

# Sanctuaries in Ellen's Ascents to the Heavens

## 1. Introduction: Importance of the Visions:

The contributions of Ellen G. White to the shaping of the sanctuary doctrine as it became established among early Sabbatarian Adventists have been adequately examined by historians.<sup>1</sup> But the contents of the earliest visions have not been explored in terms of the connections they may or may not have had with sanctuaries, and of the reception they may have had among contemporary readers within the framework of their own beliefs. The Church is of course looking for uniformity in Ellen's teachings. Early visions are read in the light of late retrospective statements enriched by the passage of time, by new insights, and by reader criticism. To substantiate present beliefs, harmonizing the old and the new is an important task of apologetics. However the results of this approach are a constant, unwarranted "modernizing" of Ellen White and the crafting of a timeless messenger made in the variable image of each generation of readers. It does not take into account the evolution of her ideas, ignores the influences that shaped her writings as well as the influences she may have had on her original readers.

A different approach is essential if we want to discover how these visions were received and the impact they had upon the original recipients. Her immediate contemporaries did not have the frame of reference of later generations of readers and did not foresee the many changes in outlook and doctrine that would follow. Mrs. White's communications once received would form an organic part of a system of beliefs already present in the experience of the believers. A chronological, historical approach that uncovers this framework is therefore essential. It is of course complicated by the imprecise dating of the early visions, by their variable contents as well as by missing periodicals in post-disappointment literature. However, recent research has shed enough light on this period to enable us to discover answers to the questions raised in our generation about the function of these visions.

While they may discover various theologies in her narratives, recent church pronouncements candidly hesitate to consider Mrs. White as a theologian in pursuit of technical exegesis. Her own early statements and those of supporters may insist on her absolute orthodoxy in matters of doctrine, on her inerrant originality, and independence from outside sources. But after the research of the 1970's there is no longer any doubt about her general use of sources, even in relating visions. The current assessment is that they are *formative* and not *normative*. It is by comparing them with contemporary thinking that we may discover whether they confirm or innovate, approve or correct. What do they confirm? If they confirm, what is the effect of this confirmation? Is it equivalent to an *imprimatur*? How does it contribute to accurate exegesis? Does this confirmation and its finality advance or hinder the continuous pursuit of truth? These are serious questions to which many seek answers.

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<sup>1</sup> Haddock, Robert, "A History of the Doctrine of the Sanctuary in the Advent Movement: 1800-1915," B.D. thesis, Andrews University, June 1970; Holbrook, Frank B. *Doctrine of the Sanctuary, A Historical Survey (1845-1863)*, Vol. 5, DARCOM, Biblical Research Institute 1989; Timm, Alberto Roland, "The Sanctuary and the Three Angels' Messages, 1844-1863: Integrating Factors in the Development of Seventh-day Adventist Doctrines." 2 vols. Ph.D. diss., Andrews University, 1995; Burt, Merlin D. "The Historical Background, Interconnected Development, and Integration of the Doctrine of the Sanctuary, the Sabbath, and Ellen G. White's Role in Sabbatarian Adventism from 1844 to 1849," Ph.D. diss., Andrews University, Dec. 2002

## 2. The Temple in the Vision of the Midnight Cry:

This vision was initially published in the *Day Star* of January 1846, having been sent from Portland Maine on December 24, 1845. In the September 6, 1845 issue of the same paper James White had related this vision of “one sister in Maine” in abbreviated form. His version ends with the “fallen Adventists’,” recognition that God “had loved the ‘fanciful,’ ‘fanatical,’ ‘disgraceful’ band, who could wash ‘one another’s feet.’” In most publications this vision is followed without transition by the “Vision of the New Earth,” but its absence from James White’s *Day-Star* narrative and its general contents indicate a subsequent date. Moreover it has its own title as a separate vision in the first edition of *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 1, ch. 9, pp 52-56. There is a logical connection between the two visions. The appearance of the Son of Man who leads the resurrected saints through the marvels of the holy city is a normal sequence to the pilgrimage of the righteous on the path leading to it. This continuity may suggest a close time connection as well. These early visions are not dated with precision. In her letter to Joseph Bates written on April 13, 1847, Mrs. White dates it in December 1844. Internal evidence confirms this approximate date. It presents none of the solutions later proposed to explain the disappointment. It never alludes to the “marriage” of the parable of the virgins, to the Son of Man’s coronation of Daniel 7 or to a new interpretation of the cleansing of the sanctuary supposedly seen by Hiram Edson on the morrow of the fateful day. But its concerns with the authenticity of the “Midnight Cry” echo the preoccupation of many contemporary Millerites with the undeniable hand of God in the movement of 1844.

The first part of the vision relating the Advent people’s travel on the path to the holy city does not allude to a heavenly sanctuary. Its contents are addressed to a group of people who experienced the “true Midnight Cry,” a proclamation based on Samuel S. Snow’s typology linked with the completion of the Day of Atonement in the Heavenly Temple. This event was originally linked with the close of probation for those who rejected the warning. The Vision of the Midnight cry places itself in the well-known period of “denial” that followed the disappointment, and is meant to restore confidence in the “Cry.” Beside Georges Storr who totally rejected Miller’s positions, Himes, Bliss and others finally recognized their mistakes and *denied* the accuracy of their former conclusions. In this period, clinging to the Cry meant a return to the beliefs of Samuel S. Snow and to a conviction that priestly intercession in the Heavens was at an end and therefore human probation had been closed. The words of the vision about the denier’s impossibility of returning to the path they had left, and the “rejection” of the “wicked world,” could not have been understood by contemporaries otherwise than as a close of probation. It had already been predicted by Miller’s writings before 1843 as an inevitable part of the “prophetic” parable of the ten virgins. It was so understood by Otis Nichols in his letter of April 20, 1846 to Miller, by James White in his *Word to the Little Flock*, pp. 22 and by Ellen G. White herself in the above mentioned letter to Joseph Bates. In fact her discovery in December that Joseph Turner had taught the same idea in a meeting the previous night shows that the close of probation was what they both taught. One month later Turner and Hale linked their efforts in reinterpreting the parable whose Shut-Door was an integral part of their eschatology. Shutting the door was an act of the “Master of the House,” not merely a self-exclusion of the foolish virgins. Dr. Graybill recognized that early Adventists most likely interpreted the vision as confirming the “Shut-Door

although “it did not explicitly do so.”<sup>2</sup> The fact is that it spoke of God’s rejection of the wicked world, which could only mean that divine grace had ceased to be available to every man. Had the door remained open, any man, no matter how wicked, could still repent and be accepted

Some writers have suggested that young Ellen Harmon did not understand her early visions as if this guaranteed their divine inspiration. Only if her visions were dictated, the words being not her own, could she fail to understand them. But, what really matters is the effect they had on the recipients, on her closest friends and relatives as well as on herself. She and her contemporaries received them as inviting a return to ideas they had temporarily abandoned, the validity of the Midnight Cry and belief in a close of probation for the world. A shut door cannot leave a passage, unless it is half-open. That is not what was implied by the parable or its interpreters at that time. The mission left for the believers was declared minimal. All they had to do was to gather the wise virgins. Immediate criticism caused them to consider the possibility that some might have previously “entered” according to the light they had. The conversions observed by other Adventists were not considered genuine. The changes in character called conversions were only apparent; they might not be genuine changes in “inward character.” The partisans of the door-shut frequently affirmed that their “work for the world” was “done,” and quoted Hoseah 5: 6 to invalidate alleged conversions. Their Shut-Door was not merely salvational, it was eschatological. It was the decree of the “Master of the House” in the parable. Whoever came late to clamor for entrance heard the fateful words: “Verily, I say unto you, I know you not.”

In the latter part of this first vision the saints’ pilgrimage to the heavenly city, led by the Son of Man, presents a view of the divine throne, the river and the tree of life, and the glories of paradise finally regained. Before the disappointment in 1842, Ellen already had had a dream of visiting a temple in which a lamb, all mangled and bleeding, was tied to a pillar. Only those who entered within would be saved in the end.<sup>3</sup> But in this first vision, among the wonders of the heavenly world visited by the saints and the young visionary was “something” that had the appearance of silver in which dwelt the ancient worthies of patriarchal and later times. Although it was not expressly called a “temple,” the furniture behind its single veil was the unmistakable sancta found in the Most Holy Place of the ancient Jerusalem temple. It is not labeled “Holy of Holies,” nor is it said that the veil raised to reveal the inside was an inner veil of separation between two holy places. Ellen did not pass through a first veil or outer chamber to face that single veil. The visual splendor of the sancta only befitted their heavenly location. In the ark surmounted by the two facing cherubim the golden pot of Manna and Aaron’s eternally-blossoming rod occupied their expected place. Added were splendid grapes on silver wires and on golden rods reserved for the final banquet. Missing were only Moses’ tables of the law. In the 1860 edition of *Spiritual Gifts* and in *Experience and Views* in 1851 this part of the vision was not reproduced.

In modern Adventist studies it has been generally assumed that a corresponding foretent, a “Holy Place,” must have been connected to the structure seen in this vision. Did not all later visionary images of the heavenly temple feature two chambers? Here, there is not the least hint of a double apartment in the heavenly structure visited by the touring saints because neither Ellen

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<sup>2</sup> Ronald D Graybill, “Visions and Revisions – part 1,” *Ministry*, Feb. 1994, note 12, p. 28

<sup>3</sup> *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol 1, pp. 27-28. *Spiritual gifts*, 1860, pp16-17

nor her closest contemporaries had ever heard of such a divided structure in the Heavens at that time. This should not surprise anyone who is aware of Millerite theology in this early period. Ellen Harmon saw what her immediate contemporaries believed about the heavenly temple late in 1844, a single structure hidden by one veil, having the typical characteristics of the Most Holy place, in which no priest was seen officiating. Students of the Millerite view of the atonement have candidly recognized that Miller and his followers considered the heavens as an antitype of the Most Holy place of the Israelite sanctuary, in which Jesus had directly entered at his ascension.<sup>4</sup> Even if some distant commentators, in the past, had postulated a passage of the High Priest through the foretent, the Millerites had not registered it. There is no evidence of a bicameral sanctuary in Heaven in the typologies of the Millerites or their successors before March 1845. After a first disappointment in the spring of 1843, they followed Samuel Snow in expecting Christ's exit from heavenly places after his lengthy intercession through the Christian era. This extended atonement was completed on October 22, 1844, the date chosen as the Day of Atonement in that year. The vision portrays Jesus as a heavenly guide. He is not the priest officiating in that structure. No inner ritual is described because the priest has left his mediatorial throne, as Snow had announced. The noted deletion of this passage from the 1860 reprint may indicate a certain discomfort with its temple configurations, particularly with what is missing, the "outer tent" and the tables of the law that were so central to later revelations. However, none of her immediate contemporaries would find reasons to question the plausibility of the landscape in the vision. Their atonement would not clash with her temple descriptions nor would they miss what was lacking. There were very few Sabbatarians among them at this early date, and visionary experiences of heavenly pilgrimages were not rare among the Millerites. The last familiar touch was a conversation with two former mentors of Ellen whom God had laid in the grave "to save them." (from disappointment?)

### 3. The Temple in the Vision of the New Earth:

There is a difference of opinion as to the date of this vision. James White placed it in the spring of 1845 and connected it with a poem written by "a brother" upon hearing the vision.<sup>5</sup> The poem, "the Better Land," was later put in music and published in Advent papers and hymnals. The poet, identified in *Spiritual Gifts* as Wm H. Hyde, had fallen into strange excesses that led him away from Adventism by the end of the summer 1845. In all of her publications, pamphlets, outside periodicals, broadsides, before 1860, and in *Early Writings* in 1882, Ellen White connected this vision with her first vision without transition. Its contents are indeed a fitting sequence to the vision of the Midnight Cry and must have followed not long after it. Mrs. White relates that she was but seventeen when she had this experience.<sup>6</sup> Her 17<sup>th</sup> birthday was November 26, 1844. Whatever be the exact date of this vision, its contents suggest that it must have occurred before the invention of the "Bridegroom-come" solution by Joseph Turner and Apollos Hale in the end of January, and in February and March 1845. The vision has no connection, even by implication, with this new solution to the disappointment. Had it occurred in the spring, it would certainly have included allusions to the heavenly "wedding," as did the

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<sup>4</sup> Dalton D. Baldwin "William Miller's Use of the Word 'Atonement'," Appendix A in Frank B. Holbrook, ed, *Doctrine of the Sanctuary, A Historical Survey (1845-1863)*, Silver Springs, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1989, p.159-170.

<sup>5</sup> Editorial note, *The Present Truth*, Vol. I, No.11, November 1850, p. 88.

<sup>6</sup> *Early Writings*, p.20.

February 15 Bridegroom vision. Its heavenly pilgrimage is highly reminiscent of apocalyptic imagery, as well as of many items in the published visions of William Foy printed by John and Charles Pearson in Portland in 1845. Ellen heard him on three occasions in Beethoven Hall in Portland. Like Foy's this vision is in the apocalyptic tradition of heavenly ascents. She shared common friends with him and lived no far from him. It must have been experienced not long after Ellen's attendance at Foy's meetings before and after the fall of 1844. She also was present after the 1844 disappointment, in a meeting in the countryside east of Portland, toward Cape Elizabeth when Foy rose to declare that her vision was "just what he had seen."<sup>7</sup> He could only refer to this vision of the New Earth which had a marked resemblance and many parallels to his own. Moreover it must also have preceded Ellen's Bridegroom vision for, although it featured a temple in the Holy City, it had none of the characteristics of the bicameral heavenly sanctuary of later visions.

Strangely, this vision features another "building that looked to me like a temple," located on a heavenly Mount Zion, as was the Jewish temple on the earthy mount. This section is never deleted from printed editions. None but the 144,000 were allowed to enter it. Ellen must have included herself for she saw "there" things that were ineffable. This leaves us in the dark about its inner sancta or its ritual. Its tables of stone memorialized the names of the elect in letters of gold. John of Patmos was more forthcoming in his occasional descriptions of the temple, but when the New Jerusalem came down to earth, he saw no temple in it for the divine presence was totally accessible to all (Rev. 21:22). In the same time and place Ellen saw a temple, but no explanation exists for this innovation. Ellen's familiarity with Biblical imagery, with the images of her childhood, as well as with other visionary ascents, includes the endless silver table of the final supper already covered with sumptuous fruit but still beyond reach.

## **4. The Temple in the Bridegroom Vision:**

### **A. Introduction:**

This vision was first printed in the form of a letter addressed to Enoch Jacobs, editor of the *Day-Star* as a supplement to the January 24, 1846 letter. In her introduction, Ellen Harmon indicates that some things left out of the earlier vision must be added for the enlightenment of the readers. The letter is dated Feb. 15, 1846 and the vision is dated "one year ago this month." This date is confirmed by the letter she addressed to Joseph Bates on July 13, 1847. It was reprinted in the April 6, 1846 broadside *To the Little Remnant Scattered Abroad* without the personal introduction to Jacobs. It is not clear why it was not reproduced in James White's pamphlet *A Word to the 'Little Flock'* on May 30, 1847, if it was an indispensable supplement to the first visions. *Experience and Views* reproduced it with three minor deletions in 1851. The "thrones" she saw in the Holy of Holies, and "had never seen before," disappeared. The "difference between faith and feeling" no longer seemed to matter, and the "unholy influence of Satan" upon the "careless multitude" was wisely eliminated. The original letter of "Sister Harmon" to Jacobs also included a vision of the "time of Jacob's trouble" dated about October 15, 1845, which was reprinted only once in the April 6 broadside. Examination of early Adventist periodicals reveals a surprising nonchalance about the boundaries of early visions which were often partially rearranged in printed editions independently of their dates, connections and subject matter. This

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<sup>7</sup> Ellen G. White manuscript 131, 1906

is particularly noticeable in the visions published in the *Present Truth* of 1849-1850 when compared with Hiram Edson's carefully written copies of 1850 visions<sup>8</sup>

## **B. The Puzzling Question Addressed to Jesus in the vision:**

The vision contains a question that seems unrelated to the general contents. The main theme of the vision, as Ellen White summarizes it in her letter to Bates is "Jesus rising from his mediatorial throne and going to the holiest as bridegroom to receive his kingdom." Yet a question addressed to Jesus about his Father's "form" and "person" unexpectedly arises in the midst of the transaction. Light is shed on this strange detail by the substance of several recent letters addressed by James White to Jacobs, editor of the *Day-Star*. White and Crozier had long been waging an intense campaign against "spiritualism," a notion that arose with the publication of *The Voice of the Shepherd* by Orlando Squires about March 1845. It promoted a spiritual Second Advent manifested in an invisible manner, and an immediate transformation of the living saints into immortals. This was also the position of *The Voice of the Fourth Angel* edited by J. D. Pickands and J. B. Cook. James White's offensive against this trend increased in intensity from September 1845 to January 1846. On November 19 he repeatedly insisted on the "literal" nature of various eschatological events yet to be witnessed, while Crozier, about the same time, spoke of the tangibility of the sanctuary, thrones, kingdom, New Jerusalem, etc. White's January 8 communication to *The Day-Star* is almost entirely devoted to this problem. He finds in Daniel 7:9 evidence of the bodily "form" of the Ancient of Days, and in the Apocalypse a material Holy City with gates, foundation and tangible structure. Only two months later, Ellen Harmon's vision appears in the same paper, using the very words of her fiancé, "form," and "person" as applying to the Father and the Son.

Incidentally she alludes to the same vision in an undated letter published in 1851 in *Experience and Views*, pp.62-64, addressed to "Dear Reader:"

I have frequently been charged with teaching views peculiar to Spiritualism. But before the editor of the *Day Star* ran into that delusion, the Lord gave me a view of the sad and desolating effects that would be produced upon the flock by him and others in teaching the spiritual views. I have often seen the lovely Jesus, that he is a *person*. I asked him if his Father was a person and had a form like himself. Said Jesus, I am in the express *image* of my Father's *person*. [emphasis original]

Evidently this is a key to the intense preoccupation of these writers with the coming seduction of Enoch Jacobs into the "spiritual" camp. Crozier's January 29, 1846 letter to the *Day-Star* responds to Jacob's claim to have "received the kingdom" at a Cleveland conference he attended with the express purpose of combating Pickands' "spiritual view." Instead of defeating the spiritualisers he came out convinced: "Christ had already come and the saints were then immortal." Crozier's unveiled sarcasms did not deter Jacobs. Elvira Hastings, a friend of Ellen, deplored the editor's dangerous turn in a letter to the same paper on Feb. 15, 1846. By May 23 Jacobs had completed his "apostasy" by converting to Shakerism. Shaker theology provided an

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<sup>8</sup> Fernand Fisel, "Three Early Visions of Mrs. E. G. White copied by Hiram Edson: An Evaluation" pp. 1-7; I-V unpublished typescript. (Sutton Vision, October 1850; Oswego vision, July 29, 1850; Dorchester Vision, October 23, 1850)

alternative to the disappointed and a “spiritual” concept of the Second Advent manifested in its founder, Ann Lee. Moreover, their symbolic and mystical interpretation of Scripture steeped into Apocalyptic literature was congenial to the Millerites.<sup>9</sup>

In February 1845, the date claimed for the vision, there was no inkling that Jacobs would ever be attracted to “spiritualism.” On the contrary he was engaged in lively debate with its advocates and was intent on confounding them. That part of the bridegroom vision showing concern for Jacob’s waywardness must have been written not long before Ellen sent it to the *Day-Star*, on January 26, when it became urgent as an opportune warning, and espoused the concerns of her fiancé. This detail shows that the vision was not entirely written in February and warrants further analysis of its context and composition.

### C. Confirming the Bridegroom Theme:

In her letter to Joseph Bates, Ellen White denied having read Joseph Turner’s paper on the coming of the Bridegroom. It was in the house but she ignored its contents. In 1845 Ellen was only 18 and had had little education as she reminds us in the letter, and as her elementary spelling and grammar show.<sup>10</sup> It is evident that she depended on family and friends to simplify for her the subtleties of Millerite writers that she could not possibly have understood. Even with hindsight and critical knowledge of the terminology used at that time, most of these articles are not easily interpreted as will become evident in this study. Moreover the millennial fever which affected the believers must not have left unreported the latest theory that might explain the disappointment. Hence we must assume that the ignorance she claimed must be tempered with the fact that others must have informed her of the trends in contemporary thinking after the publication of Turner and Hale in the *Advent Mirror* of January 1845 and after Hale’s two major articles in *The Advent Herald* of Feb 26 and March 5, 1845. This is what Joseph Bates also must have surmised when he received Ellen’s, answer to his query. Indeed, he added two possible outside sources for the vision in his own handwriting on the letter he received on July 13, 1847. Mention of the *Advent Mirror* and of an unavailable “*Hope of Israel Extra* published about the 20<sup>th</sup> December,” appears on page 3, indented above and under the date of the vision, still quite legible. Bates’ incisive questions to James White as to Ellen’s previous knowledge of the Bridegroom theme reveal a lingering, healthy skepticism about the origins of the vision, even after he had claimed absolute conviction.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Lawrence Foster “Had Prophecy Failed?” Contrastive Perspectives of the Millerites and Shakers, in Ronald Numbers & Jonathan Butler, eds. *The Disappointed*, Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1987, pp.173-188

<sup>10</sup> During the Sabbath and Sanctuary conferences of 1848, Mrs. White revealed her incapacity to understand the meaning of the scriptures studied. The episode implies that without vision she could not fathom the reasoning of the brethren. The visions, which confirmed the conclusions reached, did not come from her helplessness but could only be of divine origin. (MS 46, 1904 and *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 207). This form of apologetics was successfully used by the followers of Mohamed who alleged his illiteracy to ensure the divine origin of his messages. In the adolescent years of Ellen Harmon, when her nervousness hampered her reading, such situations were not merely episodic, but certainly chronic.

<sup>11</sup> See “Remarks,” *A Word to the ‘Little Flock,’* p.21

A. What elements in the Bridegroom vision evoke Turner and Hale's novel interpretation of the parable of the Virgins?

1. The Advent people, the church and the world are divided into two companies, as were the wise and foolish virgins of the parable.
2. The "little praying company" (wise virgins) receive the light (of the Midnight Cry) and accept it.
3. The "careless multitude" (foolish virgins) resists the light and it moves off from them.
4. Jesus "has left his mediatorial throne" in a chariot (this is Mrs. White's own 1847 comment on the vision; Turner spoke of "the closing of Christ's intercession for the world," and Hale of "the act of resigning his mediatorial work.")
5. Daniel 7:9 is the source of their imagery: (thrones, chariot, flaming throne, wheels of blazing fire) and the bestowing of the kingdom upon the Son of Man is unexpectedly equated with the "wedding" of the parable. (There are substantial differences between a wedding and a coronation, even when an ordinary bridegroom behaves like a king!)
6. The clamor of the foolish virgins for entrance after the shutting of the door is obviously mirrored in the useless prayers of the careless multitude around the deserted throne.
7. The shutting of the door brings perfect darkness to the careless multitude after the chariot ride.
8. The Little praying company rises up with Jesus (The wise virgins go in with him to the marriage).
9. The little company is told to wait for his return from the wedding and "keep their garments clean."

B. Some elements of the vision are not found in the articles by Turner and Hale:

1. Defections from the little company joining the careless multitude and sharing its fate, etc.
2. Transport of the Father in a flaming chariot to the Holy of Holies
3. The destination of Jesus as the Holy of Holies (Turner and Hale had left Jesus "within the veil" where he had been for centuries before he left his mediatorial throne).<sup>12</sup>
4. Jesus was a High Priest in the Holiest after the ride (According to Turner and Hale, he exercised this function *before* he left his Mediatorial throne).
5. The careless multitude was bowed before the mediatorial throne, unaware of Jesus' departure
6. The (priestly?) deception of Satan by imposture and his "unholy influence" upon the indifferent multitude is a new contribution.

Joseph Turner was a personal acquaintance of Ellen in Portland and had no hostile feeling against her in 1845. She probably knew where to meet him when she took a sleigh to get away from speaking in a meeting at her parents' home. It would be surprising if she had not told him her vision and discovered their concurrent belief right then. Moreover he edited the *Hope of Israel* that Portland Adventists eagerly read and was almost a neighbor of the Harmons. It is evident that her vision was unmistakably derived from his influence, whatever its exact date. But throughout her life Ellen White just could not admit human influence, for fear of endangering her prophetic gift.<sup>13</sup> This was critical at the beginning of her career.

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<sup>12</sup> See the "excursus" that follows this study to describe Turner and Hale's view of the atonement.



#### D. Confirming a two-phase atonement in a bicameral sanctuary:

Without specifically naming a holy place in front of the most holy, the bridegroom vision presents a throne with double occupancy by the Father and the Son. The Father rose from that throne to ride his flaming chariot into the holy of holies, within the veil. Then Jesus rose accompanied by the small company to announce his wedding/coronation during which the wedding guests were to keep their garments clean. Finally a similar cloudy chariot with wheels like flaming fire carried him to the holiest. Ellen White identified the first throne as a “mediatorial throne.” There is no doubt, therefore, that this symbolism suggests two chambers separated by a veil in the heavenly sanctuary. The chariot ride, an elegant poetic touch, is evidently meant to meet the criticism of some Adventists who argued that there could not be a place more holy than the very presence of God. If Jesus immediately sat at the right hand of God and ministered in the heavenly foretent, a divine throne must be found in its first chamber. Ezekiel and Daniel had already suggested the means of transportation, throne wheels. To those in exile from Jerusalem it was a comfort. The prophets had affirmed that God’s presence was not confined to one place.

What were the original sources of this imagery? The Hebrew bible presents the possibility of a heavenly model for the construction of Moses’ tabernacle without precise information on the material, spatial, or functional relationship between heaven and earth. The division into two chambers and a court are never pictured in first testament allusions to the heavenly temple, neither are the rituals prescribed in Leviticus modeled by heavenly rituals. In one source the institution of the earthly priesthood seems to have served as a shield for the people’s dreaded approach to the Holy (Numbers 17:27; 18:5). Such an institution would therefore be unnecessary in the heavens. In this part of the scriptures, no priest or high-priest is ever portrayed officiating in the rare allusions to a heavenly temple. The Lord is sometimes pictured in his holy temple, on his throne, between the cherubim (Ps. 11:4; 80:1; 99:1). Later, non-canonical apocalyptic literature features heavenly ascents in which is seen a bicameral sanctuary divided by a veil but without a priesthood.<sup>14</sup>

It is especially in the New Testament Epistle to the Hebrews that some commentators<sup>15</sup> have found possible implications of a two part sanctuary in the heavens. Three passages are usually invoked to justify this conclusion. To enter the holiest shrine, the heavenly High Priest had to pass through the heavens (Heb. 4:14), go through the greater and more perfect tabernacle (9:11) and become a minister in the sanctuary *and* the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man (8:2 ASV).<sup>16</sup> The correspondences between the two tents of the Mosaic sanctuary described in

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<sup>13</sup> Cf Ronald D. Graybill, “The Power of Prophecy: Ellen G. White and the Women Religious Founders of the Nineteenth Century,” Ph.D. Diss. John Hopkins University, 1983, pp ix and 200

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament. 163. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003, p. 82-84

<sup>15</sup> Harold W. Attridge, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Hermeneia, Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1989, Excursus: The Heavenly Temple and its significance, pp. 222-223

<sup>16</sup> William H. Shea, (“Las estructuras literaria y arquitectural en la sección del Santuario del libro de Hebreos (6:19 al 10:20,” *Theologika*, 11, No. 1 (1996) pp. 38-63) rejects the almost general interpretation that considers the Greek *kai* (and) of 8:2 as explanatory (epexegetical): (“The sanctuary, namely the true tent”). In his view the sanctuary *and* the tent are distinct items implying 2 chambers in the heavenly sanctuary.

Hebrews 9 and the heavenly sanctuary must be maintained by those who insist on an exact parallel. Through the history of interpretation other interpreters may have adopted this viewpoint,<sup>17</sup> but it is essential to observe that neither the Epistle nor its commentators ever suggested that a temporary ritual or intercession took place in the heavenly foretent, if there was one. It was merely a sacred space through which Jesus passed on his way to the Holiest, just as Aaron did on the Day of Atonement.

Unless new documentation proves otherwise, it can be affirmed that no Millerite subscribed to a two-phase atonement or a bicameral heavenly sanctuary before March 1845.<sup>18</sup> In the first part of that month, an editorial in the *Hope of Israel*<sup>19</sup> unveiled what it called “an error” in the application of the types, overlooked by the believers. They had assumed that the atonement began at the crucifixion, but it must only have taken place on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October 1844, in a *single day*. They insisted on this one day foreseen in the “types.” This is why the door of the parable was now shut. The atonement was over and there was no more intercession anywhere (page 23 first column). The door of the parable was shut, it maintained, not because the world had shut its eyes to the truth, but because of the absolute termination of the atonement in one day, the tenth day of the seventh month. A reinterpretation of the “shadow” of the daily offering of the lambs in the holy place explained this revised notion of the atonement:

“This then, is the true view of the subject. The Saviour, from his crucifixion, to the first day of the seventh month; was the antitype of the Jewish High Priest, while ministering daily in the first tabernacle;— He then rose up, and the virgins trimmed their lamps. On the 10<sup>th</sup> day He was at once the antitype of the dead and living goat. He entered the Holy Place, or inner court, (according to the third chapter of Zechariah) and shut the door. Then the atonement being finished, as it must be on that day: He leaves on the cloud to obtain the throne as we have before shown.” (original punctuation).

Given its length and novelty, the editors evidently considered this article important. It was reprinted, with some reservations, but occupied an almost complete issue of the *Day-Star*. Its main contribution in March lies in framing a two-phase atonement in a two part sanctuary. This is the sanctuary Ellen Harmon saw but she differed in one detail: the high priest continued his ministrations in the most holy presence of the father at the time of the vision. This extension of the atonement appeared shortly after in the first issue of the *Day-Dawn* printed for Crozier and Hahn by the *Ontario Messenger* on March 26, 1845.

Contrary to Adventist tradition, before this date, Owen R. L. Crozier was neither interested in sanctuary typology, nor in the exegesis of the Epistle to the Hebrews. He was trying to establish a

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<sup>17</sup> B. W. Ball, *The English Connection*, Greenwood (S.C.): The Attic Press, Inc. 1981, pp. 160-165-166 refers to Thomas Lushington’s Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews (1646), and John Owen’s Exposition of the two First Chapters... (1668) and Exposition of... Hebrews (1680), as examples of this interpretation.

<sup>18</sup> I. E. Jones, in a letter to William Miller dated February 15, 1845 asserts that among every conceivable hypothesis to explain the disappointment, some believed the Saviour then came out of the Holy of Holies... - others, that he never entered the Holy of Holies till then.

<sup>19</sup> This four page article titled “To the Believers Scattered Abroad” was reprinted in the March 25 issue of *The Day-Star* and probably appeared originally in the March 14 or 21 issue of the *Hope of Israel*, edited by C. H. Pearson and Emily C Clemons. It took about four days for eastern mail to reach the *Day-Star* in Cincinnati. (this article is hereinafter designated as the “Address”)

new possible date for the advent. In Feb, 1845, he was convinced by the study of the Apocryphal Esdras that 1844-45 was the advent year to be concluded by the final deliverance.<sup>20</sup> On March 8, he was speculating that the “day” of Matt. 24:36 and Mark 13:3 represented “symbolic time,” just as did other prophetic periods. Applied to that day, the year-day principle turned it into a year. That year was to be the “last year of time,” the final Jubilee year that began in 1844 and would end in April 1845 with the Second Advent.<sup>21</sup> For the first time on March 26, in the first issue of his new *Day-Dawn* he became thoroughly absorbed in sanctuary typology.<sup>22</sup> There is strong evidence that Crozier was prompted by the March Address “To the Believers Scattered Abroad” of the *Hope of Israel* for he reveals in his letter to that paper on April 4 that a brother Howell had sent him some issues of the paper. He acknowledges the “Marriage of the Lamb” as the last and most glorious harbinger of Jesus’ Advent. It would appear that Crozier did not adopt Turner and Hale’s solution before this, for his March 8 article, “Prophetic Day and Hour,” only stresses the “prophetic midnight” of the parable without any reference to the coming of the bridegroom to the marriage. In his April 4th letter to “Dear Brother Pearson,” (co-editor of the *Hope of Israel* with Emily C Clemons) there is emphasis on the atonement as “a new chain of evidence” never yet published. The first issue of the *Day-Dawn* that was printed by the *Ontario Messenger* only eight days before (March 26, 1845) seems to be discounted, perhaps because it was printed by a secular newspaper.

There is a great deal of similarity between these last two sources, but their general purpose seems different. The *Day-Dawn*, like the “Address” that motivated it, is an attempt to show the prophetic fulfillment of the parable, its “chronology” and the meaning of the “marriage” in the light of atonement typology. But Crozier’s letter to the *Hope of Israel*, merely a week later, seeks to show that the present Jewish year, from 1844 to April 1845 is then a *year of atonement* incorporating all the typical features of the *Day of Atonement* among the Israelites. Both sources only innovate by extending the “day” of Matt 24:36 to a “year”. The year of atonement, accompanied by its jubilee trumpet, began on October 1844 and will end on April 20 or 21, 1845. Crozier has adopted the 2 phases and 2 chambers already introduced in the “Address” but lengthened its limited atonement to April 1845. This is also the continuous atonement of the “bridegroom vision.” When Ellen disagreed with Turner and Hale, she espoused the views of Crozier. The first *Day-Dawn* contains several other innovations not found in the vision except perhaps the notion that it is still possible to sin after the door is shut,<sup>23</sup> and loose one’s salvation, as do some who leave the little company to join the deluded and receive “the unholy influence of Satan.”

The Bridegroom vision really confirmed contemporary thinking. Moreover it was sent to the *Day-Star* in the issue that followed Crozier’s major treatise on the Sanctuary. There is no need to assume that the vision was directly affected by this work since Crozier’s first *Day-Dawn* had been in circulation for nearly ten months in January 1846. The vision contained little surprise for

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<sup>20</sup> Crozier “Esdras Explains the Time in Daniel” in *The Voice of Truth and Glad Tidings*, March 19, 1845. This short article only draws from 2 Esdras 14:10-12 figures that give additional evidence of the inspiration of Esdras and his agreement with Daniel that “we are in the advent year.”

<sup>21</sup> Crozier, “Prophetic Day and Hour,” *The Voice of Truth and Glad Tidings*, April 9, 1845. Joseph Marsh, the editor of this paper rejected his conclusion as unwarranted by the language.

<sup>22</sup> O. R. L. Crozier and F. B. Hahn, “To All who are Waiting for Redemption. The Following is addressed.” *The Day-Dawn* published in the *Ontario Messenger* of March 26, 1845 under the Editorial title: THE MILLERITES, OR ADVENTISTS—THEIR DELUSIONS—THEIR FAITH, &c.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, p. 16

contemporary readers. It only offered the mystical and poetic touches expected from a young, sensitive, charismatic personality, and some rather naïve conclusions, but no other innovation.

## **6. A vision of the future:**

The second part of Ellen Harmon to the *Day Star*, dated about November 1845 was reproduced in the April 6 Broadside. It pictured the eschatological exit of Jesus from the holiest at the conclusion of the atonement. Having discarded his priestly garment he put on his kingly robe to descend on the cloud and receive his saints.

## **7. A vision of the temple in the Holy city:**

### **A. Introduction: The Historical setting.**

After Crozier had extended the atonement to April in his *Day Dawn* article and his letter to the *Hope of Israel*, his expectation was no longer tenable. His friend and neighbor Hiram Edson had to place the Advent beyond that date, in August, in his letter to the *Jubilee Standard* of May 26, 1845. He chose that date without giving a clear reason. In his second letter to the *Day-Star* of Sept 26, 1845, Crozier's major concern was Emily Clemons' recent defection from the Shut-Door camp and her plan to marry her co-Editor, C. H. Pearson. Crozier's article on the Sanctuary, the second of two sent for publication to the *Hope of Israel*, was returned to the author half printed. Clemons rejected Turner's view of the parable and labeled any attempt at placing Jesus in a new location in heaven a spiritualizing of the advent. "We have anticipated events," she declared. Crozier's solution of a new ministry in the holy of holies was nothing more than the "secret chamber" Jesus had warned against.<sup>24</sup> Crozier responded by emphasizing the concrete nature and tangibility of heavenly places. The heavenly city, the throne of David, the kingdom, its territory, subjects and laws were given a literal, external existence.

He stressed the continuation of the atonement: "it is not yet finished, but we are in the antitype of the tenth day Atonement." He justified this position by reading the Epistle to the Hebrews as if it were written to 1845 Adventists." Citing Heb. 6:19, he argued that its author (Paul for him) had *foreseen* the Adventist predicament and affirmed an entrance in the Most Holy for 1844. He failed to realize that instead of confirming his thesis this text really confuted it, since the epistle addressed its first century contemporaries to assure them that their hope had already entered within the veil in the first century. Such anachronisms are not rare in early Adventist literature.

Crozier's apologetics failed to satisfy his critics. He could only emphasize the tangibility of future realities. Christ had not come visibly. His presence in the Most Holy was not the announced event nor was it the fulfillment of the parable in any sense. The Advent was still in the future. Yet, to Crozier, his solution was unassailable. Fortunately it was unverifiable. In this letter Crozier's almost compulsive tendency to set new times for the Advent brought him to 1847, but only because his previous predictions had failed. It meant that the atonement would continue

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<sup>24</sup> Matthew 24:26

for two more years. When Crozier realized that setting new times for the Advent was no longer acceptable, he also extended the atonement beyond history to the end of the millennium.

On October 21, 1845 Crozier attempted to systematize the new doctrine of the sanctuary in a letter from Rochester to *The Voice of Truth and Glad Tidings* titled “The Springwater Affair.” It was meant to correct the wrong impression caused by Joseph Marsh’s criticisms of the “Bridegroom Come-Door Shut-Atonement made” theory. A list of ten statements, only eight of which were published by Marsh, contained Crozier’s new apologetics. Among these eight statements, were three innovations:

1. The atonement is not to be finished until after the Second Advent.
2. The scapegoat was not a type of Christ’s body but of Satan and the wicked, hence the sending away of the scapegoat was not a type of the disposal of his body.
3. The Sanctuary of the New Covenant to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days was not the church nor the earth, but the New Jerusalem. The “Sanctuary and the Host” are two. The *Host* is the temple of the *Holy Ghost*, but the *Sanctuary* the temple of Christ. [emphasis Original]

Crozier’s letter of October 23, 1845 to *The Day-Star* acknowledged another disappointment for the fall 1845 expectation, which Otis Nichols, the Sabbatarian printer had also propounded. The bi- or tri-annual expectation went on in both camps of Adventism for years, as late as 1870. The same letter amplifies Miller and Snow’s typology of vernal and autumnal festivals. Each festival must have its “fulfillment” in an antitype, the vernal types in the first advent and the autumnal in the Second. The fulfillment necessarily lasted longer than the type, hence the antitype of the tenth day of the seventh month is “not one literal day nor year, but must be *many* years.” He then included the Atonement process into the Millenium, for the “binding of Satan” and his demise into the botomless pit were a part of the atonement process. If the scapegoat was a type of Satan, the bottomless pit was the land of separation to which he would be sent. Crozier insisted that full atonement was not over until the last two sin-offerings were burnt (Lev. 16:27).

Many of these innovations were further elaborated in Crozier’s major exposition of the doctrine in *The Day-Star Extra* of February 7, 1846 to which Ellen gave the divine seal of approval.

### **B. The Vision of April 7, 1847:**

The vision was sent to Joseph Bates and published by him as a broadside titled “A Vision.” In his added “Remarks,” he described his first doubts followed by his personal investigations, and by his final acceptance of the visions as divine instructions. His annotations on Mrs. White’s July 13 letter show that four months later Bates’ doubts lingered on. He also protested, too much it seems, against any suspicion of self-interest in the publication. The vision evidently strengthened the importance of Sabbath observance which Bates so rigidly defended in his pamphlets. Bates used the visions to validate his sometimes eccentric theology, just as Adventists have done throughout their history. It was reprinted in *A Word to the ‘Little Flock’*, (pp.18-20) and in *The Review and Herald Extra* of July 21, 1851.

This new flight to the heavenly city included a detailed description of the furniture of the two chambers of the Sanctuary and echoed the objectification of heavenly things that Crozier had to stress because of the accusation of “spiritualizing” leveled against him. Upon entering the holy place, Mrs. White specified a *door* through which she passed before coming to the first, or outer veil. Although this detail echoes biblical descriptions of the door of the tabernacle, it must evidently be a reaffirmation of the “Shut-Door” of the parable having its counterpart in the heavens and corresponds to the current notion that when Christ left his mediatorial throne, he shut the door to the holy place and opened the door into the most holy. If Mrs. White’s memory was reliable in 1874, she did claim that it was on her first journey to relate her visions that such a view of the shut door came to her. (Letter 2, 1874). In this temple she did not see the two thrones of earlier visions, but only the divine throne between the cherubim. As in the Apocalypse, Jesus offered the prayers of the saints with incense rising from the censer. The remaining sancta were those found in scripture. The golden censor was likewise found in the Most Holy in Hebrews 9:4. This vision was a major occasion to exalt the Sabbath, surrounded with a halo on the tables of the law, to announce the dire consequences of giving it up, and the sinister mark of the beast to be received by Sunday worshippers. This eschatology was clearly the scenario created by Joseph Bates in his pamphlets<sup>25</sup>

This careful enumeration of heavenly sancta has been characteristic of Adventism throughout its existence. The heavenly places were assumed to contain all the furniture of the earthly temple, as well as its structure. It is only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century that “brick and mortar equivalencies” were rejected. The earthly temples were only the shadows of eternal realities, not their exact copy. The consequences of such criticism puts into question the whole doctrine of the sanctuary which rests heavily on such equivalencies.

## 8. The Letter to Eli Curtis:

Although this is a personal letter sent on April 21, 1847, in response to Curtis’ invitation in the *Day-Dawn* of January 14 and 28, 1847 ( Vol. I, Nos. 10 and 11), the *Extra* to which Mrs. White referred may be of a later date. Indeed, Crozier mentioned an *Extra* printed for Curtis in connection with the April 2, 1847 issue of the *Day-Dawn* (Vol.II, No 2, p.7) and added his own comments. Did Curtis request more than one *Extra*, or do we have comments on the same *Extra* from two different sources? It appears that both comments correspond in some points and that they both refer to the same document. They both deal with Curtis’ view of the sanctuary, his concept of the Millenium and his notion of the fate of those who worship (fall down) at the saints’ feet (Rev. 3:9). Some elements of the White letter are not Crozier’s concern: Satan’s emergence from his prison at the end of the thousand years, Michael’s standing up at the time of trouble, and Jesus’ emergence from the sanctuary after the completion of the atonement.

From her standpoint, Ellen White sustained all her positions by reference to various visions she “saw.” The weight of her “authority” is felt in her affirmations, while Crozier merely cited Scripture, condemned some of Curtis’ unbecoming language, and excused some of the writer’s peculiarities by praising his good mind and faithful heart.

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<sup>25</sup> Joseph Bates, *A Seal of the Living God*, New Bedford, Mass.: Press of Benjamin Lindsey 1849, p. 37; and *The Seventh Day Sabbath, a Perpetual Sign*, New Bedford, Mass.: By the Author, 1846/1847, pp. 56, 59, 60.

When dealing with Curtis' views of the sanctuary, there was obviously no disagreement between Ellen and Owen. However, he revealed that Curtis had kept the Millerite view of the atonement:

“His views of the Sanctuary, which are nearly the same as held by a large share of our brethren, we deem wholly unscriptural. Bro, C., like everybody else, believes the Holy of Holies is in heaven—that is a part of the Sanctuary—hence the Sanctuary must be in heaven.”

One of Ellen's purported visions supports Crozier's *Day-Star Extra* by a clear prophecy *ex eventu*, more than one year before. There is no evidence of this vision anywhere in the spring of 1845. Indeed, Crozier had the extra printed more than 14 months before. Following Crozier, Ellen identified the sanctuary to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days as “the New Jerusalem temple, with its “two apartments.” Her vision in the letter showed Jesus rising up, shutting the door, and entering the Most Holy. She did not omit the Shut-Door for the obvious reason that Curtis took a well-known stance against it. In his own fanciful paper, *The Girdle of Truth and Advent Review*, he also published an *Extra* (Vol. I, No. 6 of January 1848). On its first page, quoting Acts 2:17-18, he approved visionary revelations in the last days. Then came Ellen White's visions of 1845, 1846, and 1847. He was the first to delete the critical Shut-Door statement from the first vision<sup>26</sup>, and the references to feet-washing and the “holy kiss.” A riming poem on page 3 put the close of probation in the future. “When our “Great High Priest” entered the most holy place in 1844, it was only the ‘effectual door’ (1 Cor. 16:9) not the door of mercy that was shut.” Curtis confirmed this position in his letters to the *Day-Star*.<sup>27</sup> Only when the atonement is finished will probation close. Curtis admitted the divine origin of the visions and credited them with some innovations, but he obviously felt the right to pick and choose. He must have been influenced by Ellen's 1847 letter anyway, since he finally adopted her view of the atonement in 1848.

Curtis' open-door stance explains his generosity toward those “who worship before the saints' feet (Rev. 3:9), identified by Ellen as “professed Adventists.” (In her language this meant they had renounced the Millerite premises, did not accept the Sabbath “test,” or the new “sanctuary doctrine”) According to both sources, Curtis predicted their ultimate salvation. But neither Ellen nor Owen foresaw a glorious future for them. They would be forever lost, overwhelmed with anguish of spirit, unable to repent of their deeds while blaspheming the God of Heaven. They would suffer the divine judgments against the nations.

Mrs. White reproved Curtis in 1850 for publishing many of her visions<sup>28</sup> without mentioning the sensitive deletions. However, in a statement in the *Review and Herald* in 1851, she gave a very different reason for her dissatisfaction:

ELI CURTIS. – I wish to say to the brethren and sisters, that I have been much grieved with the strange course pursued by this man, in republishing my views, and sending them

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<sup>26</sup> Paradoxically, this deletion was the model of all future deletions.

<sup>27</sup> “Letter from Brother Curtis,” *The Day-Star*, Vol. IX No. 4-5, p. 20

<sup>28</sup> “Eli Curtis,” in *Present Truth*, May 1850 Vol. I, No. 10, p. 80

about in connection with worthless and foolish matter, such as the Dixboro Ghost, notwithstanding I have earnestly entreated him not to do so. I consider him void of judgment in spiritual things, blinded by the deception of the Enemy. I did my duty to him faithfully when I hoped he would turn from his singular course.

Mrs. White's judgment was warranted as Curtis had then begun to launch strangely mystical pamphlets and articles. One issued on April 1st, 1850 whose extensive title barely fitted in one page referred to the Dixboro Ghost. It featured the apparition of three angels seen passing through the heavens by several persons of "undoubted veracity." His article in the *Day-Dawn* recounted other "wonderful appearances."<sup>29</sup> A late pamphlet of 1861 was filled with more "worthless matter."<sup>30</sup>

## 9. The Vision of the Sealing:

Although this vision, dated Dec. 16, 1848 has little to say on the sanctuary, it is a continued witness to the heavenly intercession of Jesus in favor of "Israel." This meant "the little flock" of Adventists who had an exclusive right to a continued intercession, until the case of every saint was decided for salvation or doom. The vision was received at Rocky Hill, Ct at the house of Brother Belden. It appeared first on a broadside, January 31, 1849, in *The Present Truth* of August 1849, and in *Experience and Views* and *Early Writings*.

## 10. The Vision of the Open and Shut Door:

Received at Topsham, Maine on March 24, 1849, it was included in a private letter to the Hastings dated March 24-30, 1849. First printed in the *Present Truth* of August 1849, Vol. I, No. 3 p. 21, 22, it was reprinted in *Experience and Views*, p. 24-27 and in *Early Writings*, pp. 42-45.

It is evident that the major purpose of this vision was to link the Sabbath obligation to the Shut-Door. The Sabbath was the "sealing truth," and the saints were in the "sealing time." To convince the wise virgins that a new requirement was imposed on them, Mrs. White insisted that the "present test" could not come until the mediation of Jesus in the Holy place was finished, and he passed within the second veil. For it was there that the tables of the law, seen in the 1847 vision, highlighted the importance of the Sabbath. That there were doubts and "wavering" on this question among the wise virgins is a fact the vision does not overlook, but attributes to vigilant Satanic deception. The Sabbath was only one of the many "tests" invented by the Shut-Door camp after the disappointment, along with feet-washing, the "holy kiss," and other distinctive obligations. These were seen as "commandments" by the believers. Had one been among the "little flock" in those days he must have reasoned that all these tests were doubtful and incongruous additions to his status as a "wise virgin," since the virgins had "gone in" (spiritually or vicariously) with the Bridegroom to the "marriage" and been judged worthy of acceptance. According to the parable, their only duty was to "keep their garments clean." Moreover, from an apologetic viewpoint, it would have been difficult to prove the "perpetuity of the Sabbath" if it only became a requirement in 1844. The vigorous and almost exclusive defense of the Sabbath

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<sup>29</sup> Eli Curtis, "Signs in the Heavens," *The Day-Dawn*, April 16, 1847, Vol. II, p. 9

<sup>30</sup> E. Curtis, *The Millennial Messenger*, N. Y 1861



obligation in Sabbatarian periodicals from 1849 to 1853, against other Adventists, would have had little effect if the implications of this vision had been kept before the public.

It was Joseph Bates who had labeled the Sabbath the seal of God, had first linked it with the Shut-Door, and raised the specter of the “mark of the Beast” for the disobedient. His approach to the question was nothing less than imperious. He was the first to link the open door of the letter to Philadelphia (Rev 3:8) with the heavenly sanctuary. This was a rather daring exegesis.<sup>31</sup> In her Supplement to *Experience and Views*, Mrs. White claimed the use of this verse was “new to her,” but she could not have ignored that Bates had already used it in 1847 in his pamphlet titled “*Second Advent Way Marks and High Heaps*.”<sup>32</sup>

Adventist scholars have considered this vision as an important turning point in the evolution of Adventist missiology, seeing in it an end to the exclusion of new converts and an Open Door to anyone.<sup>33</sup> In other words, they believe it was the new sanctuary doctrine that put an end to the period of exclusion that began in 1844. This reading ignores the repeated Shut-Door refrain of the vision and its absolute rejection of apparent conversions: the revivals some ministers claimed to produce were nothing but “false reformations;” some professed Adventists used “mesmerism” to gain adherents; instead of their followers “falling prostrate” by the power of the Holy Ghost, they produced the same effect through satanic power. The eschatological decree could not be denied: the time for their salvation was past!!! Ellen vainly looked for any remaining “travail of soul,” for sinners among her contemporaries.<sup>34</sup> She evidently did not look very seriously, for in 1849 many Millerites were back on the trail and several former Shut-Door advocates had abandoned their exclusivism to rejoin the former movement. Well-known evangelists were actively fostering revivals.

If Crozier’s major study of the sanctuary in February 1846 presents an ambivalent attitude toward the Shut-Door,<sup>35</sup> his letter of April 13, 1846 in the *Day-Star*<sup>36</sup> is unequivocal. Speaking of the Jubilee trumpet that accompanied the Day of Atonement, he declared:

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<sup>31</sup> This allusion to the “key of David” has its source in the promotion of Eliakim to a new royal function in Isaiah 22:22. He would henceforth open or shut access to the royal presence. In Rev. 1:18 the Son of Man holds the key to Death and Hades, and in the Gospel of Matthew (16:18) Peter receives from him the keys of the kingdom of heaven. The open door placed before the church of Philadelphia, which no one can shut, has nothing to do with the sanctuary.

<sup>32</sup> Joseph Bates, *Second Advent Way Marks and High Heaps*, New Bedford: Press of Benjamin Lindsey, April 1847, pp 34-35 and 65.

<sup>33</sup> P. Gerard Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission*, Grand Rapids: Mich: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. 1977, pp. 155-162.

<sup>34</sup> The printed version spelled “travel.” This expression is found in the KJV of Isaiah 53:11 to evoke the labors of the “suffering servant.” In modern versions “toil” is a substitute (2 Thes.3:8) In the vision it has to do with an emotional zeal for the salvation of the world. If the time for salvation is past, obviously there is no need to toil.

<sup>35</sup> In the last section of his major study, “The Transition,” he seems to extend the “Covenant of Grace,” until the Advent, concurrently with the “Dispensation of the fullness of time,” that began in 1844. But on page 41 of the *Extra*, “The Priesthood of Christ,” he found “no evidence that an atonement for the forgiveness of sins was made on the tenth day of the seventh month .” (he saw a final “blotting out of sins” reserved to the “saints” on that day).

<sup>36</sup> “Letter from Bro. Crosier,” *The Day-Star*, May 16, 1846, Vol. X, p. 46

“This trumpet would only interest those who were benefited by the release; hence, would be sounded to Israel only. Our shut door position since the 10<sup>th</sup> of the 7<sup>th</sup> month '44 has been peculiarly adapted to the Jubilee trumpet.”

Moreover, examination of the few extant issues of the *Day-Dawn* for 1847 clearly show that the new sanctuary doctrine had no effect whatsoever on the missiology of those who adopted it. That doctrine did not open the door to the foolish virgins. In an editorial titled “Circumstances of the Second Advent,”<sup>37</sup> Crosier even suggested without compunction that the impassable rift between the faithful, sealed in their righteousness, and the wicked, confirmed in their unchangeable fatal destiny, was a necessary training to equip the righteous as co-judges with Christ after the Advent. The sympathy they might have felt for the wicked was eliminated in favor of impartial objectivity. For him, in 1847, the lamentable condition of the world “succeeded the Shutting of the Door of Matt. 25:10.” It was a divine decree that settled forever the final character of men. Human choice had been finalized and there was no possible return.

Besides, the pioneers for whom the heavenly sanctuary was a very tangible reality had never lost sight of its “architecture.” The door that was shut was that of the holy place, but it was also the door on which the foolish virgins vainly knocked. They were barred from the Holy which was the only passage to the Most Holy. The latter was not open to them but to the High Priest alone and to those he represented, namely “the little flock,” or “Israel,” or “the wise virgins.” In the first *Day-Dawn* of 1845, Crozier had them entering the open door “vicariously” through Christ. As for the wicked world, there was no indication that it could be saved for it was the “Master of the House” who closed the door of the Holy to them. In his February 1846 *Extra* the saints were “borne in” on the breastplate of their high-priest.<sup>38</sup> In Dec. 1849 David Arnold pictured an empty holy place on the Day of Atonement, according to Lev. 16:17. There is no contemporary evidence in the literature covering the next two years that the sanctuary doctrine caused a broader outreach. The Day of Atonement was not for the world but only for the “household of faith,” for “those only whose names were inscribed on the breastplate of judgment.” When Hiram Edson published his *Advent Review Extra* in September 1850 he included children, and some that had not heard the Midnight Cry, as well as some decent non-religious folk, among those who had been “borne in” on the breastplate. He did not proclaim an open door. These people, it would seem, had managed to slip in with the High-Priest *before* the door was shut.

On November 12, 1851, in a letter to Brother and Sister Howland,<sup>39</sup> Mrs White told a Brother Baker that “his going to the churches to proclaim the third angel’s message was all wrong, that he had to tame that message or he could not have got into the churches, and that he had been taking the children’s bread and giving it to the dogs.” This was still the same missiology. She urged him to stop feeding the dogs and feed the sheep.

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<sup>37</sup> *Day-Dawn*, Vol. II, No. 3, April 16, 1847, p. 12, Cols. 1-2-3.

<sup>38</sup> The origin of this idea was first found in G. W. Peavey, “The Hour of His Judgment is Come,” *Jubilee Standard*, June 19, 1845, p. 114. There is no evidence that the breastplate was ever worn in the inner shrine on the Day of Atonement. Moreover it was not the means of discovering divine judicial decisions on human behavior but a means of ascertaining the divine will in specific circumstances through the Urim and thumim kept in the ephod. Hebrew *mishpat* may refer to custom, cultural norm and statute, in addition to judgment. The breastplate symbolically brought the tribes of Israel to God’s “remembrance” and God’s will to the people.

<sup>39</sup> Manuscript release #206, E. G. White Estate

The most perplexing detail of the vision is the strange self-deception attributed to those Mrs. White considered the “enemies of the present truth:”

I saw that the enemies of the present truth have been trying to open the door of the Holy Place, that Jesus has shut; and to close the door of the Most Holy Place which he opened in 1844, where the Ark is containing the two tables of stone, on which are written the ten commandments, by the finger of Jehovah.

Again one must try to imagine the reaction of contemporary Christians, Adventists or others, to such a strange statement. In 1849 they did not even envisage two apartments in heavenly places or two phases in ministration. Neither were they, foolish virgins, clamoring for entrance into the wedding hall. By 1845 they had returned to the task of spreading their version of Adventism, rejoined their churches or abandoned the whole endeavor as a mistake. Shutting the door to the Most Holy is the last thing they would ever have done, since the author of Hebrews had long ago invited them to enter therein with boldness. Mrs. White’s homiletics of Rev. 3:8, which she found in Bates, was as audacious as his. But a typical attitude of the partisans of any ideology, is mistakenly to attribute to their opponents a foundation of beliefs similar to their own. The Jewish historian Yehezkel Kauffman has shown that Israel utterly failed to understand the nature of polytheism because it conceived of no other possible religion than its monotheism.<sup>40</sup> They could only use sarcasm in pointing out hand-made idols and the absurd worship offered them by their own manufacturers. What is known today about the religion of the Canaanites, the Egyptians, the Assyrians and other peoples of the Levant shows that Israel did not understand their mythology, the motives of their ritual acts and the functions of their religious institutions. Mrs. White, in some sense, erred likewise. Evidently, she was simply trying to say that other Christians rejected her emphasis on the importance of the Sabbath. But she chose a language that had little to do with reality because she extended to others the foundation of her own beliefs.

To conclude our analysis of this vision we must reaffirm that it did not open the door to the salvation of all men, did not alter the pattern of exclusion current among Sabbatarians at that time, and did not affect its theology of mission until other unexpected events occurred, such as the conversion of newcomers to their brand of Adventism. Like the “professed Adventists” they had castigated, they finally recognized the possibility of genuine change of heart, the geographical limits of Millerite outreach, and the passage of time that added new beings to world population.

## **11. A Clarification of “false reformations”<sup>41</sup>:**

This letter addressed to “My Dear Brothers and Sisters,” was printed only once in the *Present Truth* of March 1850, Vol. I, No. 8, p. 64, and in no other publication. It is a useful comment on the “false reformations” found in the Topsham vision of 1849 and leaves no doubt as to the Sabbatarian rejection of any apparent new conversion:

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<sup>40</sup> Yehezkel Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel*, University of Chicago Press, 1960.

<sup>41</sup> Mrs. White clarified this term in the 1849 vision as a reference to apparent conversions, not from error to truth but from bad to worse.

The excitements and false reformations of this day do not move us, for we know that the Master of the House rose up in 1844, and shut the door of the first apartment of the heavenly tabernacle.

Then follows the habitual quotation from Hoseah 5:6 with the assurance that these reformations cannot possibly be genuine.

Incidentally, the letter contains an interesting allusion to a phrase from Hebrews 6:19 with the very anachronism earlier read by Crozier:

If we are firmly fixed upon the present truth, and have our hope, like an anchor of the soul, cast within the second veil, the various winds of false doctrine and error cannot move us.

Here the writer was evidently speaking from her viewpoint as a believer in the 1844 entrance of Jesus within the second veil. Of course this usage does not harmonize with Crozier's later understanding of this passage. If Mrs. White meant that the author of Hebrews originally referred to the Most Holy Place, she took away a major element of her scaffolding. But if she thought in terms of the new ministration just inaugurated, her citation is simply removed from the first century to be fitted into the nineteenth, with similar consequences. We have seen that such anachronisms are not rare in early Adventist literature.

## **11. The Dorchester Vision: (last relevant vision of the formative years)**

Very abbreviated printed versions of this vision appear in the *Present Truth* of November 1850<sup>42</sup> and in the vision titled "The Gathering Time." in *Early Writings*.<sup>43</sup> Its complete text was apparently found only among three visions copied and preserved by Hiram Edson in the Advent Source Collection. They are found handwritten in a little cardboard-bound booklet. His longer version is the only copy that identifies the place where it occurred, the house of Bro. Nichols in Dorchester, Mass. The date on the hand copy, October 23, 1850, differs by exactly one month from that of the first printed version dated September 23.

Several details of the vision point to its authenticity. Published portions lightly differ in wording from the copy. It names well-known individuals who are omitted from the printed versions. The personal conflicts between James White and Joseph Bates, over the validity of publishing a periodical, that she relates, are well-known from other sources.<sup>44</sup> Its reference to "Sister Miner," (Clorinda S. Minor) and her connections with an effort to go to Jerusalem is verifiable in the literature of the time.<sup>45</sup> A long section deleted from the printed editions develops the theme of an alliance between the apocalyptic "mother of harlots" and her "daughters," in issuing a decree to slay non-observers of the first day of the week in the end of

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<sup>42</sup> *The Present Truth*, Vol. I, No. 11 p. 86 (last paragraph of 2<sup>nd</sup> col.)

<sup>43</sup> E. G. White, *Early Writings*, Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, Pub. Ass. P. 74-75

<sup>44</sup> James White's letter to Brother Hastings, Jan.10,1850

<sup>45</sup> Merlin Burt, *op. cit.* p. 220-221; O. R. L. Crozier, "Rothschild and the City of Jerusalem," *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 4:45, July 24, 1852, and *ibid* n.s. 4:174, 180, 204-6, 1851, p. 156; cf. E.L Chamberlain, *Day-Star*, Vol. IX, No 17, Jan.10, 1846. She wrote a book titled *Meshullam! Or, Tidings from Jerusalem*: Philadelphia 1851

time. Joseph Bates had conceived this scenario as mentioned above. The allusions to “the old chart” (The Millerite chart) directed of the Lord and to the “correct view of the daily” show some variations, but a clear connection with the printed versions. Hiram Edson’s multiple personal charismatic experiences explain his deep interest in the visions and his conscientious efforts to preserve their exact wording.

Edson carefully preserved two other visions, the Oswego vision dated July 29, 1850 and the Sutton vision dated October 1850. He owned a handwritten copy of the former, written by Mrs. White herself, found in the Advent Source Collection No.1607 and it is on file as Manuscript 5 of 1850 (WDF 731). His granddaughter, Via Ophelia Cross wrote her name and “property of Hiram Edson” in the right margin of page 3. Two portions of the vision are found on pages 59-60 of *Early Writings* under the title “Mysterious Rappings.” Another segment occurs on page 73 (last paragraph) under the title “Prayer of Faith.” A passage on page 3 already in parentheses was evidently marked for deletion, and appears nowhere else in print. It imposes the vital duty of “rebaptism out of the open-door” and “into the faith of the shut-door” for those who were originally baptized in Sunday-keeping churches and for anyone who has not been baptized since 1844. This must be done before Jesus comes. “Until that duty is done they will not gain progress.”<sup>46</sup> Of the two individuals mentioned in the vision, Gorsline and Chapin, only the latter is well-known in early Adventist history.<sup>47</sup> Manuscript Release # 592 includes the vision’s counsel to disfellowship Gorsline.

The Sutton vision is partially reproduced in *Early Writings* pp. 52-54 under the title “The Last Plagues and the Judgment,” on pp.57-58 under the title “Duty in the time of trouble,” and on pp. 61-62 under the title “The Messengers.” Here again Joseph Bates is the object of seven mentions, most of them critical. Ellen describes James White’s jealousy of him as almost irrational.

These two visions do not allude to the sanctuary and need not be analyzed further except to point out that their citations in printed form, structure, contents, allusions to contemporary figures, use of Ellen White well-known specialized vocabulary mark them as authentic<sup>48</sup> The redistribution of original portions of visions in various chapters of periodicals and books reveals a procedure that seems recurrent in early publications. Unfortunately it hides contexts, destroys coherence and structure, and disfigures the total character of a vision. Moreover, it may seem legitimate to omit, for public consumption, elements of the visions which criticize specific individuals’ very personal characteristics, but generalizing the criticism and replacing the names by the word “some” as is evident in the *Present Truth* is a flagrant misuse of “revelation,” for it

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<sup>46</sup> Emily Clemons, editor of the *Hope of Israel*, favored such a baptism in connection with a “new covenant”. Mrs White had imposed it in Atkinson according to witnesses at the Dammon trial, and she herself had been rebaptised by James White. Crozier also had a second baptism according to his late autobiography.

<sup>47</sup> R. R. Chapin wrote a letter to William Miller on October 9, 1847 from Rochester to inquire about a rumor that the latter had come out in favor of the Shut-Door and to convince him it was the right thing to do. Miller denied the report as unsound (letter of Sept 9, 1847). Bates may have been the bearer of that rumor. George W. Holt refers to Chapin in a letter of October 1850 (*Present Truth*, Vol. I, No. 11 p. 86). Later Chapin was among the critics of the shut-door visions (*Review and Herald* Aug 22, 1851) having himself been a proponent of it in 1847

<sup>48</sup> For a more extensive analysis see my unpublished typescript, “Three Early Visions of Mrs. E. G. White Copied by Hiram Edson: An Evaluation.” (no date)

targets groups who cannot understand how the criticism can apply to them. Later practice, using initials to refer to individuals, was a fairer practice.

The passage of the Dorchester vision that bears on Sanctuary ritual and appears nowhere except in Edson's copy should be quoted entirely as a tangible example of Mrs. White's thinking and method in 1850. It occurs on pages 19 to 22 of Edson's little booklet in his own handwriting:

Then I saw that Jesus' work in the Sanctuary was almost finished, almost finished, and after his work is finished, he will come to the door of the tabernacle or door of the first apartment and confess the sins of Israel upon the head of the scapegoat. Then he will put on the garments of vengeance. Then the plagues come upon the wicked and they do not come until Jesus put on the garments of vengeance and takes his seat upon the great white cloud. Then while the plagues are falling the scapegoat is being led away. He makes a mighty struggle to escape: but he is held fast by the hand that bears him away. If he should effect his escape Israel would be destroyed (or slain). I saw that it would take time to bear him away into the land of forgetfulness after the sins were put upon his head. Jesus clothes himself with the garments of vengeance and takes his place upon the great white cloud before the plagues are poured out. The great white cloud I saw was not in the holy place but entirely separate from the sanctuary. As Jesus passed through the holy place or first apartment to confess the sins of Israel on the scapegoat, an angel said. This apartment is called the Sanctuary. Then the angel repeated these words and said this is the time spoken of, "and he saw that there was no man and wondered that there was no intercessor;" we had no mediator between God and man and the plagues could be withheld no longer for Jesus had ceased pleading for Israel, and they were covered with the covering of almighty God and they lived in his sight, and those who were not covered felt the plagues for they had nothing to shelter them. I saw that there was a cherub sitting on either end of the mercy seat with their wings spread out on high, and touching each other. While their other wings reached to each side of the apartment. I saw that the wings of the angels did not reach above the Father, for that would bring him too low. I saw that the Father was in the midst above the cherubims and his glory is shed down upon the ark, and the train of his glory fills the Temple. (emphasis original)

In the light of this vision, one must wonder if Mrs. White ever read Crozier's *Extra* when she gave it the divine seal of approval three years before. Crozier's chosen antitype of the scapegoat as "Satan and the wicked" was the fifth point in his first attempt at systematizing his position on October 21, 1845. Joseph Marsh had reacted strongly against such an idea in the same paper. Crozier's October 23, 1845 letter in the *Day-Star* of Nov. 16 confirmed it. His three columns section on the Scapegoat in the *Extra*, of February 1846, page 43, could not have been more explicit. Charles Beecher, the learned brother of famed Harriet Beecher Stowe, exchanged correspondence with Crozier on that very matter.<sup>49</sup> Evidence is clear that Ellen White was not aware of Crozier's novel interpretation. She returned to the Levitical text to transpose its Scapegoat ritual into the heavens almost literally. After the procedure in the Most Holy, Jesus returned to the door of the tabernacle to confess the sins of Israel where the second goat had been

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<sup>49</sup> Charles Beecher, Letter of Sept 30, 1847, with Crozier's reply, *The Bible Advocate*, Vol. IV, No 5, March 16, 1848 pp. 34-35. In the same letter, Crozier announced his suspension on the *Day-Dawn* in September 1847

presented alive “before the Lord (Lev. 16:10). The sins of Israel were put upon its head (16:21). The scapegoat was led away by an unidentified person into the land of forgetfulness (16:22).

One detail not found in the biblical text is the “mighty struggle” of the “scapegoat” to escape. Here, Mrs. White clearly draws on “popular etymology.” But she considers the dismissal as an essential part of the atonement, a reading consonant with the Biblical text. (Why the dismissal should “take time” is not clear.) If the scapegoat should succeed in his escape, “Israel would be destroyed (or slain).” Later Adventist interpretation insisted that the atonement was completed after the sacrifice of the first goat. Had they taken Ellen seriously, they would have had to conclude that their scapegoat, Satan, played an indispensable role in the atonement. But even assuming as they do today that the scapegoat only bore Satan’s responsibility in the sins of the people, the question remains, what have the sins of Satan’s responsibility to do with defilement of the sanctuary? By what transaction were they “transferred” to the altars, to the mercy-seat, or any other part of the sanctuary?<sup>50</sup> Crozier’s eschatology leads to all sorts of insoluble problems that have not been solved in the last 160 years. The longer this quandary lasts, the more it becomes problematic. In the pioneer’s original view, the atonement was not meant to last so long. Crozier was quite aware that Sabbatarians had never accepted his view in the original form and made it known.

Ellen White ignores the angel who holds the key to the bottomless pit, a fitting antitype of the person who leads the scapegoat away. Neither does she recognize Crozier’s antitype of the land of forgetfulness, the “pit,” “prison,” or “lake of fire” to which Satan is destined (Rev. 20:1-10). Nor does she explain why an angel identifies the first apartment as “the sanctuary.” We can surmise her purpose. She is probably attempting to correct the prevailing view that “heaven itself” is the antitype of the Most Holy Place.

Her naïve perceptions of heaven are characteristic of all her early visions. She adds the curious detail that the “great white cloud” on which Jesus is to reappear on his final journey to earth is not in the holy place, but entirely separate from the Sanctuary. Is this a response to those who accused the shut-door camp of “spiritualizing” the visible advent? Likewise her image of the cherubim hovering over the mercy seat are kept in proper subordination to the Father, by limiting the size of their wings. It would be interesting to know what images of the temple Ellen was shown in her childhood. This text was written when she was 23 years old.

A significant difference between the printed version is the omission of an important phrase in reference to the Millerite chart (most likely the 1843 chart prepared by Charles Fitch and Apollos Hale). Although Ellen favored publication of the truth in periodicals, and reproached Joseph Bates for his lack of interest, she specified that “not a peg of it [the chart] should be altered *without inspiration*. James White omitted the phrase in italics. He is known to have insisted on preserving the chart intact.<sup>51</sup> Does this suggest a doubt about the importance of his wife’s inspiration? As for the game of divine dissimulation she describes (God’s hand hid a mistake in the figures of the chart until his hand was removed), it is theologically and ethically problematic.

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<sup>50</sup> This question was already posed by Roy Adams in his Doctoral Dissertation, “The Doctrine of the Sanctuary in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Three Approaches.” Andrews University, 1980, pp.226-27

<sup>51</sup> Letter from Sister J. F. Wardwell, “The Mystery of God,” *The Day-Dawn*, Vol. II, No 3, April 16, 1847 p. 10

She also alludes to a chart being printed in Boston in her letter to Brother and Sister Loveland of November 1850.

William Miller, who had difficulty with the term *tamid* (Daniel 8:13-14), had pointed out the absence of the word “sacrifice” in the original Hebrew. He needed a non-sacrificial interpretation in order to bring the prophecy into the Christian era. By his habitual use of concordances he came to the conclusion that “paganism” was the pagan Roman power that papal Rome took away to become the persecuting “little horn.” The Dorchester vision does not allude to the absence of the word sacrifice, but James White, the editor of *Present Truth* introduced that exegetical detail in the vision when he printed it. Matters of linguistic exegesis were evidently not a part of Mrs. White’s competence, but she could have credited Miller’s repeated mention of this fact. Crozier had already modified Miller’s view by defining the daily as the “continual mediation of Christ” usurped by papal power. This was not done without opposition.<sup>52</sup> Ellen White accurately reported that before 1844 “nearly all were united in the correct view of the daily.” But after 1846 most of the Sabbatarians adopted Crozier’s view without dissent. This subject has been a renewed source of endless controversy beginning in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Hebrew term is historically connected with the realm of daily ritual activity in the temple, including sacrificial procedure.

The paradoxes contained in this vision should make anyone wonder if her previous contributions to the Sanctuary doctrine have any more value than this one. This vision is one of the rare ones in which she disagrees with her contemporaries, but there is no originality or validity to her literalism, which fortunately has left no trace in the evolution of the sanctuary doctrine. After 1851 the visions did not add much to the standard traditional positions established.

## 12. Conclusion:

It is valid to speak of “sanctuaries” in Ellen White’s visions because she did not always see the same sanctuary. As the theological environment varied, so did the visions. She confirmed what her contemporaries believed about the sanctuary’s location, architecture, divisions, ritual and its association with the “pre-advent judgment” taking place in it. In spite of her determined intent to prove the originality of her revelations, she did not innovate. When she did her contributions were erroneous, as for instance in advocating a Shut-Door to the holy place, or the literal dismissal of a scapegoat in heaven. In a sense her confirmations largely explain her success as a visionary. Fellow members were delighted to get the seal of divine approval on their “discoveries,” and she, meanwhile, gathered more prestige. As for literature she contributed a few elegant, mystical images and a highly picturesque and tangible perception of heavenly places. For seven years she encouraged zeal and effort to gather the little flock alone, and discouraged any effort to associate with members of official churches or proclaim a message to the world, even in praying for the sick.<sup>53</sup> Only after her contemporaries opened the door of salvation to all could she erase the effect of these early visions by unconvincing reinterpretations.

Recent studies credit Mrs. White with both the Adventist position and the traditional Christian affirmation of an entrance into the holiest of all at the ascension. Likewise she

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<sup>52</sup> Letter of J. Weston, *The Day-Dawn*, Vol. II, No 2, March 19, 1847, p. 1-2

<sup>53</sup> Letter to Dear Brother Pierce, Dec. 3, 1857, Release 324, and The Sutton Vision mentioned above.



reinterpreted the parable of the virgins as having future reference while at the same time preserving post-Millerite fantasies which she had sealed as inspired. Conclusions may differ as to the reasons for these conflicting interpretations. But recent disclosure of her sources may indicate that the “orthodox” statements may have been borrowed from others without discrimination. She did not detect the historical errors of the historians she quoted, and may not have perceived the defeating consequences of the theological statements she borrowed.

To the question we posed at the beginning of this study, “what was the value of Mrs. White’s confirmations?” The answer is that they may have helped create another denomination, but they did not enhance the pursuit of truth. Confirming the theological efforts of a group of pioneers whose piety was evident, but whose competence was questionable, was a way of halting the perennial search. She persuaded them they possessed the absolute truth before they had even apprehended it. Relying on their assurance, they paid no attention to contemporary criticism which was abundant and often well-substantiated. When their posterity acquired competence and fostered a continuous search for understanding, constant crisis was bound to result. It will not abate as long as meaningful criticism is not met with competent scholarship, and current triumphalism continues. The Adventist movement, in spite of its prosperity, its usefulness, thriving institutions, educated clergy and continued growth, suffers internally from dogmatic stagnation and complacency, ailments that are not healed by recurrent “statements of belief,” and may have deleterious consequences in the long run.

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## EXCURSUS :

### TURNER AND HALE’S VIEW OF THE ATONEMENT

In tracing the development of the sanctuary doctrine Adventist writers have tended to credit Joseph Turner and Appolos Hale with their own view of the atonement process.<sup>54</sup> Gerard Damsteegt argues that these authors in 1845 spoke of an atonement “currently going on in heaven as a preparation and purification of the New Jerusalem.”<sup>55</sup> C. Merwyn Maxwell likewise speaks of a post-1844 preparation of the Heavenly Tabernacle in the New Jerusalem as a Day of Atonement.<sup>56</sup> Their conclusion stems from a rather ambiguous statement in *The Advent Mirror* which they fail to read in its proper perspective:

The coming of the Bridegroom would point to some change of work or office on the part of our Lord, in the invisible world; and the going in with him a corresponding change on the part of his true people. With him it is within the veil, where he has gone to prepare a place

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<sup>54</sup> This tendency began with the Adventist historian Leroy E. Froom reading the prophetic faith of “Our Fathers” as a quasi *preparatio adventista*. His magniloquent language celebrated the “Prophetic Panorama of the Ages,” in which he rediscovered the Adventist truths known throughout history.

<sup>55</sup> In Frank B. Holbrook, Editor, *The Doctrine of the Sanctuary, A Historical Survey (1845-1863)*, p.28 Note 34

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* Addendum, p. 156; cf also George Knight *Millennial Fever*, pp. 304-305

for us, with them it is outside the veil, where they are to wait and keep themselves ready till they pass into the marriage supper.<sup>57</sup>

It is quite true that the present perfect (where he has gone to prepare a place for us) would seem to allude to a recent event, but it may equally refer to a completed action, which started long ago. This change of work, or “office” is explained in the same article as a “distinct office, character, or work of Christ.” These writers find a change of office evident in most other parables as well. The change they describe is not from Bridegroom to High-Priest, but just the opposite. These writers clung to the Millerite theology of the atonement they really never gave up. The Christian High-Priest, who had been “within the veil” since his ascension, is clearly said to have closed his intercession for the world in 1844. This is what both Turner and Hale affirm.<sup>58</sup> He then became a Bridegroom, and will be crowned King as such. These are the changes of “office” they describe. After the wedding/coronation he will appear as King to gather his elect. In an effort to harmonize the details of the parable with Daniel 7 the authors strangely equated the wedding with the reception of the kingdom by the Son of Man. The marriage is that *change* in the heavenly state in which Jesus comes to the Ancient of Days to receive his kingdom.

The biblical use of the phrase “within the veil” usually refers to the veil that separates the holy from the holy of holies in the mosaic sanctuary. This may be what has caused the misunderstanding. But it is evident that in the Millerite context only one veil, if any, exists since “heaven itself” is considered the antitype of the most holy place. Moreover, in their view the people of God are shown waiting for the Master “outside the veil.” They are on earth, not in the holy place of the temple. Hence that veil is not the one that separates the holy from the most holy. It is the veil that opened the heavenly realm to Christ’s entrance. It merely separates heaven and earth.<sup>59</sup>

Turner could not have meant that Christ entered the most holy place for the first time in 1844 since he repeated in a contemporary number of the *Hope of Israel* that the atonement was completed on that date.<sup>60</sup> On March 25, 1845 Samuel Snow credited Turner with the belief that the atonement was finished.<sup>61</sup> The change from priest to bridegroom in the “invisible world” took place “within the veil,” that is, in the heavens where Christ originally went to prepare a place for the righteous. When Snow received the bridegroom message from Turner he saw no conflict with the completed atonement he had announced as the “True Midnight Cry,” before the disappointment, and was easily convinced of the new Bridegroom-Come solution.

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<sup>57</sup> J. Turner and A. Hale, *The Advent Mirror*, January 1845, p. 3

<sup>58</sup> The *Advent Mirror* speaks of “the closing of Christ’s intercession for the world,” and Hale’s articles confirm this by repeating the same phrase and adding: “I can give that act of Christ denoted by the coming of the Bridegroom to the marriage no other *special reference*, but to the act of resigning his mediatorial work, in behalf of the world, in order to his becoming king.” *Op. cit.* p. 34

<sup>59</sup> An editorial of *The Midnight Cry*, of October 11, 1844, titled “The Types” shows a parallel to this usage. (Christ offered his sacrifice “without the veil,” [sic] before going into the holiest).

<sup>60</sup> *The Hope of Israel*, January 24, 1845, cited by Isaac Welcome, *History of the Second Advent Message and Mission, Doctrine and People*, p. 398.

<sup>61</sup> Letter from S. S. Snow of March 25, 1845 in *The Voice of Truth and Glad Tidings*, April 16, 1845, Vol. 6, No. 3 p. 20. Most of the Millerites still believed his “True Midnight Cry” a few months after October 1844 and that the atonement was completed on that date

As for Appolos Hale, author of two lengthy articles in the *Advent Herald* and co-author of *The Advent Mirror*, there is no reason to assume that his views of the atonement were any different. He had pointed out that the bride was the heavenly Jerusalem, in the midst of which stood the heavenly tabernacle. She could not be married to the Bridegroom unless she was first purified. This purification he pictured in terms of Hebrews 9:23 referring to the heavenly places. He stressed that the work of purification of the “bride,” namely the atonement process in the heavenly tabernacle, was to *precede* the cleansing of the sanctuary announced in Daniel 8:14. He also gave “the act denoted by the coming of the Bridegroom to the Marriage no other *special* reference, but to the act of resigning his mediatorial work, in behalf [of] the world, in order to his becoming king.”<sup>62</sup>

When the Sabbatarian editor, James White, approvingly republished Hale’s articles, he understood perfectly well that they implied a completed atonement before 1844. That is why he had to reject this critical passage of Hale’s article:

“We suppose the condition of things at the shutting of the door would be very much as it was after the Day of Atonement among the ancient Hebrews.”

White first corrected it in his introduction by stating: “The shutting of the door of the holy place, is preparatory to the antitypical tenth day atonement for the cleansing of the Sanctuary.” For Hale the Shut-door followed the completed Day of Atonement. For White the shutting of the door in 1844 preceded the atonement, because it was the door of the first apartment of the sanctuary, excluding the foolish virgins. The veil into the most holy was then open as an entrance to the final atonement exclusively reserved to the “little flock.” In 1851 some of White’s colleagues were about to discard the Shut-Door, but whether he was, is uncertain.

One of the central differences between Mrs. White’s Bridegroom vision and the Bridegroom-Come advocates was a totally different view of the atonement beginning with an 1844 entrance into the holiest as well as a new concept of the “geography” of heavenly places. This could only come from the revision of typology launched by the *Hope of Israel* of March 25, 1845 that followed soon after the invention of the “bridegroom’s coming.”

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<sup>62</sup> “Brother Hale’s articles,” reprinted by James White in *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, September 16, 1851 and October 7, 1851 (pp. 25-28 and 33-34) were originally published in the *Advent Herald* of February 26 and March 5, 1845, (pp. 17-19 and 26-28). James White did not publish Sylvester Bliss’ extensive negative response to Hale in 16 cogent notes that still bear analysis. It is significant that Joseph Marsh’s criticism of the new solution was labeled: “Bridegroom Come-Door Shut-Atonement Made.” (O.R. L. Crozier, “The Springwater Affair.” *The Voice of Truth and Glad Tidings*, October 29, 1845, p. 505, first column)