whom. Since I agree with the way she did it, maybe that is why I think she did such a nice job! God Bless, James Nix, Ellen G. White Estate, Silver Spring, MD.

Litch (LWF, 3:4): We found the articles to be very informative and to contain an appropriate description of Josiah Litch's view on the trumpets. We congratulate you for the careful research done. In Christian love, Angel Manuel Rodriguez, Associate Director, Biblical Research Institute, General Conference of SDA.

OUR CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Have you noticed our new Post Office Box number, 1844? We will appreciate receiving your comments on this issue.

HOPE OF ISRAEL

THE SABBATH

concluded from page three

But we all, as Advent believers, have, and do still, expect, our rest in the seventh thousand years. Therefore I think we should keep the "seventh day" as a "sign," "according to the commandment."

. . . In regard to the Sabbath, Christ says, "The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath." Not *a* Sabbath, but *the* Sabbath. He says: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Mark 2:27, 28. He does not say *the* Sabbath was made for the Jews, and *a* Sabbath for the Gentiles, but "*The Sabbath was made for man.*" All mankind. Some may think that our first day is, in reality, the seventh; but this is settled when we examine Matt. 28:1; Luke 23:56; and 24:1, where a plain distinction is made between the two days. . . .

It is evident that Christ had his eye on the observance of the Sabbath, as late certainly as A. D. 70, when Jerusalem was destroyed, when he said: "Pray that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day." Matt. 24: 20. But if this tribulation spoken of has reference to the "Papal persecution," as many believe, then they were directed to the observance of *the Sabbath*, to a much later period. . . .

The disciples evidently kept the first day of the week as a festival, in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ, but never as *the Sabbath*. A controversy, however, commenced toward the close of the first century to see whether both days should be kept, or only one; and if one should be given up, which one, the first day or the seventh. This controversy increased century after century, till A. D. 603, when *Pope Gregory* passed a law abolishing the *seventh-day Sabbath*, and establishing the first day.

Thus we see Dan. 7:25 fulfilled, the "little horn" changing "times and laws." Therefore, it appears to me that all who keep the first day for "*the Sabbath*," are *Pope's Sunday-keepers!! and GOD'S SABBATH-BREAKERS!!!* •

Excerpts from the article by Elder T.M. Preble, entitled "The Sabbath," from the *Review & Herald*, August 24, 1870, pages 73, 74. First published in *Hope of Israel*, Feb. 28, 1845, this first printing inspired Captain Joseph Bates to keep the Bible Sabbath.

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THE THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE

concluded from page two

Adventists began to associate the Sabbath with their Advent experience. First, the Sabbath was connected with the idea that in the post-1844 period all biblical principles had to be restored among God's people before the Second Advent could take place. Secondly, the sanctuary theology was considered to facilitate an acceptance of the Sabbath and indicated its special relevance after 1844 by focusing the attention of believers on the central role of the Decalogue in Christ's high-priestly ministry in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. Thirdly, the third angel's message, being closely associated with the restoration theme and theology, was responsible for the important position of the Sabbath doctrine. . . . Sabbath observance after 1844 came to be an integral part of the Advent experience. As a result of identifying the Sabbath with the seal of the living God—a protection against God's wrath—the third angel's message came to be called the sealing message, or present truth. The sealing time was considered to be a present and imminent future reality, and would terminate at the completion of Christ's sanctuary ministry.

The importance of the third angel's message was its concise formulation of the emerging theology of mission uniting the two principal elements of the *raison d'être* of Sabbatarian Adventists: (1) The proclamation of the validity of their past Advent experience as an important phase in salvation history; (2) The proclamation of the restoration of the Sabbath to prepare God's people for the day of His wrath. It was at this stage of the development of the third angel's message that E. G. White stated, "We have the truth. We know it." [Letter, E.G. White to the Hastingses, No. 18, Jan. 11, 1850.] •

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SABBATHKEEPING

1520's: **Martin Luther** sent theologians to dissuade Oswald Glait and Andreas Fischer from keeping the Bible Sabbath.

1529: **Andreas Fischer** and his wife were captured and sentenced to death, she by drowning, which was carried out, and he by hanging. He escaped, however, until 1540, when he was caught and hurled from a castle wall.

1548: **Oswald Glait**, who had survived many adventures as he preached the Sabbath, was captured and imprisoned. After a year and six weeks in prison, he was bound hand and foot and cast into the Danube.

1600's: **John and Dorothy Traske**, he a zealous Puritan minister, and she a talented teacher were imprisoned by strict American Puritans for Sabbathkeeping. He suffered much during a three-year sentence on a ship and recanted about the end of the sentence. She remained faithful for fifteen or sixteen years, until she died in a filthy, rat-infested prison.

Dr. Peter Chamberlen, for 32 years a Sabbathkeeper in England, and favorite obstetrician of nobility, was too valuable to persecute.

1661: **John James**, a Sabbathkeeping minister, was arrested as he preached one Sabbath. At Newbury, England, he was convicted on trumped-up charges, hanged, drawn and quartered.

1662: **Francis Bampfield** learned of the Sabbath while in prison for refusing to swear an oath. For nine years he preached in prison and raised up a company of believers there. When released, he moved to London where he was arrested three more times and finally died in damp, cold Newgate prison.

1664: **Stephen Mumford** emigrated to Rhode Island in America from England. In 1671 he organized the first Seventh Day Baptist church in America.

1700's: Moravian Sabbathkeepers in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, convinced a visitor, German **Count Zinzendorff**, of the Sabbath.

1802: **Seventh Day Baptists** in America organized their General Conference with about 1200 members. They were not very energetic about evangelism.

1843: General Conference of Seventh Day Baptists makes a resolution to set apart November 1, 1843 as a day for fasting and prayer so that God would "arise and plead for His holy Sabbath." They did not anticipate the manner nor magnitude of the answer God had been preparing to this prayer.

Rachel Oakes moved to Washington, New Hampshire, where she was to be one of God's instruments for answering this prayer. •

Source: Maxwell, C.M., *Tell It to the World*, Review & Herald Publishing Association, Takoma Park, MD., 1977, pages 67-73.

THE GREAT QUESTION

TO UNITE THE HEARTS OF GOD'S WAITING SAINTS.

by Ellen G. White

In the holiest I saw an ark; on the top and sides of it was purest gold. On each end of the ark was a lovely cherub, with its wings spread out over it. Their faces were turned toward each other, and they looked downward. Between the angels was a golden censer. Above the ark, where the angels stood, was an exceeding bright glory, that appeared like a throne where God dwelt. . . . In the ark was the golden pot of manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of stone which folded together like a book. Jesus opened them, and I saw the ten commandments written on them with the finger of God. On one table were four, and on the other six. The four on the first table shone brighter than the other six. But the fourth, the Sabbath commandment, shone above them all; for the Sabbath was set apart to be kept in honor of God's holy name. The holy Sabbath looked glorious—a halo of glory was all around it. I saw that the Sabbath commandment was not nailed to the cross. . . . I saw that God had not changed the Sabbath, for He never changes. But the pope had changed it from the seventh to the first day of the week; for he was to change times and laws. . . ." *EW* pp. 32, 33.

"I saw that the holy Sabbath is, and will be, the separating wall between the true Israel of God and unbelievers; and that the Sabbath is the great question to

unite the hearts of God's dear, waiting saints. . . .

At the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully. This enraged the churches and nominal Adventists as they could not refute the Sabbath truth. . . ." *EW* p. 33.

"The commencement of that time of trouble, here mentioned, does not refer to the time when the plagues shall begin to be poured out, but to a short period just before they are poured out, while Christ is in the sanctuary. At that time, while the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, and the nations will be angry, yet held in check so as not to prevent the work of the third angel. At that time the "latter rain," or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out. . . ." *EW* pp. 85, 86.

"I saw the sword, famine, pestilence, and great confusion in the land. The wicked thought that we had brought the judgments upon them, and they rose up and took counsel to rid the earth of us, thinking that then the evil would be stayed." *EW* pp. 33, 34. •

Early Writings, Review & Herald Publishing Association, Washington, D. C., 1882, pp. 32-34, & 85, 86.

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