

**One Furnace Too Many:**

**Ellen White Garbles**

**Her Own Theology**

**of the pre-Advent**

**Time of Trouble**



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a revision of my "One Furnace Too Many: Ellen White's Self-sourcing in her Soteriology of the pre-Advent Times of Trouble – a Brief Appraisal", December, 2000

## General Information

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### Quotations

#### Sacred Scripture

Unless otherwise specified, throughout my entire assessment I utilise the *New International Version* (NIV) – 1990 *British* edition – for all such quotations, with all emphases supplied. To all intents and purposes, this diverges in spelling alone from the North American editions which the majority of my readers use. Even then, such differences are sporadic.

#### Ellen White Corpus

With very rare exceptions, I likewise adopt the standard abbreviations for the Ellen White writings listed @ [www.whiteestate.org/cdrom/bib-stan](http://www.whiteestate.org/cdrom/bib-stan). In particular, my chief exception, entrenched following several decades of writing before cyberspace, entails her 1946 compilation, *Counsels to Writers and Editors*. I always utilise the abbreviation *CWE* instead of *CW*.

### # CHRISTIANS BEWARE!!



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## ***One Furnace Too Many: Ellen White Garbles Her Own Theology of the pre-Advent Time of Trouble***

The Seventh-day Adventist Church sincerely believes that the prophetic ministry of Ellen White in its midst is prime evidence of its exalted rôle as God's **single**, authentic denomination on Planet Earth.<sup>1</sup> However, in recent decades it has been crushed by a lingering, devastating crisis of confidence in its precious prophet. Here the most influential factor by far has been the traumatic awakening that her purportedly inspired writings are often **extremely** heavily dependent upon widely scattered literary sources, even for her theology.<sup>2</sup>

The mere *fact* of her wholesale employment of literary sources is not the problem. For even certain biblical authors were dependent upon them, largely if not completely, rather than on Scripture's regular thought inspiration.<sup>3</sup> The patent example is the NT evangelist. For it is widely accepted today, even among conservative Christians, that Mark's Gospel was the first, penned from *eyewitness* reports, especially Peter's, and that both Matthew and Luke depended largely upon his Gospel. In fact, the latter freely admits his general debt from the outset, Lu. 1:1-4. Nor is the OT any stranger to this practice, especially in its historical records.<sup>4</sup>

Rather, the crippling problem for the Ellen White corpus in general is that, however reliable all of her scattered sources may have seemed in her day, they are often marred by *significant errors* from today's more informed perspective, even where theology itself, not mere history, medical routine or science, is involved.<sup>5</sup>

Here I have no need to retrace the source-critical<sup>6</sup> path that has been traversed so ably by many others in the objective evaluation of Ellen White's claim of divine inspiration. Rather, there are independent conclusions to be drawn in this matter from her frequent debts in *later* writings to material **she** had written *earlier*.<sup>7</sup>

### ***How the Later Ellen White Books were Produced***

The bulk of the onerous task of defending Ellen White's prophetic ministry from its many modern critics is the responsibility of the Ellen G. White Estate, that General Conference body of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with complete legal responsibility for her vast collection of writings and records.<sup>8</sup> To its credit, it has recently clarified that, with the considerable assistance of a few trusted secretaries, at least her later articles and even books were largely collated from various earlier writings of hers, with her ultimate approval.<sup>9</sup>

One of the most interesting cases in this regard is *Steps to Christ*, first published in 1892. This generally excellent survey of the gospel, strongly encouraging its acceptance, is the most widely read and translated of all her writings. Not surprisingly, then, wise protagonists, careful to give ample credit *wherever* it is due, are quite content to praise her at least for this fine contribution to Christ's cause. However, even this seemingly innocuous, positive volume is embroiled in current controversy over its authorship in source-critical terms!<sup>10</sup>

#### **Joshua and the Angel**

Whatever, my objective of breaking some new ground in a form convenient for committed lay consumption must depend upon more succinct yet highly significant material. A typical instance, albeit less familiar beyond Seventh-day Adventist bounds, is PK 587-589, published soon after Ellen White's death in 1915. This portion of its chapter 47, "Joshua and the Angel", is founded extremely heavily upon 5T 472-474, portion of its identically titled subsection of Testimony 32, dating from 1885.<sup>11</sup> Patently, its scattered editorial modifications scarcely ever transcend mere *minor* lexical options, as befits descriptions of the *identical* situation.<sup>12</sup> I have endeavoured to highlight and classify all of this solely editorial activity clearly and briefly in Appendix A.<sup>13</sup> Readers who are au fait with source criticism may skip it. Others may appreciate it as a basic introduction.

Far more interesting, certainly, is the *profound* debt of Ellen White's portrayal of a *similar yet distinctly different situation* in GC 618-621,<sup>14</sup> originally published in 1888, again to the above description in 5T 472-474. Despite apposite additions and deletions, *clause after clause is virtually repeated*, albeit sometimes in diverse order. Although the task is daunting, Appendix B tries to track this heavy redaction clearly and concisely.<sup>15</sup>

These related revisions bring us to the key concern of the current, brief evaluation of Ellen White's claims.

### ***Two OT, Typological References to Seventh-day Adventism's End-time Traumas***

Ellen White highlights the traumas to afflict God's saints as he prepares them for Jesus' Return by casting her typological eyes over two OT incidents. First is the time of Jacob's trouble, Gen. 32:24-30. The phrase itself derives from her quite erroneous reading of her KJV at Jer. 30:7.<sup>16</sup> And two of her major descriptions of Jacob's literal struggle are GC 616-618 and PP 196-198. Second is the angel's sharp dispute with Satan over Joshua's sinfulness, Zech. 3:1-5. Most apposite are PK 583-585 and 5T 467-470. But compare COL 166-169.

## The Metaphor of a Furnace Refining Gold

### General References

Whichever of these typological references Ellen White appeals to, by far her most evocative metaphor for the purging from sinfulness which she considers quite crucial for translation is a furnace refining gold.<sup>17</sup> She applies it *generally* to God's testing of Christian character through trials.<sup>18</sup> And this is often associated with a more or less protracted process of shedding moral imperfections, as eloquently demonstrated in PP 129f.:<sup>19</sup>

God has always tried His people in the furnace of affliction. It is in the heat of the furnace that the dross is separated from the true gold of the Christian character. Jesus watches the test; He knows what is needed to purify the precious metal, that it may reflect the radiance of His love. It is by close, testing trials that God disciplines His servants. He sees that some have powers which may be used in the advancement of His work, and He puts these persons upon trial; in His providence He brings them into positions that test their character and reveal defects and weaknesses that have been hidden from their own knowledge. He gives them opportunity to correct these defects and fit themselves for His service...

Her reflexion motif is mentioned here almost in passing. However, at times she highlights it sharply, even among such general references: "God is purifying and proving His people. He will refine them as gold, until the dross is consumed and His image is reflected in them", IT 355.<sup>20</sup> But it is important to notice carefully that Ellen White employs no adverb *fully* here. She cannot be accused of perfectionism in such references.

### Specific References

Whatever, of supreme interest to the current investigation is Ellen White's consistent, *specific* application of this furnace metaphor elsewhere in her theology to the *factual*, end-time perfection of Christian character.

This is no place to detail let alone to evaluate Seventh-day Adventist eschatology prefacing the climactic Return of Christ. However, some comprehension is crucial to the present enquiry. So a survey is apropos, with special interest in the Great Tribulation. This has been drawn from Ellen White's five major accounts,<sup>21</sup> despite certain ambiguities and even salient anomalies among them, which rather challenge confidence.<sup>22</sup>

As human probation closes in heaven with the completion of the pre-Advent Judgment, the Spirit of God is fully withdrawn from the earth, and Satan strives to destroy God's faithful servants through evil human henchmen. A death decree is pronounced on Sabbatarians, permitting the populace, after a certain time, to slaughter them. God tests his saints' faith to the utter extreme as Satan torments them about their sinfulness. They are forced to cling to Christ's merits alone. They also plead with God for deliverance from the menacing mobs, some of whom attempt to slay them before the appointed hour. However, not even then is as much as a *single* drop of martyr blood spilt.<sup>23</sup> For the shielding angels make the upraised swords fall. And at the darkest hour Jesus returns in power and glory to snatch his saints from the very jaws of death.

However, Ellen White's eschatology launches with a crucial pastoral preface to this climactic experience.

One of her more intriguing forecasts is that "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."<sup>24</sup> For, although she specifically depicts "the time of trouble" in familiar terms of trial and persecution until the Parousia,<sup>25</sup> she carefully clarifies her initial reference as "a short period just before" the latter.<sup>26</sup> Seventh-day Adventism has labelled it the *Little* Time of Trouble, spawned by other Christians' opposition to the Sabbath truth being promoted.<sup>27</sup>

Above all else, the imperceptible transition to *the* Great Tribulation, Rev. 7:14,<sup>28</sup> the *major* Time of Trouble in Ellen White's eyes, is the sealing of the saints, 1-8. They have achieved utter perfection of character, it appears, "the victory over *every* besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over *every* wrong word and action",<sup>29</sup> and are *fully* fit to enter God's eternal Kingdom. So Jesus blots all of their sins from the heavenly records,<sup>30</sup> and issues the climactic command, "let him who does right *continue* to do right; and let him who is holy *continue* to be holy", 22:11b. This concludes the pre-Advent judgment.<sup>31</sup> At this precise point, moreover, Christ leaves the Most Holy Place of God's heavenly Temple, for his High Priestly ministry there, ever since 1844,<sup>32</sup> is finished.<sup>33</sup> *This leaves mankind without any Mediator, or Advocate, before God!*<sup>34</sup>

There can be no doubt whatever, therefore, *precisely* what Ellen White means in her supremely eloquent furnace metaphor, which is extremely prominent — even climactic — typically, in such end-time contexts.<sup>35</sup>

... the Lord's eye is upon His people. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but *Jesus will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. Their earthliness must be removed that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected...*<sup>36</sup>

... the Lord's eye is upon His people... Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but *the Refiner will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire... [T]heir earthliness must be consumed, that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected.*<sup>37</sup>

... the Lord's eye is upon His people. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but *Jesus will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. Their earthliness will be removed, that through them the image of Christ may be perfectly revealed.*<sup>38</sup>

## One Furnace Too Many, Dear Ellen

However, Ellen White's utilisation of this metaphor poses serious questions for her prophetic credentials. And the crescent suspicion that here she has created a cardinal crisis of confidence for her hapless devotees will begin to badger any alert reader who observes no more than that, although my three quotations immediately *supra* are virtually **identical**, she applies her thoroughly transparent, striking metaphor to **two** traumatic, end-time experiences which await her fellow, loyal Seventh-day Adventists. Indeed, despite both their crucial *contiguity* and remarkable *similarity* in their *continuity*, they are none the less **distinctly different**.

Should such an alert reader choose to investigate such a suspicion, closer inspection of Ellen White's furnace metaphor in her prime, end-time contexts soon confirms its validity, especially in broad perspective.

First, *it epitomises her impossible end-time soteriology*. No one with any adequate appreciation of the NT Plan of Salvation would fail to appreciate that, until the Great Transformation at Christ's Return, when **innate** human corruption is **completely** destroyed by a fresh act of literal, divine creation, 1 Cor. 15:50-55,<sup>39</sup> with even the apostle Paul we must all lament repeatedly, "nothing good lives in me," Ro. 7:27.<sup>40</sup> Indeed, quite apart from the fact that Ellen White's theology of a pre-Advent judgment of individuals, beginning in heaven with Adam in 1844, is sheer heresy,<sup>41</sup> **it is downright nonsense to suggest that even the most saintly Christian amongst us could EVER live in God's holy sight this side of that transformation without Christ's intercession**, especially when, she soberly suggests, "**there will be NO ATONING BLOOD to cleanse from sin**"!!!<sup>42</sup> It is only the most naïve hamartology that would seriously surmise that stains can still be removed from **any** robes of righteousness after the blood through which they can **alone** be cleansed is no longer available!!

Nor does the corporate sealing of Rev. 7:1-8 rescue this extremely curious thesis. For John's pastoral appeals for God's saints to endure the Great Tribulation, 13:9f.; 14:12, accompany his fearful caution, 14:9-11, that **anyone** who worships the beast and its image and receives its mark – the very *objective* of the deception prefacing the persecution which they wield and the persecution itself, 13! – will be downright condemned.

Secondly, *Ellen White completely contradicts her own perfectionist theology* in her metaphor. It is obvious from her mention in 5T 472-474 and PK 587-589 of Jesus our Advocate<sup>43</sup> that *both* of these are discussing what Seventh-day Adventists designate the **Little** Time of Trouble,<sup>44</sup> *before* probation closes. For, above all, although God's saints suffer testing tribulation, "the divine Advocate *pleads* in their behalf."<sup>45</sup> Moreover, *both* accounts close with the persecuted saints receiving the *transitional* seal of God.<sup>46</sup> Here the metaphor of a refiner's furnace is quite apropos, in terms of her theology, in its manifest meaning of **absolute** purification.

Why, then, has Seventh-day Adventism's crucial prophet used this *very* metaphor, with **negligible** review of terminology, and certainly **none** altering its pristine thrust, in her parallel depiction of **the** Time of Trouble?

... the Lord's eye is upon His people, and His ear listens to their cries. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but **the Refiner will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire... [T]heir earthliness must be consumed, that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected.**<sup>47</sup>

It is comprehensible that Ellen White should mold her latter account from the language of the former, for persecution is their common theme, and it progresses quite imperceptibly across their close of probation boundary. Nor can there be the slightest cogent quibble that GC 618-621 is discussing **the** Time of Trouble. On one hand, its context commences with an explicit assertion that the saints' corporate sealing, which occurs at the close of human probation,<sup>48</sup> launches the "great, *final* trouble."<sup>49</sup> On the other, this passage, so conspicuously devoid of every reference to Christ's intercessory ministry in its source, is quite decisive that "*their cases have been decided* in the sanctuary above."<sup>50</sup> For good measure, this very decisive sentiment is reiterated in expanded form: "*Their sins have gone beforehand to judgment and have been blotted out*."<sup>51</sup>

However, even were Ellen White's unique end-time soteriology to survive the crucial Berean Test, Acts 17:11, she is thoroughly confused to have Christ himself *still consuming the earthliness of his saints* in GC 618-621 **after** he has completed his *High Priestly ministry of intercession in God's ethereal temple*! For one thing, such a refining negates her explicit assurances *supra* that **all** of their sins have been dealt with for eternity. For another, gold requires no second course of *complete* purification.<sup>52</sup> Either this refining during the Little Time of Trouble was **downright** effective or it was not. If not, at least in terms of Seventh-day Adventism's eschatology, why were all of God's faithful followers **sealed** at the close of human probation? And why did Christ conclude the very ministry by which **alone** they can possibly stand in the sight of a righteous God?

In case some very ambitious apologist opines the desperate expedient that one refining process which bridges *both* contiguous periods of persecution clarifies this major theological enigma, I offer this final rebuttal. In its end-time contexts, Ellen White's frequent furnace metaphor denotes **wholesale** cleansing from decadence quite decisively, especially with its **specific** objective "that the image of Christ may be **perfectly** reflected"<sup>53</sup> in the characters of his persecuted followers. It would be utterly ludicrous, then, and no resolution of this disastrous enigma, were she to locate their sealing at the close of probation **during** the refining.

One furnace too many, dear Ellen. You have fired up at least one extremely luminous furnace too many!

- <sup>1</sup> For a convenient summary see D. F. Neufeld, ed., "SPIRIT OF PROPHECY", *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (Washington, 1976<sup>2</sup>), 1412b.
- <sup>2</sup> Ellen White's literary borrowings sweep right across the range of disciplines in her vast writings, including health, history, science and theology. I know of no single source of information. However a convenient starting point is Seventh-day Adventism's official, Ellen G. White Estate internet site: [www.whiteestate.org](http://www.whiteestate.org). Go to section "Issues & Answers" from its home page. By all means also peruse sites of her critics. But beware their rather careless, even reckless, excesses. E.g., she is often ridiculed for her forecast that "Old Jerusalem never would be built up", EW 75. However, Julia Neuffer, "The Gathering of Israel: a Historical Study of Early Writings, pp. 74-76", available on the official site, is quite a persuasive, fair-minded rebuttal. My abbreviations are largely standard, as detailed in my *General Information*, inside my front cover.
- <sup>3</sup> I am well aware that some readers sincerely hold that Holy Writ was the product of virtual divine dictation. However, there are equally sincere, conservative Christians who accept the conclusive evidence that God inspired his authors' *thoughts*, not their *words*. Interestingly, Ellen White unequivocally supports the latter position, as in ISM 19-22 and GC v-vii.
- <sup>4</sup> E.g., notice Jer. 51:64: "The words of Jeremiah end here." The following historical chapter is almost a word-perfect *reiteration* of 2 Ki. 24:18-25:30. Some *unknown* editor, not Jeremiah, compiled it. More strikingly still, 1 & 2 Chronicles are an edited *repetition* of much of the Books of Samuel and Kings. As the closing books in the Hebrew OT, the former were penned about 400 B.C., some 150 years after the latter, for a distinctly different purpose. The Books of Samuel and Kings recount the history of Yahweh's people during the monarchy. Despite the spectacular reigns of David and Solomon, these largely dismal days concluded in Babylonian captivity. In contrast, the Book of Chronicles recounts the nation's history when it required assurance. So it highlights the glory of David's and Solomon's reigns. We find no mention here of Bathsheba, or of Absalom's revolt, for example. In fact, it focuses almost entirely on the southern kingdom of Judah. Even the striking ministries of Elijah and Elisha are omitted since they laboured for the northern kingdom. They also close on a strong note of restoration, not judgment.
- <sup>5</sup> See my n. 2. As her theology is the major focus of current, persistent controversy, the critiques detailed in my nn. 23, 41 will suffice here as examples. Further afield, @ [www.whiteestate.org](http://www.whiteestate.org), the section "Issues & Answers" includes the typical rebuttals: "Unusual Statements Regarding Scientific Issues"; "Alleged Historical Errors". The open mind will not only treat these with the caution due all sectarian apologia, but with equal caution weigh the cases of Ellen White's better critics, both here and in issues not specifically defended by her official apologists.
- <sup>6</sup> The term *critical* is easily misconstrued by the laity. It is merely a technical term for professional investigation, here of literary sources. The interested lay reader will profit from reading the conservative G. E. Ladd's *The New Testament and Criticism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967).
- <sup>7</sup> I hope that this fresh approach sheds new objectivity on a salient exercise that is now somewhat stalled by extreme emotions on both sides.
- <sup>8</sup> E.g., see my n. 2.
- <sup>9</sup> See my n. 2 re the site, [www.whiteestate.org](http://www.whiteestate.org). In its "Issues & Answers", this clarification is summarised in the essay, "The Role of Ellen G. White's Literary Assistants". More detail is in its reference material. For a typical critique on the opposite side of the debate, see @ my n. 10.
- <sup>10</sup> E.g., see R. K. Sanders, "Who Wrote Steps to Christ?", @ [www.truthorfables.com/Steps\\_to\\_Christ](http://www.truthorfables.com/Steps_to_Christ).
- <sup>11</sup> This information appears within the book's *Contents*.
- <sup>12</sup> The details will be discussed *infra* in due course. <sup>13</sup> *Infra*, 5. <sup>14</sup> Re the details, see my n. 12.
- <sup>15</sup> *Infra*, 6.
- <sup>16</sup> As in GC 616. Rather, Jer. 30:5-7 speaks of Jacob as the entire *nation*, 10, not as an *individual*. Cf. 14:8; 15:11; 16:19.
- <sup>17</sup> Others include hammering and chiseling, as in CG 168, pruning, as in DA 676f., weeding, as in COL 50f., and winnowing, as in 3T 115.
- <sup>18</sup> E.g., COL 174f.; MB 30; 1T 355; 4T 84-86, 212; 7T 214. Cf. TM 446.
- <sup>19</sup> Cf. AA 524, 576f.; GC 48, 649f.; MH 470f.; 1T 431, 706f.; 2T 119; 3T 541; 5T 485; 7T 214; 8T 123f.
- <sup>20</sup> Cf. COL 174f.; 2T 269; 3T 28, 67; 4T 86; 5T 105. Cf. TM 441.
- <sup>21</sup> EW 282-288; GC 613-652; PK 587-592; PP 201-203; 5T 472-476.
- <sup>22</sup> E.g., apart from the major anomaly motivating this entire exercise, a significant ambiguity is the timing of the death decree compared with the close of human probation. In EW 283 it is merely "after a certain time". However, 36f. (cf. LS 117) is quite explicit that it results from the seven last plagues, which follow the close of probation, 52, 280. Cf. GC 615f., although the patent inference from 616-623 is that the close of probation intervenes. And 635-652 implies that Jesus' Parousia approximates if not coincides with the specified day of slaughter.
- <sup>23</sup> For a brief rebuttal of this key heresy, which imperils those secure in Ellen White's eschatology, see my "Not a Single Drop of Martyr Blood? The Crisis of Confidence Threatening Ellen White's Devotees", due by April, 2003.
- <sup>24</sup> EW 33.
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 85, answering a specific query. <sup>27</sup> E.g., "LITTLE TIME OF TROUBLE", *SDAE*, 794a.
- <sup>28</sup> Detailed above all in Rev. 13. <sup>29</sup> EW 71, stress supplied.
- <sup>30</sup> EW 48; GC 352, 421f., 483, 613f.; PP 357f.
- <sup>31</sup> CT 418; EW 279f.; FE 363f.; GC 490f., 613; PP 201; 2T 190f., 691; 4T 387; 8T 315.
- <sup>32</sup> See my n. 41. <sup>33</sup> EW 36, 48, 280; PP 426; 2T 190.
- <sup>34</sup> EW 48, 71, 280; GC 425, 613, 614; PP 201; 2T 191; 8T 315. Cf. @ my n. 42.
- <sup>35</sup> In my next section I explore the enigma that GC 621, @ n. 37, actually refers to *the* Great Tribulation, following the close of human probation.
- <sup>36</sup> 5T 474, stress supplied.
- <sup>37</sup> GC 621, stress supplied. See further my n. 35. <sup>38</sup> PK 589, my stress. <sup>39</sup> Cf. Phil. 3:21. This is surely implicit, too, in Ro. 8:18-27.
- <sup>40</sup> My stress. Note context, 7:7-8:14. Cf. 6:19a; 13:14; Gal. 5:16-25.
- <sup>41</sup> I have addressed this issue, quite crucial to her Church's credentials, comprehensively yet briefly in my "Seventh-day Adventism's Dogma of an Investigative Judgment through Ellen White's Eyes", July, 2002.
- <sup>42</sup> PP 201, stress supplied. Cf. EW 281; 5T 212.
- <sup>43</sup> See Appendix A, *infra*, 5. <sup>44</sup> See @ my n. 27.
- <sup>45</sup> 5T 474; PK 589.
- <sup>46</sup> 5T 475f.; PK 591f. Cf. EW 48, 71; GC 612f.; 5T 210-216. The relevant theology is rather peripheral here. But it is worth observing in passing that Seventh-day Adventism associates this very closely with seventh-day Sabbath observance, as in GC 452, 605, 640; PP 307; 6T 350, 352; 8T 117. However, although there are towering principles in this unique theology of respecting God as our Creator, even if he still expects his Fourth Commandment, Ex. 20:8-11, to be obeyed today, *this was no issue for John's flock*, for whom his pastoral prophecy was certainly *primarily* intended. E.g., note the imminence in Rev. 1:13; 2:16, 25; 3:11; 12:12; 22:6, 7, 10, 12, 20. A replete critique would also verify that there is no script for Seventh-day Adventist preachers in 14:6f., with no hint of any judgment beginning in 1844, or even of the Pauline gospel. Context readily confirms that this is the good news of God's end-time vengeance. The idiom is familiar in the OT, to which John is very frequently indebted. Another serious problem is that Ellen White largely forfeits the impact of her dramatic theology in applying it explicitly to the *fledgling* era of Seventh-day Adventism. It is one thing to view the End as imminent in and around the trauma of the abortive Millerite Movement, as in EW 58 (stress supplied), penned in *Christian Experience and Views of Mrs. E. G. White* in 1851 (EW 3): "I saw that *the time for Jesus to be in the most holy place was nearly finished* and that *time can last but a very little longer*." For the conditionality to which she appeals in ISM 66-69, penned in MS 4, 1883 (ISM 73), is a valid hermeneutic *per se* in prophetic interpretation, Jer. 18:7-10. It is another thing entirely, however, to tear the sealing from its context in applying it to the identical era, as in "*this* sealing time", EW 43f. (stress supplied), penned in *Experience and Views* in 1851, especially hand in hand with this *contemporary* caution, 58 (stress supplied): "*The sealing time is very short and will soon be over*." Worse, specific references to fellow Christians of similar, Millerite persuasion who *had* received God's coveted, end-time seal, as in 2SM 263, penned in Letter 10, 1850, are reiterated several decades later, *despite the vast benefit of hindsight*, as in 1883 in ISM 66 and even in 1899 in Letter 207, published in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary 7*, eds F. D. Nichol *et al.* (Washington: R&H, 1957), 982a.
- <sup>47</sup> GC 621, stress supplied. <sup>48</sup> See my n. 46. <sup>49</sup> GC 614, my stress. <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 618, stress supplied.
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 620, stress supplied.
- <sup>49</sup> Although Ellen White speaks at times of gold purified seven times, as in 1T 431, 707, she probably has Ps. 12:6 in mind, despite its specific reference to silver. Whatever, this does not alter the patent fact that she viewed the saints' end-time trauma as a *single*, sustained experience.
- <sup>50</sup> See @ my nn. 36-38. Cf. EW 71.

## Appendix A

## The Literary Debt of PK 587-589 to 5T 472-474

5T 472-474

Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing up of the great day of atonement. The remnant church will be brought into great trial and distress. Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts. Satan numbers the world as his subjects, he has gained control of the apostate churches; but here is a little company that are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to destroy the people of God. All will be required to render obedience to human edicts in violation of the divine law. Those who will be true to God and to duty will be menaced, denounced, and proscribed. They will "be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends."

Their only hope is in the mercy of God; their only defense will be prayer. As Joshua was pleading before the Angel, so the remnant church, with brokenness of heart and earnest faith, will plead for pardon and deliverance through Jesus their Advocate. They are fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives, they see their weakness and unworthiness, and as they look upon themselves they are ready to despair. The tempter stands by to accuse them, as he stood by to resist Joshua. He points to their filthy garments, their defective characters. He presents their weakness and folly, their sins of ingratitude, their unlikeness to Christ, which has dishonored their Redeemer. He endeavors to affright the soul with the thought that their case is hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes to so destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations, turn from their allegiance to God, and receive the mark of the beast.

Satan urges before God his accusations against them, declaring that they have by their sins forfeited the divine protection, and claiming the right to destroy them as transgressors. He pronounces them just as deserving as himself of exclusion from the favor of God. "Are these," he says, "the people who are to take my place in heaven and the place of the angels who united with me? While they profess to obey the law of God, have they kept its precepts? Have they not been lovers of self more than of God? Have they not placed their own interests above His service? Have they not loved the things of the world? Look at the sins which have marked their lives. Behold their selfishness, their malice, their hatred toward one another."

The people of God have been in many respects very faulty. Satan has an accurate knowledge of the sins which he has tempted them to commit, and he presents these in the most exaggerated light, declaring: "Will God banish me and my angels from His presence, and yet reward those who have been guilty of the same sins? Thou canst not do this, O Lord, in justice. Thy throne will not stand in righteousness and judgment. Justice demands that sentence be pronounced against them."

But while the followers of Christ have sinned, they have not given themselves to the control of evil. They have put away their sins, and have sought the Lord in humility and contrition, and the divine Advocate pleads in their behalf. He who has been most abused by their ingratitude, who knows their sin, and also their repentance, declares: "'The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan. I gave My life for these souls. They are graven upon the palms of My hands.'

The assaults of Satan are strong, his delusions are terrible; but the Lord's eye is upon His people. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but Jesus will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. Their earthliness must be removed that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected; unbelief must be overcome; faith, hope, and patience are to be developed.

PK 587-589

Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing scenes of the great day of atonement. The remnant church will then be brought into great trial and distress. Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts. Satan numbers the world as his subjects; he has gained control even of many professing Christians. But here is a little company who are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to destroy the people of God. Men will be required to render obedience to human edicts in violation of the divine law.

Those who are true to God will be menaced, denounced, proscribed. They will be "betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends," even unto death. Luke 21:16. Their only hope is in the mercy of God; their only defense will be prayer. As Joshua pleaded before the Angel, so the remnant church, with brokenness of heart and unflinching faith, will plead for pardon and deliverance through Jesus, their Advocate. They are fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives, they see their weakness and unworthiness; and they are ready to despair.

The tempter stands by to accuse them, as he stood by to resist Joshua. He points to their filthy garments, their defective characters. He presents their weakness and folly, their sins of ingratitude, their unlikeness to Christ, which has dishonored their Redeemer. He endeavors to affright them with the thought that their case is hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes so to destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations, and turn from their allegiance to God. Satan has an accurate knowledge of the sins that he has tempted God's people to commit, and he urges his accusations against them, declaring that by their sins they have forfeited divine protection, and claiming that he has the right to destroy them. He pronounces them just as deserving as himself of exclusion from the favor of God. "Are these," he says, "the people who are to take my place in heaven, and the place of the angels who united with me? They profess to obey the law of God; but have they kept its precepts? Have they not been lovers of self more than lovers of God? Have they not placed their own interests above His service? Have they not loved the things of the world? Look at the sins that have marked their lives. Behold their selfishness, their malice, their hatred of one another. Will God banish me and my angels from His presence, and yet reward those who have been guilty of the same sins? Thou canst not do this, O Lord, in justice. Justice demands that sentence be pronounced against them."

But while the followers of Christ have sinned, they have not given themselves up to be controlled by the satanic agencies. They have repented of their sins and have sought the Lord in humility and contrition, and the divine Advocate pleads in their behalf. He who has been most abused by their ingratitude, who knows their sin and also their penitence, declares: "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan. I gave My life for these souls. They are graven upon the palms of My hands. They may have imperfections of character; they may have failed in their endeavors; but they have repented, and I have forgiven and accepted them."

The assaults of Satan are strong, his delusions are subtle; but the Lord's eye is upon His people. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but Jesus will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. Their earthliness will be removed, that through them the image of Christ may be perfectly revealed.

Letter colour code: edited; transposed; added or omitted.

## Appendix B

## The Literary Debt of GC 618-621 to 5T 472-474

5T 472-474

GC 618-621

Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing up of the great day of atonement. The remnant church will be brought into great trial and distress. Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts. Satan numbers the world as his subjects, he has gained control of the apostate churches; but here is a little company that are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to destroy the people of God. All will be required to render obedience to human edicts in violation of the divine law. Those who will be true to God and to duty will be menaced, denounced, and proscribed. They will "be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends."

Their only hope is in the mercy of God; their only defense will be prayer. As Joshua was pleading before the Angel, so the remnant church, with brokenness of heart and earnest faith, will plead for pardon and deliverance through Jesus their Advocate. They are fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives, they see their weakness and unworthiness, and as they look upon themselves they are ready to despair. The tempter stands by to accuse them, as he stood by to resist Joshua. He points to their filthy garments, their defective characters. He presents their weakness and folly, their sins of ingratitude, their unlikeness to Christ, which has dishonored their Redeemer. He endeavors to affright the soul with the thought that their case is hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes to so destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations, turn from their allegiance to God, and receive the mark of the beast.

Satan urges before God his accusations against them, declaring that they have by their sins forfeited the divine protection, and claiming the right to destroy them as transgressors. He pronounces them just as deserving as himself of exclusion from the favor of God. "Are these," he says, "the people who are to take my place in heaven and the place of the angels who united with me? While they profess to obey the law of God, have they kept its precepts? Have they not been lovers of self more than of God? Have they not placed their own interests above His service? Have they not loved the things of the world? Look at the sins which have marked their lives. Behold their selfishness, their malice, their hatred toward one another."

The people of God have been in many respects very faulty. Satan has an accurate knowledge of the sins which he has tempted them to commit, and he presents these in the most exaggerated light, declaring: "Will God banish me and my angels from His presence, and yet reward those who have been guilty of the same sins? Thou canst not do this, O Lord, in justice. Thy throne will not stand in righteousness and judgment. Justice demands that sentence be pronounced against them."

But while the followers of Christ have sinned, they have not given themselves to the control of evil. They have put away their sins, and have sought the Lord in humility and contrition, and the divine Advocate pleads in their behalf. He who has been most abused by their ingratitude, who knows their sin, and also their repentance, declares: "'The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan! I gave My life for these souls. They are graven upon the palms of My hands.'"

The assaults of Satan are strong, his delusions are terrible; but the Lord's eye is upon His people. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but Jesus will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. Their earthliness must be removed that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected; unbelief must be overcome; faith, hope, and patience are to be developed.

As Satan influenced Esau to march against Jacob, so he will stir up the wicked to destroy God's people in the time of trouble. And as he accused Jacob, he will urge his accusations against the people of God. He numbers the world as his subjects; but the little company who keep the commandments of God are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. He sees that holy angels are guarding them, and he infers that their sins have been pardoned; but he does not know that their cases have been decided in the sanctuary above. He has an accurate knowledge of the sins which he has tempted them to commit, and he presents these before God in the most exaggerated light, representing this people to be just as deserving as himself of exclusion from the favor of God. He declares that the Lord cannot in justice forgive their sins and yet destroy him and his angels. He claims them as his prey and demands that they be given into his hands to destroy.

As Satan accuses the people of God on account of their sins, the Lord permits him to try them to the uttermost. Their confidence in God, their faith and firmness, will be severely tested. As they review the past, their hopes sink; for in their whole lives they can see little good. They are fully conscious of their weakness and unworthiness. Satan endeavors to terrify them with the thought that their cases are hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes so to destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations and turn from their allegiance to God.

Though God's people will be surrounded by enemies who are bent upon their destruction, yet the anguish which they suffer is not a dread of persecution for the truth's sake; they fear that every sin has not been repented of, and that through some fault in themselves they will fail to realize the fulfillment of the Saviour's promise: I "will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world." Revelation 3:10. If they could have the assurance of pardon they would not shrink from torture or death...

They afflict their souls before God, pointing to their past repentance of their many sins, and pleading the Saviour's promise: "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." Isaiah 27:5. Their faith does not fail because their prayers are not immediately answered. Though suffering the keenest anxiety, terror, and distress, they do not cease their intercessions. They lay hold of the strength of God as Jacob laid hold of the Angel; and the language of their souls is: "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me."

Had not Jacob previously repented of his sin in obtaining the birthright by fraud, God would not have heard his prayer and mercifully preserved his life. So, in the time of trouble, if the people of God had unconfessed sins to appear before them while tortured with fear and anguish, they would be overwhelmed; despair would cut off their faith, and they could not have confidence to plead with God for deliverance. But while they have a deep sense of their unworthiness, they have no concealed wrongs to reveal. Their sins have gone beforehand to judgment and have been blotted out, and they cannot bring them to remembrance...

... The assaults of Satan are fierce and determined, his delusions are terrible; but the Lord's eye is upon His people, and His ear listens to their cries. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but the Refiner will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. God's love for His children during the period of their severest trial is as strong and tender as in the days of their sunniest prosperity; but it is needful for them to be placed in the furnace of fire; their earthliness must be consumed, that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected.

Letter colour code: edited; transposed; added or omitted; similar context. Paragraph details:

**a: the Composition of ¶ 1 of "GC 618-621" from 5T 472-474**

5T 472-474

GC 618-621

Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing up of the great day of atonement. The remnant church will be brought into great trial and distress. Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts. Satan numbers the world as his subjects; he has gained control of the apostate churches; but here is a little company that are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to destroy the people of God. All will be required to render obedience to human edicts in violation of the divine law. Those who will be true to God and to duty will be menaced, denounced, and proscribed. They will "be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends."

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As Satan accuses the people of God on account of their sins, the Lord permits him to try them to the uttermost. Their confidence in God, their faith and firmness, will be severely tested. As they review the past, their hopes sink; for in their whole lives they can see little good. They are fully conscious of their weakness and unworthiness. Satan endeavors to terrify them with the thought that their cases are hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes so to destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations and turn from their allegiance to God.

Though God's people will be surrounded by enemies who are bent upon their destruction, yet the anguish which they suffer is not a dread of persecution for the truth's sake; they fear that every sin has not been repented of, and that through some fault in themselves they will fail to realize the fulfillment of the Saviour's promise: "I will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world." Revelation 3:10. If they could have the assurance of pardon they would not shrink from torture or death...

They afflict their souls before God, pointing to their past repentance of their many sins, and pleading the Saviour's promise: "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." Isaiah 27:5. Their faith does not fail because their prayers are not immediately answered. Though suffering the keenest anxiety, terror, and distress, they do not cease their intercessions. They lay hold of the strength of God as Jacob laid hold of the Angel; and the language of their souls is: "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me."

Had not Jacob previously repented of his sin in obtaining the birthright by fraud, God would not have heard his prayer and mercifully preserved his life. So, in the time of trouble, if the people of God had unconfessed sins to appear before them while tortured with fear and anguish, they would be overwhelmed; despair would cut off their faith, and they could not have confidence to plead with God for deliverance. But while they have a deep sense of their unworthiness, they have no concealed wrongs to reveal. Their sins have gone beforehand to judgment and have been blotted out, and they cannot bring them to remembrance...

... The assaults of Satan are fierce and determined, his delusions are terrible; but the Lord's eye is upon His people, and His ear listens to their cries. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but the Refiner will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. God's love for His children during the period of their severest trial is as strong and tender as in the days of their sunniest prosperity; but it is needful for them to be placed in the furnace of fire; their earthliness must be consumed, that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected.

**b: the Composition of ¶ 2 of "GC 618-621" from 5T 472-474**

5T 472-474

Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing up of the great day of atonement. **The remnant church will be brought into great trial and distress.** Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts. Satan numbers the world as his subjects; he has gained control of the apostate churches; but here is a little company that are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to destroy the people of God. All will be required to render obedience to human edicts in violation of the divine law. Those who will be true to God and to duty will be menaced, denounced, and proscribed. They will "be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends."

Their only hope is in the mercy of God; their only defense will be **prayer**. As Joshua was pleading before the Angel, so the remnant church, with brokenness of heart and earnest **faith**, will **plead for pardon and deliverance** through Jesus their Advocate. **They** are fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives, they see their weakness and unworthiness, and as they look upon themselves they are ready to **despair**. The tempter stands by to accuse them, as he stood by to resist Joshua. He points to their filthy garments, their defective characters. He presents their weakness and folly, their sins of ingratitude, their unlikeness to Christ, which has dishonored their Redeemer. **He** endeavors to **affright the soul** with the thought that their case is hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes to **so** destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations, turn from their allegiance to God, and receive the mark of the beast.

Satan urges before God his accusations against them, declaring that they have by their sins forfeited the divine protection, and claiming the right to destroy them as transgressors. He pronounces them just as deserving as himself of exclusion from the favor of God. "Are these," he says, "the people who are to take my place in heaven and the place of the angels who united with me? While they profess to obey the law of God, have they kept its precepts? Have they not been lovers of self more than of God? Have they not placed their own interests above His service? Have they not loved the things of the world? Look at the sins which have marked their lives. Behold their selfishness, their malice, their hatred toward one another."

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But while the followers of Christ have sinned, they have not given themselves to the control of evil. They have put away their **sins**, and have sought the Lord in humility and **contrition**, and the divine Advocate pleads in their behalf. He who has been most abused by their ingratitude, who knows their sin, and also their repentance, declares: "'The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan.' I gave My life for these souls. They are graven upon the palms of My hands."

The assaults of Satan are **strong**, his delusions are terrible; but the Lord's eye is upon His people. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but **Jesus** will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. Their earthliness must be **removed** that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected; **unbelief must be overcome; faith, hope, and patience are to be developed.**

GC 618-621

As Satan influenced Esau to march against Jacob, so he will stir up the wicked to destroy God's people in the time of trouble. And as he accused Jacob, he will urge his accusations against the people of God. He numbers the world as his subjects; but the little company who keep the commandments of God are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. He sees that holy angels are guarding them, and he infers that their sins have been pardoned; but he does not know that their cases have been decided in the sanctuary above. He has an accurate knowledge of the sins which he has tempted them to commit, and he presents these before God in the most exaggerated light, representing this people to be just as deserving as himself of exclusion from the favor of God. He declares that the Lord cannot in justice forgive their sins and yet destroy him and his angels. He claims them as his prey and demands that they be given into his hands to destroy.

As Satan accuses the people of God on account of their sins, the Lord permits him to try them to the uttermost. Their confidence in God, their **faith** and firmness, will be severely tested. As they review the past, their hopes sink; for in their whole lives they can see little good. **They** are fully conscious of their weakness and unworthiness. Satan endeavors to **terrify** them with the thought that their cases are hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes so to destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations and turn from their allegiance to God.

Though God's people will be surrounded by enemies who are bent upon their destruction, yet the anguish which they suffer is not a dread of persecution for the truth's sake; they fear that every **sin** has not been repented of, and that through some fault in themselves they will fail to realize the fulfillment of the Saviour's promise: I "will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world." Revelation 3:10. If they could have the assurance of **pardon** they would not shrink from torture or death...

They afflict their souls before God, pointing to their past **repentance** of their many **sins**, and **pleading** the Saviour's promise: "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." Isaiah 27:5. Their **faith** does not fail because their **prayers** are not immediately answered. Though suffering the keenest anxiety, terror, and **distress**, they do not cease their intercessions. They lay hold of the strength of God as Jacob laid hold of the Angel; and the language of their souls is: "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me."

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... The assaults of Satan are **fierce and determined**, his delusions are terrible; but the Lord's eye is upon His people, and His ear listens to their cries. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but the **Refiner** will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. God's love for His children during the period of their severest trial is as strong and tender as in the days of their sunniest prosperity; but it is needful for them to be placed in the furnace of fire; their earthliness must be **consumed**, that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected.

**c: the Composition of ¶¶ 3-5 of "GC 618-621" from 5T 472-474**

5T 472-474

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The assaults of Satan are **strong**, his delusions are terrible; but the Lord's eye is upon His people. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but **Jesus** will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. Their earthliness must be **removed** that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected; **unbelief must be overcome; faith, hope, and patience are to be developed.**

GC 618-621

As Satan influenced Esau to march against Jacob, so he will stir up the wicked to destroy God's people in the time of trouble. And as he accused Jacob, he will urge his accusations against the people of God. He numbers the world as his subjects; but the little company who keep the commandments of God are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. He sees that holy angels are guarding them, and he infers that their sins have been pardoned; but he does not know that their cases have been decided in the sanctuary above. He has an accurate knowledge of the sins which he has tempted them to commit, and he presents these before God in the most exaggerated light, representing this people to be just as deserving as himself of exclusion from the favor of God. He declares that the Lord cannot in justice forgive their sins and yet destroy him and his angels. He claims them as his prey and demands that they be given into his hands to destroy.

As Satan accuses the people of God on account of their sins, the Lord permits him to try them to the uttermost. Their confidence in God, their **faith** and firmness, will be severely **tested**. As they review the past, their hopes sink; for in their whole lives they can see little good. They are fully conscious of their weakness and unworthiness. Satan endeavors to terrify them with the thought that their cases are hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes so to destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations and turn from their allegiance to God.

Though God's people will be surrounded by enemies who are bent upon their destruction, yet the anguish which they suffer is not a dread of persecution for the truth's sake; they fear that every **sin** has not been **repented** of, and that through some fault in themselves they will fail to realize the fulfillment of the Saviour's promise: I "will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world." Revelation 3:10. If they could have the assurance of **pardon** they would not shrink from torture or death...

They afflict their souls before God, pointing to their past **repentance** of their many **sins** and **pleading** the Saviour's promise: "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." Isaiah 27:5. Their **faith** does not fail because their **prayers** are not immediately answered. Though suffering the keenest anxiety, terror, and **distress**, they do not cease their intercessions. They lay hold of the strength of God as Jacob laid hold of the Angel; and the language of their souls is: "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me."

Had not Jacob previously repented of his sin in obtaining the birthright by fraud, God would not have heard his prayer and mercifully preserved his life. So, in the time of trouble, if the people of God had unconfessed **sins** to appear before them while tortured with fear and anguish, they would be overwhelmed; **despair** would cut off their **faith**, and they could not have confidence to **plead** with God for **deliverance**. But while they have a deep sense of their unworthiness, they have no concealed wrongs to reveal. Their **sins** have gone beforehand to judgment and have been **blotted out**, and they cannot bring them to remembrance...

... The assaults of Satan are **fierce and determined**, his delusions are terrible; but the Lord's eye is upon His people, and His ear listens to their cries. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but the **Refiner** will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. God's love for His children during the period of their severest trial is as strong and tender as in the days of their sunniest prosperity; but it is needful for them to be placed in the furnace of fire; their earthliness must be **consumed**, that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected.

**d: the Composition of ¶ 6 of "GC 618-621" from 5T 472-474****5T 472-474**

Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing up of the great day of atonement. The remnant church will be brought into great trial and distress. Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts. Satan numbers the world as his subjects, he has gained control of the apostate churches; but here is a little company that are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to destroy the people of God. All will be required to render obedience to human edicts in violation of the divine law. Those who will be true to God and to duty will be menaced, denounced, and proscribed. They will "be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends."

Their only hope is in the mercy of God; their only defense will be prayer. As Joshua was pleading before the Angel, so the remnant church, with brokenness of heart and earnest faith, will plead for pardon and deliverance through Jesus their Advocate. They are fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives, they see their weakness and unworthiness, and as they look upon themselves they are ready to despair. The tempter stands by to accuse them, as he stood by to resist Joshua. He points to their filthy garments, their defective characters. He presents their weakness and folly, their sins of ingratitude, their unlikeness to Christ, which has dishonored their Redeemer. He endeavors to affright the soul with the thought that their case is hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes to so destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations, turn from their allegiance to God, and receive the mark of the beast.

Satan urges before God his accusations against them, declaring that they have by their sins forfeited the divine protection, and claiming the right to destroy them as transgressors. He pronounces them just as deserving as himself of exclusion from the favor of God. "Are these," he says, "the people who are to take my place in heaven and the place of the angels who united with me? While they profess to obey the law of God, have they kept its precepts? Have they not been lovers of self more than of God? Have they not placed their own interests above His service? Have they not loved the things of the world? Look at the sins which have marked their lives. Behold their selfishness, their malice, their hatred toward one another."

The people of God have been in many respects very faulty. Satan has an accurate knowledge of the sins which he has tempted them to commit, and he presents these in the most exaggerated light, declaring: "Will God banish me and my angels from His presence, and yet reward those who have been guilty of the same sins? Thou canst not do this, O Lord, in justice. Thy throne will not stand in righteousness and judgment. Justice demands that sentence be pronounced against them."

But while the followers of Christ have sinned, they have not given themselves to the control of evil. They have put away their sins, and have sought the Lord in humility and contrition, and the divine Advocate pleads in their behalf. He who has been most abused by their ingratitude, who knows their sin, and also their repentance, declares: "'The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan! I gave My life for these souls. They are graven upon the palms of My hands.'"

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