



A FRESH LOOK AT THE STOREHOUSE

by Lloyd and Leola Rosenvold

Abbreviations Used

AA	<i>Acts of the Apostles</i>	Mar	<i>Maranatha</i>
AG	<i>Amazing Grace</i>	MB	<i>Thoughts From the Mount Blessing</i>
AH	<i>Adventist Home</i>		
IBC	<i>The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary (Volume indicated by the number)</i>	IMCP	<i>Mind Character and Personality (Vol. 1)</i>
		MH	<i>The Ministry of Healing</i>
CC	<i>Conflict and Courage</i>	MM	<i>Medical Ministry</i>
CD	<i>Counsels an Diet and Foods</i>	Ms	<i>Ellen G. White manuscript</i>
CG	<i>Child Guidance</i>	MYP	<i>Messages to Young People</i>
CH	<i>Counsels on Health</i>	ML	<i>My Life Today</i>
ChS	<i>Christian Service</i>	OHC	<i>Our High Calling</i>
CM	<i>Colporteur Ministry</i>	PK	<i>Prophets and Kings</i>
COL	<i>Christ's Object Lessons</i>	PP	<i>Patriarchs and Prophets</i>
CS	<i>Counsels on Stewardship</i>	RC	<i>Reflecting Christ</i>
CSW	<i>Counsels on Sabbath-School Work</i>	RH	<i>Review and Herald</i>
CT	<i>Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students</i>	SL	<i>The Sanctified Life</i>
		SC	<i>Steps to Christ</i>
CW	<i>Counsels to Writers and Editors</i>	SD	<i>Sons and Daughters of God</i>
DA	<i>The Desire of Ages</i>	ISG	<i>Spiritual Gifts (Vol. 1)</i>
Ed	<i>Education</i>	ISM	<i>Selected Messages (Vol. 1)</i>
Ev	<i>Evangelism</i>	ISP	<i>Spirit of Prophecy (Vol. 1)</i>
EW	<i>Early Writings</i>	SR	<i>Story of Redemption</i>
FLB	<i>The Faith I Live By</i>	ST	<i>Signs of the Times</i>
FE	<i>Fundamentals of Christian Education</i>	Te	<i>Temperance</i>
		IT	<i>Testimonies for the Church (vol. 1-9)</i>
FW	<i>Faith and Works</i>		
GC	<i>The Great Controversy</i>	TDG	<i>This Day With God</i>
GCB	<i>General Conference Bulletin</i>	TMK	<i>That I May Know Him</i>
GW	<i>Gospel Workers</i>	UL	<i>Upward took</i>
HP	<i>In Heavenly Places</i>	WM	<i>Welfare Ministry</i>
LHU	<i>Lift Him Up</i>	YI	<i>Youth's Instructor</i>
LS	<i>Life Sketches</i>	MR	<i>Ellen White Manuscript Releases #____</i>
		PUR	<i>Pacific Union Recorder</i>
Lt	<i>Ellen G. White letter</i>	AR	<i>Adventist Review</i>

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*Here is the patience of the saints:
here are they that keep the commandments of God,
and the faith of Jesus.
Revelation 14:12*

www.Revelation1412.org



Where should Adventists pay their tithes and offerings? Who is rightly permitted to accept tithes and offerings? Where is God's "storehouse" for the acceptance of tithes and offerings? Does the storehouse have a single address? In recent years these questions have been widely discussed in the church.

The authors of this volume have researched extensively not only the published writings of Ellen White, but also many of her unpublished writings and some of her lesser known manuscripts. We have also researched historical records which bear upon the answers to these questions.

We have found our study of this subject to be very fascinating. Some of the inspired counsels and pronouncements which we have gleaned from inspired historical records on these topics may greatly surprise both church administrators and lay readers.

Our purpose in writing the results of our study of this topic on church finances is that Seventh-day Adventists may become better informed of the Lord's counsel regarding this subject, and be more confident of the course that God would have them follow.

May God bless you each one in your study of these vital truths.

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SOME ADVENTIST HISTORY

Chapter 1

Readers may notice that in some of our writings we, at times quote Ellen White sources from publications that are not being printed by Adventist presses, but by independent publishers. Some readers may wonder if such passages are authentic. They are. Since we will in this book, be using references taken from these manuscripts we will detail herewith some background history concerning these manuscript collections.

While Ellen White was in Australia, during the post-1888 years--throughout the 1890s--she addressed many messages to the leaders in Battle Creek concerning administrative and theological issues in the church. These were assembled and printed by the church. They were published as *Special Testimonies for Ministers and Workers, Series "A"*, and were given a limited circulation.

Early in the 20th century during the Battle Creek crisis with Dr. Kellogg etc., a similar series of special messages came from her pen and these were designated as *Special Testimonies for Ministers and Workers, Series "B"*. These, too, had a limited circulation. Soon, however, except for a few copies in private hands, both *Series "A"* and *Series "B"* became essentially unavailable and "extinct."

Loma Linda Messages

During the formative years of our medical work at Loma Linda in the first decade of the century, Ellen White wrote numerous counsels to various ones, especially to Elder John Burden and others who were very active in the founding of Loma Linda. In 1908 Doctor A.W. Truman, a physician with his medical degree from the University of Colorado, arrived to join the initial faculty group at the College of Medical Evangelists, (now known as Loma Linda University).

He early on recognized the intrinsic, as well as the historical, value of all of the divine counsels given concerning Loma Linda and its mission and from various sources he gathered together manuscripts pertaining to the founding and mission of Loma Linda. These documents he carefully compiled into 1028 pages and these then became known as *Loma Linda Messages* (LLM).

Only five copies were made. Doctor Truman's own master copy, and four others which he placed into the hands of certain medical workers. Not surprisingly, some church leaders objected to the private availability of this material, but Doctor Truman doggedly refused to give up his manuscript. His original manuscript is still extant and is stored in a safe place.

We personally first learned of the existence of the LLM from one of the original recipients of Dr. Truman's manuscript collection. This was in the late 1940s. This veteran minister who revealed to us their existence did not seem disposed to let us see his copy. It was almost as if the manuscripts were supposed to be a well-kept secret.

Spalding-Magan Collection

In addition, during those earlier years of this century, faithful, earnest pioneers such as, brethren Sutherland, Magan, Spalding, Johnston and Paulson, had gathered up choice copies of Ellen White letters and manuscripts, some of which were addressed to themselves. They decided to pool their collections and share them with each other. As far as we know A. W. Spalding did the organizing of these manuscripts which became known as the *Spalding-Magan Collection*.

Additionally, Drs. David Paulson and Daniel Kress also had private collections. Being in private hands, apparently, only a very few of these various collections survived through the years. Most Adventists knew absolutely nothing about their existence.

Independent Publishers

During the 1950s there was considerable theological ferment in the church. While we do not know from what sources the *Spalding-Magan, Loma Linda Messages, and Series "A" and "B"* surfaced, we do know that an enterprising California, non-SDA chiropractor, apparently saw an opportunity to make some money. He obtained these collections and had his secretaries (it is said that the latter happened to be Catholics) transcribe these

precious manuscripts on mimeograph stencils, he duplicated them and printed them up with suitable heavy paper covers.

He offered these volumes to Adventists in loose-leaf format at very high prices. We felt very fortunate to be able to obtain our copies. For a number of years thereafter, these collections could be obtained only on what came to be called the Adventist "Black Market." Those who treasured the messages from the Spirit of Prophecy eagerly bought these expensive books.

Law-suit Threatened

At the time that these manuscripts issued from the non-SDA publishers it was our understanding that church officials voiced their objections to the publishers and that there was a possible "threat" of a law-suit if they did not desist from publishing. In any event, there was a committee of Adventists who were sponsoring the circulation of the collections, and in one of our copies there is still a personal note signed -- "The Committee." We still have the original copy, it reads:

Dr. Rosenvold: In mailing this manuscript we feel like those who were forbidden to teach any more in [Christ's] name. A law-suit with a threat of contempt of court and jail sentence has been thrust at the circulators of this manuscript.

We do not recall ever hearing that this "threat" was consummated. As far as we know the initial circulation was carried on in a rather limited time frame.

A Portion Made Available

We had known for many years that there were multiplied thousands of pages of unreleased Ellen White Mss. [Manuscripts] on file in her estate. And for years some of us had pleaded with the brethren to release some of these unavailable writings with their precious messages. We would quote Deuteronomy 29:29 to the brethren: "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever..." We added, "We are the children of the pioneers. These things have been revealed. We need and want them."--Finally, the Seventh-day Adventist black market had made a portion of them available to us! In more recent years various Adventist independent publishers, such as Leaves of Autumn of Payson, Arizona, faithfully made available to Adventists copies of these various collections of manuscripts.

The End of an Odyssey

In the year 1986, the end of an odyssey finally came. The trustees of the Ellen White Estate demonstrated divine wisdom as they acknowledged the validity of the messages recorded in these hundreds of pages of manuscripts and letters that had been printed by independent publishers, and circulated on the "Adventist black market" for so many years. In one brief declaration they officially released all of the collections we have enumerated above (plus others) and with a single stroke of the pen lumped them together as Manuscript Release # 1200. They specifically mentioned the *Spalding-Magan* and *Loma Linda Messages*. After which they added "etc."

Readers will readily notice the important bearing these newly released manuscripts will have upon the issues discussed in this booklet. We praise the Lord for the action taken by the White Estate. Finally, some of the most precious and helpful messages from God's servant were given status in the church.

In 1987 the Ellen White Estate trustees did the church another great favor. They released all pertinent letters and manuscripts relating to the 1888 issue, placing them into a four-volume set comprising more than 1800 pages. They designated them as Manuscript Release # 1300, and made them available through the Adventist Book Centres. Praise the Lord once again, for these exceedingly valuable documents titled, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*! While the White Estate has not, as yet, placed some of these old collections into formal print, they have included them in the material on the Compact Disks that are now available with all of the released Ellen White writings upon them including the 1888 Materials. Again, we say, Praise the Lord!

A FRESH LOOK AT TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Chapter 2

This book is written with the hope and purpose of preventing further misunderstandings from developing between administrators of God's financial storehouse and some from among those who bring tithes and offerings into the storehouse. If we take a fresh look at problems pertaining to systematic benevolence and the subsequent use and management of God's treasuries, surely we should be able to arrive at a mutually correct understanding. In seeking this goal, let us consider ancient as well as modern church history and the inspired writings. We will begin with experiences from the times of Nehemiah and seek to learn lessons therefrom.

Nehemiah

When Nehemiah arrived from Persia on his second trip to Jerusalem he found that there had been a withholding of tithes from the Lord's storehouse to the extent that the Levites did not receive a sufficient support for their living expenses. They had been forced to seek other employment. (In those days tithes were largely paid in the form of agricultural goods.)

Instead of quickly blaming the people, Nehemiah looked for a possible reason for this spiritual declension. He soon discovered that there had been intermarriage between the family of the heathen Ammonite, Tobiah, and the high priestly family, and that the high priest had arranged "a great chamber" as living quarters for Tobiah in the store rooms of the temple. These rooms were ordinarily used for the storage of tithes and various offerings. It was apparent that Tobiah and his family received subsistence from tithes and offerings. In her comments Sister White termed this a "misappropriation" of funds.

The lay Israelites perceived the enormity of what their "spiritual leader" had done in giving lodging and sustenance to this heathen in God's storehouse! Some responded in a very human way--simply withholding their tithes and offerings. Readers will find it of interest to read all about this in Nehemiah 13 and *Signs of the Times*, Vol. 1, pages 405 and 406 [ST, January 17, 1884].

Owing to this sin against Jehovah at church headquarters, God's cause and the temple services had greatly suffered. Nehemiah promptly set about to remedy the situation. Instead of scolding the people for non-payment of tithes, he evicted Tobiah and his household goods, from the premises. Thus he remedied both the cause and effect, for the Israelites immediately began again to bring their tithes and offerings into the divine storehouse. Their "confidence" in the leadership was restored. We quote from the pen of Ellen White:

When Nehemiah learned of this bold profanation, he promptly exercised his authority to expel the intruder. "It grieved me sore; therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber. Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chambers; and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat-offering and the frankincense."

Not only had the temple been profaned, but the offerings had been misapplied. This tended to discourage the liberality of the people. They lost their zeal and fervor in the cause of God, and were reluctant to pay their tithes. The treasuries of the Lord's house were but poorly supplied; and the singers and others employed in the temple service not receiving a sufficient support, many left the work of God to labor elsewhere for the maintenance of their families. Nehemiah promptly corrected these abuses. He gathered together those who had forsaken the service of the house of God, and caused the tithes and offerings to be restored. Faithful men were appointed to take charge of the means raised, confidence was restored, and all Judah brought their tithes to the treasuries of the Lord. -ST, January 17, 1884 par. 3, 4. (1 ST 405, 406.)

Does not this experience of Nehemiah teach us that when storehouse administrators find that tithes and offerings are not coming in as they should, they need to wisely search out the cause before assigning blame?

A Word From Our General Conference President

Our new General Conference President, Elder Robert Folkenberg, expressed sound reasoning and insight into such problems, when on Sabbath, July 14, 1990 at the General Conference session, he stated:

When leaders project a clear vision to the church, fewer people will feel that they must go outside of the church to fulfil their dream. When leaders build confidence in our church by openness, honesty, integrity, and involvement of all groups, the resources that presently flow out of the church will then flow through the church to accomplish our mission. The members' trust in the leadership is indispensable.

- Adventist Review, July 19, 1990.

In the *Signs of the Times* article quoted from above, Ellen White observed that "we need Nehemiahs in 1884." Surely we also need Nehemiahs in the 1990s and we pray that God will give courage and wisdom to the new General Conference administration to "clean out" any Tobiah-like abuses that may exist in the Lord's storehouse administration. Carping at, and sometimes even intimidating, the tithe payers in the pews has too often proved to be counter-productive of good results. The first step should always be to ascertain the cause of the failure of funds to come in. Investigation might just possibly reveal, as was the case in Nehemiahs time, that the root cause is in the storehouse management itself. While abuses should not be used as an excuse to not pay tithe, where human nature is concerned, it happens.

Where is the Storehouse?

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. Malachi 3:10.

Before we proceed we should define some terms and locate the "storehouse." In Bible times tithes and offerings were brought to the temple and placed in store-rooms provided for the offerings of fruits, grains etc., as well as monies. In the times of the kings, these storage chambers were referred to as "treasuries" (see I Chron. 9:26, 28; 28:11, 12). In apostolic times Paul counselled believers to weekly set aside their benevolent funds to be brought to the church gatherings at the proper times.

In the remnant church the usual method has been for tithes and offerings to be gathered by the local churches and the tithes and portions of-the offerings forwarded to higher administrative echelons of the church.

For What is the Tithe to be Used?

What is the purpose of the tithe? The light from the Spirit of Prophecy is clear; the tithe is to be used to defray the needs and expenses of those who preach and teach the gospel. In the days of ancient Israel, "The tithe was set apart for the support of those who ministered in the sanctuary". (CS, 71)

God has not changed; the tithe is still to be used for the support of the ministry. -9T, 250.

But a great mistake is made when the tithe is drawn from the object for which it is to be used -- the support of the ministers. There should be today in the field one hundred well-qualified laborers where now there is but one. -GW, 226

It is to be especially devoted to the support of those who are bearing God's message to the world; and it should not be diverted from this purpose. -CS, 103.

He intends that the ministry of the gospel shall be fully sustained. He claims the tithe as His own, and it should ever be regarded as a sacred reserve, to be placed in His treasury for the benefit of His cause, for the advancement of His work, for sending His messengers into "regions beyond," even to the uttermost parts of the earth. -CS, 71.

The tithe is sacred, reserved by God for Himself. It is to be brought into His treasury to be used to sustain the gospel laborers in their work. -CS, 93

Includes Women Workers

Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. 1 Cor. 9:14

Not all are ordained ministers to whom tithing is to be paid. Women workers are also to be paid by the tithe: (Even widows of ministers-See 7MR 137.3 (MR #451))

God Has Settled This Question.--If women do the work that is not the most agreeable to many of those who labor in word and doctrine, and if their works testify that they are accomplishing a work that has been manifestly neglected, should not such labor be looked upon as being as rich in results as the work of the ordained ministers? Should it not command the hire of the laborer? . . . This question is not for men to settle. The Lord has settled it. -*Evangelism*, 493

To be Paid as Verily as Their Husbands.--When it is possible, let the minister and his wife go forth together. The wife can often labor by the side of her husband, accomplishing a noble work. She can visit the homes of the people and help the women in these families in a way that her husband cannot....

Select women who will act an earnest part. The Lord will use intelligent women in the work of teaching. And let none feel that these women, who understand the Word, and who have ability to teach, should not receive remuneration for their labors. They should be paid as verily as are their husbands. -*Evangelism*, 491

Includes Bible Teachers--and Even Medical Workers

Our conferences look to the schools for educated and well-trained laborers, and they should give the schools a most hearty and intelligent support. Light has been plainly given that those who minister in our schools, teaching the word of God, explaining the Scriptures, educating the students in the things of God, should be supported by the tithe money. This instruction was given long ago, and more recently it has been repeated again and again. -6T, 215.

Some, who do not see the advantage of educating the youth to be physicians both of the mind and of the body, say that the tithe should not be used to support medical missionaries, who devote their time to treating the sick. In response to such statements as these, I am instructed to say that the mind must not become so narrowed down that it cannot take in the truth of the situation. -*Medical Ministry* 245

No line is to be drawn between the genuine medical missionary work and the gospel ministry. These two must blend. They are not to stand apart as separate lines of work. They are to be joined in an inseparable union, even as the hand is joined to the body. -*Medical Ministry*, 250

Purposes For Which Tithe Should Not be Used

The above passages have enlightened us as to how the tithe should be used and for what purpose. We will also consider ways in which the tithe should not be used:

"It [the tithe] is not to be regarded as a poor fund" or "for defraying the incidental ["or running"] expenses of the church" (CS 103). The tithe should not be diverted "to various objects which, though good in themselves, are not the object to which the Lord has said that the tithe should be applied" (CS 102). Tithe may not "be applied to school purposes" or used to support "canvassers and colporteurs". (*Ibid*)

The portion that God has reserved for Himself is not to be diverted to any other purpose than that which He has specified. Let none feel at liberty to retain their tithe, to use according to their own judgment. They are not to use it for themselves in an emergency, nor to apply it as they see fit, even in what they may regard as the Lord's work. -GW, 225

Except in cases of exceptionally deep poverty and need, tithe should not be used even to build houses for worship:

There are exceptional cases, where poverty is so deep that in order to secure the humblest place of worship, it may be necessary to appropriate the tithes. -1MR, 191

Generally speaking, tithe is to be used only for gospel ministry.

A Decrease in Mission Offerings

Contrasted with tithes which show a slow gradual increase over the years, offerings for missions have fallen off drastically in recent years. Is there a reason for this? In an article for July 2, 1990 the editor of the *Pacific Union Recorder* laments: "Years ago the North American Division gave an amount equal to 65% of tithe toward missions." He was quoting from a publication of the Seventh-day Adventist Institute of World Missions. He contrasts this with the paltry "6% of tithe," level of current mission giving in the North American Division--a decrease from 65% to 6%!

Seek For the Cause

Back to our original question: When tithes and offerings are being withheld, would it not be well for us as a church to investigate to see if there may be an undetermined "cause" for this shocking reduction in benevolence? It cannot simply be written off as perfidious greed on the part of the members, for if that were the motive, surely the tithe too, would have a more serious fall. Could mismanagement at the "storehouse" level possibly be a factor? Let us take a Look.

Any Modern Abuses?

We would prefer to not have to mention particulars, but it seems that some examples will be necessary in order to clarify the problem. We cite the Davenport financial debacle. Early in that crisis administrators rushed to put out the word that "no tithe" had been involved. It was not long before they admitted that indeed the sacred tithe had been enmeshed in the financial scandal. Another administrator early hastened to state that "no losses" had been suffered. When a layman wrote a letter to him showing that indeed losses had been sustained, the conference leader was honest and came back with the reply that "Yes, there had been losses sustained."

More recently some Adventists have been shocked to learn that the General Conference is suing believers in Jesus and in the Bible Sabbath for alleged trade mark "infringement," and that multiplied thousands of dollars of tithe funds have been used to pay legal expenses (some to non-SDA lawyers). The case is not yet settled. We have a letter written by a General Conference official stating that indeed, they were using tithe funds for this purpose. He also stated that the General Conference budgets \$200,000 yearly for litigation expenses.

To the extent that tithes and offerings have been invested in bonds or in stocks in corporations that do not honor God's holy Sabbath, that too, is grossly inappropriate. How can God bless such investments?

Nowhere in the sacred writings do we find counsel that the tithe is to be used as described in the above paragraphs! There are other abuses and mismanagements that seem to be generally known, but the foregoing illustrations, together with the topic that is discussed in the next chapter, will suffice to clarify that there are misapplications of tithes and offerings even in this our day. As in the days of Nehemiah, could these irregularities be a reason church funds are "flowing out of the church" rather than "through the church" as suggested by Elder Folkenberg?

While in this chapter, and in the one which follows, we cite Spirit of Prophecy counsels directed to church administrators, actually both they and the laity who supply the tithes and offerings need to follow the divine counsels, as far as it is possible, on the proper use and distribution of the Lord's funds.

In government when the people contact their elected officials, they are often able to favorably influence the decisions and policies of the government. Do not church members have some responsibility, not only to know the Lord's counsels, but to encourage correct practices in the management of church funds?

DIVERTED FUNDS

Chapter 3

If you live in a prosperous conference, perhaps some of your tithe has been traded away for some other funds--this is called "tithe exchange." What is "tithe exchange?" Without delving into monetary formulas, tithe exchange is, briefly, a method by which a conference having a larger amount of tithe than it can use at a given time, which desires non-tithe funds to build buildings, or pave parking lots (or whatever else), can send an amount of tithe to the General Conference and receive in return "non-tithe" funds which will enable it to build buildings etc.

We first learned of this "quick-change" method almost fifty years ago when a young Seventh-day Adventist minister explained it to us. He stated that a certain large academy was then being built on "tithe-exchange" funds and he said he was personally opposed to such dealings. (The brother is at this present writing serving at the General Conference level.)

That tithe-exchange is a standard conference practice is shown by the following citation from the 1983 edition of General Conference policy regulations: "Tithe Exchange. -- The church's present policy makes provision only for conferences and unions to exchange tithe for non-tithe funds."

Sources of Non-tithe Funds

What are some of the sources of "non-tithe" funds that are available to be used to "swap" for tithing? They may be earnings from trusts, investments, Ingathering funds, Sabbath School or other mission funds. Exclusive of the trust funds and investments, these offerings have all been solicited, using the plea of needs in the mission fields. But if exchanged for tithe those very funds would never get to the mission field! They would remain in the homeland for material purposes, and the tithe for which they were exchanged would be sent to the missions. Tithe used in the "tithe exchange" is still the sacred tithe and can be sent to the mission field as tithe for its proper use. But if offerings given for missions should be used in the exchange and they are then retained in the homeland to be used for building construction or other material uses, does that not constitute an improper diversion of funds from the channel of intended use to a channel not intended by the donors? To what extent Sabbath School or other mission funds are currently involved in the tithe-swapping we do not know.

What Saith Inspiration?

Having established that the General Conference (man-made) policy permits tithe to be exchanged for "non-tithe" funds, can we find support for this practice in the inspired writings? We believe the answer should be--No! If there are surplus tithes on hand in a prosperous conference, should they not share that surplus directly with needy mission fields, rather than in effect, using it for such material use as to build buildings etc.? Let us allow the Lord's servant to reply:

In some of the larger conferences the tithe may be more than sufficient to sustain the laborers now in the field. But this does not sanction its use for any other purpose. If the conferences were doing the work that God desires them to do, there would be many more laborers in the field, and the demand for funds would be greatly increased. The conferences should feel a burden for the regions beyond their own borders. There are missions to be sustained in fields where there are no churches and no tithes, and also where the believers are new and the tithe limited. If you have means that is not needed after settling with your ministers in a liberal manner, send the Lord's money to these destitute places. Special light on this point has been given. -1MR, 183, 184.

And if there is a surplus of means in the treasury, there are many places where it may be used strictly in the appointed lines. In many places the dearth of means is so great that the workers cannot be employed to do missionary work. Every dollar of the money put into the treasury is not needed in _____. Let the Lord's money be donated to support the ministers in foreign countries where they are working to lift the standard in new fields.

This is God's money, and He designs that it shall be used in sustaining the ministry, in educating a people to prepare to meet their God. . . .

If you have more means than you need to settle [with] your ministers in a fair, liberal, Christian manner, there are other places where you can help, where there are but few people and poor, and the tithe is limited. Send the Lord's money to them. This I have been repeatedly shown is the way to do. -1MR, 189, 190.

Could divine instructions be clearer? Surplus tithe should "not be used for any other purpose!"

Various administrators defend this tithe exchange method as proper. But many lay persons who have given funds for missions, are not so sure of the propriety of the method. They feel that it is a misappropriation of funds. Certainly, as members have learned of the "tithe-exchange" scheme does it not tend to stifle giving in response to appeals for true mission needs? Whether this man-made scheme is one reason why mission giving has fallen from 65% to 6% of tithe levels we cannot say.

Further Divine Counsel

The Lord has not given orders to any man to divert money from the channel in which it should go. ... Who has heard the voice of God directing that this means should be diverted into other channels? If this is the course our leading brethren are to pursue, what confidence can men have to follow out their convictions in making donations to the cause of God? Let the money that comes from those whom God has made his stewards be received and treated as a sacred offering, and be applied where it was designed this will tend to inspire confidence and encourage liberality in those whom God has made his stewards. But if men, with their finite judgment feel free to appropriate these gifts as they see fit, they will confuse that mind that in all sincerity was moved to bestow his goods on some branch of God's work. When our brethren undertake to work according to their own ideas, they will do great harm to souls, they will create doubt and questioning. Why should men want to interpose their own ways and ideas to defeat the purposes of God? - *EGW 1888 Materials, 1236.*

Nothing stifles liberality quicker than if donors find out (or even suspect) that the funds they gave for a certain specific purpose are not used for that purpose but are instead diverted to other uses. That is a fundamental principle in all fund-raising.

Other Hindrances to Benevolence

Years ago members understood that such fund raisings as birthday-thank offerings and investment projects went for special mission projects. We understand that this is no longer so, but that all such offerings are lumped into a general mission fund. Additionally, it is rarely ever made clear that the thirteenth Sabbath offering does not all go to the needy mission projects which for thirteen weeks are held up before the members. Some years ago we learned to our surprise that it is only a certain limited percentage of some kind of "over-flow" of the thirteenth Sabbath offering that goes for the specified projects. When members learn some of these facts, they may tend to wonder if it is worthwhile to give a large special offering when only a small part of it goes for the needy project for which it has been raised.

It is certain that this complicated formula for apportioning the thirteenth Sabbath funds does not tend to stimulate larger giving. Years ago the thirteenth Sabbath offering was a big feature in Sabbath Schools. Nowadays, at least in some locales, one hardly ever hears about it. Could it be that decline in mission funds could be partially explained on the basis of some of the irregularities mentioned above?

Lord, send us some Nehemiahs to guide Thy people into proper tithe and mission giving and the proper use of the Lord's funds!

WHERE IS THE STOREHOUSE?

Chapter 4

In 1901 Sister White wrote a strong letter to an administrator concerning wrong methods of tithe disbursement in the conferences. Some who should have received tithes as remuneration for their services did not receive adequate support. This inadequacy concerned both white and black gospel workers in the South. She spoke of "prevarications" that had been practiced and also said that their "past course had been crooked." Strong language! What is more, even after it was called to their attention the administrators had not confessed or repented of their misdeeds. In their failure to support some gospel laborers, she said: "Christ has been wronged in the person of His saints." (The above quotations are taken from MR 1200, *Spalding-Magan Collection*, 178.)

Four years later the specific situations had not changed and in writing to a conference president who was expressing concern and even anxiety, because he had learned that Sister White and certain other sisters were by-passing the conference channels and sending their tithe directly to some of the neglected active and retired ministers, in the southland. She explained to him the "whys" and "wherefores" of the whole issue. For years the Lord had told her to so disburse her own tithe.

We present herewith a full photo-copy of her letter to the Colorado Conference president as it appears in the *Spalding-Magan Collection* on pages 215 and 216:

The Use of the Tithe.

Mountain View, Calif., Jan. 22, 1905.

Elder Watson:

My brother, I wish to say to you, Be careful how you move. You are not moving wisely. The least you have to speak about the tithe that has been appropriated to the most needy and the most discouraging field in the world, the more sensible you will be.

It has been presented to me for years that my tithe was to be appropriated by myself to aid the white and colored ministers who were neglected and did not receive sufficient properly to support their families. When my attention was called to aged ministers, white or black, it was my special duty to investigate into their necessities and supply their needs. This was to be my special work, and I have done this in a number of cases. No man should give notoriety to the fact that in special cases the tithe is used in that way.

In regard to the colored work in the South, that field has been and is still being robbed of the means that should come to the workers of that field. If there has been cases where our sisters have appropriated their tithe to the support of the ministers working for the colored people in the South, let every man, if he is wise, hold his peace.

I have myself appropriated my tithe to the most needy cases brought to my notice. I have been instructed to do this; and as the money is not withheld from the Lord's treasury, it is not a matter that should be commented upon; for it will necessitate my making known these matters, which I do not desire to do, because it is not best.

Some cases have been kept before me for years, and I have supplied their needs from the tithe, as God has instructed me to do. And if any person shall say to me, Sister White, will you appropriate my tithe where you know it is most needed, I shall say, Yes, I will; and I have done so. I commend those sisters who have placed their tithe where it is most needed to help to do a work that is being left undone; and if this matter is given publicity, it will create knowledge which would better be left as it is. I do not care to give publicity to this work which the Lord has appointed me to do, and others to do.

I send this matter to you so that you shall not make a mistake. Circumstances alter cases. I would not advise that any should make a practice of gathering up tithe money. But for years there have now and then been persons who have lost confidence in the appropriation of the tithe who have placed their tithe in my hands, and said that if I did not take it they would themselves appropriate it to the families of the most needy minister

they could find. I have taken the money, given a receipt for it, and told them how it was appropriated.

I write this to you so that you shall keep cool and not become stirred up and give publicity to this matter, lest many more shall follow their example.

(Signed) Ellen G. White.

It was always God's plan that the tithe should be equitably disbursed by administrators so as to properly support all those who give the gospel to the people of the world. We have been told that "If all would pay a faithful tithe, and devote to the Lord the first-fruits of their increase, there would be a full supply of funds for His work" (6T 385). Sometimes the disbursers of the tithe have been derelict in their duty to properly see to it that equity controlled their management.¹ (*See footnote*)

Lessons From the Watson Letter

We learn from this letter that, in her tithe paying, Ellen White acted on instructions from the Lord, when she by-passed the regular channels--the local church and conference offices--and paid her tithing directly to white, colored, or aged retired ministers who had been neglected financially by the management of the conferences. Thus, she had for years appropriated her own tithe.

Furthermore, there were other women who did this same thing, and she commended them for so doing. If a person asked her to appropriate their tithe for them, she did so--in the same manner that she paid her own. She said that these women had lost confidence in the ability of the conference to properly appropriate their tithe. If Ellen White could not take their tithe they, themselves, would appropriate it, giving it to the most needy ministers they could find. The Lord appointed her and others to do this.

Elsewhere Ellen White has counselled that the "better" way would be if we could repose full confidence in the brethren who disburse tithe and work through the normal channels. (See page 13 for discussion.)

However, could it be possible that the Lord would instruct Ellen White and the other sisters to follow an exception to the usual plan, that would be absolutely denied, under similar circumstances, for anyone else to ever do? We would ask, Might there be situations in our day when it would be proper for individuals to do as did the sisters in Ellen White's day? This is a question that we, ourselves, do not feel that we should answer and especially for others.

A Caution

There is a caution we need to heed from the Watson letter. Ellen White was not anxious to have this unusual practice of tithe paying promoted among the laity. She told Elder Watson to stop complaining about it, for she did not want notoriety given to this practice. "Let every man if he is wise, hold his peace," she said, "It is not best to make this matter public." --But it has now been made public in Manuscript Release # 1200. We can be grateful that this valuable letter has been preserved until our day!

Evidently, Elder Watson was very upset and disturbed because some of the tithes were by-passing the conference offices. But she told him to keep cool and not get so stirred up! Should he continue to complain, many more might follow the practice in the disbursement of the tithe. This she did not advocate.

Where is the Storehouse?

¹ Footnote: Ellen White did not only supplement the pay of underpaid ministers, but also gave tithe to women who did gospel work without conference salary, such as minister's wives: "I will feel it in my duty to create a fund from my tithe money, to pay these women who are accomplishing just as essential work as the ministers are doing, and this tithe I will reserve for work in the same line as that of the ministers, hunting for souls, fishing for souls." *Spalding-Magan Collection*, 117.

There is yet another most important principle that we can glean from this letter. Ellen White made it clear that the tithe disbursed by herself and the ladies was not money that was withheld from the Lord's treasury--from His storehouse. Their tithe was used according to the purpose for which the tithe is designated, just as truly as if it had actually passed through the local churches and conference offices. Indeed, as it was being privately disbursed by themselves, they were verily placing it into the Lord's treasury! These sisters in effect became disbursers of storehouse funds. Obviously, special situations such as she described to Elder Watson should not be used as an excuse for handling tithe funds in an inappropriate or irresponsible manner.

Only One Address?

Back in 1901 some of the brethren believed that there was only one address for the storehouse, namely, Battle Creek. But when unfulfilled needs were great in the south, Sister White wrote to Elder Daniels:

The Lord has blessed the work that J.E. White has tried to do in The South. God grant that the voices which have been so quickly raised to say that all the money invested in the work must go through the appointed channel at Battle Creek, shall not be heard. The people to whom God has given his means are amenable to him alone. It is their privilege to give direct aid and assistance to missions. It is because of the misappropriation of means that the Southern field has no better showing than it has today.
-Spalding-Magan Collection, 176, 177 (1901).

The arrangement that all moneys must go through Battle Creek and under the control of the few men in that place is a wrong way of managing. There are altogether too many weighty responsibilities given to a few men, and some do not make God their counselor.
-TM, 321.

Here Ellen White clarifies a principle: It is not necessary for monies to go through the appointed channel at Battle Creek, in order for them to be considered as having been invested in the Lord's storehouse! Regarding administrative "voices" which were declaring that all funds should pass through Battle Creek, she bluntly declared that, "They shall not be heard!" The Lord's storehouse has more than one geographic address. It is the privilege of the members, she said, to give direct aid and assistance to various needs.

Since it was clearly stated by the Lord's servant in olden times that all funds need not pass through the coffers at Battle Creek, should we then assume that it is not imperative for all funds to pass through the coffers of Silver Spring, Maryland in our day? Or for that matter through any other single storehouse headquarters? The following advice is certainly clear:

Do not worry lest some means shall go direct to those who are trying to do missionary work in a quiet and effective way. All the means is not to be handled by one agency or organization. *-Spalding-Magan Collection, 421.*

Some men are so imbued with the single storehouse concept that they will claim that if a brother member of conference *A* should give his tithe to conference *B*, then *B* should, or will, automatically forward it to conference *A*. That is largely fiction. We have knowledge of specific instances where that concept was pointedly ignored. For example: it was desired in Mission *B* to hold evangelistic meetings but there was a lack of funds. They needed another thousand dollars. The evangelist asked a lay-member in conference *A* if he could possibly send one thousand dollars of his personal tithe to the treasurer of Mission *B* to make the meetings possible. The brother sent the needed amount and this enabled the evangelistic meetings to be held.

Various conferences and over-seas divisions gladly accept donations (including tithes) from outside of their own districts from donors wishing to place their funds for specific mission work. The mission fields simply ignore this theoretical rule. And, if we follow the counsel laid down through the Spirit of Prophecy, that is as the Lord would have it.

A Better Way

The Watson letter was penned in 1905. By 1911 Ellen White was still handling people's tithes (by-passing the conference channel) and distributing it directly. But, at that time she added, "there is a better way:"

You ask if I will accept tithes from you and use it in the cause of God where most needed. In reply, I will say that I shall not refuse to do this, but at the same time I will tell you that there is a better way.

It is better to put confidence in the ministers of the conference where you live, and in the officers of the church where you worship. Draw nigh to your brethren. Love them with a true heart fervently, and encourage them to bear their responsibilities in the fear of God. "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12). *Letter 96, 1911*, p. 1. (To Mrs. J. J. Gravelle, December 29, 1911.) -1MR, 196.

Obviously, if the financial management officers do not respond positively to the loving pleadings of the laymen, as they encourage them to "bear their responsibilities" in the disbursement of the tithes "in the fear of God," the confidence of the people could only continue to be shaken! On their part, the storehouse administrators must realize that when the lay "people" who must "strain every nerve and muscle to lay by their tithes," see that there is mismanagement "their confidence and faith will be shaken. When you call for donations, there will be no response" (1MR 264, 1891).

Concerning Offerings

In contrast to the more limited scope for the placement of tithes, offerings can be more widely disbursed to various "addresses" of God's storehouse. Some readers may be surprised to learn of this. Concerning her unusual disbursement of tithes, Ellen White was rather quiet. But as to offerings, she freely urged direct giving to needy workers and projects. She repeatedly expressed publicly, that often offerings should be given directly to alleviate the needs of God's servants who are promoting the giving of the gospel in various ways, and in diverse places. She even adds that unless we do give directly when there is a need, and when it is possible for us to do so, we could be called unjust stewards. Remember: "The Lord has not specified any regular channel through which means should pass" (*Spalding-Magan Collection*, 498).

As far as offerings are concerned (and under certain circumstances even tithes!) the storehouse can have many addresses; that is, wherever there is a need in the vineyard of the Lord, there is the Lord's "treasury!"

A SOLEMN RESPONSIBILITY

Chapter 5

There is counsel from the Lord's servant telling us that we have a solemn personal responsibility as to where we place funds, and that we should know how the funds we place into God's treasury are being used. While the use and placement of tithe is comparatively selective, offerings can be distributed more widely and have more diversified uses:

Individual Responsibility.

"Some men or councils may say, that is just what we wish you to do. The Conference Committee will take your capital and will appropriate it for this very object. But the Lord has made us individually his stewards. We each hold a solemn responsibility to invest this means ourselves. A portion it is right to place in the treasury to advance the general interests of the work; but the steward of means will not be guiltless before God, unless, so far as he is able to do this, he shall use that means as circumstances shall reveal the necessity. We should be ready to help the suffering, and to set in operation plans to advance the truth in various ways. It is not in the province of the Conference or any other organization to relieve us of this stewardship. If you lack wisdom, go to God, ask him for yourself, and then work with an eye single to his glory.

By exercising your own judgment, giving where you see there is need in any line of the work, you are putting out your money to the exchangers. If you see in any locality that the truth is gaining a foothold, and there is no place of worship, then do something to meet the necessity. By your own action encourage others to act, in building a humble house for the worship of God. Have an interest in the work in all parts of the field.

While it is not your property that you are handling, yet you are made responsible for its wise investment, for its use or abuse. God does not lay upon you the burden of asking the conference or any council if you shall use means entrusted to you by God as you shall see fit, to advance the work of God in destitute towns and cities, and impoverished localities. If the right plan had been followed, there would not have been so much means used in some localities and so little in other places where the banner of truth has not been raised. We are not to merge our individuality in any institution in our world. The high-handed power that has been developed, as though positions had made men gods, makes me afraid, and ought to cause fear. It is a curse wherever, and by whomsoever it is exercised. This lording it over God's heritage will create such a disgust of man's jurisdiction that a state of insubordination will result. The people are learning that men in high positions of responsibility cannot be trusted to mould and fashion other men's minds and characters. The result will be a loss of confidence even in the management of faithful men. But the Lord will raise up laborers who realize their own nothingness without special help from God. ... Do we individually realize our true position, that as God's hired servants we are not to bargain away our stewardship? We have an individual accountability before the heavenly universe to administer the trust committed us of God. Our own hearts are to be stirred, our hands are to have something to impart of the income that God entrusts to us. " (Letter O-55-1895 to O. A. Olsen).

-EGW 1888 Materials, 1443-1445.

An Analysis of the Above

The message is, that we will not be judged guiltless unless we do all that we can to see to it that our means are given to the most needy places in God's storehouse. We are obligated to see that our funds are used to the glory of God. We cannot without guilt bargain away our stewardship to other men, such as, giving to administrators a lump sum and allowing them to apply it as they see fit. We are trustees of God's wealth and we must act like faithful stewards. We repeat: We are to know not only "where" in the Lord's treasury our funds are given, but also "how" they are used. Note the following:

The churches must arouse. The members must awake out of sleep and begin to inquire, How is the money which we put into the treasury being used? The Lord desires that a close search be made. Are all satisfied with the history of the work for the past fifteen years? Where is the

evidence of the co-working with God? Where has been heard throughout the churches the prayer for the help of the Holy Spirit? Dissatisfied and disheartened, we turn away from the scene. -*The Kress Collection*, 120 (1900).

Please note that we are instructed to make a "close search" of how the funds we put into the treasury are being used.

A Portion to the Local Church

Keep in mind that Ellen White counselled that "a portion of it is right to place in the treasury [of the local church and conference] to advance the general interests of the work." Yes, God expects us to give a portion of our offerings through the local channel. Let us follow this counsel. But concerning the remainder of our benevolent funds, God has instructed us that the donor himself is under sacred obligation to God to decide to what address (section) of the Lord's storehouse (vineyard) he should direct the means entrusted to him. Indeed, God's storehouse has more than one address. We have observed that His treasury is anywhere there is a need in God's work--whether that be in the conference or elsewhere in His field.

More On Stewardship



In the hands of faithful stewards it [means] shall be made to serve the purpose of God always. Then will the entrusted talents be so wisely employed as to gain for the steward a rich experience, directly and indirectly, and enable him to be rich in good works, blessing his fellow men. He is not required to part with his money in large sums and thus shift his responsibility upon other men. He is to acquire wisdom to stand as [a] faithful steward, dealing with his Lord's goods with wisdom and discrimination....

There must not be a moving by impulse. There should not be a pressure brought to bear upon those who have means that they will virtually shift their responsibility upon other men. Every man and woman who is under rule to God is to listen to His counsel. The workings of the arch-adversary of souls will be revealed in various ways. The deceitfulness of riches oft ensnares the soul.

There is a positive necessity for the steward of God to pray much that he may not be deceived in anywise in handling the Lord's goods. He is a steward, a partner in the firm, and if he moves not by impulse but from a sense of conviction that he must invest his Lord's goods to advance the glory of God in the work of saving souls to Jesus Christ, then [he] himself will be benefited eternally, if he holds fast his confidence and faith and trust in God firmly unto the end. -16MR, 258, 259 (1896).

If we turn over our stewardship to another by simply giving a large sum to the brethren we lose the blessing of knowing how our funds are being used and of having a part in planning their use. We lose the blessing of feeling as "partners in the firm." Ellen White wrote the above counsel to a brother of means.

Not Without Protest

Never should we withhold the Lord's tithe for any reason. In *Gospel Workers*, page 227, the Lord's servant penned this advice:

Some have been dissatisfied, and have said, "I will not longer pay my tithe; for I have no confidence in the way things are managed at the heart of the work." But will you rob God because you think the management of the work is not right? Make your complaint, plainly and openly, in the right spirit, to the proper ones. Send in your petitions for things to be adjusted and set in order; but do not withdraw from the work of God, and prove unfaithful, because others are not doing right. -GW, 227.

If we see that tithe funds are being misappropriated, through faulty management, we are admonished that we should "Make [our] complaint, plainly and openly," to the right person and in the right spirit. Never, never are we to say, "I will not longer pay my tithe."

If, after you have made the proper complaint in the proper manner, the matter is not corrected, there may be serious situations, such as the one reported by Ellen White in the Watson letter, when it would be proper for the

believer to do as she and the other sisters did. They placed their tithe where it would be used properly, though it was accomplished through a different avenue. (Ellen White's practice, however, and her words, do not grant wholesale permission for just anyone or everyone who may become disgruntled to disburse their own tithe rather than placing it in the regular channel.)

The main thrust of the above passage is that one should not, even if he has lost confidence in the management of the tithe, rob God's treasury by declaring, "I will not longer pay my tithe!" One would thereby be unfaithful and guilty himself for the reason that the administrators were being unfaithful. There is a difference between failure to pay tithe at all, and placing it into the Lord's treasury through a different channel.

Undeserving Ministers

At times we may observe that there are men on the conference payroll serving as ministers of the gospel who do not deserve to be paid out of the tithe. Once again it is proper for us to make a complaint or protest about this to the right persons. Call their attention to the fact that the Lord's servant has counselled as follows:

Those who give themselves to the ministry of the Word of God enter a most important work. The gospel ministry is a high and sacred calling. Properly done, the work of the gospel minister will add many souls to the fold. Many have made a mistake in receiving credentials. They will have to take up work to which they are better adapted than the preaching of the Word. They are being paid from the tithe, but their efforts are feeble, and they should not continue to be paid from the tithe. In many ways the ministry is losing its sacred character. -17MR, 305 (1905).

God's ministers must have the truth in their hearts in order to successfully present it to others. They must be sanctified by the truths they preach or they will be only stumbling blocks to sinners. Those who are called of God to minister in holy things are called to be pure in heart and holy in life. "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord." If God pronounces a woe upon those who are called to preach the truth and refuse to obey, a heavier woe rests upon those who take upon them this sacred work without clean hands and pure hearts. As there are woes for those who preach the truth while they are unsanctified in heart and life, so there are woes for those who receive and maintain the unsanctified in the position which they cannot fill. -2T, 552.

There are fearful woes for those who preach the truth, but are not sanctified by it, and also for those who consent to receive and maintain the unsanctified to minister to them in word and doctrine. -1T, 261, 262.

It would be poor policy to support from the treasury of God those who really mar and injure His work, and who are constantly lowering the standard of Christianity. -3T, 553.

After following the principle of protesting plainly and openly, concerning a minister whom we feel is not worthy to receive tithe, let us leave it with the Lord.

A Great Privilege

In closing we would ask, What is the responsibility of the believer?

The churches must arouse. The members must awake out of sleep and begin to inquire, How is the money which we put into the treasury being used? The Lord desires that a close search be made. -The Kress Collection, 120.

As members of God's remnant church, and as earnest followers of Jesus, we should all esteem it a great privilege and a distinct honor to be allowed the personal responsibility to return to God our tithes and offerings; to have a share in giving the good news of salvation to the world. Even our little children, from their tenderest years, may share in the joy of these privileges and responsibilities.

"THE BLUE BOOK"

Chapter 6

Another bit of little known Seventh-day Adventist history might be appropriate here. On May 8, 1907 a prominent Battle Creek physician, Dr. S_____, sent a long letter to Willie White concerning Sister White's prophetic ministry. He requested that Brother White give the letter to his Mother. Many of his remarks and questions were not complimentary, and seemed to cast doubt upon her prophetic ministry.

In October of that same year the doctor's letter to Willie was published as an 89 page book. A blue ink was used to print the cover. Thus the book came to be referred to as "The Blue Book."

One question, which Dr. S_____ asked was, "How should we pay tithe?" Two years earlier, Sister White had written her letter to Elder Watson relative to the payment and disbursement of tithe. A copy of this letter is found in our chapter 4. Dr. S_____ reproduced this letter in "The Blue Book," and commented on it rather approvingly, but he raised the question whether one should pay tithe through the church channels, or disperse it privately?

This bit of Adventist history took place before either of us were born, but about thirty years later, one of us met Dr. S_____. He also knew some of the members of the doctor's immediate family very well, including his wife. This personal acquaintance, makes this background story about "The Blue Book" of special interest to us, so now we will document further historical details.

Willie White was Ellen White's Special Assistant

Willie White, to whom the doctor's letter was addressed, worked closely with his mother and counselled with her freely on vital decisions. Further, we must remember that the Lord had called him to a special work and had placed His Spirit upon him and given him wisdom to serve as a helper to His messenger--even as some ancient prophets, such as , Elijah and Elisha had servants to assist them in their ministry. In vision, God had told Ellen White:

I have put My Spirit upon your son, W. C. White, that he may be your counselor....I will be with your son, and will be his counsellor. He will respect the truth that comes through you to the people. He will have wisdom to defend the truth; for I will take charge of his mind, and will give him sound judgment in the councils that he attends in connection with the work. -7MR, 294 (See also 1SM, 45, 55).

A Committee to Answer "The Blue Book"

A committee of leading men was designated to formulate replies to "The Blue Book," and various members were assigned certain topics or questions. The question concerning "Tithe--to whom it should be paid," was considered by the committee preparing the reply to "The Blue Book", so "very important" that they decided to "refer this to W. C. White"--(MEMORANDA'S _____TRACT, page 4; White Estate, D File 213.)

Regardless who was the author (s), the following statement was presented to the committee:

As to the proper use of the tithe: The outline of a statement upon this subject which was agreed upon was briefly this: To give ex tracts from Sister White's writings as to the tithe and its use; to show that her testimony and her own usual practice was in favor of paying the tithe into the regularly designated treasury, to be used under the counsel of the committees appointed for such purposes; to show further from her writings that when those who have charge of the expenditure of the tithe so far fail in the discharge of their duty that the regularly organized channels for the distribution of the tithe become hindrances to its proper use, then in order to carry out the divine plan that the tithe should be expended in the wisest manner for the furtherance of the work, individuals have the right to pay their tithes direct to needy fields; but that this involves a

considerable degree of personal responsibility, which must be assumed by those who decide to follow this plan. It was thought that this matter could be handled in a way to show that the departure from the regular lines was authorized only when the regular plans failed to be carried out by those in positions of responsibility. -Memorandum of Plans Agreed Upon in Dealing with "The Blue Book." (Emphasis Supplied.) From White Estate, File # 213.

At the time this was written (circa 1907) Ellen White was still living and was very active in her ministry. She was undoubtedly aware of the above statement. If Willie was the author, he worked very closely with his mother on many projects.

A Solemn Personal Responsibility

As it is pointed out in the formal statement above, one who assumes to himself the responsibility to disburse his own tithe directly, takes upon himself a very solemn responsibility! Especially when one realizes that:

There are only two places in the world where we can deposit our treasures--in God's storehouse or in Satan's, and all that is not devoted to Christ's service is counted on Satan's side and goes to strengthen his cause. -6T, 448.

When a member disburses his own tithe, he must determine whether or not the men or women whom he has chosen to receive his tithe are worthy and whether or not they can properly, according to God's word, receive tithe. We must consider: Do they serve as a part of God's treasury; as a part of His storehouse?

Conclusion

Surely this statement by Willie White concerning tithe paying, based upon the divine counsel through Ellen White, clarifies proper tithe paying. Under certain circumstances, there may be more than one channel or storehouse address through which tithe may be properly appropriated. The next chapter contains a warning to those who would call the organized church "Babylon" and therefore, urge others that they should not pay their tithe into the treasury of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

OPPOSITION TO THE COMMAND IN MALACHI 3

Chapter 7

Let us ever guard against becoming anti-organizational, as did some in Ellen White's day who were calling the church "Babylon" and who therefore opposed the plain command of God through Malachi to bring all the tithes into the treasury of God's house. It would be well for us to study and heed the following counsel very conscientiously:

Those who are carrying this message of error, denouncing the church as Babylon, are neglecting their God-appointed work, are in opposition to organization, in opposition to the plain command of God spoken by Malachi in regard to bringing all the tithes into the treasury of God's house, and imagine that they have a work to do in warning those whom God has chosen to forward His message of truth. These workers are not bringing greater efficiency to the cause and kingdom of God, but are engaged in a work similar to that in which the enemy of all righteousness is engaged. Let these men who are rising up against the ways and means ordained of God to forward His work in these days of peril divest themselves of all unscriptural views concerning the nature, office, and power of God's appointed agencies. -TM, 53.

The writers of this book wish to state that we subscribe to the above counsel and to all the counsels of inspiration relative to the payment and use of tithes and offerings to support gospel outreach. In our 114-page book, *Separation and Unity* published some years ago, we documented from inspired writings the fact that the true church is not now, and never will become, Babylon! One needs only to consider the ancient type. Zion (Jerusalem) never became Babylon and Babylon never became Zion.

True, there were faithful believers residing in Babylon who were called to come home to Zion and similarly there were to be found in Zion some spiritual Babylonians whose beliefs and sentiments were more in harmony with Babylon than with Zion.

So it is in our day. There are spiritual Babylonians in our midst who have tried to pollute our doctrines with Babylonish teachings. So also, there are true Israelites to be found in the churches of Babylon and these need to be called out of these churches and into the full Light of the truth entrusted to Zion--the remnant church.

The Purified Church

At the present time we find that as foretold "Every wind of doctrine [is] blowing" in the church relative to both doctrines and church finances. But we have been promised that after "a thorough reformation" and the sifting takes place "God's servants will [all] speak the same things" (8T 251).

Inspiration teaches us that the "sinners in Zion" (spiritual Babylonians--the tares) "will be shaken out" before the end and the faithful members of the present "church militant" will then become the "church triumphant:" "Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners" (Cant. 6:10) will she go forth to give the last warning message to the world.

Neglecting the Command of Malachi 3

Never should we neglect to obey any of God's commandments:

The tithe is sacred, reserved by God for Himself. It is to be brought into His treasury to be used to sustain the gospel laborers in their work. For a long time the Lord has been robbed because there are those who do not realize that the tithe is God's reserved portion. Some have been dissatisfied, and have said, "I will not longer pay my tithe; for I have no confidence in the way things are managed at the heart of the work." But will you rob God because you think the management of the work is not right? Make your complaint, plainly and openly, in the right spirit, to the proper ones. Send in your

petitions for things to be adjusted and set in order; but do not withdraw from the work of God, and prove unfaithful, because others are not doing right.

Read carefully the third chapter of Malachi, and see what God says about the tithe. If our churches will take their stand upon the Lord's word, and be faithful in paying their tithe into His treasury, more laborers will be encouraged to take up ministerial work. More men would give themselves to the ministry were they not told of the depleted treasury. There should be an abundant supply in the Lord's treasury, and there would be if selfish hearts and hands had not withheld the tithes, or made use of them to support other lines of work.

[This passage is written in the context of "various channels" or "lines," such as, the use of the tithe for "school purposes," "canvassers and colporteurs" etc. See page 226 of *Gospel Workers*, the paragraph just above the beginning of this-passage.]

God's reserved resources are to be used in no such haphazard way. The tithe is the Lord's, and those who meddle with it will be punished with the loss of their heavenly treasure, unless they repent. Let the work no longer be hedged up because the tithe has been diverted into various channels other than the one to which the Lord has said it should go. Provision is to be made for these other lines of work. They are to be sustained, but not from the tithe. God has not changed; the tithe is still to be used for the support of the ministry. -GW, 226, 227.

Conclusion

Surely, a balanced presentation of the various clear counsels on tithe and other church finance, as found in the writings of Ellen White, needs to be given wide circulation in order that tendencies to ignore or oppose selected counsels, and to substitute for them the policies or sayings of men, might be counteracted. It is these convictions which have impelled us to compile this present book.

The Lord's servant has written extensively concerning tithe paying, and when we study and accept her various counsels, rather than dwelling upon merely a selected few, we will obtain a balanced view of the entire topic. There seems to be no passage in all the inspired writings that commands that all tithe must be exclusively placed into the local church and local conference office, in order to consider that it has been placed into the Lord's treasury or storehouse.

Under normal circumstances, the preferred method is to pay our tithe into the treasury of the organized work. But, as shown in previous chapters, there are divinely revealed exceptions to this general rule. Therefore, as long as one recognizes the proper uses of the tithe, since tithe-paying is an individual matter between the believer and his Lord, should we not be more tolerant of those members who conscientiously believe that they should use the alternate, or direct, method of paying their tithe?

May God guide us all as we accept our personal responsibilities in dispersing our tithes and offerings!

A FRESH LOOK AT FUND RAISING

Chapter 8

The Lord's servant was very tactful in her fund-raising. Never did she resort to harangue to obtain funds for worthy projects. She recognized that the best recommendation for a worthy cause was its need, its nature, and its fruits; and that love must be the motive for giving. (Arbitrary rules should not even be made for tithe paying--see *The Desire of Ages*, 617.)

Freewill Offerings

True Christian benevolence springs from the principle of grateful love. Love of Christ cannot exist without corresponding love to those whom he came into the world to redeem. Love to Christ must be the ruling principle of the being, controlling all its emotions and directing all its energies. Redeeming love should awaken all that tender affection and self-sacrificing devotion that is possible to exist in the heart of man. When this is the case, no heart-stirring appeals will be needed to break through their selfishness and awaken their dormant sympathies, to call forth benevolent offerings for the precious cause of truth. - RH, December 15, 1874 (1 RH 153).

Systematic benevolence should not be made systematic compulsion. It is free-will offerings that are acceptable to God. -*Ibid*.

The plan of Moses in the wilderness to raise means was highly successful. There was no compulsion necessary. Moses made no grand feast. He did not invite the people to scenes of gaiety, dancing, and general amusement. Neither did he institute lotteries or anything of this profane order to obtain means to erect the tabernacle of God in the wilderness. God commanded Moses to invite the children of Israel to bring the offerings. Moses was to accept gifts of every man that gave willingly from his heart. These free-will offerings came in so great abundance that Moses proclaimed it was enough. They must cease their presents; for they had given abundantly, more than they could use. -RH, October 13, 1874 (1 RH 153).

How Shall We Solicit Funds?

We well remember during the great depression years when the White Memorial Church pioneered the use of a Bible Correspondence course in Los Angeles--years before the large national correspondence courses were sponsored by the church. The brother who led out in this work gave a soul-stirring Sabbath sermon on the coming of Christ, and at the end he incidentally mentioned that the group needed \$300 so as to enable them to add a certain number of names to their student rolls. The congregation consisted not of wealthy people. Most were poor medical and nursing students and a few underpaid hospital employees. A collection was taken, and guess what? One thousand dollars was raised right on the spot. No harangue, no pleading, no cajoling. A genuine and worthy need was presented in simplicity, God's people recognized the need, and under the Holy Spirit's promptings responded. How different from some of the camp-meeting fund raising sermons sometimes heard today!

Appealing Directly to the People

In her search for funds with which to carry on a worthy work, Ellen White often bypassed the "regular" channels and appealed directly to the people. To Dr. Kellogg she wrote:

Dr. Kellogg, I am perplexed to know what to do for means, but I do not ask you to take this burden upon you. God forbid that you should have any unnecessary burdens to bear. One thing I shall do: I shall make appeals to every church, irrespective of any persons in responsible positions. There is a work to be done in this country, and the people who have had the benefit of my husband's labor and my own in building up the work on the Pacific

Coast and in Battle Creek must understand how hard we have labored, and help us. I do not call on the conference. I come to the people and appeal to them for help. If we can once get established, we shall work without assistance, but we must have help now. We cannot do without it. -16MR, 290 (1899).

Independent Treasuries

When Sutherland and Magan launched their "independent" work at Madison early in this century, even though she was faced with opposition from church administrators, Ellen White clearly stated that these self-supporting workers should be allowed to solicit funds directly from church members.

Yet in another case, a year or two earlier, where an autonomous worker (also in the southland) decided that he should operate a treasury independent of the Union Conference, Sister White advised against the idea as she said, "I hope that he will never have such a treasury" (17 MR 271; MS 123, 1902).

Why would she approve some self-supporters to have a separate treasury and another not to have one? We found the answer near the end of the manuscript, she said, "I cannot give countenance to _____ operating independently, because I know that he is not a close financier." (*Ibid*)

There we have a good reason why in a specific situation there should not be an independent treasury. She did not in that passage say that there should never be an independent treasury for self-supporting ministries. In the case at hand there was a specific reason.

When God Takes the Reins

Unless those who can help in ----- are aroused to a sense of their duty, they will not recognize the work of God when the loud cry of the third angel shall be heard. When light goes forth to lighten the earth, instead of coming up to the help of the Lord, they will want to bind about His work to meet their narrow ideas. Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning. There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world. God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness. -TM, 300.

Some day the task of fund-raising may be taken out of the hands of men. God will take the leadership in His own hands; and then surprise men by the simple means He will use. Yes, God will take the work away from human planners and into His own hands and will use "simple means" and simple men who will perform His work "contrary to any human planning."

These eleventh-hour laborers in the Lord's vineyard may need material support. God will provide. He may inspire fellow-laymen to furnish needed assistance. The above passage indicates that the leaders who had always wanted to "dictate" will not be permitted to lead out in that great work.

A Modern Example

In the past God's work has sometimes been supported "contrary to any human planning." We will relate a case in point that happened almost forty years ago. A self-supporting Adventist medical missionary came back from a mission field and related that the need was great in a certain locale. The church building was in disrepair. There was no money in the mission budget to adequately support a pastor and no money to hire a native teacher for the children of the believers.

A lay family who learned of this, decided to do something about the need. The three sub-teen children in the family decided to sponsor the teacher which in those days could be hired for \$25.00 per month. The children worked, ran errands, sold produce etc. and for many months they personally supported the teacher by sending the funds through the self-supporting mission worker. The mother in the household had a small savings account. She spent it for housing for the native minister and funds were secured to repair the small church building. Soon the work was reconstituted in that locale; all through the finances supplied directly by one lay family.

If this project had to be planned and sponsored through the General Conference, it might have taken a long time to get it into the budget--or it may have continued to be neglected.

The final irony was that about a dozen years later a Sabbath School Mission quarterly described that a gospel work at this location which had died some years earlier was now functioning once again and the "church bells were ringing at _____." Not a word was said that the Lord had brought this about through a single lay family in the United States and the interest and work of the self-supporting mission worker. The family responsible craved no recognition. They were happy that the mission work had been restored.

We cite another example showing that private donations are legitimate and bring a blessing to God's cause. Immediately after World War II when Central Europe was a shambles there was great need amongst our Seventh-day Adventist people. Specifically, they needed nurses' uniforms for the Adventist nurses. They appealed to the General Conference for help. But there was no way to get it into the budget on short notice.

Someone in Takoma Park was acquainted with the self-supporting efforts of a medical worker in Loma Linda. For years he had accepted donations from friends to purchase medical supplies for missions overseas. The appeal came to him from Takoma Park. He immediately secured the uniform materials and shipped it overseas to quickly meet the urgent need in central Europe. Thus, God's storehouse does not have a single street address. Is this not a great truth?

Yes, the storehouse can have many addresses; wherever there is a need in the gospel vineyard of the Lord. This is true even in some of the Lord's vineyards that are being cultivated by self-supporting, or "independent" workers. (See the next chapter.) Surely, God's people need to ask Him for wisdom to know to which of His storehouses they should give particular offerings! He is the owner of all we have. We are only stewards.

No Eloquent Appeals to Excite Sympathy

God designs that the exercise of benevolence shall be purely voluntary, not having recourse even to eloquent appeals to excite sympathy. "God loveth a cheerful giver." He is not pleased to have His treasury replenished with forced supplies. The loyal hearts of His people, rejoicing in the saving truth for this time, will, through love and gratitude to Him for this precious light, be earnest and anxious to aid with their means in sending the truth to others. The very best manner in which to give expression to our love for our Redeemer is to make offerings to bring souls to the knowledge of the truth. The plan of redemption was entirely voluntary on the part of our Redeemer, and it is the purpose of Christ that all our benevolence should be freewill offerings. -3T, 413.

Let us not forget that fund-raising is never to be an end in itself. It is simply a needful step to bring the necessary material aid to various places in God's vineyard so that souls may be saved for His kingdom through gospel outreach; through the love of Jesus reflected to Lost humanity.

AUTONOMOUS WORKERS

Chapter 9

Said Jesus, "Go work to day in My vineyard" (Matt. 21:28). Concerning the largeness and needs of the vineyard, Jesus elaborates:

The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest. -Luke 10:2

But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come. -Matt. 10:23

Individually we are all responsible to help answer this prayer.

When speaking of the "kingly power" that was being practiced in our church by some of the leadership during Ellen White's lifetime, she often directed her attention and comments to their "kingly" attitude toward autonomous workers. Today these workers are commonly referred to as "independent ministries." In her day they were considered to be working in "irregular lines" in contra-distinction to the workers employed by the conference who were spoken of as working in the "regular lines."

"Regular" and "Irregular"

The term "regular" to most persons denotes something normal, proper and orderly. By way of contrast, the term "irregular" can be taken to mean something out of the ordinary patterns of things, something less than regular, or sometimes even flawed or off-color.

But as we shall find, men do not always use terms properly. During those early days, it appears that the term "irregular lines" was by some used pejoratively. In any event, Ellen White accepted the use of their terms, but surprised the brethren by speaking very highly and approvingly of many who worked in the "irregular" channels.

At about the turn of the century there seemed to be considerable agitation amongst some conference leaders toward some of the workers who, though not employed in the "regular lines," were receiving donated funds from church members to help defray their expenses in preaching the gospel. The Lord's servant was very much concerned over the efforts of these brethren to devalue, criticize and denigrate their labors and to stop the flow of funds to these humble self-sacrificing workers. She objected strenuously in pointed communications to various highly placed leaders. In some of her communications, she pointed out that the Lord's vineyard is large and there is room for all to work and efforts to denigrate the work of the autonomous workers ought to cease. We will shortly quote some surprising comments from her pen regarding the "regular" versus "irregular" workers.

Kingly Power and Autonomous Workers

A few quotations will establish the fact that the Spirit of Prophecy encourages autonomous workers:

Now I want to say, God has not put any kingly power in our ranks to control this or that branch of the work. The work has been greatly restricted by the efforts to control it in every line. Here is a vineyard presenting its barren places that have received no labor. And if one should start out to till these places in the name of the Lord, unless he should get the permission of the men in a little circle of authority he would receive no help. But God means that his workers shall have help. If a hundred should start out on a mission to these destitute fields, crying unto God, he would open the way before them. Let me tell you, if your heart is in the work, and you have faith in God, you need not depend upon the sanction of any minister or any people; if you go right to work in the name of the Lord, in a humble way doing what you can to teach the truth, God will vindicate you. -GCB, April 3, 1901, p. 26.

Also in 1901 Sister White wrote to Elder Daniells stating that at that time, "the 'regular lines' have not done the work which God desired to see accomplished." She added: "Divine wisdom must have abundant room in which to work. It is to advance without asking permission or support from those who have taken to themselves a kingly power." (*Spalding-Magan Collection*, 174, 175).

A Letter to Brother Johnston

Apparently Brother Johnston had joined in criticising Brother Shireman, an autonomous worker. On August 6, 1901, Ellen White wrote him as follows:

God is displeased with the spirit you have manifested. Your insinuations and criticisms are most unbecoming. ... Do you know that you are criticizing the work of a man who has been visited by the angels of the Lord? Who has sent you to a field where a good work is in progress, to show your zeal by tearing it in pieces? If this is working in the "Regular lines", it is high time that we worked in irregular lines. ...

It is time that church members understood that everywhere there is a work to be done in the Lord's vineyard. No one is to wait for a regular process before they make any efforts. They should take up the work right where they are. There should be many at work in what are called "irregular lines." If one hundred laborers would step out of the "regular lines," and take up self sacrificing work, such as Brother Shireman has done, souls would be won to the Lord. And the workers would understand by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. -*Spalding-Magan Collection*, 194, 195.

In a previous passage, Ellen White had asserted that "if a hundred should start out on [self-sacrificing] missions," funds would be provided. In the above passage she adds, that if one hundred would step out of the "regular lines" and work in "irregular lines" "souls would be won to the Lord." Indeed she seems to suggest that it would be helpful (at least in 1901) if many conference employees would step out of the organized work and join in the self-supporting work!

We shall note as we proceed that she also asserted that autonomous workers had every right to be financially supported in their soul-winning labors for the Lord, by such persons as wished to contribute to their sustenance. Indeed, they were permitted to even solicit funds from church members. Sister White was so impressed with the efficiency of these "irregulars" that she expressed the desire that it would be well if many of the "regulars" would become "irregulars."

Kingly Power and Finances

Kingly power applied to fellow workers in God's vineyard by the "regulars" did not limit itself to methods of gospel labor and territorial boundaries. Administrators were also trying to limit or restrain the financial resources available to volunteer workers in the Lord's vineyard. The Lord owns not only the vineyard but the silver and gold and the cattle upon a thousand hills are all His and He is free to choose to whom among His witnesses He may desire to make material resources available to use in gospel outreach, and from which hands of stewards of means such support should come. Leaders must use great caution in trying to prescribe rules to govern their fellow men in such personal matters as raising funds for soul winning.

In that same letter written to Elder Daniells in 1901, regarding such matters Ellen White clearly set forth the following principles:

The Macedonian cry is coming from every quarter. Shall men go to the "regular lines" to see whether they will be permitted to labor, or shall they go out and work as best they can, depending on their own abilities and on the help of the Lord, beginning in a humble way and creating an interest in the truth in places in which nothing has been done to give the warning message?...

God grant that the voices which have been so quickly raised to say that all the money invested in the work must go through the appointed channel at Battle Creek, shall not be

heard. The people to whom God has given his means are amenable to him alone. It is their privilege to give direct aid and assistance to missions.


-Spalding-Magan Collection, 176, 177.


Here she (the Lord's servant) asserted that all benevolent funds need not pass through the channels of the church. This is here stated as a principle, and surely that principle still applies today.

Speaking of funds raised from individual church members by "independent and self-supporting auxiliary enterprises," notwithstanding the fact that these funds did not pass through the regular church channels, Ellen White stated: "The money they receive is God's money." (*Spalding-Magan Collection*, 451).

Individual Responsibility

Through the Spirit of Prophecy, counsel was also given to individual contributors of funds concerning giving both to the conference and autonomous workers:

 **Some men or councils may say, that is just what we wish you to do. The Conference Committee will take your capital and will appropriate it for this very object. But the Lord has made us individually his stewards. We each hold a solemn responsibility to invest this means ourselves. A portion it is right to place in the treasury to advance the general interests of the work; but the steward of means will not be guiltless before God, unless, so far as he is able to do this, he shall use that means as circumstances shall reveal the necessity. We should be ready to help the suffering, and to set in operation plans to advance the truth in various ways. It is not in the province of the Conference or any other organization to relieve us of this stewardship. If you lack wisdom, go to God, ask him for yourself, and then work with an eye single to his glory. ...**

 **While it is not your property that you are handling, yet you are made responsible for its wise investment, for its use or abuse. God does not lay upon you the burden of asking the conference or any council if you shall use means entrusted to you by God as you shall see fit, to advance the work of God in destitute towns and cities, and impoverished localities. (Letter to O. A. Olsen) -EGW 1888 Materials, 1443-1445.**

Kingly Power and the Control of Means

We continue to quote from a letter Ellen White wrote to Elder Daniells:

[Men] have taken to themselves a kingly power. In the past one set of men have tried to keep in their own hands the control of all the means coming from the churches, and have used this means in a most disproportionate manner, erecting expensive buildings where such large buildings were unnecessary and uncalled for, and leaving needy places without help or encouragement. They have taken upon themselves the grave responsibility of retarding the work where the work should have been advanced. ... For years the same routine, the same "regular way" of working has been followed, and God's work has been greatly hindered. ... We look to see whether new fields have been worked whether the barren portions of the Lord's vineyard have received attention. We see that most of those who have sought to begin work in new regions, as Brother Shireman has done, have been discouraged by those at the heart of the work, for fear that they would need money from the treasury. Yet from that same treasury money has been used to erect imposing and unnecessarily expensive buildings. If men had received the wisdom of God, they would have exercised justice and equity in regard to the outlay of means. All parts of the Lord's vineyard would have received a just proportion of help.

-Spalding-Magan Collection, 174-176.

In this same letter she also advises:

Let every yoke be broken. Let men awaken to the realization that they have an individual responsibility.

The present showing [June 1901] is sufficient to prove to all who have the true missionary spirit that the "regular lines" may prove a failure and a snare. God helping his people, the circle of kings who dared to take such great responsibilities shall never again exercise their unsanctified power in the so-called "regular lines". -*Ibid*, 175.

Self-Supporting Work

In 1907 and 1908 there was still a problem concerning kingly power and autonomous workers and finances, for in a series of letters, the servant of the Lord wrote concerning this. On April 10, 1907 she addressed Elder J. S. Washburn:

You have been represented to me as holding yourself aloof from these brethren [autonomous workers, Sutherland and Magan]. Had you gone to them in the spirit of Christ, and studied with them the needs of the field, you would have said, These brethren need some of the means we are handling. Had you inquired into their needs, and advocated the dividing with them of the means given for the work in that field, considering that "All ye are brethren," you would have done a work well pleasing to the Lord. ...

The words of Christ, "All ye are brethren," should ever be kept in mind.

-*Spalding-Magan Collection*, 410.

Ellen White suggested to Elder Washburn, that the conference might share some of their funds with the autonomous workers, rather than casting covetous eyes on the means raised by them for gospel work. The word of the Lord through His servant was that if conferences would actually vote to divide their means with needy and worthy autonomous brethren, this would be well pleasing to the Lord.

On May 14, 1907, Ellen White addressed P. T. Magan:

Some have entertained the idea that because the school at Madison is not owned by a conference organization, those who are in charge of the school should not be permitted to call upon our people for the means that is greatly needed to carry on their work. This idea needs to be corrected. In the distribution of the money that comes into the Lord's treasury, you are entitled to a portion just as verily as are those connected with other needy enterprises that are carried forward in harmony with the Lord's instruction.

The Lord Jesus will one day call to account those who would so tie your hands that it is almost impossible for you to move in harmony with the Lord's biddings. "The silver and the gold is mine, saith the Lord, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." -*Ibid*, 411.

She continued by instructing professors Sutherland and Magan not to feel troubled about accepting gifts and free-will offerings directly from the members. You are just as much entitled to ask for money for your worthy project "as are any other men". (*Ibid*)

Let us note once again that money given by the members directly to a worthy project, even though it by-passes the regular church channels is referred to by the Lord's servant as "money that comes into the Lord's treasury."

Self Supporting Work

The Lord has instructed me that, from the first, the work in Huntsville and Madison should have received adequate help. But instead of this help being rendered promptly there has been long delay. And in the matter of the Madison school, there has been a standing off from them because they were not under the ownership and control of some Conference. This is a question that should sometimes be considered, but it is not the

Lord's plan that means should be withheld from Madison, because they are not bound to the conference. The attitude which some of our brethren have assumed toward this enterprise shows that it is not wise for every working agency to be under the dictation of conference officers. There are some enterprises under certain conditions, that will produce better results if standing alone. ...

There are among our church members faithful souls who feel a burden for those who know not the truth for this time. But one will say to such, The conference will not support you if you go here or there. To such souls I would say, "Pray to God for guidance as to where you shall go; follow the directions of the Holy Spirit, and go, whether the conference will pay your expenses or not. "Go work today in My vineyard," Christ commands. When you have done your work in one place, go to another. Angels of God will go with you, if you follow the leadings of the Spirit. --Letter 314, 1907. (To Elders Daniells and Evans, September 23, 1907.) -8MR, 202-207.

The above letter clearly states that it is not always God's plan that an institution or a missionary enterprise should be controlled by a Conference. At this juncture we would urge that you turn to Appendix A at the back of this book wherein Ellen White expresses this principle in even stronger terms.

Soliciting Finances for Autonomous Work

Surely, the principles given above and in the following excerpt written on January 6, 1908, addressed to "Those Bearing Responsibilities in Washington and Other Centers," would apply to other worthy self-supporting work as well as to Sutherland and Magan at Madison. In this letter Ellen White clearly enunciates the principle of fund-raising and autonomous workers so that it cannot be misunderstood. Note the heading under which MR #1445 was originally released by the White Estate:

Soliciting Finances Not to Be Restricted

God has given me a message for those men who are carrying responsibilities in Washington and other centers of the work. ...

The Lord has directed Brethren Sutherland and Magan, men of sound principles, to establish the work at Madison. ...

It is the privilege of these brethren to receive gifts from any of our people whom the Spirit of the Lord impresses to help. They should have means--God's means--with which to do the Lord's work. -20MR, 99 (MR #1445, 1).

In this same letter, she states that, "They should be allowed to go to the people to solicit help;" "Forbiddings are not to be exercised by the conference, or by others who feel that they have authority to do so." She adds that "The people are to be, not forbidden, but encouraged, to give of their means to this work". (*Ibid*)

Further, in this letter Ellen White enunciates the principle once again that all monies need not pass through the regular channel:

Do not worry lest some means shall go to those who are trying to do missionary work in a quiet way. All the means is not to be handled by one organization or one party. The Lord works through various agencies. If there are those who desire to step into new fields and take up new lines of labor, forbid them not, but encourage them to do so. -20 MR, 102 (MR #1445, 4).

We should note once again that "means" given directly to autonomous workers by the members of the church is "God's means" even though it does not pass through the coffers of the conference. Ellen White asserts that "All means is not to be handled by one organization."

Placing Restrictions Upon Autonomous Workers

Despite all the pointed counsel Ellen White had given to the brethren over and over again for many years, including the early part of 1908, yet in the General Conference Committee of 1908, the brethren passed resolutions and published them in the *Review* placing "many restrictions" upon the autonomous workers. Is it any wonder that on May 26, 1908, Ellen White could not sleep past midnight, and so was up writing a letter "To the Officers of the General Conference:"

When I read the resolutions published in the Review, placing so many restrictions upon those who may be sent out to gather funds for the building up of institutions in needy and destitute fields, I was sorry for the many restrictions. I can but feel sad, for unless the converting grace of God comes into the conferences, a course will be taken that will bring the displeasure of God upon them. We have had, enough of the spirit of forbidding. ...

When the officers of the General Conference allow such restrictions to be made, they give evidence that they need clearer spiritual eyesight, that the heavenly anointing is not upon them. ...

A much greater work would have been done if men had not been so zealous to watch and hinder some who were seeking to obtain means from the people to carry forward the work of the Lord. -*Spalding-Magan Collection*, 435.

The Lord's messenger had continued to appeal to the brethren of the conference. Instead of placing "walls and bands around [these autonomous] workers of experience," she counselled, by making "man-made rules and restrictions" you--"the conference workers" should "strengthen and support and labor in harmony with" them. *Ibid*, 412.

When God lays a work upon individuals, men are not to reject His sanction. God must not be impeded in the working out of His plans by man's interference, but this has been done again and again. -14MR, 24 (MR #1084, 8).

The Lord Will Honor Them

Christ's servants who are true and faithful may be unrecognized and unhonored by men who may be united with Seventh-day Adventists, but the Lord will honor them. They will not be forgotten by God. He will honor them by His presence because they have been found true and faithful. -16MR, 299 (MR #1228, 5).

Already we have noted in other passages that God will also honor such faithful servants with means, donated by His faithful lay-stewards.

Conclusion

From the extracts which we have quoted in this chapter one would doubt that Ellen White, if she were alive today, would tolerate the conferences if they should try to proscribe the activities of autonomous ministries who are, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, giving the truths of the Bible, including the messages of the three angels of Revelation 14, to the people.

We would also have to conclude that she would not be critical of those who exercise their God-given duty to decide for themselves where they should place means for the support of gospel work. Funds to support autonomous work, she says, can be given in addition "to the portion it is right to place in the [conference] treasury to advance the general interests of the work" of the "regular lines" (EGW 1888 Materials, 1443).

Are not the principles laid down through the Spirit of Prophecy at about the turn of the century (the early 1900s) still valid principles for us in the latter part of the century? Principles never change. They are eternal!

CARNIVALS IN OUR MIDST

Chapter 10

The story begins shortly after the Hebrews left Egypt for their journey to the Promised Land. While Moses was up in the mount receiving from the hand of God the Holy Oracles of the Ten Commandments, the people celebrated around a golden calf in a carnival-like spirit with dancing, singing, feasting and licentiousness.

Instead of offering their praise and burnt sacrifices to Jehovah God (see 3T 296) they offered their burnt offerings (on an altar erected by Aaron) before the golden calf. Thus they placed their offerings into Satan's storehouse (see 6T 448).

The music that accompanied their celebration at the foot of Mount Sinai was so loud and raucous that Joshua, as he descended the mountain with Moses, thought it was "the noise of war." But Moses said, NO! "It is the noise of them that sing" (see Exodus 32). They sang, they danced, they celebrated about the golden calf! As a result of their placing both their allegiance and offerings into "Satan's storehouse" many were punished with death! This experience at Horeb should have been forever after a lesson for God's people not to repeat such an orgy.

Baal-Peor

But less than forty years later they again entertained the spirit of a carnival. While encamped on the east bank of the Jordan, through ecumenism, they fell into lusting. Through the worldly appeal of the "music and dancing" of the heathen nations located in that area, they were soon deceived into joining with them in their licentious, carnival-like idolatrous worship! Once again God showed His displeasure [See Numbers 25 & PP Chap. 41]. This time a terrible plague fell upon them and tens of thousands died! Were not these things written for our admonition that we might not experience lusting after "music and dancing" patterned after the false churches?

Shortly After 1844

From the experience at Baal-Peor we now traverse the centuries of history until we arrive at the year 1844. Just as the golden calf experience occurred near the beginning of ancient Israel's journey to Canaan, so, shortly after 1844, the beginning of the remnant's journey heavenward, there was a very startling development in our own church history. Ellen White describes the fanaticism which arose in various places as producing "scenes of excitement and tumult"--a carnival-like atmosphere:

There was much excitement, with noise and confusion. One could not tell what was piped or what was harped. Some...were jumping, dancing, and shouting. -2SM, 34.

Through the servant of the Lord, God sent a message of denunciation to them:

I bore my testimony in the name of the Lord, placing His rebuke upon these manifestations. -Ibid.

Should not this experience with its rebuke from God, have been forever after a lesson for God's people that they would never again attempt to serve God in a carnival-like spirit of confusion?

A Carnival – 1900!

Yet, in about 1900, in the state of Indiana, the believers fell into a similar wild fanaticism; the president of the conference not only tolerated this activity, he was actually one of its sponsors. The Lord's servant actually likens their manner of worship to "a carnival" inspired by "Satanic agencies."

In describing this development in Indiana, Ellen White used the occasion to prophesy and to warn us (our present generation) that this same type of carnival-like worship would be introduced into our Seventh-day Adventist Church once again--"just before the close of probation!"

A Prophecy – For the 1990s

Ellen White's prophecy for our time follows:

The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, in such a bedlam of noise. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time. ... The powers of satanic agencies blend with the din and noise, to have a carnival, and this is termed the Holy Spirit's working. ... I was instructed to say that at these demonstrations demons in the form of men are present... -2SM, 36, 37.

Were not these Seventh-day Adventists in Indiana serving "another god" as truly as were the ancient Israelites?

Fulfillment of the Prophecy

Dear readers, the predictions foretold in the above prophecy are now, in the 1990s [and onward], meeting their fulfillment before our very eyes and our ears!

Faithful members have expressed grave concern over the recent introduction into some of our churches of Pentecostal-like services with loud music, drum beating, arm and body swaying--and sometimes dancing! These churches call themselves Seventh-day Adventist Celebration-type churches. We have viewed a number of video tapes of these carnival-like religious Sabbath School and church services. One celebration minister said: "We use drums We use lots of drummers--twelve to fifteen since April."

Have we not as a people disregarded the prophecy informing us that this very type of worship would once again enter into our midst "just before the close of probation?" And that it would again be sponsored by "satanic agencies" (2SM 37)? Have we not as a people largely failed to recognize that these present activities are an exact fulfillment of this prophecy?

All Five Are Similar

Similar fanaticisms are "an invention of Satan" and are inspired by "demons" whether they occur around the golden calf at Horeb, at Baal-Peor, shortly after 1844, in Indiana in 1900, or in the 1990's, [or even in these very days]!

Brethren and sisters, as you review the five similar fanaticisms (both ancient and modern) which we have herein cited, can you not see how much they have in common, and how urgent it is at this time, that we heed the lessons that God would have us learn from all five?

Please notice that even as the conference president in Indiana was in 1900 deeply involved in this fanaticism, so today there are conference administrators who either tolerate, approve, or sponsor the celebration format. All five have in common a "bedlam of noise," raucous music, bodily activities, with some form of dancing as well as unsound religious concepts.

Into Our Camp Meetings

At the turn of the century, it was foretold that this carnival-type worship would be brought into our camp meetings just before the close of probation. Ninety years later we are observing its fulfillment. For "every uncouth thing" has been brought into our camp meetings this summer (1990). Wild music with drums, shouting, and dancing--all were demonstrated.

We viewed video scenes of a large 1990 SDA camp meeting, and emblazoned across the front of the large youth tent was a huge sign bearing the message in large letters: OUTRAGEOUS YOUTH CELEBRATION! Speaking of outrageous--it really was!

Two Storehouses

By now the reader may be wondering, "But what does all this diversion to the topic of carnivals and fanaticisms have to do with the financial storehouse of God's church which is the topic of this book?" We reply, "It has very much to do with the topic of the storehouse."

Consider the fact that vast sums of money, given by members of the Seventh-day Adventist church, are devoted to the propagation and maintenance of the celebration church activities. Millions of dollars can easily be expended on these activities. One such congregation has been paying \$7000 per month for rental of a Pentecostal church building and we hear that this rental expense has recently been almost doubled. When we consider that there are only two types of treasuries in this world where individuals can place their benevolent funds, this subject takes on a great deal of importance: for while one treasury is God's storehouse; the other one is Satan's storehouse! Which shall we support?

God's Storehouse or Satan's Storehouse

Never should we forget that,

There are only two places in the world where we can deposit our treasures--in God's storehouse or in Satan's, and all that is not devoted to Christ's service is counted on Satan's side and goes to strengthen his cause.

The Lord designs that the means entrusted to us shall be used in building up His kingdom. His goods are committed to His stewards that they may be carefully traded upon and bring back a revenue to Him in the saving of souls unto eternal life. And these souls in their turn will become stewards of the truth, to co-operate with the great firm in the interests of the kingdom of God. -6T, 448.

Celebration Churches and Finances

Faithful members are openly wondering if financial support should be given to local churches that are using wild cacophonous, unholy music, worldly dramatics etc.--all practices which have been spoken against in the *Testimonies for the Church*. Can Christians afford to supply funds for Satan's storehouse? Or offer them to a false god?

"The tithe ... is to be especially devoted to the support of those who are bearing God's message to the world" (WM 227), and not to those who are promoting Satan's messages, his music and methods of worship. All of the funds we hold are sacred unto the Lord and we should use them only for righteousness and to support God's true cause in the earth.

Our very salvation may depend upon our ability to recognize the true storehouse! Surely, it is timely for us to take a fresh look at both of the storehouses: Christ's storehouse and Satan's. After we do this we might ask ourselves, "How can judgment-bound Adventists in clear conscience support the raucous celebration exhibitions either by their attendance or by their means?"

Every Man's Duty

It is not our duty to dictate, or even suggest, "how" or "where" in God's treasury or storehouse the faithful members should pay their tithes and offerings. That is the prerogative of the Holy Spirit speaking to individual

hearts. But it is surely every man's duty to warn fellow-believers against placing their means into Satan's storehouse.

Only if we are fully surrendered to Jesus and are studying to know the revealed will of God, can we with confidence know that the Holy Spirit will lead us in our expressions of giving, in our stewardship, so that we can fully rest in Christ as to where and how to pay our tithes and offerings.

We no longer have a living prophet, but she and earlier prophets have recorded for us the true facts about the four prior "carnival-like apostasies" which we have discussed herein. Our messenger to the remnant has also foretold that there would come into our midst one more apostasy of the same type "just before the close of probation." Having considered that all five have similar characteristics (many being identical) can any earnest Seventh-day Adventist doubt that the present celebration excitement as commonly practiced is equally as contrary to God's will as were the other four? Can anyone doubt that all five would, in the sight of God, be classed with Satan's storehouse?

May God have mercy upon His people, Israel, in this day of trial--"just before the close of probation!"

A SHORTAGE IN THE STOREHOUSE

Chapter 11

Earlier in this volume we called attention to the fact that mission offerings as to percentage of tithe have, over a period of years, fallen from 65% to 6%. The storehouse brethren do not explain why this terrible fall has taken place. But perhaps we could find some clues if we should look into our church history. This is not the first time in the history of God's people that a situation comparable to this has arisen. At other times the opposite has been true, there have been times when God's people have given more than was needed.

The Plan of Moses

After the golden calf episode was ended and the severest offenders had died, God told Moses to invite the congregation to make free-will offerings of various precious and useful materials to facilitate the building of the tabernacle and its furnishings.

The plan of Moses in the wilderness to raise means was highly successful. There was no compulsion necessary. Moses made no grand feast. He did not invite the people to scenes of gaiety, dancing, and general amusement. -Counsels on Stewardship, 203.

Take ye from among you an offering unto the LORD: whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD; gold, and silver, and brass, And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, -Exodus 35:5, 6

There followed a long list of various materials, such as precious stones, oil, sweet incense etc.

After the need was presented in plain, simple language to the people, the Lord gave them generous hearts. They brought so many offerings, there was such a super-abundance, that Moses finally told the people to stop giving, for they had given more than was needed! There was a surplus in "the storehouse!" This illustrates that God's people will respond in giving when their hearts are open to the moving of the Holy Spirit, and when there are also faithful stewards, such as Moses, in charge of the storehouse.

Shortages

Years ago the remnant church members gave large offerings when the needs were placed before them, but as we have mentioned earlier, in recent years the mission offerings, though greatly needed, have drastically fallen off.

In very fact other offerings than mission offerings have also decreased. One of our largest union conferences reports that their "revolving fund" which is used to help build churches, schools, etc. is very low. Pastors have been asked to place notices regarding this shortage in the church bulletins, with the request that if any members have money to loan to this fund they should contact their conference offices. How different this is from the "building fund" that was gathered by Moses in the wilderness! Speaking of the world fund, Don E. Robinson, under-treasurer of the General Conference writes: "The world budget for 1991 will be the tightest since the Great Depression. How are we to accomplish our great global mission? . . . Sacred funds must be stretched. Economy is essential." AR Oct. 11, 1990. What might happen when a depression actually strikes? Only God knows!

In his address to the church at Indianapolis this past summer (1990), our new General Conference president indicated concern over fiscal matters, implying a diversion of financial resources:

When leaders project a clear vision to the church, fewer people will feel that they must go outside of the church to fulfill their dream. When leaders build confidence in our church by openness, honesty, integrity, and involvement of all groups, the resources that presently flow out of the church will then flow through the church to accomplish our mission. The members' trust in the leadership is indispensable. -Adventist Review, July 19, 1990.

Past History

We have already referred to the administrative chicanery of Eli's sons far back in antiquity [see PP Chap.56]. Also to the financial and administrative chicanery at the temple storehouse in Jerusalem during Nehemiah's absence. We will now consider some administrative malfeasance that took place in more recent history, about one hundred years ago, which resulted in a failure of the members to supply the treasury.

During the last decade of the nineteenth century there were two prominent administrators at the General Conference level to whom Ellen White wrote numerous letters and counsels, trying to get them to change their ways. So uncooperative and obstructive were their activities to God's purposes for His people that God's servant wrote to them in 1896: "For reasons that you can give, God is not moving upon the hearts of his people to supply the treasury." _What? When God's people fail to bring all their tithes and offerings into the central storehouse, can there be a reason other than the fault of the individual members themselves? In her letter to these administrators, Ellen White told them that they themselves understood the reasons for this shortage in the treasury, for they were responsible for it!

Could God possibly be "responsible" to the extent that He did not move upon the hearts of believers to be generous? We quote here a pertinent extract from Ellen White's letter of 1896 to these two men:

A condition of things has been brought about, that, unless God in mercy shall interpose, will work disaster to his cause. Inexperienced minds are being troubled at the outlook. For reasons that you can give, God is not moving upon the hearts of his people to supply the treasury. When you shall receive the Holy Spirit's unction by returning unto the Lord with full purpose of heart, you will see yourselves in a new light altogether. You who are finite, erring, and unsanctified, have supposed that God's children were put under your jurisdiction, for you to plan for them, and bring them to your terms. The policy you have labored so hard to establish in your connection with the work is an offense to God. He has never justified any arrangement, through organization, discipline, or laws, whereby men who have evidenced that they are not susceptible to the Holy Spirit's moving shall use their power to sustain others in a like disregard of the Spirit's work. -*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1366, 1367.

Obviously, the responsibility lay not with God, but with the two administrators upon whom the "guilt will rest upon" in this matter (*Ibid*)

These two men were so far from God that in the same letter Ellen White wrote: "...your course is an offense to God. And you have so long refused the evidence of the operation of the Holy Spirit that it is questionable whether you will ever again recognize the light from heaven. It may even appear as darkness to you, until the time shall come when every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess to God." (*Ibid*, 1365)

It seems there was "fault" and "guilt" aplenty in this historical episode of one hundred years ago. The servant of the Lord assigned guilt, not only upon the two men themselves, but upon men who "yoked up with" them despite the light given, and "upon those who [had] placed increasing responsibilities upon [them]" (*Ibid*, 1366)

A Grievous Robbery of God

Her many messages over a period of years seemed to make no impression or change in these men. Their wrong influence had permeated not only Battle Creek, but other leaders and the world field in general. So it was that at that time, God chose not to move upon the hearts of the believers "to supply the treasury." Says Ellen White: "It is a grievous robbery of God to become so blinded as you are today because you have refused heaven's light" (*Ibid*, 1366).

These men were "robbing God" by frustrating God's purposes. Even His purposes to supply His treasury were obstructed by their course of action and their persistent refusal to accept inspired counsel.

A Lack In the Treasury

Thirty years earlier there was a similar situation. "The special hand of God" was not upon His work in Ohio, and the sacrifices and offerings of the people had nearly dried up:

I saw that the special hand of God has not been with the work in Ohio to prosper the cause there. There is a lack; there should be among preachers and people a close examination, a faithful searching of heart, to find the cause of so great a lack of the Spirit of God. Their sacrifices and offerings have nearly dried up. Why do not the truths of God's word warm the heart and lead to self-denial and sacrifice? -1T, 238.

Their lack was "a lack of the Spirit of God," but it resulted in a shortage or lack in God's storehouse! The Lord's counsel for correcting the situation in Ohio is stated as follows:

Ministers have stood directly in the way of the work of God in Ohio. They should stand out of the way, that God may reach His people. They step in between God and His people, and turn aside His purposes. Brother J has exerted an influence in Ohio which he must labor to counteract. I saw that there were those in Ohio who would take the right position with right instructions. They have been willing to sustain the cause of present truth, but have seen so little accomplished that they have become discouraged. Their hands are feeble, and need staying up. I saw that the cause of God is not to be carried forward by pressed offerings. God does not accept such offerings. This matter is to be left wholly to the people. They are not to bring a yearly gift merely, but should also freely present a weekly and monthly offering before the Lord. This work is left to the people, for it is to be to them a weekly, monthly, living test. This tithing system, I saw, would develop character, and manifest the true state of the heart. If the brethren in Ohio have this matter presented before them in its true bearing, and are left to decide for themselves, they will see wisdom and order in the tithing system.

Ministers should not be severe, and draw upon any one man, and press means from him. If he does not give just as much as another thinks he should, they are not to denounce him, and throw him overboard. They should be as patient and forbearing as the angels are. They should work in union with Jesus. Christ and angels are watching the development of character, and weighing moral worth. The Lord bears long with His erring people. The truth will be brought to bear closer and closer, and will cut off one idol after another, until God reigns supreme in the hearts of His consecrated people. I saw that God's people must bring to Him a freewill offering; and the responsibility should be left wholly upon the individual, whether he will give much or little. It will be faithfully recorded. Give the people of God time to develop character. -1T 237, 238.

Modern Problems?

Might there be similar reasons today for the present shortages in the storehouse? We have mentioned that there are many among the faithful in Israel who do not feel comfortable about lending either moral or financial support to churches (and sometimes even conferences) whose administrators sponsor the celebration type of fanatical excesses. Could these facts, among others which we have cited earlier, supply some answers to the fiscal problems which were implied in Elder Folkenberg's first presidential sermon? We trust that he and his close associates are thinking on these things in the light of church history. History can be a most wonderful teacher if we will heed her lessons. But if we do not heed them we may find ourselves having to repeat history.

"In the Last Extremity"

Eventually a change will come in the giving habits of God's people. The Lord's servant expresses it thus:

Cheerful Liberality in the Closing Work

In the last extremity, before this work shall close, thousands will be cheerfully laid upon the altar. Men and women will feel it a blessed privilege to share in the work of preparing souls to stand in the great day of God, and they will give hundreds as readily as dollars are given now. -CS, 40.

"In the last extremity" of time there will also be a change in the storehouse management. God will take the "responsibility" of His work in His own hands. He will not always entrust "the management of his people to unsanctified human hands." (*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1367). Then will the Holy Spirit move upon the hearts of His people and they will amply supply His treasury.

If change does not happen soon, at least we have the assurance that there will be a change eventually. Perhaps it may come about in a far different way than we humans expect. The earnest desire expressed by the General Conference president will come to fruition--even if it should wait until--"the last extremity" of time, when God takes the reins in His own hands (see TM 300). Lord hasten that day!

We close this chapter with the words of Don E. Robinson:

Financially as well as in other areas, our church stands at a crossroad. The world budget for 1991 will be the tightest since the Great Depression. How are we to accomplish our great global mission?

Humanly, the task is not only daunting--it is impossible. But I am thankful that our God promises to supply all our needs according to His riches in glory. -AR, October 11, 1990.

"TITHES FOR CHRIST!"

Chapter 12

Jesus had spent the night in Bethany, presumably at the home of Lazarus. He arose early in the morning and departed before breakfast for Jerusalem. Being hungry it was with great expectation that He approached a luxuriant fig tree along the road (see Matt. 21). We can imagine His disappointment when He arrived to find that the tree had no fruit--"nothing but leaves!"

Leaves? Leaves are not all bad. They are necessary to the development of the fruit. "Nothing but leaves," however, represents so-called "good works," which may include our payments of tithes and offerings, if they are performed by us without our first having a proper relationship with God. This danger is ever present to trap unwary souls. It is called legalism.

A Saving Relationship

A Saving relationship with our Lord Jesus, is our greatest need. It is of primary importance. Jesus pleads with the members of the Laodicean church to allow Him an entrance into their hearts. A saving relationship with Jesus entails something more vital than is generally visualized. Judas had a relationship with Jesus for more than three years. They talked with each other on a daily basis. Judas talked with Jesus; and Jesus talked with Judas. But, for the reason that Judas did not surrender his sins and his heart to Jesus, His relationship was not unto salvation--he died a lost man!

"Nothing but leaves!" By such abundant foliage the fig tree, representing the people of Israel, claimed to have a relationship with God. But, for the reason that the tree had no fruit--no righteous character--Jesus passed judgment on that tree and it "withered away." Tithe paying, regardless of our motive, is an act (a work, among many others) that develops character. Ellen White writes:

This tithing system, I saw, would develop character, and manifest the true state of the heart. -1T, 237.

If true love is our motive, a righteous character will result. But if we pay tithe and perform other works merely in the spirit of legalism, our characters can only develop and ripen for destruction, as shown by Jesus in His illustration of the fig tree that "withered away."

God Shows Us the Way

Praise God, we are not left alone on this dark world to come to such a self-deceived and tragic end! God has lifted up our precious Saviour, hanging upon His cross for us, and through His Word, He shows us the way to find salvation. It is at the point of surrender, the point of death to self, that new spiritual life can enter into the believer. In order to have a proper relationship with Christ He must be permitted to come in and dwell within us through His Holy Spirit. This results in a true, a joyous, and a saving relationship with Jesus! Then our faithfulness in paying tithes and offerings and other spiritual activities (good works) will spring from a heart overflowing with love and the fruits of the Spirit. This will result in proper character development. Anything less than this is a deception and a fraud--"nothing but leaves!"

Jacob's Relationship With God

Before Jacob pledged to God, "I will surely give a tenth to Thee," he had experienced a true conversion. Our relationship with God must be as deep and as genuine as was Jacob's if we would receive a blessing from our commitment to obey God and to pay Him a faithful tithe. Let us review the experience of Jacob:

Threatened with death by the wrath of Esau, Jacob went out from his father's home a fugitive... The evening of the second day found him far away from his father's tents. He felt that he was an outcast... The darkness of despair pressed upon his soul... With weeping and deep humiliation he confessed his sin, and entreated for some evidence that he was not utterly forsaken. ... He had lost all confidence in himself, and he feared that the God of his fathers had cast him off. -PP, 183.

But God did not forsake Jacob. His mercy was still extended to His erring, distrustful servant. The Lord compassionately revealed just what Jacob needed--a Saviour. He had sinned, but his heart was filled with gratitude as he saw revealed a way by which he could be restored to the favor of God.

Wearied with his journey, the wanderer lay down upon the ground, with a stone for his pillow. As he slept he beheld a ladder, bright and shining, whose base rested upon the earth, while the top reached to heaven. Upon this ladder angels were ascending and descending; above it was the Lord of glory... -PP, 183.

Jacob's Vow

Jacob awoke from his sleep in the deep stillness of night. ... An unseen presence filled the solitude. "Surely the Lord is in this place," he said, "and I knew it not. . . . This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."... With deep gratitude he repeated the promise that God's presence would be with him; and then he made the solemn vow, "... of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee." -PP, 187.

A Demonstration of Gratitude to God Who is Owner of All

The tithing system was given to fallen man that he might demonstrate his love toward his Creator and Benefactor as the Owner of all. At Least a century before Jacob made his vow, grandfather Abraham paid tithe to "Melchisedek, the priest of the most high God." But the tithing system for fallen man began after man was expelled from Eden when offerings began to be made to God. But even more, the underlying principles for tithing were revealed to man in his first week of life when God, who gave all Eden to man, reserved for Himself one tree, just one tree, that the holy pair might recognize that God was really the Owner of all. Note the extracts which follow:

The Lord created every tree in Eden, pleasant to the eyes and good for food, and he bade Adam and Eve freely enjoy his bounties. But he made one exception. Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil they were not to eat. This tree God reserved as a constant reminder of his ownership of all. Thus he gave them an opportunity to demonstrate their faith and trust in him and their perfect obedience to his requirements. So it is with God's claims upon us. He places his treasures in the hand of humanity, but requires that one-tenth shall be faithfully laid aside for his work. He teaches us the lesson that he requires this portion to be placed in his treasury. It is to be rendered to him as his own; it is sacred, and is to be used for sacred purposes, for the support of those who carry the message of salvation to all parts of the world.

-Atlantic Union Gleaner, December 14, 1904.

20 (Gen. 28:22; Lev. 27:30). Tithing Goes Back to Days of Adam.-- The tithing system reaches back beyond the days of Moses. Men were required to offer to God gifts for religious purposes, before the definite system was given to Moses, even as far back as the days of Adam. In complying with God's requirements they were to manifest in offerings their appreciation of His mercies and blessings to them. This was continued through successive generations, and was carried out by Abraham, who gave tithes to Melchisedek, the priest of the most high God. The same principle existed in the days of Job (ST April 29, 1875). -IBC, 1093.

In making his vow to give the tenth to God, Jacob was not being legalistic. We observe that his promise flowed from a heart filled with love and gratitude:

Jacob was not here seeking to make terms with God. The Lord had already promised him prosperity, and this vow was the outflow of a heart filled with gratitude for the assurance of God's love and mercy. Jacob felt that God had claims upon him which he must acknowledge, and that the special tokens of divine favor granted him demanded a return. -PP, 187.

A Message to Us

Next the Lord's servant speaks directly to each and every one of us today concerning what our response should be to God's blessings:

So does every blessing bestowed upon us call for a response to the Author of all our mercies. The Christian should often review his past life and recall with gratitude the precious deliverances that God has wrought for him, supporting him in trial, opening ways before him when all seemed dark and forbidding, refreshing him when ready to faint. He should recognize all of them as evidences of the watchcare of heavenly angels. In view of these innumerable blessings he should often ask, with subdued and grateful heart, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" Psalm 116:12. -PP 187.

"Tithes For Christ"

God's beautiful counsel addressed to us through His servant continues:

Our time, our talents, our property, should be sacredly devoted to Him who has given us these blessings in trust. Whenever a special deliverance is wrought in our behalf, or new and unexpected favors are granted us, we should acknowledge God's goodness, not only by expressing our gratitude in words, but, like Jacob, by gifts and offerings to His cause. As we are continually receiving the blessings of God, so we are to be continually giving.

"Of all that Thou shalt give me," said Jacob, "I will surely give the tenth unto Thee." Shall we who enjoy the full light and privileges of the gospel be content to give less to God than was given by those who lived in the former, less favored dispensation? Nay, as the blessings we enjoy are greater, are not our obligations correspondingly increased? But how small the estimate; how vain the endeavor to measure with mathematical rules, time, money, and love, against a love so immeasurable and a gift of such inconceivable worth. Tithes for Christ! Oh, meager pittance, shameful recompense for that which cost so much! From the cross of Calvary, Christ calls for an unreserved consecration. All that we have, all that we are, should be devoted to God. -PP, 187, 188.

An Unreserved Surrender

When two armies are in combat and one is finally victorious, each soldier of the defeated army is required to lay down his armor with all his guns and weapons of warfare. He must also surrender his own person into the hands of the conquering general.

On that dark and lonely night at Bethel, Jacob surrendered himself to God. He renewed and deepened his surrender years later by the side of the River Jabbok while he was returning to his homeland.

When we as individuals, surrender "all that we have, all that we are" to our Saviour, we will gain a relationship with Jesus that will not only be joyous, but saving as well. Then and then only, will our vows to God, such as "I will surely give a tenth unto Thee," flow from a grateful, joyous heart filled with the love of God, and for the souls for whom Christ died.

From the cross of Calvary, Christ calls for an unreserved consecration. All that we have, all that we are, should be devoted to God.

Then only can we sincerely say from the heart,

Tithes for Christ! Oh, meager pittance, shameful recompense for that which cost so much!

A SEQUEL

Chapter 13

In this volume we have used some little known and very revealing counsels from the pen of Ellen White and made some pointed comments. As we close our book we believe we could do nothing more appropriate for our readers, be they lay members or storehouse administrators, than to adapt the closing portion of the following letter from Ellen White written to church officials:

Think [us] not your enemy because [we] tell you the truth; let not the words [we] have written discourage you, but let them restore, strengthen, and uphold you. [We] respect and love you [all], and for this reason [we] entreat you to heed the message God has given [through His Testimonies] for you. Do not lightly esteem the voice of the Holy Spirit. God wants you to have liberty in Him, and by placing yourselves in His hands you may abound in every good work, and represent Him to the world.

In much love, E.G. White.---Letter67, 1896. -18MR, 53 (MR #1306, 12).

That each and every one of us may be filled with the fullness of the love of God is our sincere prayer. Amen.

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Appendix A

In March, 1898 Ellen White wrote the following article in the *Review*. She states that John the Baptist did not work under the sponsorship of the established church organization. It was not God's plan that he should be under the church officials. He worked "under the guidance of the Holy Spirit;" he did not call to "his aid priest or rabbi." She clearly states further, that God has promised that such independent workers will not only "be furnished with grace, ample and full," but also that their material sustenance will be supplied. We commend the following article to our readers for their careful study.



"Here is the patience of the Saints: Here are they that keep the Commandments of God, and the Faith of Jesus" Rev. 14: 12.

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PERSONAL EFFORT.

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

"And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things. And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed: send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat. He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat? He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes."

Five loaves and two fishes! What a meager portion, seemingly! But in his life of assumed humanity, the Saviour relied implicitly upon God; he knew that his Father's power was sufficient for all things. Taking the small supply of food, he blessed it, and dividing it among the disciples, bade them distribute it to the multitude. "And they did all eat, and were filled."

The provision lasted until the deed of mercy was accomplished, and the wants of every hungry soul were supplied. Then Christ said, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." "And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments,

and of the fishes." So Christ would teach us economy.

From this miracle, Christ would have us learn lessons applying to spiritual things. By his action he showed the necessity of relieving temporal hunger; and how much more important it is that spiritual hunger be satisfied. In this world there are hearts that are crying aloud for the living God, that are starving for the bread of life. God requires that the truth committed to men be not only eaten by them, but given to others.

As we do this work, we must learn to rely upon what God can do for the saving of souls. Generally too much dependence is placed upon human ability, and too little faith is shown in him whose grace is sufficient to supply all our deficiencies. We are inclined to think that unless an organized company of workers is sent to a field, the efforts put forth will be useless. We feel as if we must belong to some organization if we would accomplish good.

But John the Baptist did not work on this plan. His mission was to prepare the way for the Messiah by his God-given message; and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, he did the work appointed him without calling to his aid priest or rabbi.

In the place of relying upon men for guidance, we should humble ourselves before God, confessing our sins, and pleading with him for forgiveness. We should forsake our proud, self-sufficient way, and go to work, seeking God most earnestly for strength to give the bread of life to those who are not converted,—those who are sick and in need of a physician.

After the disciples had received the Holy Spirit, they went out to give to others the light and knowledge they had received. They were few in numbers, but under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they did more for the conversion of those in Jerusalem than the large religious organizations had ever done. They extended their work to the remote parts of the earth. God blessed their efforts, and thousands of such as should be saved were added to the church. So the Lord would have us labor. Unless those now gathered in cities will go forth willingly to do earnest, solemn work for the Master, the Lord himself will scatter them.

Success does not depend upon the numbers engaged in the work. Whether they be few or many, all are to work to the utmost of their ability, feeling that as individuals they have a personal responsibility to labor for Christ.

When Christ fed the multitude, each one of the disciples was given a part in the work. Christ asked his Father's blessing on the food, and it came; but the work was not left to one man. Each one was given something to do. So it is now. God has given to every man his work; and he expects all to do their part faithfully. When the truth is presented, God does not design that one man shall do the greatest part of the work. No man should put himself and his work in the place of God. One man's voice must not be heard continually, while others stand by as onlookers. All are to labor for the promotion of the work. Every available power is to be used to carry forward the great work.

No one should lose sight of his personal responsibility, relying on some other worker to do the work he should do, forgetting that he has a part to act in relieving those who are perishing for want of the bread of life. Ordained ministers are not the only ones who can work for Christ. Those who have heard the truth and rejoice in it have a work to do also. At all times they can work for God. It is a law of God that whoever believes the truth as it is in Jesus will make it known. In this perilous time no one can really believe the truth, and stand idly by as a spectator, without interest in the work of God.

God has given different gifts to different people. These varied gifts meet and impress varied minds. In any effort made to advance the truth, a diversity of gifts is a help. By their personal influence some may win their way to hearts and subdue stubborn natures, while others, though not possessing this God-given tact, may have more knowledge and experience.

God desires all to realize that they must be careful how they strive to control those who are doing his work. No one is to seek to bind the hands

of God's instrumentalities. God has given to every man his work, and if his children will consecrate themselves to him, no one has a right to specify who is to work, or who is not to work. Let God work through whomsoever he will.

Faithfully and earnestly we are to do the work God has given us, be it large or small. No one else can do our work for us. Individual effort must be made. The Holy Spirit worked through John, but it did not submerge him in some one else. Christ called Matthew from the receipt of custom; he did not make Matthew John. He took his disciples just as he found them, and connected them with himself. He poured out his Spirit upon these human agencies, that they might speak the word of righteousness to those in need of light.

As we work for God, the outlook may not be flattering, yet if faithful, unselfish workers will go to those places that have not yet received the truth, and act their part by communicating the light they have received, God will bless their efforts. As they hold forth the bread of life to perishing souls, even though they themselves do not know where the means to carry forward the work is coming from, God will open a way before them. They will be furnished with grace, ample and full, which will supply their every necessity. The Lord will not allow his work to languish.

A simple faith and trust in God brings its reward. But the work must be regarded as God's work. It is to be done for the good of others, not to gratify pride or self-sufficiency. Every worker must be ready to sacrifice his own wishes and plans for the good of others.

The work of saving souls is infinitely above any other work in our world. He who is brought under the influence of the truth, and through faith is made a partaker of Christ's love, is by that very act appointed to save others. He has a mission in the world. He is a co-worker with Christ.

It pays to labor for those for whom Christ has died. Our strength and resources can be expended in no better way. As we co-operate with God in this work, we can think of Christ's words, which are so full of assurance: "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." God loves the souls to whom he gave his only begotten Son, and he calls upon us to see all men through the eyes of divine compassion.

Appendix B

"God Has Settled This Question"

Some current writers on the subject of tithe would limit the use of the tithe almost exclusively to ordained ministers. In June of 1992 we received a very recently released manuscript. It is a testimony written in Australia concerning wives of ministers who were working in Australia as gospel workers along with their husbands:

There are ministers' wives, Sisters Starr, Haskell, Wilson, and Robinson, who have been devoted, earnest, whole-souled workers, giving Bible readings and praying with families, helping along by personal efforts just as successfully as their husbands. These women give their whole time and are told that they receive nothing for their labors because their husbands receive their wages. I tell them to go forward and all such decisions will be revised.

The Word says, "The laborer is worthy of his hire." When any such decision as this is made I will, in the name of the Lord, protest. I will feel it my duty to create a fund from my tithe money to pay these women who are accomplishing just as essential work as the ministers are doing, and this tithe I will reserve for work in the same line as that of the ministers, hunting for souls, fishing for souls.

I know that the faithful women should be paid wages as is considered proportionate to the pay received by ministers. They carry the burden of souls and should not be treated unjustly. These sisters are giving their time to educating those newly come to the faith, and hire their own work done and pay those who work for them. All these things must be adjusted and set in order and justice be done to all.

Proofreaders in the Office receive their wages, those who are working at housework receive their wages--two dollars and a half and three dollars a week. This I have had to pay and others have to pay. But ministers' wives, who carry a tremendous responsibility, devoting their entire time, have nothing for their labor. This will give you an idea of how matters are in this conference. There are seventy-five souls organized into a church, who are applying their tithe into the conference, and as a saving plan it has been deemed essential to let these poor souls labor for nothing. But this does not trouble me, for I will not allow it to go thus. -21MR, 360 (Letter 137, 1898. MR #1576).

Would not the same principle apply to wives or women engaged in gospel work anywhere in the world? This 1898 counsel concerned ministers wives in Australia, but in the middle of the next decade similar counsel was given concerning American women. In 1903 Sister White reminded the leaders that it is proper to use tithe for the support of women who were laboring in giving the gospel. She reminded them that this issue should not be questioned, for it had already been settled by the Lord.

This question is not for men to settle. The Lord has settled it. You are to do your duty to the women who labor in the gospel, whose work testifies that they are essential to carrying the truth into families. Their work is just the work that must be done, and should be encouraged. In many respects a woman can impart knowledge to her sisters that a man cannot. The cause would suffer great loss without this kind of labor by women. Again and again the Lord has shown me that women teachers are just as greatly needed to do the work to which He has appointed them as are men. --*Manuscript 142, 1903. -Evangelism, 493.*

It is surprising that here in the last decade of the 20th century, men are still debating about who may rightfully receive support from the sacred tithe. Is it not time that we stop the debate and accept the divine counsels given by God about 100 years ago?

We conclude that, surely, the principle of tithe to be paid to gospel workers applies to women, who are not wives of ministers as well as un-ordained men who are laboring in the field of soul-saving. The divine principle is clearly enunciated:

To Be Paid From the Tithe.--The tithe should go to those who labor in word and doctrine, be they men or women.--Manuscript 149, 1899. -Evangelism, 492.

Jesus said: "The laborer is worthy of his hire." No sex gender or ordination is mentioned in this divine statement. Shall we not accept the word of God just as it is written?

Many years ago the following letter copy fell into our hands and we filed it and have inadvertently failed to include it in the Storehouse Collection, but we do now May, 1997 include it.

The Work God Has Appointed.

Loma Linda, Cal., May 14, 1907.

Prof. P. T. Magan,

Dear Brother Magan:--

I bear positive testimony that you and your fellow workers in Madison are doing the work that God has appointed to you. There was at first in your mind a question regarding this, but as you have advanced, you have been able to see the way of the Lord more clearly.

The attitude of opposition or indifference on the part of some of your brethren has created conditions that have made your work more difficult than it should have been. You have not received from some many words of encouragement, but the Lord is pleased that you have not been easily discouraged.

Some have entertained the idea that because the school at Madison is not owned by a conference organization, those who are in charge of the school should not be permitted to call upon our people for the means that is greatly needed to carry on their work. This idea needs to be corrected. In the distribution of the money that comes into the Lord's treasury, you are entitled to a portion just as verily as are those connected with other needy enterprises that are carried forward in harmony with the Lord's instruction.

The Lord Jesus will one day call to account those who would so tie your hands that it is almost impossible for you to move in harmony with the Lord's biddings. "The silver and the gold is mine, saith the Lord, and the cattle upon a thousand hills."

You and your associates are not novices in educational work, and when you are in stress for means with which to advance the work, you are just as much entitled to ask for that which you need as are other men to present the necessities of the work in which they are engaged.

You have in the past done much to bring means into circulation in the work of God. And you need not now feel troubled about accepting gifts and free-will offerings; for you will need them in the work of preparing young men and women to labor in the Lord's vineyard. As you carry on this work in harmony with the Lord's will, you are not to be kept on a constant strain to know how to secure the means you need in order to go forward. The Lord forbids the setting up of walls and bands around workers of experience who are faithfully acting their God-appointed part.

Much precious time has been lost because man-made rules and restrictions have been sometimes placed above the plans and purposes of God. In the name of the Lord I appeal to our conference workers to strengthen and support and labor in harmony with our brethren at Madison, who are carrying forward a work that God has appointed them.

(Signed) Ellen G. White.

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