

5. Baptism. "... Christ made it clear that He required baptism of those who wished to become part of His church, His spiritual kingdom"; "In baptism believers enter into the passion experience of our Lord"; "... [B]aptism also marks [a] person's entrance into Christ's spiritual kingdom. ... it unites the new believer to Christ.... Through baptism the Lord adds the new disciples to the body of believers -- His body, the church.... Then they are members of God's family" (*SDAs Believe ...*, pp. 182, 184, 187).

6. The Investigative Judgment. According to SDA theology, beginning on October 22, 1844, Christ entered upon the "judgment phase" of His ministry, whereby He blots out sin: [The SDA doctrine of the "Investigative Judgment" rests on Ellen G. White's claimed revelation that Christ entered the heavenly Holy of Holies, not at His ascension, but in 1844, wherein He then began to investigate the records of human works (*TGC*, pp. 362-373) (cf. Heb. 9).]:

7. The Sabbath. "In the last days, the Sabbath test will be made plain. When this time comes, anyone who does not keep the Sabbath will receive the mark of the beast and will be kept from heaven" (*TGC*, p. 449); "... [T]he divine institution of the Sabbath is to be restored ... The delivering of this message will precipitate a conflict that will involve the whole world. The central issue will be obedience to God's law and the observance of the Sabbath. ... Those who reject it will eventually receive the mark of the beast" (*TGC*, pp. 262-63). In one of her most revered works, Ellen White wrote that Sabbath observance would be the "line of distinction" in the "final test" that will separate God's end-time people who "receive the seal of God" and are saved, from those who "receive the mark of the beast" (*The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*, p. 605). Describing a supposed vision direct from God, Ellen White wrote, "I saw that the Holy Sabbath is, and will be, the *separating wall* between the true Israel of God and *unbelievers*" (*Early Writings*, p. 33; emphasis added). She also wrote of some Adventists failing to understand that "Sabbath ... observance was of sufficient importance to draw a line between the people of God and unbelievers" (*Ibid.*, p. 85).

SDAs have, thereby, made Sabbath-keeping a criterion for a personal relationship with the Lord -- even to the extent of one's salvation! Why? Because, according to SDAs, we are all to be under strict adherence to Old Testament Law, including the Ten Commandments, of which the fourth one says, "keep the Sabbath." (This Sabbath-keeping requirement was supposedly confirmed in a vision received by Ellen G. White, rather than by study of the Bible.) SDAs believe that "Sunday-keeping" will be the mark of the beast in the future.

8. Ellen G. White, the Prophet. Many rank-and-file SDA members deny that their organization any longer decrees Ellen G. White a God-inspired prophet. Yet in SDA official publications, the SDA church continues to defend Ellen White legends, and maintain there was no difference in the degree of inspiration she received from that received by Bible writers (*Review & Herald*, 4 October 1928, p. 11; "Source of Final Appeal," *Adventist Review*, 3 June 1971, pp. 4-6; G. A. Irwin, *Mark of the Beast*, p. 1; "The Inspiration and Authority of the Ellen G. White Writings," *Adventist Review*, 15 July 1982, p. 3; *Ministry*, October 1981, p. 8 (5); see also, *Judged by the Gospel*, pp. 125-130). And in the SDA June 2000, General Conference, the church voted to more aggressively affirm and support the "Spirit of Prophecy through the ministry of Ellen White" (*Adventist Today*, [online: July 2000]).

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Pamphlet 290

Seventh-Day Adventism

Origin: "Seventh-Day Adventism (SDA) arose from the aftermath of the Adventist movement of the mid-1800s." "Seventh-day" refers to the focus on sabbath, or Saturday worship. "Adventist" refers to the SDA belief that they are the fulfillment of prophecies pertaining to the latter days remnant and the coming of Christ. The world was predicted to end in 1844 with the Second Coming of Christ, by William Miller, a New England Baptist itinerant preacher. Miller's followers condemned all the churches of the day as apostate and "Babylon," and warned Christians to come out of them. A great many did, and the "Adventist" movement was born and grew rapidly" (Melton, J. Gordon, *Encyclopedia of American Religions*, Vol. 2, pp. 21-22).

Christ did not appear in 1844. After this "Great Disappointment," one "little flock" still insisted the date of their original predictions had been correct. They decided the event marked by 1844 was not the Second Coming, but the entrance of Christ into the Holy of Holies in the Heavenly Sanctuary. There, they said, He began the "Investigative Judgment." (See #6 below.) This doctrine was received and endorsed by Ellen G. White (*Ibid.*, p. 680).

"From 1844 to 1851, the group taught the "shut door" doctrine, based on Jesus' parable of the ten virgins. Anyone who had not accepted the Adventist message by the time Jesus entered the Holy of Holies was to be shut out permanently, as were the five foolish virgins. Cut off from the Bridegroom, they could not join the Adventists or have any hope of eternal life. Ellen White not only approved and taught this doctrine, but her first vision experience (she claimed over 2,000 visions) was largely responsible for its being received by the Adventist group" (Brinsmead, Robert, D., *Judged by the Gospel: A Review of Adventism*, pp. 130-133).

"By 1846, the group had adopted the Seventh-Day Baptists' view that the Saturday Sabbath must be observed by Christians. A highly elevated form of

this doctrine, together with the doctrine of the Investigative Judgment, became the hallmarks of Seventh-Day Adventism. In 1850, James and Ellen White began publishing a magazine, *The Review & Herald*, to disseminate Adventist and Sabbatarian doctrines. This helped many of the remaining "Millerites" to coalesce into a distinctive body, which adopted the name of Seventh-Day Adventist Church in 1860, and formally incorporated in 1863, with approximately 3,500 members in 125 congregations" (*Encyclopedia of American Religion*, Vol. 2, p. 681).

"Ellen G. White (1827-1915) never held official title as the head of the SDA church, but was one of its founders and acknowledged spiritual leader. She rather disingenuously declined to claim the title of "prophet," calling herself a "messenger" instead (P.G. Damsteegt, *et al.*, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe ... A Biblical Exposition of 27 Fundamental Doctrines*, 1988, p. 224). But she claimed to have the "spirit of prophecy," and that her messages were direct from God for the guidance and instruction of the church. With her knowledge and consent, others called her a prophet and an inspired commentator of Scripture, and even "the Spirit of Prophecy" (Maurice Barnett, *Ellen G. White & Inspiration*, pp. 5–17). Having only a third grade education, Ellen White said for years she was unable to read, bolstering the claim that her beautiful prose was inspired by God. However, it has been discovered that she not only read, but plagiarized other Christian authors throughout virtually all her writings. The sad facts of this matter have been thoroughly and indisputably established in several books". (e.g., see Walter Rea, *The White Lie*; and *Judged by the Gospel*, pp. 361–383).

As of year-end 2004, the SDA church claimed more than 13,936,932 members worldwide in 57,850 churches; there are more than 1,000,000 Adventists in the U.S. and Canada (making the SDA one of the fastest growing "churches" in the world). While headquartered in Washington, D.C., SDA employment worldwide totals nearly 203,568, not including 15,381 ordained ministers. (Contributions in 2004 totaled \$1.3 billion.) SDAs claim to be working in 882 languages and over 1,000 dialects.

They have a large investment in publishing and education -- they operate 57 publishing houses and support 574 medical units and 117 nursing homes and retirement centers and 34 orphanages); and 6,707 primary and secondary schools, colleges, and universities (with total enrollment of almost 1.3 million students). They also broadcast over Adventist World Radio more than 1,000 hours per week of programming in more than 40 languages from 18 transmitters in seven international locations, and have almost 18 million students enrolled in its more than 122,620 "Sabbath Schools" (<http://www.nadadventist.org/article/view/238>, SDA Internet web site). (The SDA church also publishes two of their own Bible "translations": *The Study Bible* and *The Clear Word Bible*.)

SDA is organized as a representative democracy. Lower echelons elect representatives to higher units; determination and administration of policy and enforcement of doctrinal orthodoxy is imposed from the top down. President and Executive Committee of General Conference are standing chief administrative offices. Lower administrative units are the General Conference, Divisions (over continents), Union Conferences, local Conferences, and congregations.

1. Source of Authority. Ellen G. White claimed to be, "a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light." The official SDA *Questions on Doctrine* (Q.D.) states that, "the Holy Spirit opened to her mind important events and called her to give certain instructions for these last days, and inasmuch as these instructions, in our understanding, are in harmony with the Word of God, which Word alone is able to make us wise unto salvation, we as a denomination accept them as inspired counsels from the Lord" (Q.D., p. 93). (Emphasis added.) Mrs. White claimed to have received more than 3,000 "inspired counsels from the Lord" (i.e., visions) between 1844 and 1868. (From these "visions," she produced over 100,000 handwritten manuscript pages from which were published 54 books!) Therefore, SDAs have a new source of authority in their lives -- according to SDA's dogma, if an SDA does not accept Mrs. White as *infallible*, they have no

salvation!

2. Mankind. Seventh-Day Adventists do not believe that the whole man or any part of him is inherently "immortal" (Q.D., p. 518). SDAs believe in "soul sleep" for the saved (i.e., no conscious existence from the time of death until the resurrection), and annihilation for the wicked (i.e., the body and soul are destroyed at death rather than experiencing everlasting torment). How, then, can one get to heaven?: SDAs believe that one can have immortality only on the condition that he comes to Christ through Ellen G. White; i.e., a works program, following salvation by grace with light of revelation through Ellen G. White as the infallible guide to Holy Scripture, apart from which one cannot have immortality.³ Then, at resurrection day, the body will be *re-created* (necessary because of soul sleep) for all those who believe in White's guidance and teachings (while non-SDAs will remain in "soul sleep" forever; i.e., will cease to exist [annihilated] and will *not* suffer everlasting torment).

3. Christ. Mrs. White: "Christ took upon His sinless nature our sinful nature ... Christ took human nature and bore the infirmities and degeneracy of the race. He took our nature and its deteriorating condition" (Q.D., pp. 654-656) (cf. Jn. 14:30). According to SDA, then, Christ acquired a sinful nature! Of course, if this could have been so, there could have been no sinless sacrifice, no hope for sinners, and no Savior.

4. Atonement. "Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ" (E.G. White, *The Great Controversy [TGC]*, 1911, p. 623; *TGC* has since been retitled and published as *America in Prophecy*, 1988). SDA teaches that, though saved by grace, we are *kept* by the Law (i.e., "partial atonement"). Therefore, one must keep Old Testament dietary and ceremonial laws, paying particular attention to keep the Saturday Sabbath and the Ten Commandments, and most importantly, making sure to faithfully pay the tithe.