

Graffiti in the Holy of Holies, by Clifford Goldstein

A brief response by Dale Ratzlaff

Does *Graffiti* give
Valid biblical support for the Investigative Judgment?

Or

Is *Graffiti* “Obscurantism”?

And

A Free Offer to ALL SDAs

The above title just printed by Pacific Press Publishing Association is supposed to be a refutation of the thesis of the book, *The Cultic Doctrine of Seventh-day Adventists*. *Graffiti* is receiving wide advertisement in SDA periodicals and is being promoted at pastor’s meetings around the country purporting to show the errors of *Cultic Doctrine* and the truthfulness of SDAs Investigative Judgment Doctrine.

We believe that truth needs no other foundation than honest investigation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and a willingness to follow truth when it is discovered. “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:32 When the Jews were seeking to condemn Jesus, Nicodemus said to them, “Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it?” John 7:51. In the same way, Adventist leaders are speaking out against *Cultic Doctrine* to those who have not read *Cultic Doctrine* in the hopes that they will not read it.

Be a student not a follower. Because we believe that all of us should be students and not mere followers, (of people and organizations) we suggest that you read both books and reach your own conclusions. Prayerfully consider the evidence presented and then under the guidance of the Holy Spirit follow your conscience.

Free Offer

We are making the following qualified **FREE OFFER** to **ANY SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST WHILE FUNDS AND SUPPLIES LAST! We will send you a free copy of *The Cultic Doctrine of Seventh-day Adventists*.** This offer may be withdrawn at any time without notice. To take advantage of this free offer do the following:

1. Request *Cultic Doctrine* either by:
 - a. Email at dale@ratzlaf.com or,
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Life Assurance Ministries
PO Box 11587
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2. Send us your full name and mailing address.
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4. State that you will read *Cultic Doctrine*.

We will keep your request confidential.

This free offer is ONLY for people who are CURRENTLY Seventh-day Adventists.

A Brief Response to *Graffiti*

- Mr. Goldstein claims that EGW did not endorse Miller's 15 proofs and says, "...nowhere in CDSDA does Brother Dale give an example of Ellen White endorsing Miller's other "proofs" for 1843-1844.¹
 - I have a copy of Miller's chart which I purchased not long ago when I visited Miller's Chapel in Vermont. This chart lists the events upon which Miller's 15 "proofs" were based and EGW said, "The Lord showed me that the 1843 chart was directed by his hand, and that no part of it should be altered; that the figures were as he wanted them."
 - EGW said that, "the prophetic periods reached to 1844, and that the same evidence they had presented to show that the prophetic periods closed in 1843, proved that they would terminate in 1844."² Here EGW uses the plural "periods" showing that there was more than one line of prophecy pointing to 1843, 44.
 - I encourage you to read Chapter 3 in *Cultic Doctrine* and decide for yourself.
- Another shortcoming of Goldstein's work is that he completely leaves out many of the *real* problems. Following is just one example where many could be cited.
 - Ellen White said that Miller's message proclaiming that Christ would come in 1843 was a "saving message" and of those rejected the "time" aspect of this false message she said, "The blood of souls is upon them." Here she makes Miller's error "a saving message". These same pastors "had no opposition to the preaching of Christ's coming, but they objected to the definite time."³ Here EGW makes the acceptance of the date of 1843, 44 a "saving message". This is clearly a **false** gospel!
 - Goldstein, in seeking to defend the erroneous statements of EGW, makes a passing reference to EGW's vision that supports the shut door of mercy and then says, "Whatever Ellen White was shown in that first vision, she could have simply read more into it than was there."⁴ Yes, Mr. Goldstein, I believe that is exactly what she did! How, then can one trust her writings to be "a continuing and authoritative *source* of truth" as stated in the Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists?
 - Goldstein does not mention the letter of EGW to Joseph Bates and several other visions/letters where Ellen White, *based upon a vision she had*, "corrects" those who had *given up* the shut door of mercy and by so doing she "closed" that door of mercy again! Read Chapter 7, "The Swinging Door" for abundant evidence.
- Goldstein takes me to task for not responding to the approximately 2,000 pages of the seven volume DARCOM series which supposedly answers all of the questions raised in Dr. Ford's *Daniel 8:14 The Day of Atonement And the investigative Judgment* and also *Cultic Doctrine*. True, I did not I but read on:

- o The late Dr. Raymond Cottrell, who has studied this topic *more than another person*, said of this series and the church's response to those who raise real questions about SDA's Sanctuary doctrine:

“Webster defines obscurantism as ‘depreciation of or positive opposition to enlightenment or the spread of knowledge, esp. a policy ... of **deliberately making something obscure or withholding knowledge from the general public.**’ Here, the word ‘obscurantism’ is used in the specific sense of making presumably authoritative decisions and/or statements with respect to the sanctuary doctrine on the basis of untested, preconceived opinions and/or without first weighing all of the available evidence on the basis of sound, recognized principles of exegesis and basing conclusions exclusively on the weight of all the evidence.”

“Obscurantism has characterized the official response of the church to every question raised with respect to the traditional interpretation of Daniel 8:14, the sanctuary doctrine, and the investigative judgment. In at least most instances this obscurantism has been inadvertent and not intentional, but its effect has been the same as if it had been intentional. **It is high time for the church to be done with the traditional clichés with which it has heretofore responded to questions regarding the sanctuary doctrine.** It is time to face up to and to deal fairly and objectively with all of the evidence.”

In my humble opinion, I would go further than the late, kind and gentle Dr. Cottrell and say that the SDA church's practice of obscurantism *is* intentional. SDA leaders write and promote books that claim to have all the answers which are designed to deceive the SDA membership into thinking that SDA scholars have solved all the problems so the members need not be concerned, nor should they take the time to study into it for themselves. Moreover, by all means, they should not read books by former Adventist pastors who “attack” this doctrine or EGW!

- o For those who want to do a scholarly comparison of the 2,000 pages of the 7 Volume DARCOM series, may I suggest that you (1) go to our web site <http://www.ratzlaf.com/Qstore/Qstore.cgi> and order former SDA Pastor, Dr. Fred Mazzaferri's new E-book, *As In A Mirror*, which is a scholarly and well documented answer to the DARCOM series and (2) go to <http://www.ratzlaf.com/downloads.htm> and download Dr. Raymond Cottrell's, 40 page paper, THE “SANCTUARY DOCTRINE” — ASSET OR LIABILITY?
- *Graffiti* has many pages dealing with the apoplectic passages of Daniel that are designed to show the validity of SDAs 1844 Investigative judgment.
 - o However, here is the MAJOR problem with this and several other SDA doctrines. *Church doctrine should not be based on one obscure text or even several obscure texts from highly symbolic apocalyptic writings.* Yes, Daniel 8:14 is an obscure apocalyptic text! To go from Daniel 8:14 to SDA's investigative judgment in 1844 one must make over 20 dubious and linking assumptions most of which are contrary to the evidence. Only a very few Adventist “scholars” are able to do this—most SDA scholars admit in private that it is impossible to do using good hermeneutics! No other Bible student or theologian from the time of Christ to the present day has been able to get the

1844 and the Investigative Judgment doctrine from Scripture. Why is this? Likewise only Mormon “scholars” are able to find an elaborate doctrine of baptism for the dead in 1 Cor. 15:29. Why is this? Only Jehovah’s Witnesses “scholars” are able to prove from Scripture that Christ had an invisible coming in 1914. Why is this? The reason is that ALL of the above are following the *cultic hermeneutic* of basing doctrine on some obscure text(s) of the Bible, defining what that text(s) means, and then making all those who “have the truth” line up with their understanding of that text. Sound doctrine, however, should be derived from clear, contextual, didactic teaching. Where the Bible is clear we can be certain. Where the Bible is unclear we MUST be tentative.

- Goldstein also uses techniques which appear to be deceptive. For example on page 127 he states, “Again, to quote Brother Dale: ‘The last judgment simply reveals who by faith accepted God’s free gift of eternal life and who did not.’ A *last* what? Judgment. Last before what? The Second Coming, obviously. And in this last judgment before the Second Coming, what is it that reveals who has accepted God’s gift by faith? Works, what else?”
 - Here Goldstein misrepresents my understanding. He reads into my statement of “last judgment” as a judgment *before* the second coming “*obviously*”. Not only is this not “obvious”, the judgment I am speaking about is not *before* the second coming! “The second coming of Christ will be a *revelation* of how men responded to God’s gracious gift of salvation.”⁵
 - Goldstein further says, “In what must be the most hilarious line in his book, Brother Dale—in a section titled, “The second coming of Christ reveals God’s judgment”—quotes Romans 2:5 and then writes: “The above text implies that the verdict has already been given. In that sense, it could be said to be a pre-Advent judgment. A pre-Advent *what? Judgment?* Kind of a strange admission, is it not, for a book dedicated to disproving the whole thing of a pre-Advent Judgment?... “A pre-advent judgment” would, by definition, include at least two points: it’s a judgment, and it’s pre-Advent—exactly what Adventists have been saying all along.”

No, Mr. Goldstein, this is NOT what Adventists have been saying all along. Adventists have presented an Investigative Judgment where **only believers** come into that judgment and that judgment is based upon their character, works, their belief in Christ where even forgotten and unconfused sins will stand against them in that judgment. SDA’s judgment starts in 1844 and ends *before* the second coming. My understanding of New Covenant pre-advent judgment which is *clearly* presented in *Cultic Doctrine* is simply a person’s response to the gospel. Once a person has accepted Christ (been saved) then, John 5:24 comes into play “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and *does not come into judgment*, but has passed out of death into life.” The pre-advent judgment is our response to the gospel. That response is revealed to all *at*—not *before*—the second coming of Christ. You have misrepresented my understanding of the simple gospel of Christ which I *clearly* articulated. Following are quotes from the chapter summary:

(1) “By his death on the cross, Jesus judged Satan and demonstrated God’s justice in the way God saves sinners.”⁶

(2) “The good news of the judgment is that all who believe and trust in the life, death and resurrection of Christ can say with assurance, “I’ve been acquitted!” We have *already* been judged in Christ. Those who reject the gospel, judge themselves unworthy of eternal life.”⁷ [This is what I said could be referred to as a “pre-advent judgment”]

(3) “The second coming of Christ will be a revelation of how men responded to God’s gracious gift of salvation.”⁸

This is *not* what Adventists have been saying all along. While John 5:24 states clearly that *believers do not* come into judgment, Adventists teach that *only believers* come into the Investigative Judgment.

- Goldstein says, “However sincere Brother Dale may be in his criticism, and however accurately he may be portraying the dilemma that many people within the church have faced, or still face, his words are a prime example of what I call “folk Adventism”—popular but *false* conceptions about our doctrines. If the Adventist Church really does *teach* what he says it does, then it should *do* what he says, and that is—get rid of the pre-advent judgment, because any doctrine that goes contrary to the gospel should be abandoned.”
 - What is presented in *Cultic Doctrine* is *not* “folk Adventism”; it is the real, original teaching of the Investigative Judgment. True, Adventists are scurrying about making numerous reinterpretations which are designed to make it *appear* that this doctrine is biblical and harmonizes with the gospel all the while not willing to renounce the errors of the original Investigative Judgment teaching. For this reason, we are including the following summary of this doctrine as presented in *Cultic Doctrine*.

Summary of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary and the investigative judgment

The Seventh-day Adventist doctrine of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary and the investigative judgment teaches that at the ascension Christ entered the outer apartment of the heavenly sanctuary. From that time until 1844, he performed a ministry of intercession and forgiveness analogous to that of the earthly sanctuary’s outer apartment.⁹ In 1844 Christ entered into the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary for the *first* time^{10,11} to begin a work of investigative judgment.¹² This judgment deals *only* with those who have professed to believe in God.¹³ The wicked, according to SDA theology, will be investigated during the 1000 years¹⁴ and executed shortly after the close of the 1000 years of Revelation 20.¹⁵ The investigative judgment starts with the cases of the dead, reaching clear back to Adam and reviews the life records of every person who has professed faith in God. Every deed is closely examined. Each succeeding generation is investigated and judged.¹⁶ At some time, none know when, the cases of the dead are completed and God then moves to the cases of the living.¹⁷ SDAs believe they will not know when their name comes up in judgment.¹⁸ Therefore, it is extremely important that they engage in no frivolous activity or sin. Every sin must be confessed. *Sins which have been forgotten and unconfessed will stand against them in the judgment.*¹⁹ Their characters must demonstrate perfect obedience to the Ten Commandment law,²⁰ especially the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.²¹ Some names in this list of professed believers will be accepted, others will be rejected.²² When every person confessing faith in God has come up in review, Jesus *then* pleads his blood before the Father on behalf of those who are found worthy, and blots out the record of their sins from

the books of heaven.²³ Then, not knowing if, or when, the work of investigative judgment has been completed, the righteous, still in their human state, before the second coming of Christ, will have to live in the sight of a holy God *without an intercessor*.²⁴ This, then, completes the atonement.²⁵ Jesus then takes the sins of God's people and transfers them to Satan, who is represented by the Day of Atonement scapegoat in Leviticus 16.²⁶ Satan then bears the ultimate responsibility for all the sins he has caused the righteous to commit. He will suffer for these sins in the lake of fire and then be blotted from existence.²⁷ The investigative judgment is conducted before all the intelligences of the universe. This, then, vindicates the character of God before all the unfallen beings.²⁸ Then everyone will know the immutability of the law of God and the righteous character of God.²⁹

- o If the above description of SDA's Investigative Judgment is, "folk Adventism" as Goldstein says, it is "folk Adventism" straight from Ellen White as I, and many others, were taught in SDA schools. Therefore, if Goldstein is to be consistent and follow his own counsel, then he and all Adventists "should *do* what he says, and that is—get rid of the pre-advent judgment, because any doctrine that goes contrary to the gospel should be abandoned."

SDAs Request your free book today!

¹ Graffiti, p. 153

² Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 1, p. 139, *Cultic Doctrine*, p. 89.

³ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 232, *Cultic Doctrine*, p. 84.

⁴ Graffiti, p. 161

⁵ *Cultic Doctrine*, p. 263

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 263

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ "The ministration of the priest throughout the year in the first apartment of the sanctuary, 'within the veil' which formed the door and separated the holy place from the outer court, represents the work of ministration upon which Christ entered at His ascension. It was the work of the priest in the daily ministration to present before God the blood of the sin offering, also the incense which ascended with the prayers of Israel. So did Christ plead His blood before the Father in behalf of sinners, and present before Him also, with the precious fragrance of His own righteousness, the prayers of penitent believers. Such was the work of ministration in the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven." Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 420. See also *Early Writings*, p. 252; *Review and Herald*, 1850-03-01; 1905-11-09; *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 1, p. 158.

¹⁰ It is clear from the earliest records that this was the teaching and belief of early Adventists. In the Hiram Edson *Manuscript Fragment*, Mr. Edson relates his experience in the field the day after the great disappointment which laid the foundation for the reinterpretation of Miller's 1844 prophecy which, in turn, laid the foundation for the SDA investigative judgment. "Heaven seemed open to my view, and I saw distinctly and clearly, that instead of our High Priest coming out of the Most Holy of the heavenly sanctuary to come to this earth on the tenth day of the seventh month, at the end of the 2300 days, that he for the *first time* entered on that day the second apartment of that sanctuary; and that he had a work to perform in the Most Holy before coming to this earth." See Knight, *Rise of Sabbatarian Adventism*, p. 126. Ellen White states, "Thus those who followed in the light of the prophetic word saw that, instead of coming to the earth at the termination of the 2300 days in 1844, Christ *then* entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary to perform the closing work of atonement preparatory to His coming." *The Great Controversy*, p. 422. "As foreshadowed in the type, and foretold in the Scriptures, Christ, *at the time appointed*, entered the most holy place of the temple of God in heaven. He is represented by the prophet Daniel as coming *at this time* to the Ancient of days: 'I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came'—not to the earth, but—to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.'" Ellen G. White, *Southern Watchman* 1905-01-24. (In recent years Seventh-day Adventists have recognized

this blatant disagreement with Scripture and now state that Christ “was inaugurated as our great High Priest and began His intercessory ministry at the time of His ascension.” See the SDA belief statement listed in the main text at the beginning of this chapter. Note, however, that all this says is that Christ became our *High Priest* at that time. It does not say that He entered the Most Holy Place. I believe this statement is designed to be somewhat nebulous. By itself it does not *explicitly* contradict Hiram Edson and Ellen White, which SDAs would not want to do, yet it also allows room for individual interpretation for those who want to make this doctrine agree with Scripture and want Christ in the Most Holy Place at the ascension as taught in Hebrews.)

¹¹ Some Adventists make yet *another* reinterpretation in trying to harmonize EGW’s statement that Christ entered into the Most Holy Place in 1844 with the teaching of Hebrews 6:19. They state that Christ entered the Most Holy Place at the ascension to dedicate the Most Holy Place and then withdrew to the Holy Place until 1844.

¹² “In 1844 our great High Priest entered the most holy place of the heavenly Sanctuary, to begin the work of the Investigative Judgment.” Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, 1887-03-22. “Attended by a cloud of heavenly angels, our great High Priest enters the holy of holies, and there appears in the presence of God to engage in the last acts of his ministration in behalf of man,—to perform the work of investigative Judgment, and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits.” Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, p. 308.

¹³ “In the typical service *only* those who had come before God with confession and repentance, and whose sins, through the blood of the sin offering, were transferred to the sanctuary, had a part in the service of the Day of Atonement. So in the great day of final atonement and investigative judgment the *only* cases considered are those of the *professed people of God*.” Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 480. See also *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, p. 420.

¹⁴ “The judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work, and takes place at a later period.” Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 480. “After the judgment of the wicked dead had been finished, at the end of the one thousand years...” Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 292.

¹⁵ “At the close of the thousand years, Christ again returns to the earth. He is accompanied by the host of the redeemed and attended by a retinue of angels. As He descends in terrific majesty He bids the wicked dead arise to receive their doom.” Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 662.

¹⁶ “As the books of record are opened in the judgment, the lives of all who have believed on Jesus come in review before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, our Advocate presents the cases of each successive generation, and closes with the living.” *Ibid.*, p. 483.

¹⁷ “Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. For many years this work has been in progress. Soon—none know how soon—it will pass to the cases of the living.” *Ibid.*, p. 490.

¹⁸ “How perilous is the condition of those, who, growing weary of their watch, turn to the attractions of the world. While the man of business is absorbed in the pursuit of gain, while the pleasure-lover is seeking indulgence, while the daughter of fashion is arranging her adornments,—it may be in that hour the Judge of all the earth will pronounce the sentence, ‘Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.’” Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, p. 315.

¹⁹ “Day after day passing into eternity, bears its burden of records of the books of Heaven. Words once spoken, deeds once done, can never be recalled. Angels of God have registered both the good and the evil. The mightiest conqueror upon the earth cannot call back the record of even a single day. Our acts, our words, even our most secret motives, all have their weight in deciding our destiny for weal or woe. Though they may be forgotten by us, they will bear their testimony to justify or condemn. They go before us to the Judgment. The use of every talent will be scrutinized.” *Ibid.*, p. 331.

²⁰ “Christ lived a life of perfect obedience to God’s law, and in this He set an *example* for every human being. The life that He lived in this world *we are to live* through His power and under His instruction.” Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing*, p. 180. “God requires perfect submission and perfect obedience. Eternal life is worth everything to us. You may come in close connection with God if you will agonize to enter in at the strait gate.” Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 4, p. 218.

²¹ “Many and earnest were the efforts made to overthrow their faith. None could fail to see that if the earthly sanctuary was a figure or pattern of the heavenly, the law deposited in the ark on earth was an exact transcript of the law in the ark in Heaven, and that an acceptance of the truth concerning the heavenly sanctuary involved an acknowledgment of the claims of God’s law, and the obligation of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.” Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, p. 257. “The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not.” Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 605.

²² “Every name is mentioned, every case closely investigated. Names are accepted, names rejected. When any have sins remaining upon the books of record, unrepented of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the book of life, and the record of their good deeds will be erased from the book of God’s remembrance.” Ibid., p. 483.

²³ “At the time appointed for the judgment—the close of the 2300 days, in 1844—*began* the work of investigation and *blotting out of sins*. All who have ever taken upon themselves the name of Christ must pass its searching scrutiny. Both the living and the dead are to be judged ‘out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.’” Ibid., p. 486. See also *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, p. 266. “Each one of you needs to awake and face square about to get out of the cart rut of selfishness. Improve the short, probationary time given you by working with your might to redeem the failures of your past life. God has placed you in a world of suffering to prove you, to see if you will be *found worthy* of the gift of eternal life.” Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 3, p. 530.

²⁴ “When he [Christ] leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor.” Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, p. 432. See also *Early Writings*, p. 280; *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 1, p. 198; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 614, 647.

²⁵ “Thus those who followed in the light of the prophetic word saw that, instead of coming to the earth at the termination of the 2300 days in 1844, Christ then entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary to perform the *closing work of atonement* preparatory to His coming.” Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 422.

²⁶ “When Christ, by virtue of His own blood, removes the sins of His people from the heavenly sanctuary at the close of His ministration, He will place them upon Satan, who, in the execution of the judgment, must bear the final penalty.” Ibid., p. 422. See also *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, p. 266.

²⁷ “The scape-goat was sent away into a land not inhabited, never to come again into the congregation of Israel. So will Satan be forever banished from the presence of God and his people, and he will be blotted from existence in the final destruction of sin and sinners.” Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, p. 267.

²⁸ “With sobering timeliness we study the subject of God’s investigative judgment on the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary (sesquicentennial) of its commencement in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary on October 22, 1844. Through this judgment work God has committed Himself to explain completely to the universe of unfallen beings His work of redemption, and His perfectly fair and loving way of dealing with sin and sinners. The judgment settles all accusations, doubts, and concerns about the justice and goodness of God.” Commentary, Adult Sabbath School Lessons, *Three Angel’s Messages*, p. 47.

²⁹ “The final judgment is a most solemn event, which must take place before the assembled universe. When God honors His commandment-keeping people, not one of the enemies of truth and righteousness will be absent. And when transgressors receive their condemnation, all the righteous will see the result of sin. God will be honored, and His government vindicated; and that in the presence of the inhabitants of the universe.” Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, 1901-06-18.