

In early 1890 Ellen White was moved to write a series of articles for the *Review* that linked together the 1888 message, the Sanctuary truth, and the work of Christ in the Most Holy Apartment. And she directly linked it all to the 1888 message (January 21 through April 8):—

“You have been having light from heaven for the past year and a half. . . . These men who refuse to receive truth, interpose themselves between the people and the light. . . . How long will those at the head of the work keep themselves aloof from the message of God?” (Ellen G. White, *Review*, March 18, 1890).

“1888” Article Published in April 25th Edition of *Adventist Review*

Surely the Lord’s providence arranged for Clifford Goldstein’s article, “1888 and All that ...” to appear in the April 25th [2002] edition of the *Adventist Review*. We believe that the article will encourage church members to examine the 1888 message itself.

Following, for your consideration, are two analyses of the article.

An Amazing Treatise For Adventists

The Clifford Goldstein presentation in the April 25 *Adventist Review* is unique in this journal’s history. The title infers that the Minneapolis General Conference was nothing special. This heaven-blessed event was: “1888 and All That ...”

He claims to have found that Ellen White’s theology is in “sharp contrast” with “the so-called 1888 message.” “Ellen White claimed that she had been teaching for ‘forty-five years,’ the same message as Jones and Waggoner presented at this session.” When the source is checked, a different meaning is evident:

“I have had the question asked, ‘What do you think of this light that these men are presenting?’ Why, I have been presenting it to you for the last forty-five years—the matchless charms of Christ. This is what I have been *trying* to present before your minds. When Brother Waggoner brought out these ideas in Minneapolis, it was the first clear teaching on this subject from any human lips I had heard, excepting the conversations between myself and my husband. I have said to myself, It is because God has presented it to me in vision that I see it so clearly, and they cannot see it because they have never had it presented to them as I have. And when another presented it, every fiber of my heart said, Amen” (Ms. 5, p. 10 [Sermon, Rome, New York, June 19, 1889]; *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, pp. 348-349; emphasis supplied).

She declared that the church would “not have had” the 1888 message if Jones and Waggoner had not brought it: “Has God raised up these men to proclaim the truth? I say, yes, God has sent men to bring us the truth that we should not have had unless God had sent somebody to bring it to us.

... I no more dare to lift my hand against these persons, because it would be against Jesus Christ, who is to be recognized in His messengers" (p. 608).

Obviously there was and is only one "1888 message" and this is what was preached by Jones and Waggoner and confirmed by Ellen White. While at the Minneapolis session she preached a thirteen-page sermon of warning and solemn admonition pointing out the danger the delegates faced of rejecting light (see the *1888 Materials*, pp. 348-349). She entreated the brethren, "be not like the Pharisees, who were blinded with spiritual pride, self-righteousness, and self-sufficiency, and who because of this were forsaken of God" (p. 166). At least four times in this sermon she refers to the Jews and draws the comparison: "As the Jews refused the light of the world, so many of those who claim to believe the present truth will refuse light which the Lord will send to His people" (for example, see p. 174). It was in this sermon that she emphatically commended Dr. Waggoner's presentations:

"Dr. Waggoner has spoken to us in a straightforward manner. There is precious light in what he has said. ... I know it would be dangerous to denounce Dr. Waggoner's position as wholly erroneous. ... That which has been presented harmonizes perfectly with the light which God has been pleased to give me during all the years of my experience" (pp. 163, 164).

Goldstein's second paragraph questions what Christ accomplished on the cross. He denies "that the entire world, every human being" has been legally justified. His teaching requires that the sinner must do something first; he/she must "claim" justification before "we are legally justified." He does not believe that Christ's work makes it "easy to be saved and hard to be lost." Even though "Christ tasted 'death for every man' (Heb. 2:9); yes, God was in Christ, 'reconciling the world unto himself' (2 Cor. 5:19) ... this does not mean we were all saved," so it doesn't mean what it says. Thus, he says, the sinner must do something before the cross becomes effective to justification.

The author then returns to his previous contention that the message was "something that she [Ellen White] had been preaching for decades," then supports this contention by quoting two words, "old light" from *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 168. When this source is checked it will be found in her 34-page account of the General Conference held in Minneapolis. The two words "old light" do not refer to anything Ellen White preached, but rather this was the truth of what Waggoner was preaching. She explains it specifically:

"Elder E. J. Waggoner had the privilege granted him of speaking plainly and presenting his views upon justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ in relation to the law. This was no new light, but it was old light placed where it should be in the third angel's message. ... At this meeting I bore testimony that the most precious light had been shining forth from the Scriptures in the presentation of the great subject of the righteousness of Christ When I stated before my brethren that I had heard for the first time the views of Elder E. J. Waggoner, some did not believe me. I stated that I had heard precious truths uttered that I could respond to with all my heart" (pp. 168, 172).

The message brought to God's people in 1888 was special, "precious light" and it did not depend upon Ellen White, but rather she confirmed that it was a message from heaven brought by Jones and Waggoner.

Goldstein brings the charge: "Nothing in her writing teaches universal legal justification ... Why in all of Ellen White's writings does no book, no chapter in a book, no article, or even a simple full paragraph, spell out in unambiguous terms the idea of universal legal justification prior to personal faith?" The truth is she does teach universal legal justification and this truth permeates her writings. In *The Desire of Ages* the entire chapter "Calvary," over a dozen times she uses phrases such as: "save the sinful race" (744); "embraced the world"; "took in every sinner that had lived or should live, from the beginning of the world to the end of time" (745); "each child of humanity" (755); "a new and living way is prepared for all" (757). Ellen White understood corporate responsibility and taught that Christ's sacrifice was for the whole world.

A recent publication, *Let History Speak*, compiles over twenty Bible texts and over twenty-five quotations from Ellen White which make clear God's verdict of acquittal for the whole world. Here are a few brief sample statements:

"Salvation is like the sunshine. It belongs to the whole world" (DA 307).

"The blessings of salvation are for every soul. Nothing but his own choice can prevent any man from becoming a partaker of the promise in Christ by the gospel" (DA 403).

"He restored the whole race of men to favor with God. ... All that man can possibly do toward his own salvation is to accept the invitation. ... No sin can be committed by man for which satisfaction has not been met on Calvary" (1SM 343).

"All men have been bought with this infinite price. ... God has purchased the will, the affections, the mind, the soul, of every human being. Whether believers or unbelievers, all men are the Lord's property" (COL 326).

"With His own blood He has signed the emancipation papers of the race" (MH 90).

"He redeemed Adam's disgraceful fall, and saved the world" (*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 43).

"Christ wrought out a redemption for men. ... Thus Christ gave to humanity an existence out of Himself. To bring humanity into Christ, to bring the fallen race into oneness with divinity, is the work of redemption" (1SM 250, 251).

"The atonement for a lost world was to be full, abundant, and complete. Christ's offering was exceedingly abundant, reaching every soul that God had created" (YI, July 19, 1900).

Repeatedly in the book of Romans, plus other Pauline writings, the teaching seems beyond dispute. Exhibit A:

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ... For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. ... Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned. ... Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life” (Rom. 5:1, 6, 12, 18).

This *Review* article closes with the author’s sweeping charge that there is nothing in the writings of Ellen White which support universal legal justification. “What Jones and Waggoner preached in 1888 was what she [Ellen White] had been preaching for 40 years.” “Ellen White doesn’t teach the 1888 message. ... the 1888 message (so called) isn’t the message given in 1888.”

After scores of commendations by Ellen White over a period of years, in 1896 a one-paragraph statement brings the era into focus:

“An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord’s message through Brethren Waggoner and Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world” (1SM 234, 235 [*1888 Materials*, p. 1575]).

The closing statement in Goldstein’s article proclaims that “we” reject what “some call the 1888 message.” How long must there continue the “opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord’s message through Brethren Waggoner and Jones”?

Ellen White, truly the Lord’s messenger, explains that *she* did not bring the 1888 message to the church. Emphatically she declares how the message came:

“The Lord has raised up Brother Jones and Brother Waggoner to proclaim a message to the world to prepare a people to stand in the day of God. The world is suffering the need of additional light to come to them upon the Scriptures,—additional proclamation of the principles of purity, lowliness, faith, and the righteousness of Christ. This is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (*1888 Materials*, pp. 1814, 1815).

—Donald K. Short

[Key to abbreviations: COL—*Christ’s Object Lessons*; DA—*Desire of Ages, The*; MH—*Ministry of Healing, The*; 1SM—*Selected Messages*, book 1; YI—*Youth’s Instructor, The*.

Romans 5:18: The Operative Word—“All”

The author [Clifford Goldstein] declares that Ellen White never taught that the sacrifice of Christ achieved for “all men” a legal justification, or that all men were justified by His blood at the cross.

The first question every thoughtful reader will ask is, What does the Bible say?*

Just this (Paul was as much “the Spirit of Prophecy” as Ellen White):

“The judicial action, following upon the one offense [of Adam], issued in a verdict of condemnation, but the act of grace, following upon so many misdeeds, issued in a verdict of acquittal. ... It follows, then, that as the issue of one misdeed was condemnation for all men, so the issue of one just act is acquittal and life for all men” (Rom. 5:15-18, NEB).

“Just as one man’s trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man’s act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all” (vs. 18, NRSV).

“So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men” (NASB).

“So then, as through one transgression condemnation came to all men, so through one righteous act there is for all men justification and life” (Modern Language).

“Just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners [all men], so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men” (NIV).

“As the one sin condemned all mankind, in the same way the one righteous act sets all mankind free and gives them life” (GNB).

“As by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life” (KJV).

“As through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life” (NKJV).

“So also the result of a single deed of righteousness is a life-giving acquittal for all mankind” (Weymouth).

“Through one righteous act there is for all men a justified life” (Berkeley).

“So then, as through one offence to all men it is to condemnation, so also through one declaration of ‘Righteous’ it is to all men to justification of life” (Young’s Literal).

Said E. J. Waggoner:

“As the condemnation came upon all, so the justification comes upon all. ... It is a fact, therefore, plainly stated in the Bible, that the gift of righteousness and life in Christ has come to every man on earth. There is not the slightest reason why every man that has ever lived should not be saved unto eternal life, except that they would not have it. So many spurn the gift offered so freely” (*Signs of the Times*, March 12, 1896).

Said A. T. Jones:

“Christ ... has endowed every soul with divine right to walk in this consecrated way ... and by it enter fully and freely into the holiest of all” (*The Consecrated Way*, p. 83).

—Robert J. Wieland

* See the article on page 20 of this *Newsletter*: “Legal Justification for the Whole Human Race? What Does the Bible Say?”

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