

THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

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Theme: "The Divine-Human Christ"

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your questions or comments
on Spirit of Prophecy matters?
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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES VISIT THE RESEARCH CENTRE



Clarke (right) and Higginbotham view
exhibits in the Research Centre

A group of students and faculty members from Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta and Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis recently visited the EGW-SDA Research Centre. Martin Hanna, director of the Research Centre, addressed aspects of

the life and work of Ellen G. White, and answered questions concerning her role in Adventist theology. Professor Carolyn Higginbotham, Vice-president & Academic Dean led the delegation from Christian Theological Seminary, while Professor Erskine Clarke headed the team from Columbia Theological Seminary.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

**"He took our nature and
overcame, that we through
taking His nature might
overcome."** (*Desire of Ages*, 311-312).

FROM THE DIRECTOR:

THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR OF THE LORD'S FAVOR (II)

BY MARTIN HANNA

Our "Spirit of Prophecy News Letter," like the ministry of Ellen White, is dedicated to the message Jesus proclaimed. **"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me;** because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim . . . the Acceptable Year of the Lord" (Isa. 61:1, 2). The term "acceptable year of the Lord" may also be translated **"the year of the Lord's favor."**

Who is this "Lord" who proclaims a year of divine favor? The prophet Isaiah anticipates the words of a **Spirit-sent representative of God who is Himself God.** "I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I, and now the Lord God and His Spirit has sent me. Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord your God" (Isa. 48:16, 17).

What a mystery! Ellen White writes: **"There are three living persons of the heavenly trio"** (*Evangelism*, 615). "The divine Son of God, existed from eternity, a distinct person, yet one with the Father. He was the surpassing glory of heaven" (*Selected Messages*, 1:247). "The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead" (*Desire of Ages*, 671).

Some have suggested that the words—"the Lord God and His Spirit has sent me"—are an interjection by Isaiah. This is possible. However, **the truth of the plurality of divinity** is clearly taught elsewhere in Scripture. Isaiah's words—**"from the beginning"** (Isa. 48:16)—are paralleled when John writes: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**" (Jn. 1:1).

Wonder of wonders! "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came to his own, and his own received him not" (Jn. 1:10-11). When Jesus claimed to be the

Spirit anointed Messiah, the people of Nazareth asked, "Is not this Joseph's son? Then they tried to kill him" (Lk. 4:22, 29).

Nicodemus came close to an understanding of the nature of Christ when he said, "We know that you are a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that you do except God be with him" (Jn. 3:2). However, the Jews had great difficulty in accepting that **God was not simply with Jesus, because Jesus is God.**

They rejected the idea that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. 5:19); and that **"in Christ dwells all the fullness of the godhead"** (Col. 2:9).

When is the Year of the Lord's favor? The acceptable year of the Lord is not a literal 365 day year. It is the time of God's reward and favor to His saints who have overcome. However, for the wicked this year is "the day of our God's vengeance" (Isa. 61:2).

Final fulfillment of the acceptable year of the Lord is outlined by the Apostle John. "I saw a new heaven and earth . . . [where] the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying or pain for the former things are passed away...Behold I make all things new...There shall be no more curse" (Rev. 21:1-5; 22:3).

What does this have to do with 2004? The acceptable year of the Lord's favor is about 2004 years nearer now than when Jesus first came. His second coming is drawing near! Let us lift up our heads and look up, for our redemption draws near! (Luke 21:28). **<continued on page 3>**

From the Director (continued)

An while we wait let us witness! White writes: "Today God is still using His church . . . preparing the way for the second advent . . . **The Spirit of the Almighty is moving** upon men's hearts, and those who respond to its influence become witnesses . . . And as they continue to let their light shine, as did those who were baptized with the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, they receive more and still more of the Spirit's power" (*Acts of the Apostles*, 53-54).

(Part III next month).

DONATIONS

The Research Centre is thankful for the donation of more than **200 bookmarks**, donated by Mrs. Maria Wheatle.

We are also in need of the following books:

- *Daniel and The Revelation*, by Uriah Smith.
- *The Sanctuary Service*, by M. L. Andreasen.
- *The Coming of the Comforter*, by Le Roy Froom.
- *Christ Our Righteousness*, by A. G. Daniells.
- *The Two Republics of Rome and the United States*, by A. T. Jones.

If you would like to donate these or other materials, please contact us at the address on page one.

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

(Hebrews 2: 14).

THOUGHTS ON CHRISTOLOGY

"The humanity of the Son of God is everything to us. It is the golden chain that binds our souls to Christ, and through Christ to God...**Christ was a real man...**Yet he was **God in the flesh...** The study of the incarnation of Christ is a fruitful field, which will repay the searcher who digs deep for hidden truth."

The Youth's Instructor, Oct. 13, 1898.

"In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, un-derived...**The divinity of Christ** is the believer's assurance of eternal life."

The Review and Herald, Apr. 5, 1906.

"Christ took human nature that men might be one with Him as He is one with the Father, that God may love man as He loves His only-begotten Son, that men may **be partakers of the divine nature**, and be complete in Him.

Selected Messages, Vol. 1, 250.

We're on the Web!

<http://egw-sdaresearch.ncu.edu.jm>

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION FAITHFULLY APPLYING GOD'S COUNSEL: HOW TO FINANCE CHURCH WORK

Faithful Application. "Our responsibility as Christians is not only to read God's counsel to us, but to apply it faithfully to our personal lives. **Our first task**, therefore, is to seek out the principles of Christian living through a Spirit-guided study of the Bible and the writings of Ellen White.

"**Our second task** is to relate the principles we have found to our personal lives and social context. To do so, we must have some understanding of the historic situation that originally called forth the counsel.

"**Third**, we must have a good grasp of the current situation in which we are going to apply the universal principles. Only with such understanding can we intelligently **put into practice the prophetic principles in our daily lives, our schools and churches, and in the larger culture.**

"Christian living is a dynamic experience inseparably linked to common sense and thinking and acting upon one's thoughts...Rigidity and inflexibility of thought and action are the antithesis of living Christianity. The Christian's task is to search out God's revelations and then to seek to put them into practice in daily living without doing violence to the intent of their underlying principles. **That takes personal dedication as well as sensitivity to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.**" (George Knight: *Reading Ellen White*, Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1997, 102-103).

Fundraising activities. The following statements have been interpreted frequently, but incorrectly, as condemning any means of raising funds other than by tithes and offerings.

"[If] professing Christians would faithfully bring to God their tithes and offerings, **His treasury would be full.** There would then be no occasion to resort to **fairs, lotteries, or parties of pleasure** to secure funds for support of the gospel" (*Acts of Apostles*, 338).

"Satan throws a religious garment over **delusive pleasures** and **unholy reveling** to give them the appearance of sanctity, and the consciences of many are quieted because means are raised to defray church expenses. Men refuse to give for the love of God; but for **the love of pleasure**, and the **indulgence of appetite for selfish considerations**, they will part with their money...How does God look upon churches that are sustained by such means? **Christ cannot accept these offerings**" (*Stewardship*, 203).

The Holy Spirit leads us to **pay careful attention to the types of fund raising activities which Ellen White discourages.** "We must take into consideration circumstances surrounding such efforts and the influences which emanate from them. There is a clear

line of **demarcation between unselfish, dignified effort and the frivolities and irreligious actions** of the ordinary church bazaars as conducted by certain religious groups." (Arthur L White, *Concerning Food Sales*, Washington DC: Ellen G. White Estate Publications, 5). [This document is available at the Research Centre for \$25]

Ellen White's comments on **fundraising in the Jewish sanctuary** are instructive for churches today. **First, fundraising is a divine requirement.** Many worshipers from afar could not bring animals with them and their foreign currencies needed to be exchanged for the coin of the sanctuary so they could fulfill divine requirements with regard to offerings (*Desire of Ages*, 154).

Second, fund raising may be abused. The Priests and Rulers used fundraising as an opportunity for fraud and extortion and it grew into a disgraceful traffic. The worshipers had been incorrectly taught that without an animal sacrifice God would not bless them (154-155). "Many . . . were too poor to purchase the humblest offering for the Lord, too poor even to buy food" (157).

"Jesus . . . saw the unfair transactions. He saw the distress of the poor, who thought that without shedding of [animal] blood there would be no forgiveness for their sins. . . . The sacred enclosure had become one vast exchange" (157). "So great was the confusion that the worshipers were disturbed, and the words addressed to the Most High were drowned in the uproar" (155).

Third, fundraising abuses should be corrected. "The priests and rulers . . . should have corrected the abuses of the temple court. They should have given to the people an example of integrity and compassion. Instead of studying their own profit, they should have considered the situation and needs of the worshipers, and should have been ready to assist those who were not able to buy the required sacrifices (156-157).

Fourth, what we give to God should remind us of how much more He has given to us. "Christ saw that something must be done. . . . The worshipers offered their sacrifices without understanding that they were typical of the only perfect Sacrifice. And among them, unrecognized and unhonored, stood the One symbolized by all their service. . . . Christ's work was to establish an altogether different worship" (157).



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

What did Ellen White believe regarding the Godhead?

Ellen White never used the term "trinity," although she did refer to the "three living persons of the heavenly trio" (*Evangelism*, 615). She believed in the full deity of Christ, stating that "Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from all eternity, God over all, blessed forevermore" (*Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906). She also referred to the Holy Spirit as "the Third Person of the Godhead" (*The Desire of Ages*, 671). Her comments, as collected in *Evangelism*, 613-617, suggest that she believed that the Scriptures taught the existence of three co-eternal divine persons (Ellen G. White Estate Website, January 28, 2004).

Did Ellen White suggest that the human nature of the Son of Mary changed into the divine nature of the Son of God?

No; Ellen White believed that the two natures—human and divine—were mysteriously blended in one person: Jesus Christ. White writes: "He [Christ] was the divine Son of God. The human and the divine were blended, and those who humbly seek God through Him will be made partakers of the divine nature" (*Bible Echo and Signs of the Times*, Sept. 2, 1895). In Christ, "divinity and humanity were mysteriously combined, and man and God became one" (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, 7:443).

We welcome your questions and comments on Spirit of Prophecy matters. Please, send your comments or questions to the EGW-SDA Research Centre. (See address on page one).

Fascinating Facts

Did you Know that...

* The "Big Bible" that Ellen White held on vision in early 1845, weighs 18 ½ pounds (8 Kgs.) and was printed by Joseph Teal in 1822. She held the Bible with her outstretched left arm for 20 to 30 minutes.

* Sarah Belden, Ellen White's sister, as a young woman, once asked her employer for six week's wages in advance, then gave it to Joseph Bates for traveling expenses to enable him to take the Sabbath truth to another town. (Roger Coon, *The Families of Ellen G. White*, Nov. 15, 1991).

* On April 3, 1847, Ellen White had a vision of the heavenly Sanctuary. She was at home Stockbridge Howland. She saw the temple, ark, tables of the Law, and the Sabbath command surrounded by a halo. You may read more about this vision in the book *Life Sketches*, 95-96.

The Research Centre welcomes our two new student-workers: **David Watson**, and **Conrad Grant**.

They are theology students of Northern Caribbean University. We hope that their experience will enrich their careers as well as their personal lives, as they continue to help us at the Research Centre.

Talk-Back



"I was impressed with the E.G. website...that's a giant step!"
Donald & Dionne Robinson, NCU Graduates and Missionaries.

"The experience was wonderful. The Centre is a useful way to educate people about the SDA Church and the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

Valentine Reid, Hormons SDA Church, Jamaica.

"I think this Research Centre is one that has opened my mind as to the type of person Ellen G. White is. I didn't like her much because I didn't know about her works or her true character. But now I'm happy that I have opened the doors to see her as a true prophet given to us by God."

Shemala Mitchell, Student, NCU.

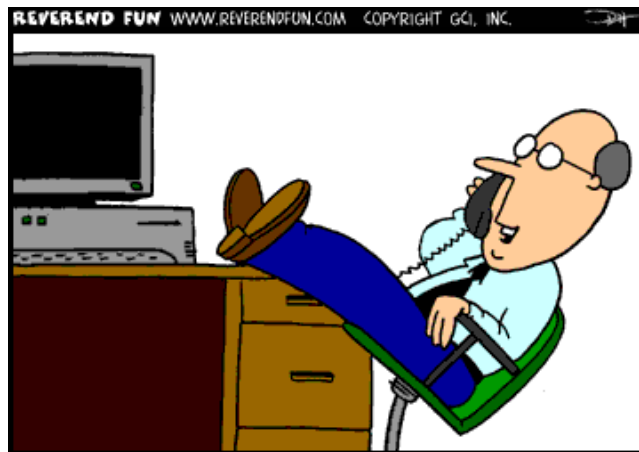
"A visit to this Centre will enlighten one's view of Ellen G. White and the Spirit of Prophecy. Thanks for your beautiful tour and God's richest blessings on the Centre."

Anthony Dowding, Port Maria SDA Church, St. Mary, Jamaica.

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

(2 Peter 1: 4).

HUMOUR



Thanks to Benoit Piquette

04-08-1998

I HAVEN'T EVEN TURNED MY COMPUTER ON SINCE OUR NEW CHRISTIAN BOSS TOLD US THAT WE WILL BE JUDGED BY OUR FAITH AND NOT BY OUR WORKS

The Spirit of Prophecy Association:

Did you Know? The Ellen G. White—Seventh-day Adventist Research Centre at Northern Caribbean University has launched a **Spirit of Prophecy Association**. Members of the Association support and benefit from the activities of the Centre.

Activities at the Centre include collecting and preserving Ellen White's writings as well as other materials (supportive and critical) that are relevant to SDA theology and history. We also produce research, present seminars, and answer questions about Ellen White and SDA history and theology.

The **annual budget** of the Centre (**J\$ 6.5 million**) is largely funded by a partnership of the Inter-American Division, West Indies Union, and Northern Caribbean University. The Division provided the materials for the centre and provides the Director's salary and overseas travel budget. The Union and University fund most of our other costs.

To maximize our ability to serve you, **the Research Centre will raise J\$1 million** each year to supplement our budget. We will do this **by receiving donations of J\$1,000 or more** from those who become members of our Spirit of Prophecy Association.

Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 2, No. 2

Spirit of Prophecy Association News Letter
Ellen G. White—Seventh-day Adventist (EGW-SDA) Research Centre, Northern Caribbean University.

Spirit of Prophecy is a news letter dedicated to the promotion of the biblical truth concerning God's revelation through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit of Prophecy. This news letter is published by the EGW-SDA Research Centre to equip the members of the Spirit of Prophecy Association to participate in the ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Editorial Staff: Martin Hanna, Director, Research Centre; Kerry-Ann Chambers, Administrative Assistant, Research Centre.

Supervisory Committee: Leon Wellington, Vice President, Spirit of Prophecy Coordinator, IAD; Ronnie Henry, Spirit of Prophecy Coordinator, WIU; Vassell Kerr, Dean of School of Religion and Theology, NCU; Nazrene Nathan, Resource Centre, WIU; Daniëto Murray, Vice President for Finance, NCU; Heather James, Librarian; Pastor Gary Fletcher. The Director and the Secretary are also members of this committee.

There are three groups of members. **First, regular members** may be sponsored by an institution. For example, some Spirit of Prophecy Coordinators may be sponsored by their churches. **Second**, regular membership fees may be contributed by purchasing materials from the Centre. **Third**, fees or larger contributions may be donated to the Centre by **members who are called benefactors**.

NEW MEMBER! We would like to welcome to our Spirit of Prophecy Association: **Mr. Denton Nation**, from Coker SDA Church, St. Elizabeth, Jamaica.

Please fill out and send this coupon to the

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