

The Government of God



Democracy,
Dictatorship, or
Republic?
Part 2

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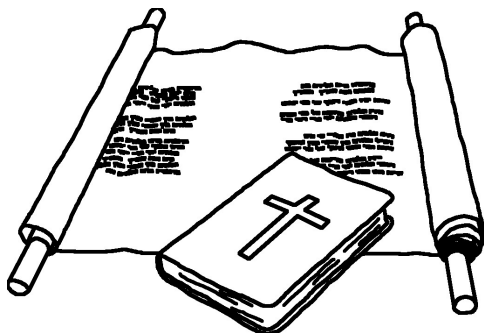
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1. What About a Creed?

The city of Nicaea was a large and important metropolis in 325 A.D. It received its name from Lysimachus, one of the four generals who divided Alexander's empire amongst themselves. Lysimachus captured the city in 301 B.C. and renamed it for his wife, who had recently died. Located in present day Turkey, it was only a little ways southeast from Byzantium, soon to be renamed Constantinople and to become the new Roman capitol.

But in June of 325 the city was a bustle of activity and excitement. The emperor, Constantine himself, had arrived. With all the grand trappings of the imperial court, he was coming to attend the first ecumenical council of the recently legalized Christian religion. Three hundred and eighteen specially invited bishops had come to discuss the issue then dividing the Christian church and threatening to split the newly reunited empire. The main issue of discussion was the nature and origin of Jesus Christ. Arius contended that He was a created being with a beginning sometime before all other creatures. But other Christian leaders and bishops believed He was a divine being, with no beginning.

This council was a landmark in Christianity, being the first council ever to be called by the state, instead of the church. It was necessary therefore, that Constantine be there in person. "Resplendent in purple and gold, Constantine made a ceremonial entrance at the opening of the council... but respectfully seated the bishops ahead of himself." *Carroll, Warren (1 March 1987), The Building of Christendom page 11*. The emperor presided over the council but cast no vote in the proceedings. But whatever decision the council made, he was prepared to enforce it with imperial might.

The result of that council, sanctioned and enforced by the state, was the first official Christian creed. Taking its name from the city itself, the Nicene Creed set forth the belief that Christ had no beginning, He was as divine as God Himself. But it did more than this, it also denounced and repudiated Arius and all who believed and taught his doctrine. Beyond this, it separated the computation of the time for Easter from the Jewish method of calculating the time for Passover.

There was a big push among Christians of this time to disassociate themselves from the Jews. Ever since the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 A.D. the Jews had been despised and hated in the empire. The Christians, therefore, did not want to be linked in any way to this hated race. This feeling of needing to differentiate themselves from the Jews, had led many in the church to adopt the practice of celebrating Sunday instead of the Jewish Sabbath. This practice was officially embodied in the Nicene Creed by separating Easter from the Jewish Passover.

Constantine was very much in favor of this change. He had already issued the first Sunday law in 321. In order to replace all the pagan based “lucky and unlucky days” of the pagan empire, he instituted the official day of rest for the empire as the “Christian” Sunday sabbath. The strange thing about this, of course, was that Sunday was not the Bible Sabbath, but one of the normal pagan “unlucky days” on which no business could be contracted. But it wasn’t strange in Constantine’s mind, because he was trying to unite his pagan and Christian subjects under Christianity.

But getting back to that first creed, it did even more than deal with Easter. It also set forth that the Paulicians were not considered Christian and would have to be re-baptized to join the Orthodox Catholic Church. Who were the Paulicians? Officially they were followers of Paul of Samosata. According to historical records, his doctrines were heretical, and he was a self serving egotist. But before we throw out the Paulicians as a fanatical sect, blindly following a mad man, who was creating a cult, let us consider the fact that the Paulician label was generously applied by Rome to almost everyone who still kept the seventh day Sabbath. Many of the people labeled Paulician retained the original Greek Bible (the one the KJV is based on) and insisted on the doctrines of the apostles. So the creed not only set forth the beliefs of the Orthodox Roman Church, but it excommunicated (disfellowshipped) all who taught and practiced differently from that church.

When the council dissolved in 325, Arius and all who refused to abide by the Nicene Creed were excommunicated from the church and exiled by the Emperor. Such was the immediate result of the Nicene Creed and such has been the result of all the creeds that have been formed by Christian groups ever since. John Loughborough said in 1861 “The first step of apostasy is to get up a creed, telling us what we shall believe. The second is, to make that creed a test of fellowship. The third is to try members by that creed. The fourth to denounce as heretics those who do not believe that creed. And, fifth, to commence persecution against such.” *J.N. Loughborough, Review and herald, October 8, 1861.*

The Nicene Creed, the first official creed, was formulated by a corrupt church for the purpose of forcing her doctrines on all Christians. It marked the beginning of the persecution of Christians against Christians, and the world

plunged into the Dark Ages. But with the protestant reformation the world began to emerge from that darkness. The protestants broke free from Rome, but they did not realize that creeds were at the root of Rome's power and authority. Seeking to rival Rome, they formed creeds of their own. They demanded freedom for themselves but persecuted those who rejected their creed. Thus we find Protestants persecuting Protestants.

At one point during the the reformation, the Swiss protestants under Zwingli attempted to unite with the German protestants under Luther. They tried hard but the could not agree on their creed. There was one point in the Swiss creed that the Germans would not accept and the Swiss would not accept that point in the German creed. Thus it was the fault of the creeds that Protestantism never united. To this day we have conflicting protestant church denominations because they will not give up their creeds but insist that all who join them adhere to the creed, because their church is built on it.

Sister White tells us about those who base their faith on their creeds, "they are so fearful lest something shall be introduced that will turn away the people from their creeds and dogmas, and divert the means into other channels, that they spare no effort to excite prejudice, and resort to commands and threats to prevent their members from going to hear Bible preaching... They do not, like Luther, test their doctrines by the Bible, but by their creed, their church customs, the practices of the Fathers. Their so-called Lutheranism is little better than Catholicism with the name of Luther attached to it." *Ellen G. White, Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists (1886) page 198.*

It's no different than what the Jews were doing at the time of Christ. We read, "He (Jesus) told them that they made the commandments of God of no effect through their tradition. The requirements of men were placed where the requirements of God should have been, and Jesus charged them with being ignorant both of the Scriptures and of the power of God. It is Satan's studied plan to pervert the Scriptures, and to lead men to put a false construction on the words of God. He has led the Roman Church to take a position that the Bible is to be read in the light of the interpretation of the Fathers and of the Church, and therefore the Lord cannot penetrate the minds of the members of this Church until they read the Bible as the word of the infinite God. **All articles of faith, all doctrines and creeds, however sacred they have been regarded, are to be rejected if they contradict the plain statements of the word of God.** If the Bible supports the doctrine we have held in the past, we are justified in retaining it; for the word of God gives us foundation for our faith." *Review and Herald, March 25.*

The Advent believers in 1844 rejected all creeds, recognizing them as part of what made the churches Babylon. James White wrote, "It is the opinion of the mass of professors of religion, that human creeds are indispensable to the maintenance of gospel order. They seem to think that without creeds all would be confusion in the church. But what is the real condition of the churches with

all their creeds to aid them? They are in a condition but little less than perfect confusion. And is it not a fact that creed making has produced the Babel confusion now existing among them? If it has, and it is evidently a clear case, then why talk of a human creed being indispensable to the maintenance of gospel order?" *James White, December 13, 1853.*

Ellen White agreed with this, for she wrote in the Great Controversy, "Rome withheld the Bible from the people, and required all men to accept her teachings in its place. It was the work of the Reformation to restore to men the Word of God; but is it not too true that in the churches of our time men are taught to rest their faith upon their creed and the teachings of their church rather than on the Scriptures? Said Charles Beecher, speaking of the Protestant churches: 'They shrink from any rude word against creeds with the same sensitiveness with which those holy fathers would have shrunk from a rude word against the rising veneration for saints and martyrs which they were fostering. . . . The Protestant evangelical denominations have so tied up one another's hands, and their own, that, between them all, a man cannot become a preacher at all, anywhere, without accepting some book besides the Bible. . . . There is nothing imaginary in the statement that the creed power is now beginning to prohibit the Bible as really as Rome did, though in a subtler way.'" *Great Controversy, 1888 edition page 388.*

It was not a creed, a statement of belief and doctrine that united the Advent believers. It was a message, strong and powerful, a hope, uplifting and ennobling, a common goal and purpose that united them in bonds stronger than any union formed by a human creed. We read of that time, "If God's professed people would receive the light as it shines upon them from his Word, they would reach that unity for which Christ prayed, that which the apostle describes, 'the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' 'There is,' he says, 'one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism.' **Such were the blessed results experienced by those who accepted the Advent message. They "came from different denominations, and their denominational barriers were hurled to the ground; conflicting creeds were shivered to atoms;** the unscriptural hope of a temporal millennium was abandoned, false views of the second advent were corrected, pride and conformity to the world were swept away; wrongs were made right; hearts were united in the sweetest fellowship, and love and joy reigned supreme. If this doctrine did this for the few who did receive it, it would have done the same for all, if all had received it." *Great Controversy, 1888 edition, page 379.*

When the Advent believers officially organized themselves into the Seventh-day Adventist Church, they rejected the formation of a creed. "This peculiar people will stand forth free from the confusion of creeds; free from the traditions and commandments of men—keeping the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." *James White, Review and Herald, December 6, 1853.*

They did adopt a covenant, one that new Adventists signed. "When the the tent

was taken down, Brother Hare took it to Gisborne and began meetings... I remained at Napier with the intention of staying but a few weeks to establish the truth more firmly, and then going to a new place. But the interest increased so that I could not see my way clear to leave. **About sixty persons have signed the covenant**, making ninety-five in all. Of this number, fifty-four have joined the church. We expect to have baptism soon when about twenty more will join.” *A. G. Daniels, General Conference Bulletin, October 18, 1889, page 46.*

What was this covenant that the new members signed? It wasn’t 27 fundamental beliefs. It was simply this, “We, the undersigned, hereby associate ourselves together, as a church, taking the name, Seventh-day Adventists, covenanting to keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus Christ.” *Review and Herald, October 8, 1861*

Said James White, “The Bible! The Bible!—Let the Bible be your rule of faith, and of order. Take heed to the sure word, the light that shineth in a dark place.” *James White, Review and Herald, December 6, 1853*

This covenant was very similar to that taken by the early Christian converts in Jerusalem. It is recorded that their covenant was this, “I believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost, and in one Baptism of repentance.” *Wikipedia article, “Creed of Jerusalem.”*

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” *1 John 1:7*

“We want no human creed; the Bible is sufficient. The divine order of the New Testament is sufficient to organize the church of Christ. If more were needed, it would have been given by inspiration. But with only that which was “given by inspiration of God,” the man of God is ‘thoroughly furnished unto all good works.’ 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.” James White, *Review and Herald, December 6, 1853*

Sister White tells us, “The prayer of Christ to His Father, contained in the seventeenth chapter of John, is to be our church creed. It shows us that our difference and disunion are dishonoring to God. Read the whole chapter, verse by verse.—Ms 12, 1899” *Manuscript Releases Vol. 5 page 49.*

Once in a while the Adventist covenant was altered to fit a particular case. “Among those who embraced the Sabbath here was a young man who was hopelessly given to intoxicating drink. Even his wife despaired of his ever reforming. He felt anxious to sign the covenant, so we presented it to him with the temperance pledge embodied in it. This he finally signed; and in a letter received from there about a month after, it was stated that he had not drank a drop of liquor since.” *Historical Sketches of Foreign Missions, 1886 page 103.*

What is a creed? It is an, “Officially authorized, usually brief statement of the essential articles of faith of a religious community, often used in public worship or initiation rites. Creeds are most numerous in Western traditions.” [http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/creed.](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/creed)

A creed is any statement of belief that is used as a test of fellowship. Even if this statement of belief is formulated as questions rather than statements, if it is used to test potential members, it is a creed. A creed is made up of doctrines, whether they are true or not. It is interesting that the covenant used by James White and the other leaders of the SDA church in 1861 falls under the definition of creed as found in the dictionary, even though they claimed it was not a creed. Also, the Jerusalem creed was not recorded until well into the fourth century, years after the Nicene Creed was created. There is no evidence that it was used by Paul or the apostles.

We read in the Spirit of Prophecy that creeds are a part of the wine of Babylon. “Cut out this exclusiveness wherever it may be. The light God has given is for the world. It is not to be put under a bushel or under a bed. The devil is far from being narrow and proscribed in his work. This is plainly revealed by the rapidly increasing darkness, the multitudinous errors, heresies, misconceptions, and delusions of these last days. **Creeds and false doctrines are popular and all pervading, to leave the minds of the world with the drinking of the wine of Babylon, the most deadly heresy.** The neglect of plainest warnings will place us on the guilty list. Yes, we have plenty of evidence of Satan’s might. We have evidence also that the day of work is nearly ended. Let every power that God has entrusted to His agencies be now employed. Restrict no one’s labor, in any line if they are established in the truth, but let all work who will.” *Manuscript Releases page 381.*

“In the professedly Christian world many turn away from the plain teachings of the Bible and build up a creed from human speculations and pleasing fables, and they point to their tower as a way to climb up to heaven... The existing confusion of conflicting creeds and sects is fitly represented by the term “Babylon,” which prophecy (Revelation 14:8; 18:2) applies to the world-loving churches of the last days.” *Patriarchs and Prophets page 124.*

“The term Babylon, derived from Babel, and signifying confusion, is applied in Scripture to the various forms of false or apostate religion. But the message announcing the fall of Babylon must apply to some religious body that was once pure, and has become corrupt. It cannot be the Romish Church which is here meant; for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries. But how appropriate the figure as applied to the Protestant churches, all professing to derive their doctrines from the Bible, yet divided into almost innumerable sects. The unity for which Christ prayed does not exist. **Instead of one Lord, one faith, one baptism, there are numberless conflicting creeds and theories. Religious faith appears so confused and discordant that the world know not what to believe as truth. God is not in all this; it is the work of man,—the work of Satan.**” *Spirit of Prophecy Vol. 4 page 232.*

“The work is before us individually. Our moral identity cannot be submerged in any human being. We shall be called of God to do our work according to our several ability. The vineyard is large and requires every jot of moral power

everyone has had entrusted to him or her. **Partition walls will be broken down. Everyone who will hear the message and believe the truth will no longer be confined, bound to creeds, but will take the Bible as his guide, as the very creed of life, as the waters of salvation.** The very intensity of the light shining from heaven makes men messengers of truth and salvation. They cannot hold their peace. They have accepted the truth and emerged into the light, the light shining in these last days.” *Manuscript Releases page 223.*

When a church uses a series of questions to evaluate a potential new church member and expects the potential new member to answer the questions perfectly according to the church’s idea of truth, this is a creed. We don’t see this type of gospel order being used by either the Adventist pioneers, or the apostolic church.

“Some who have had great light have had an almost uncontrollable desire to bind all our medical institutions under the supervision of one power. I am instructed to say that this desire is prompted by the same spirit that in the world manifests itself in the efforts of the unions to become a controlling power. The work that God has given His people to do is to bind up the testimony, and to seal the law among His disciples... **Let none say, ‘You must bind yourselves by specified agreements to do thus and so, or else you cannot be endorsed by us.’ The signing of such agreements must cease.** The day for work of this kind is past. It has already wrought much mischief. The Lord is our guide and our ruler. Let us bind ourselves up with Him. God does not desire men to be under binding agreements; for He is to move in His own way. Every yoke is now to be broken. The truth as it is in Jesus is of sufficient binding force to hold every mind, control every impulse, and direct every movement. Those whom God would control if they would submit to Him, but who do not choose to walk humbly with Him, are not to make terms for others. Let every man look to God, not to men. The Lord God of heaven rules. *Manuscript Releases Vol. 4 page 71*

“This is a wonderful age in which we are living. God is beholding the deplorable state of society. He requires those who believe His gospel to come out from the world. ‘Be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing.’ Human, kingly power among God’s people in any branch of his cause, as represented by the documents prepared for men to sign, is not ordained of God. Let those who believe the Bible study the principles that are to govern them in dealing with human minds. God is not the author of confusion, but of peace. The selfishness that exalts one man to rule the minds of his fellow men, is not inspired of God; for the Lord works in and through those who will be worked by Him, and who in every line of Christian service will act in accordance with divine enlightenment.” *Manuscript Releases Vol. 4 page 72.*

A creed prevents growth and the acceptance of further light. “In Eph. 4:11-13, we read, ‘And he gave some apostles, and some prophets,’ etc. Here we have the gifts of the church, presented. Now I take the ground that creeds stand in direct opposition to the gifts. Let us suppose a case: We get up a creed, stating just what we shall believe on this point and the other, and just what we shall do in

reference to this thing and that, and say that we will believe the gifts too. But suppose the Lord, through the gifts, should give us some new light that did not harmonize with our creed ; then, if we remain true to the gifts, it knocks our creed all over at once. Making a creed is setting the stakes, and barring up the way to all future advancement. God put the gifts into the church for a good and great object; but men who have got up their churches, have shut up the way or have marked out a course for the Almighty. They say virtually that the Lord must not do anything further than what has been marked out in the creed. A creed and the gifts thus stand in direct opposition to each other.” *James White, Review and Herald, October 8, 1861*

“In the absence of Bible testimony in their favor, many with unwearying persistence urged,—forgetting how the same reasoning had been employed against Christ and his apostles,—‘Why do not our great men understand this Sabbath question? But few believe as you do. It cannot be that you are right, and that all the men of learning in the world are wrong.’ To refute such arguments it was needful only to cite the teachings of the Scriptures and the history of the Lord’s dealings with his people in all ages. God works through those who hear and obey his voice, those who will, if need be, speak unpalatable truths, those who do not fear to reprove popular sins. **The reason why he does not oftener choose men of learning and high position to lead out in reform movements is that they trust to their creeds, theories, and theological systems, and feel no need to be taught of God. Only those who have a personal connection with the Source of wisdom are able to understand or explain the Scriptures.** Men who have little of the learning of the schools are sometimes called to declare the truth, not because they are unlearned, but because they are not too self-sufficient to be taught of God. They learn in the school of Christ, and their humility and obedience make them great. In committing to them a knowledge of his truth, God confers upon them an honor, in comparison with which earthly honor and human greatness sink into insignificance.” *Great Controversy, 1888 edition page 455.*

When a creed is formed it is human nature to rest on that creed and think that we have and know everything we need to. This is never a safe position to be in and leads us to treat those who are moving forward with coolness and often hardness just because they see things in a different light than we do.

Does not a statement of beliefs or a series of doctrinal test questions keep our ranks pure and preserve unity among us? No, history has taught us that it does not. It only serves to divide, separate, and cause distrust and suspicion. But the church of God are to have confidence in their brethren, not suspicion of them.

“It is not in accordance with the mind of the Lord to encourage suspicion, jealousy, envy, and evil surmising. The Lord desires His people to unite and to look constantly to Jesus. They are to work in sympathy and love, with entire confidence in one another. Christ declares, ‘All ye are brethren.’” *Manuscript Releases Vol. 5, page 364.*

But how, it will be asked, are we to preserve purity and unity in our ranks, if we don't have a creed? We answer that this is the work and office of the Holy Spirit, not of any man. "Now is the time for earnest wrestling with God. Our voices should join with the Saviour's in that wonderful prayer: 'Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.' Let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Many may ask, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' The responsibility rests upon every individual. 'Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.' **The scheme of salvation is not to be worked out under the laws and rules specified by men. There must be no fixed rules; our work is a progressive work, and there must be room left for methods to be improved upon. But under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, unity must and will be preserved.**" *Review and Herald, July 23, 1895.*

"If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." *Philippians 2:1-3.*

Is there to be no order or organization in the remnant then? No, we must have order and organization, but this order is for missionary purposes, not control. James White once said, "There are those at the present time who start back at the idea of gospel order...They will have to learn that God has not called any of his people away from the confusion of the churches, designing that they should be left without discipline. In mercy he reached forth his hand, and enabled the Advent people in 1844 to break the cords of sectarianism that bound them, that they (the Philadelphia Church) might be disciplined and guided into the kingdom by the order and pure doctrines of the gospel. To suppose that the church of Christ is free from restraint and discipline, is the wildest fanaticism." *James White, Review and Herald, December 6, 1853.*

But this order and organization will not bind men. True order will support and encourage them as they work for the Lord. "Those who know the truth are to be worked by the Holy Spirit, and not themselves to try to work the Spirit. If the cords are drawn much tighter, if the rules are made much finer, if men continue to bind their fellow-laborers closer and closer to the commandments of men, many will be stirred by the Spirit of God to break every shackle, and assert their liberty in Christ Jesus. If men would act toward their fellow-men as to those whom Christ loves, if they would obey the commandment to 'love thy neighbor as thyself,' there would be sweet harmony among the brethren. How much better it would be if those who claim to be Christians would behave like Christians. How much better it would be if all would cease speaking of their own good works and ways, indulging their self-esteem; refrain from the putting forth of the finger, imagining evil, and using their influence to weaken, oppress, and destroy. If men will not come to the terms made by the leading workers, they will not entertain them, they do not care what results may follow their injustice. With

them it is rule or ruin. God has not appointed any man to do such work. And no human being shall be permitted to prescribe my liberty or intrench upon the perfect freedom of my brethren, without hearing my voice lifted in protest against it.” *Review and Herald, July 23, 1895.*

“The real character of the church is measured, not by the high profession she makes, not by the names enrolled upon the church book, but by what she is actually doing for the Master, by the number of her persevering, faithful workers. Personal interest, and vigilant, individual effort will accomplish more for the cause of Christ than can be wrought by sermons or creeds.” *Review and Herald, September 6, 1881.*

“The apostle showed that religion does not consist in rites and ceremonies, creeds and theories. If it did, the natural man could understand it by investigation, as he understands worldly things. Paul taught that religion is a practical, saving energy, a principle wholly from God, a personal experience of God’s renewing power upon the soul.” *Acts of the Apostles page 451.*

So, will the remnant have a creed? In light of all that we have shared here, we answer a resounding—NO! to this question. The remnant will stand solidly united on the Bible. We must go back to that order established in Jerusalem and on which the Advent believers were building, we must build again on the platform they established and move forward solidly on the path of truth. Order is necessary, but it is an order that does not control any individual, but leaves each free to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit in his own life and work. This is the order for which we strive, we will not be bound by what others think is the truth, we will stand free to seek and know the truth for ourselves and to follow where the Holy Spirit leads, regardless of what others may think or do.

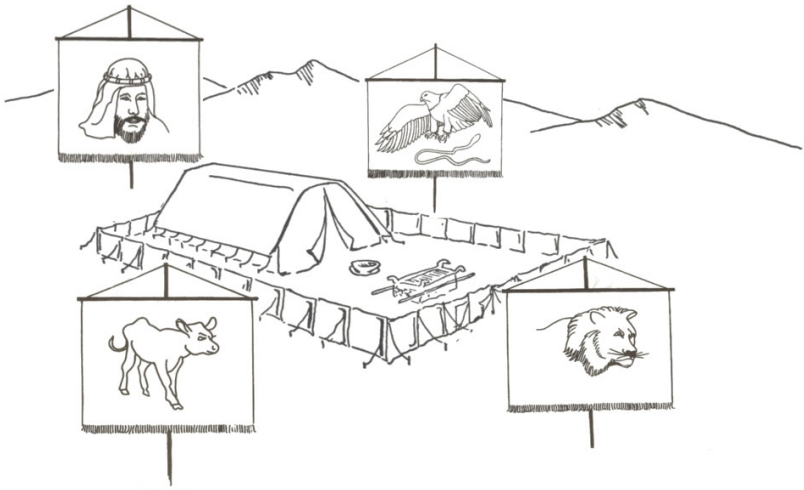
Again we read that statement from the Great Controversy. “If God’s professed people would receive the light as it shines upon them from his Word, they would reach that unity for which Christ prayed, that which the apostle describes, ‘the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.’ ‘There is,’ he says, ‘one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism.’ Such were the blessed results experienced by those who accepted the Advent message.” *Great Controversy. 1888 edition, page 379.*

This is the only formula found in inspiration for true unity. “The prayer of Christ to His Father, contained in the seventeenth chapter of John, is to be our church creed. It shows us that our difference and disunion are dishonoring to God. Read the whole chapter, verse by verse.” *Manuscript Releases Vol. 5 page 49.*

The Nicene Creed became the very foundation of the Roman Church, adopted by the east and the west, it is still at the foundation of the Papacy to this day. The remnant will not base their unity and organization on this type of Papal foundation. They will be based solidly on the Word of God and the last message of mercy. Any church organization that bases itself on the same foundation of a creed, even if every point of that creed is truth, is surely setting up an image to

1. What About a Creed?

the Roman beast. Any church that bases their beliefs on any other creed than the Bible ceases to be a remnant church and becomes a Babylonian church. The true remnant never has had, does not have, and never will have a creed!



2. God's Government on Earth

“And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening. And when Moses’ father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even? And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to inquire of God: When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws. And Moses’ father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the

people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.” *Exodus 18:13-26*

Now that we have seen the perfect order and organization of heaven, let's consider the church of Christ here on earth. It would be well to pause at this point and consider our definitions again. We have been discussing republics and dictatorships as the two forms of government. We have clearly seen that a republic is the order of heaven while a dictatorship is the order of Satan. But today we only use these terms used in referring to civil and secular governments. When we deal with church organization we use different terms.

When we start digging into church history, we discover that there are two forms of organization here as well. The one is called a hierarchy, the other is called congregational. Is there a correspondence between these ecclesiastical organizations and the civil government forms of the dictatorship and the republic? There is a very close correspondence.

When we look up the definition of hierarchy in the 1828 Webster's dictionary we find a fascinating definition. “An order or rank of angels or celestial beings; or a subordination of holy beings. Some of the Rabbins reckon four, and others ten hierarchies, or orders of angels. 1. Constitution and government of the christian church, or ecclesiastical polity, comprehending different orders of clergy; as the hierarchy of England.”

What is fascinating about this definition is the assertion that heaven is organized as a hierarchy and by implication that the church hierarchy corresponds to the heavenly one. But the 1913 Webster's definition defines this even more. “**(1):** A rank or order of holy beings. **(2):** A body of officials disposed organically in ranks and orders each subordinate to the one above it; a body of ecclesiastical rulers. **(3):** Dominion or authority in sacred things. **(4):** A form of government administered in the church by patriarchs, metropolitans, archbishops, bishops, and, in an inferior degree, by priests.”

What this is depicting is a pyramid type structure with each level subject to the level above until you reach the ultimate authority, the king (in the case of the English church), or pope, at the top. Again, what is really interesting here is the assumption that the government of God in heaven is a hierarchy on just this type of plan.

But there is a different kind of church order that is opposed to this concept. It is the congregational order. Let's see what Webster's has to say about this in 1828. “Pertaining to a congregation; appropriately used of such Christians as hold to church government by consent and election, maintaining that each congregation is independent of others, and has the right to choose its own pastor and govern itself; as a congregational church, or mode of worship.”

Now that sounds more like the true order and organization of heaven. This is a republic, government by the consent of the governed. We can clearly see from this that the republic and the congregational system are the same and the dictatorship and the hierarchy are the same. One set of terms is dealing with the

church and the other is dealing with the civil government. Since God's government is both civil and religious, we will stick to the terms republic and dictatorship in order to avoid confusion.

The question to consider now is, what form of government is correct for the church of God? Should it be a hierarchy, a dictatorship, or congregational, a republic? If the one is the order of heaven and the other the order devised by Satan, the answer to this should be obvious. But what does God say about it?

“Christ designs that heaven's order, heaven's plan of government, heaven's divine harmony, shall be represented in His church on earth. Thus in His people He is glorified. Through them the Sun of Righteousness will shine in undimmed luster to the world. Christ has given to His church ample facilities, that He may receive a large revenue of glory from His redeemed, purchased possession. He has bestowed upon His people capabilities and blessings that they may represent His own sufficiency. The church, endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the riches of His mercy, His grace, and His love, are to appear in full and final display. Christ looks upon His people in their purity and perfection, as the reward of His humiliation, and the supplement of His glory,—Christ, the great Center, from whom radiates all glory.” *Desire of Ages, page 680*

If heaven's plan of organization is to be copied in His church here, then we must understand that organization. From what we have seen so far it is clear that the order of heaven is republic in principle and representative in form. It is congregational, not a hierarchy, and this is exactly the plan we see in church history.

There is a difference between the earthly republic and God's republic that needs to be understood. In the earthly republic the representatives are elected by popular vote. This system is imperfect and the founding fathers even admitted it to be so. But it was the best they could do. With popular election the leaders are chosen based on how well they sway public opinion. This is not so in God's government. In His republic the representatives are appointed based on their fitness for the work.

“The order so strikingly displayed in the perfection and arrangement of all God's created works was manifest in the Hebrew economy. God was the center of authority and government, the sovereign of Israel. Moses stood as their visible leader, by God's appointment, to administer the laws in His name. From the elders of the tribes a council of seventy was afterward chosen to assist Moses in the general affairs of the nation. Next came the priests, who consulted the Lord in the sanctuary. Chiefs, or princes, ruled over the tribes. Under these were ‘captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens,’ and, lastly, officers who might be employed for special duties. Deuteronomy 1:15.” *Patriarchs and Prophets, page 374.*

On the surface, it would appear that this arrangement, with God appointing the leaders and representatives is dictatorial and makes God Sovereign dictator, but

remember He has the entire heavenly council assisting Him in these decisions. Who is better to determine a man's fitness to lead? The sinful people of earth, so prone to error, or those of the council, who have experienced these things and have the wisdom of the ages at their command?

God still chooses those who are fit to lead in His church, for this reason, we must be certain of God's ordination before we seal it with man's ordination.

For the first couple thousand years of earth's history, God's church was set up on a patriarchal system. This system was family based, with the eldest son, if worthy, inheriting the priesthood and leadership of the family from his father. This system was based on small units and worked well when the population in the world was small. But by the time the Hebrews were delivered from Egypt their family had increased into the millions. It was time for a larger organization.

Jethro counseled Moses to select more people to to be involved with him in judging and teaching Israel. We read:

"This counsel was accepted, and it not only brought relief to Moses, but resulted in establishing **more perfect order among the people**. The Lord had greatly honored Moses, and had wrought wonders by his hand; but the fact that he had been chosen to instruct others did not lead him to conclude that he himself needed no instruction. The chosen leader of Israel listened gladly to the suggestions of the godly priest of Midian, and adopted his plan as a wise arrangement." *Patriarchs and Prophets* page 300-301.

The counsel given to Moses by his father-in-law was a plan for a more perfect order. What order is perfect? The order of heaven. This means that Jethro's plan came closer to resembling the order of heaven. Involving the people directly in a representative government like this was a part of God's perfect plan of order for His church. We see this principle again later when the seventy elders were appointed.

"Moses repeated to the congregation the words of the Lord, and announced the appointment of the seventy elders. The great leader's charge to these chosen men might well serve as a model of judicial integrity for the judges and legislators of modern times: 'Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him. Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's.' Deuteronomy 1:16, 17... 'And the Lord came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease.' Like the disciples on the Day of Pentecost, they were endued with 'power from on high.' It pleased the Lord thus to prepare them for their work, and to honor them in the presence of the congregation, that confidence might be established in them as men divinely chosen to unite with Moses in the government of Israel. Again evidence was given of the lofty, unselfish spirit of the great leader. Two of the seventy, humbly counting

themselves unworthy of so responsible a position, had not joined their brethren at the tabernacle; but the Spirit of God came upon them where they were, and they, too, exercised the prophetic gift. On being informed of this, Joshua desired to check such irregularity, fearing that it might tend to division. Jealous for the honor of his master, 'My lord Moses,' he said, 'forbid them.' The answer was, 'Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them.' *Patriarchs and Prophets* page 381.

But there was even more to the organizational structure of Israel. The very layout of the camp itself was a representation of the throne in heaven. The tabernacle, which contained the ark of the covenant, a representation of the throne of God, was pitched in the center of the camp. Then the people were divided into four separate camps, according to their tribes. Each camp contained three tribes, with a single standard, or flag under which the people pitched their tents. On the west was the camp of Judah, on the south the camp of Reuben, on the East, the camp of Ephraim, and on the north, the camp of Dan. (See Numbers 2.) This camp layout formed a hollow square with the tabernacle in the middle.

Each of the four standards had a different picture on it, the standard of the camp of Judah had a lion on it, the standard of Reuben, a calf, or ox, the standard of Ephraim, a man, and that of Dan, an eagle. These are the exact same four beasts represented to John in the Revelation as being around the throne of God in heaven.

Many years later, the people grew tired of the system set up by God and demanded that a king, or a dictator, be set up. Samuel told them that in so doing they would lose their God given rights to freedom.

"Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations... And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them... And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king. And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers... And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work... And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day. Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of

Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles. And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the LORD. And the LORD said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king.” 1 Samuel 8:4-22.

The people chose to turn from God's republican form of government and take Satan's dictatorial form instead. Again, God reigns by the consent of the governed and when the people did not consent to His government, He gave them what they wanted, a dictator. They had to find out by sad experience that this was not a good idea. But God overruled even this error for good by choosing a king through whom He could work out His will for the nation.

King David did not rule alone, he involved the elders of Israel in his government.

“King David, toward the close of his reign, delivered a solemn charge to those bearing the burden of the work of God in his day. Summoning to Jerusalem ‘all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons, with the officers, and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men, ‘the aged king solemnly charged them, ‘in the sight of all Israel the congregation of the Lord, and in the audience of our God,’ to ‘keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God.’ 1 Chronicles 28:1, 8. To Solomon, as one called to occupy a position of leading responsibility, David gave a special charge: ‘Thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off forever. Take heed now; for the Lord hath chosen thee: . . . be strong.’ 1 Chronicles 28:9, 10.” *Acts of the Apostles* page 95.

When Israel demanded a king, God divided the theocracy. Prior to Saul, the religious and civil government of the nation were combined, just as they are combined in heaven. But when the people chose a king, God divided the religious leadership of Israel from the civil government. This was for the good of the people and to help prevent religious persecution.

In the heathen nations the civil and religious was combined and the king was worshiped as a God (as the Egyptian Pharaoh), or was invested with the high priest's office (as in Rome, where the title Pontificus Maximus, office of the high priest, was bestowed on the emperor). By choosing a king who was not of the priestly line, God clearly made a division between the civil and religious administration.

But the first king, Saul, who should have understood this, tried to unite the religious and the civil by offering sacrifice and was soundly rebuked by Samuel. “And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the

commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.” *1 Samuel 13:13-14.*

The fact that Saul's family lost the government of Israel as a result of his attempt to unite the kingship and the priesthood, is a sure indication of how important the separation of church and state was to the Lord.

This separation of church and state is further reinforced, years later, by the experience of king Uzziah who tried to burn incense as a priest and was struck by leprosy in 2 Chronicles 26:19. The king was not to exercise religious authority as a priest nor was the priesthood to exercise civil authority as rulers of the nation. In practice this separation principle was often violated by Israel's kings, with very sad results, and the people tended to follow their king in religious matters as well as in civil.

When the nation of Israel rejected God as their king, when the king, priests, and people turned from the worship of God to worship Baal, God chose to remove the civil authority from Israel entirely and give it to the Gentiles.

“Thus saith the Lord GOD; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.” *Ezekiel 21:26-27.*

God took the civil government away from Israel and gave it to Babylon. It was then successively overturned to Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Finally, Christ, “whose right it is,” came and God gave it to Him. But the Jews would have nothing to do with it. “But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.” *John 19:15.*

Thus was the civil government handed to the gentiles, by the consent and desire of the people, through their authorized leaders. “And it shall be no more,” until Christ, “whose right it is,” comes the second time. Only then will church and state be reunited under the heavenly administration.

The religious government was also taken from Israel and given to the church. “Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” *Matthew 21:43.*

Under the new dispensation, Christ represents the earth in heaven's councils and is the true ruler of this world. But He does not govern arbitrarily, He allows those who reject Him to have the ruler they have selected and suffer the consequences. He specifically represents those who have chosen and consented to His ruler ship of this earth. The church became His government on earth and He organized it on the same lines as heaven is organized.

What was the foundation of this government? It was the same that was the foundation of Israel's theocracy. The same law that is the constitution of heaven's government, the ten commandments. If the church is a subsidiary of the government of heaven, then it would stand to reason that its constitution, law, or creed, if you will, would be the same as that governing heaven. This is why man made creeds are not necessary, and are in fact detrimental, to the church here. God has already given us the creed on which we are to build our organization. This is why man made creeds are the first step in apostasy. They are the first step in rejecting the ruler ship of heaven and setting up another government, independent of God's government. This is because they reject the very foundation and constitution of that government. It is saying to God that we can produce something better then that which is established, thus joining the rebellion of Lucifer, for this has been his charge from the beginning. "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry." *1 Samuel 15:26*.

"The warfare against God's law commenced in heaven. Satan was determined to bring God to his ideas, his way, to force Him to change the law of His government. This was the cause of the war in heaven. Satan worked upon the sympathies of the angelic host by his deceptive attitude, but he was expelled from heaven, and now he is determined to carry out on this earth the plans he instituted in heaven. If he can persuade man to be disloyal to the law of God, he will feel that he is revenged upon God. He strives to instill into the minds of men his masterly deceptions, thus perverting judgment and justice, trampling down the law of God. This work—the conflict between truth and error—lies at the foundation of the trials and tribulations that the children of God will experience. This is the 'trial of their faith.' *Manuscript Releases, Vol. 12, page 37*.

If you notice, Israel's theocracy was based on the ten commandments as their constitution, but they also had some additional laws that governed procedures. Therefore there is nothing wrong with having our procedures written down to avoid confusion and to ensure order. But these procedures deal with actions and procedures of order, not beliefs.

The foundation of church government is to be the same as the heavenly government, the ten commandments. Its form should also be the same. We have already seen how heaven is governed as a representative republic. The theocracy of Israel was the same until they demanded a king. With the new church, Christ returned to the representative model. The council in Jerusalem is the prime example of how this representative government is to work on earth.

When a group of Jews arose in the church, insisting that the entire ceremonial law be kept by all the Christians, it lead to a situation of confusion in the church. God had clearly indicated through His dealings with the apostles that it was His will that the ceremonial law not be kept in the new dispensation. To solve the confusion they held a general council.

“In the church at Antioch the consideration of the question of circumcision resulted in much discussion and contention. Finally, the members of the church, fearing that a division among them would be the outcome of continued discussion, decided to send Paul and Barnabas, with some responsible men from the church, to Jerusalem to lay the matter before the apostles and elders. There they were to meet delegates from the different churches and those who had come to Jerusalem to attend the approaching festivals. Meanwhile all controversy was to cease until a final decision should be given in general council. This decision was then to be universally accepted by the different churches throughout the country.” *Acts of the Apostles, page 190.*

The council met and the decision was made to ratify that which the Holy Spirit had already made plain, that the ceremonial law was no longer binding on God's church. This decision carried with it the authority of the representative council on earth as well as the authority of the Holy Spirit Himself. Through the story of this council at Jerusalem, where everyone was given a voice and was heard, and then a decision was made based on the evidence, we are given a picture of how Christ's government on earth is to operate.

But this church did not remain pure. By the time we reach the council of Nicea in 325 A.D., things had changed and the council of representatives were authorizing and binding things on the church which were in direct contradiction to the law of God. They were also uniting with the civil power by using the power of the Roman Emperor Constantine to enforce the Nicean Creed.

“Satan could not hinder the plan of salvation. Jesus was crucified, and arose again the third day. He told his angels that he would make even the crucifixion and resurrection tell to his advantage. He was willing that those who professed faith in Jesus should believe that the laws regulating the Jewish sacrifices and offerings ceased at the death of Christ, if he could push them further, and make them believe that the law of ten commandments died also with Christ.” *Spiritual Gifts, Vol 1. page 109.*

Carefully, Satan incorporated the policies of his kingdom into the practices of the church. He left just enough of the organization Christ had set up to fool people, but he gradually mixed enough policy and craft into their teaching and doctrine to destroy the entire morality of the Christian Religion. He also united the civil and religious powers.

Since God divided the civil government from the church government, there should have been no union between church and state. This division was made to ensure the liberty of the people, but man has continued to try and unite the civil and religious. The Catholic Church in the west, became head over the state and you see the pope appointing and taking down kings. But in the east the emperor ruled over the church and you find the emperor appointed and removing the patriarch in Constantinople. This was the fundamental difference between the churches of the east and those of the west. But Neither view is correct. The church must not control the state, nor use it's power to enforce church doctrine.

The state must not control the church nor enforce religious dogma, but is required to protect the civil liberties and religious liberties of the people. Both must be based on the ten commandments for we read:

“You have heard much in regard to the authority and sanctity of the law of the Ten Commandments. God is the author of that law, which is the foundation of His government in heaven and on earth. **All enlightened nations have based their laws upon this grand foundation of all law.**” *Temperance, page 164.*

But the state can only regulate man's duty to man. It can only make laws concerning the last six commandments. It is limited in its sphere to command. The church, on the other hand, cannot use the civil authority, nor exact civil penalties for violation of religious doctrine. The powers of both are limited. In this sinful world they must be limited, or man loses his God given right to liberty of conscience and action.

“We are to recognize human government as an ordinance of divine appointment, and teach obedience to it as a sacred duty, **within its legitimate sphere.** But when its claims conflict with the claims of God, we must obey God rather than men. God's word must be recognized as above all human legislation. A ‘Thus saith the Lord’ is not to be set aside for a ‘Thus saith the church’ or a ‘Thus saith the state.’ The crown of Christ is to be lifted above the diadems of earthly potentates.” *Acts of the Apostles, page 68.*

This principle is clearly presented by Christ Himself when He said: “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.” *Matthew 22:21.*

But even though the church abandoned her position, and enforced error by the power of the state, some kept alive their faith and belief. They kept the ten commandments as the foundation of their faith. They also kept the concepts of representative government alive. This had its effects on society. Even the secular governments were affected by it, particularly in Eastern Europe, where Germany, Poland, and Hungary, formed republican types of governments with elected kings rather than hereditary monarchs. It was this tradition of civil and religious freedom that prevented the inquisition from gaining a foothold in eastern Europe, as it did in the west. While the Jesuits did gain almost entire control of the Polish government and the allegiance of her king, they still failed to induce him to kill the heretics and Judiazers (Sabbath keepers). His power base was too dependent on the support of those very heretics for him to take such a drastic step.

The reformation in Europe rediscovered many of these principles of the divine government. The reformation had a profound effect on civil as well as religious liberty. But the protestants only went so far. They did not throw off the restrictions of their creeds nor did they remove all the dictatorial controls from which they had come out. Those who were themselves persecuted, in turn united with the state and persecuted those who were in advance of them, in understanding, faith, and practice.

But those who were persecuted by both the Papists and the Protestants alike, carried their free principles of protestantism and republicanism, as well as congregationalism, across the Atlantic and planted them firmly in America. Here they took root and grew to become the very foundation of the infant United States. Thus we see in prophecy the beast with the lamb-like (or Christ-like) horns rising from the earth in 1798. The principle of separation of the church and the state, introduced by God to Israel, also became part the foundation of religious liberty in the United States. Within this protective asylum of civil and religious liberty arose God's remnant, the Seventh-day Adventist church.

The early leaders of the remnant movement, James White, Joseph Bates, Uriah Smith, and John Loughborough, to name just a few, fully understood where the Protestants had gone wrong. They recognized how God's government worked and they organized their work along heaven's lines. They formed a church without a creed, within the country without a king. God approved of their work and sent them a prophet. Something He had not done for centuries, while the church was shrouded in the darkness of superstition and error.

Through His messenger, Ellen White, He approved of the order and organization created, but He warned the young church over and over again against those who would take kingly authority.

"The division of the General Conference into District Union Conferences was God's arrangement. In the work of the Lord for these last days there should be no Jerusalem centers, no kingly power. And the work in the different countries is not to be bound by contracts to the work centering in Battle Creek, for this is not God's plan. Brethren are to counsel together, for we are just as much under the control of God in one part of His vineyard as in another. Brethren are to be one in heart and soul, even as Christ and the Father are one. Teach this, practice this, that we may be one with Christ in God, all working to build up one another." *Testimonies Vol. 8, page 232.*

"The kingly power formerly revealed in the General Conference at Battle Creek is not to be perpetuated. The publishing institution is not to be a kingdom of itself. It is essential that the principles that govern in General Conference affairs should be maintained in the management of the publishing work and the sanitarium work. One is not to think that the branch of the work with which he is connected is of vastly more importance than other branches." *Testimonies Vol. 8, page 233.*

Unfortunately the people of the remnant movement made the same mistake as had Israel of old and converted their heaven approved order into one of the most tightly controlled protestant structures in existence, rivaling only Rome in the tightness of their structure and the restrictions placed on the beliefs and actions of their members.

In the 1880's the loud cry of the third angel began to sound for we read in 1892, "**The time of test is just upon us**, the loud cry of the third angel **has already begun** in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ." *The Review and*

Herald, November 22, 1892.

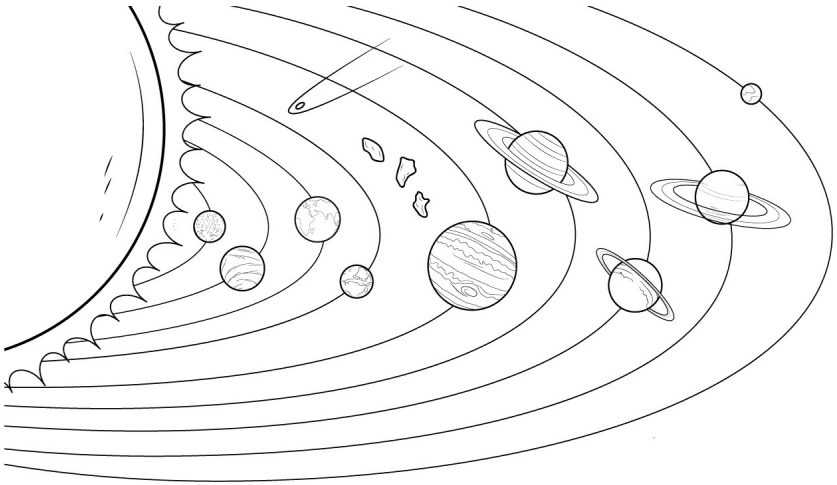
Again in 1906 we read “In the eighteenth chapter (of Revelation) is recorded the very last call to the churches. **This call is now to be given.**” *Manuscript 75, Sept. 20, 1906, Upward Look page 277.*

Sadly, the church that was set up without a creed, did not heed the call and joined the ranks of the Babylonian churches. Her downward course has not stopped nor slowed since it began. But this is exactly what we were told would happen.

In 1905 the prophet warned, “One thing it is certain is soon to be realized,—**the great apostasy, which is developing and increasing and waxing stronger, and will continue to do so until the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout.** We are to hold fast the first principles of our denominated faith, and go forward from strength to increased faith. Ever we are to keep the faith that has been substantiated by the Holy Spirit of God from the earlier events of our experience until the present time. We need now larger breadth, and deeper, more earnest, unwavering faith in the leadings of the Holy Spirit. If we needed the manifest proof of the Holy Spirit's power to confirm truth in the beginning, after the passing of the time, we need today all the evidence in the confirmation of the truth, when souls are departing from the faith and giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. There must not be any languishing of soul now.”

Pamphlet—Testimonies for the Church Containing Messages of Warning and Instruction to Seventh-day Adventists, page 57.

Now that the last message of mercy is being given to the church and the world and the remnant is coming out from among them to stand separate and distinct, we have the opportunity, once again, to organize along heaven's lines. The question to ask is, do we create an organization according to our own ideas and then ask God to join and bless it, or do we join the government that God has already established?



3. The Reason for Organization

The story is told of Joshua under the walls of Jericho meeting a man dressed in battle clothes with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua accosted the stranger with the question, “Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?” *Joshua 5:13*. The man was Jesus of course, but notice that he did not answer Joshua’s question with a choice of sides. He said, “Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come.” The message was that Jesus was the captain of the Lord’s host, He was not for either side, ultimately, He desired both sides to join His side. He would work for whoever joined His army.

It is the same today. Jesus has set up an order in Heaven and He desires us to join it. Anyone can join, no matter what side they started on, and all are welcome. Again, we read of the apostasy of the Golden Calf at Sinai. When Moses came down from the mount, he saw what the people were doing. “Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the LORD’S side? let him come unto me.” *Exodus 32:26*.

The sons of Levi were the only ones who came forward to be on the Lord’s side. As a reward for their faithfulness, they were designated for the Sanctuary service, for the priesthood and the care of the tabernacle.

Today the same call is going forth. “Who is on the Lord’s side?” And the reward today is similar to that in Israel. Those who come out and stand on the Lord’s side will be part of the 144,000, the royal retinue of Christ, “kings and priests unto God and his Father.” They “follow the Lamb whither soever he goeth.” God wants to take the order of heaven and have it perfectly replicated in his church on earth. Then He can come and take us straight into the heavenly courts. “The 144,000 were all sealed and perfectly united. On their foreheads

was written, 'God, New Jerusalem,' and a glorious star containing Jesus' new name." *Life Sketches*, page 65.

How is this group to become united and have the strength to resist the devil and stand at the end?

"I saw that this door at which the enemy comes in to perplex and trouble the flock can be shut. I inquired of the angel how it could be closed. He said, 'The church must flee to God's Word and become established upon gospel order, which has been overlooked and neglected.' This is indispensably necessary in order to bring the church into the unity of the faith. I saw that in the apostles' day the church was in danger of being deceived and imposed upon by false teachers." *Early Writings*, page 100.

"If Satan can work to turn the whole current of the waters of life into the most polluted channels, it is the very work he would rejoice to see the whole Seventh-day Adventist people engaged in. He desires us to use up in this way all the available means, so that there is nothing left to sustain foreign missions. But God wants His work to go in the very way He has ordained for it to go. **He has not inaugurated a new plan or arrangement to save the world.** . . ." *Manuscript Releases Vol. 3* page 403.

What is the purpose of this organization, and why do we need it? The purpose on earth is the exact same purpose as that in heaven. The redemption and salvation of the world.

"The salvation of the human race has ever been the object of the councils of heaven." *Signs of the Times*, June 12, 1901.

"How strange it looked to me, as I saw that **all Heaven was interested in our salvation**, and then saw the little interest manifested by man for his fellow-men. They throw their arms about their treasure here as though it were their Saviour, and could impart unto them eternal life. I was ashamed, distressed, agonized, that such should ever bear the name of disciples, or profess the name of Christ. I saw that they should cheerfully say, 'Here, Lord, is the little of earth's treasures thou hast lent me; take any portion of it; take it all; it is thine. Let me do my part in saving my fellow-men, and let me be raised up with the redeemed to dwell with thee forever.' Tremblingly will such disciples lean upon the strong promises of God. Earth fades before their vision; Heaven is magnified, and no sacrifice is too dear for them to make for the 'far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.'" *Life Sketches*, page 337.

"**The church of Christ on earth was organized for missionary purposes**, and the Lord desires to see the entire church devising ways and means whereby high and low, rich and poor, may hear the message of truth. Not all are called to personal labor in foreign fields, but all can do something by their prayers and their gifts to aid the missionary work." *Testimonies Vol. 6* page 29.

What is the purpose of organization? Is it to keep our doctrines and beliefs pure? Is it to control the beliefs and actions of its members? No. It is for

missionary purposes only.

“The church of Christ was organized for missionary purposes. **Christian missionary work furnishes the church with a sure foundation, a foundation having this seal, ‘The Lord knoweth them that are His.’** [2 Timothy 2:19.] By it the members are inspired with zeal to deny self, to put forth self-sacrificing efforts to send the truth to the regions beyond. It has a salutary influence upon unbelievers; for as the workers labor under divine supervision, worldlings are led to see the greatness of the resources that God has provided for those who serve Him. We are laid under a most solemn obligation to furnish, in Christian missions, **an illustration of the principles of the kingdom of God.** The church is to work actively, as an organized body, to spread abroad the influence of the cross of Christ.” *Gospel Workers* page 646.

It is not a creed, not kingly authority, not restrictions of personal belief and action, that bring unity and harmony into the ranks of the church. It is a message and the giving of this message that brings unity and that is the basis for order. The church has a mission, a purpose to warn the world, as we go forward with this message and give it to the world, unity will follow and order becomes essential.

When you consider the physical world you find perfect order all the way down to the smallest atom, and God’s government is also organized down to the smallest individual. The church must have perfect order down to the smallest, one member church. Even this member can be organized, with a plan for his missionary activity.

“God is a God of order. Everything connected with heaven is in perfect order; subjection and thorough discipline mark the movements of the angelic host. Success can only attend order and harmonious action. God requires order and system in His work now no less than in the days of Israel. All who are working for Him are to labor intelligently, not in a careless, haphazard manner. He would have his work done with faith and exactness, that He may place the seal of His approval upon it.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 376.

Does this organization plan for each person what his duty and purpose is? No, this is not how the republic of heaven works. But each individual should have an interest in the organization and should ask God what he can do to help the work and how he can be a part of God’s government. Each one is important.

Is there a place for rules of order in our meetings and rules for how decisions should be made? Yes, there clearly is, for this is part of system and discipline. This helps to ensure, especially in our sinful world, that everyone has a voice that gets heard. Does this mean that all the members should be independent atoms, acting independently of all others? Not at all, we are all to be in subjection to each other.

“Notwithstanding the fact that Paul was personally taught by God, he had no strained ideas of individual responsibility. While looking to God for direct guidance, he was ever ready to recognize the authority vested in the body of

believers united in church fellowship. He felt the need of counsel, and when matters of importance arose, he was glad to lay these before the church and to unite with his brethren in seeking God for wisdom to make right decisions. Even ‘the spirits of the prophets,’ he declared, ‘are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.’ 1 Corinthians 14:32, 33. With Peter, he taught that all united in church capacity should be ‘subject one to another.’ 1 Peter 5:5.” *Acts of the Apostles* page 200.

“I saw that the shepherds should consult those in whom they have reason to have confidence, those who have been in all the messages, and are firm in all the present truth, before they advocate new points of importance, which they may think the Bible sustains. Then the shepherds will be perfectly united and the union of the shepherds will be felt by the church. Such a course I saw would prevent unhappy divisions, and then there would be no danger of the precious flock being divided and the sheep scattered without a shepherd.” *Early Writings*, page 61.

“Christian sociability is altogether too little cultivated by God’s people... Students should be taught that they are not independent atoms, but that each one is a thread which is to unite with other threads in composing a fabric... Those who shut themselves up within themselves, who are unwilling to be drawn upon to bless others by friendly associations, lose many blessings; for by mutual contact minds receive polish and refinement; by social intercourse, acquaintances are formed and friendships contracted which result in a unity of heart and an atmosphere of love which is pleasing in the sight of heaven.” *Testimonies Vol. 6*, page 172.

“In spite of all the good qualities a man may have, he cannot be a good soldier if he acts independently of those connected with him. Occasional and uncertain movements, however earnest and energetic, will in the end bring defeat. Take a strong team of horses. If, instead of both pulling together, one should suddenly jerk forward and the other pull back, they would not move the load, notwithstanding their great strength. So the soldiers of Christ must work in concert, else there will be a mere concourse of independent atoms. Strength, instead of being carefully treasured to meet one great end, will be wasted in disconcerted, meaningless efforts. In union is strength. A few men and women who unite together, having the glory of God in view, will be growing in strength and wisdom, and gaining new victories. There is much hard work to be done for the Master, and much wisdom must be brought into the work. It is the unconquerable perseverance, the never-failing endurance, which will bring the victory. Many have a theory of truth, but know scarcely anything of the sweet victories through that faith which overcometh the world. An experience must be gained by each one for himself, or we shall never sit down with the suffering Man of Calvary. It will cost us all we have, but as a reward we shall inherit all things.” *Signs of the Times*, September 7, 1891.

“I know that the Lord loves His church. It is not to be disorganized, or broken

up into independent atoms. There is not the least consistency in this. There is not the least evidence that such a thing will be. Those who shall heed this false message, and try to leaven others will be deceived, and prepared to receive advance delusions, and they will come to naught.” *Manuscript Releases, Vol 1, page 303.*

But while each individual is to subject his ideas to the church body, this body must not exercise a kingly and arbitrary authority over the individual. Notice that the body was to all come together and seek God’s counsel in the matter unitedly. Too many times this is not done, and when it is not done, the church ceases to have any authority over God’s heritage and the individual must be free to follow the leading of God. This is why Satan is always trying to lead the church to make arbitrary decisions without consulting God, who would lead and guide if we would let Him.

This is clearly seen in the story of Joshua. At first he prayed for guidance and was given the chance to consult with the “Captain of the host of the Lord.” But after the great victory at Jericho, he felt sufficient to lead on his own. This led to a great defeat at Ai and to being deceived by moldy bread and old sandals. It is always dangerous for any individual, any republican body of church leaders, to feel all sufficient in themselves and fail to honestly and earnestly seek the counsel of God.

We also see this in the story of Paul and the church in Jerusalem.

“Several years had passed since the brethren in Jerusalem, with representatives from other leading churches, gave careful consideration to the perplexing questions that had arisen over methods followed by those who were laboring for the Gentiles. As a result of this council, the brethren had united in making definite recommendations to the churches concerning certain rites and customs, including circumcision. It was at this general council that the brethren had also united in commending to the Christian churches Barnabas and Paul as laborers worthy of the full confidence of every believer.” *Acts of the Apostles, page 400.*

“Among those present at this meeting, were some who had severely criticized the methods of labor followed by the apostles upon whom rested the chief burden of carrying the gospel to the Gentile world. But during the council their views of God’s purpose had broadened, and they had united with their brethren in making wise decisions which made possible the unification of the entire body of believers.” *Acts of the Apostles, page 401.*

“Afterward, when it became apparent that the converts among the Gentiles were increasing rapidly, there were a few of the leading brethren at Jerusalem who began to cherish anew their former prejudices against the methods of Paul and his associates. These prejudices strengthened with the passing of the years, until some of the leaders determined that the work of preaching the gospel must henceforth be conducted in accordance with their own ideas. If Paul would conform his methods to certain policies which they advocated they would acknowledge and sustain his work; otherwise they could no longer look upon it

with favor or grant it their support.” *Acts of the Apostles, page 401.*

“These men had lost sight of the fact that God is the teacher of His people; that **every worker in His cause is to obtain an individual experience in following the divine Leader, not looking to man for direct guidance; that His workers are to be molded and fashioned, not after man’s ideas, but after the similitude of the divine.**” *Acts of the Apostles, page 401.*

“In his ministry the apostle Paul had taught the people ‘not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.’ The truths that he proclaimed had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit, ‘for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God... Which things,’ declared Paul, ‘we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.’ 1 Corinthians 2:4, 10-13.” *Acts of the Apostles, page 402.*

“Throughout his ministry, Paul had looked to God for direct guidance. At the same time, he had been very careful to labor in harmony with the decisions of the general council at Jerusalem, and as a result the churches were ‘established in the faith, and increased in number daily.’ Acts 16:5. And now, notwithstanding the lack of sympathy shown him by some, he found comfort in the consciousness that he had done his duty in encouraging in his converts a spirit of loyalty, generosity, and brotherly love, as revealed on this occasion in the liberal contributions which he was enabled to place before the Jewish elders.” *Acts of the Apostles, page 402.*

“After the presentation of the gifts, Paul ‘declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry.’ This recital of facts brought to the hearts of all, even of those who had been doubting, the conviction that the blessing of heaven had accompanied his labors. ‘When they heard it, they glorified the Lord.’ They felt that the methods of labor pursued by the apostle bore the signet of Heaven. The liberal contributions lying before them added weight to the testimony of the apostle concerning the faithfulness of the new churches established among the Gentiles. The men who, while numbered among those who were in charge of the work at Jerusalem, had urged that arbitrary measures of control be adopted, saw Paul’s ministry in a new light and were convinced that their own course had been wrong, that they had been held in bondage by Jewish customs and traditions, and that the work of the gospel had been greatly hindered by their failure to recognize that the wall of partition between Jew and Gentile had been broken down by the death of Christ.” *Acts of the Apostles, page 402.*

“This was the golden opportunity for all the leading brethren to confess frankly that God had wrought through Paul, and that at times they had erred in permitting the reports of his enemies to arouse their jealousy and prejudice. But instead of uniting in an effort to do justice to the one who had been injured,

they gave him counsel which showed that they still cherished a feeling that Paul should be held largely responsible for the existing prejudice. They did not stand nobly in his defense, endeavoring to show the disaffected ones where they were wrong, but sought to effect a compromise by counseling him to pursue a course which in their opinion would remove all cause for misapprehension.” *Acts of the Apostles*, page 403.

The result of following the erring counsel of these leading brethren was the arrest of Paul and his subsequent imprisonment and trial at Rome. This mistake of the leaders was overruled by God for the good of His cause but it was not in His original plan. Organization must not ever be used for the purpose of controlling the work and beliefs individuals.

“The lesson of the vine and its branches holds a deep meaning for the workers in the cause of God. Every worker is to draw his strength from the same Source, and while the individuality of each is to be maintained, unity and harmony is to be preserved. When this spirit of oneness pervades the work, our institutions throughout the world will be united in their interests, while the individuality of any one will not be merged into that of any other one... It is not the purpose of God to centralize in this way, bringing all the interests of one branch of the work under the management of a comparatively few men. In His great purpose of advancing the cause of truth in the earth, He designs that every part of His work shall blend with every other part. The workers are to draw together in the Spirit of Christ. In their diversity, they are to preserve unity. One institution is not to be brought under the control of another, but all are to exercise their powers harmoniously.—Letter 112, 1907, pp. 4. 5. (To the directors of the Nashville Sanitarium and the Southern Union Conference, March 10, 1907.)” *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 5 page 362-363.

“Before my husband’s death this matter in regard to the publishing house at Battle Creek and the publishing house at Oakland was presented to me under the figure of the vine, and since that time it has been presented to me under the same figure. The Lord has shown me that these two institutions are to be kept as separate as two branches which, though distinct, both center in the parent vine. They are not to be merged into one, but are to be kept distinct, yet each is to derive its nourishment from the same source... Under different figures this matter has been presented to me, and I know that it is not the Lord’s will that these two publishing houses shall be united. I fear that those at Battle Creek have also made a mistake in taking over the schools and the Health Retreat at St. Helena. The publishing house at Battle Creek has been under the reproof of God for years, especially since the time of the Minneapolis meeting, when some acted the part of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. If its managers were not swelled with self-importance and self-sufficiency, they would not feel that they could carry every crippled institution.” *1888 Materials* page 1518.

What will be the result if we organize here on heaven’s plan, creating a perfect reflection of God’s government? If we are united and establish order that is a

perfect reflection of heaven's government, then Jesus can come take us and our organization into His heavenly kingdom. Only then, will church and state be reunited into a single theocracy again. What a destiny is ours, if we will only take hold of it! What is that order? It is republican in form, governed by representatives and based solely and solidly on the constitution of heaven, the transcript of God's character, the ten commandments. It guarantees the freedom of all and a voice for all, with no kingly control, not even kingly control by the majority.

Order was necessary for Isreal to be able to enter the promised land of Canaan. The same order is just as necessary for us to be able to enter the heavenly Canaan. "Here their worship had taken a more definite form, the laws had been given for the government of the nation, and a more efficient organization had been effected preparatory to their entrance into the land of Canaan. The government of Israel was characterized by the most thorough organization, wonderful alike for its completeness and its simplicity. The order so strikingly displayed in the perfection and arrangement of all God's created works was manifest in the Hebrew economy." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 374.

"God is a God of order. Everything connected with heaven is in perfect order; subjection and thorough discipline mark the movements of the angelic host. Success can only attend order and harmonious action. God requires order and system in His work now no less than in the days of Israel. All who are working for Him are to labor intelligently, not in a careless, haphazard manner. He would have his work done with faith and exactness, that He may place the seal of His approval upon it." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 376.

What is the purpose of this organization, if it is not to exercise control over actions and beliefs? It seems that no organization patterned on the principles of freedom has ever succeeded. Will an organization without kingly control ever succeed?



4. The Message that Unites

“And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire. Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings. And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf’s foot: and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass. And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings. Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward. As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle. Thus were their faces: and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies. And they went every one straight forward: whither the spirit was to go, they went; and they turned not when they went. As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning. And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning. Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces. The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel. When they went, they went upon their four sides: and they turned not when they went. As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings were full of eyes round about them four. And when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them: and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up. Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went, thither was their spirit to go; and the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels. When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels

were lifted up over against them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels. And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature was as the colour of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above. And under the firmament were their wings straight, the one toward the other: every one had two, which covered on this side, and every one had two, which covered on that side, their bodies. And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings. And there was a voice from the firmament that was over their heads, when they stood, and had let down their wings. And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. **This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.** And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.” Ezekiel 1:4-28.

What a picture was this that Ezekiel saw! This is a picture of the government of God. It is similar to the one shown John in the book of Revelation, but while John was shown the organization of the redeemed, Ezekiel saw the organization of the entire universe. The universe itself is divided into four parts. Each of these parts is further divided into four parts, just as the camp of Israel was divided into four camps, each under a standard that corresponded to one of these heavenly divisions. Notice too that each creature has three sets of wings, each set containing two wings, so six wings for each creature. Six wings times four creatures is twenty-four, corresponding to the twenty-four elders of Revelation, which we saw before represented twenty-four courses, each course serving two weeks in rotation. They are perfectly united, indicated by the fact that they all move at the same time. This order, this perfect organization was to Ezekiel “the appearance of the likeness of **the glory of the Lord.**”

There is another place where we read about the glory of God lightening the whole earth. In Revelation 18:1 we read about a mighty angel who descends from heaven and the whole earth is lightened with his glory. This angel bears the last message of mercy to a world about to be destroyed. What is this glory that lightens the whole earth?

After Israel’s great sin of worshipping the golden calf at mount Sinai, we read of Moses asking the Lord, “I beseech thee, show me thy glory.” Exodus 33:18. In response the Lord promised “I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.” Exodus 33:19

God commanded Moses to hew a new set of stone tables to replace the ones that had been broken at the calf and then to come up into the mountain. After Moses came up into the mountain “the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.” Exodus 34:5-7.

The judgment of God, His judicial system, His jury, is His glory.

“It is his righteous character that constitutes the glory of God; and it is this same glory that Christ prays may be given to his followers upon the earth.”
Review and Herald, November 3, 1896.

Heaven’s plan of order is a perfect reflection of God’s character, His glory, it is based on His law which is a transcript of His character, His glory. Thus God’s character is the foundation of His throne and is the glory and light that surrounds it, it is also His governmental organization. As God’s church reflects His character more and more closely on an individual level as well as on an organizational one, that light and glory will be reflected more and more by His people and His church. Just as Moses’ face shown after communing with God.

Later on we find Moses himself pleading God’s own character as a reason for Him to forgive the Israelites. When they were on the very borders of the promised land, Israel rebelled and refused to go forward at God’s command. For we read, “It was upon this knowledge of the long-sufferance of Jehovah and of his infinite love and mercy, that Moses based his wonderful plea for the life of Israel when, on the borders of the Promised Land, they refused to advance in obedience to the command of God. At the height of their rebellion, the Lord had declared, ‘I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them;’ and he had proposed to make of the descendants of Moses ‘a greater nation and mightier than they.’ Num. 14:12. But the prophet pleaded the marvelous Providences and promises of God in behalf of the chosen nation. And then, as the strongest of all pleas, he urged the love of God for fallen man. ‘I beseech thee,’ he prayed, ‘let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying, The Lord is long-suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression... Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.’ Verses 17-19.” *Review and Herald, March 18, 1915.*

“Graciously the Lord responded, ‘I have pardoned according to thy word. And then he imparted to Moses, in the form of a prophecy, a knowledge of his purpose concerning the final triumph of his chosen people. ‘As truly as I live,’ he declared, ‘all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.’ Verses 20, 21. God’s glory, his character, his merciful kindness and tender love,—all that

Moses had pleaded in behalf of Israel was to be revealed to all mankind. And this promise of Jehovah was made doubly sure; it was confirmed by an oath. As surely as God lives and reigns, his glory should be declared ‘among the heathen, his wonders among all people.’ Psalm. 96:3.” *Review and Herald, March 18, 1915.*

“It was concerning the future fulfillment of this prophecy that Isaiah had heard the shining seraphim singing before the throne. ‘The whole earth is full of his glory.’ Isa. 6:3. The prophet, confident of the eternity of these words, himself afterwards boldly declared of those who were bowing down to images of wood and stone, ‘They shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.’ Isa. 35:2.” *Review and Herald, March 18, 1915.*

This is an amazing prophecy! God promised to Moses, and swore a double oath to him that the earth would be filled with His glory. This is the work for the final church, for we read in Revelation 18 of the final messenger descending from heaven “and the earth was lightened with his glory.” *Revelation 18:1*. Not the glory of the angel, the glory of God. But not only was it sworn to Moses by a double oath, it was repeated by David in Psalm 96:3 and again by Isaiah in Isaiah 6:3 and again by John in Revelation 18. Four times, the Lord promised his prophets that He would fill the earth with His glory. This promise must be fulfilled in the final generation on the earth. And it’s fulfillment has already begun.

“Today this prophecy is meeting rapid fulfillment. The missionary activities of the church of God on earth are bearing rich fruitage, and soon the gospel message will have been proclaimed to all nations. ‘To the praise of the glory of his grace,’ men and women from every kindred, tongue, and people are being made ‘accepted in the Beloved,’ ‘that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.’ Eph. 1:6; 2:7. ‘Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name forever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory.’ Ps. 72:18, 19.” *Review and Herald, March 18, 1915.*

Since this is part of the final message of mercy to be given by the final generation and since it was so important that God swore to Moses that it would happen, we can depend on Him to fulfill His word. But how is the earth to be lightened with His glory?

“It is his righteous character that constitutes the glory of God; and it is this same glory that Christ prays may be given to his followers upon the earth. Hear the petition that he makes to his Father for them: ‘Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth... And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I

have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world... And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.” *Review and Herald, November 3, 1896.*

The glory of God is the perfect reflection of His character in His Church! Part of this reflection is the perfect unity that He has with His Father! His church must have it, too, or it cannot lighten the earth with His glory. His character is the foundation of His government. Not only is His character to be perfectly reflected in the church but His plan of government must be perfectly reflected in the church, for this organization, as shown to Ezekiel, is part of His glory.

“This request of Christ has no limit to its fulness. He desires that his followers shall reveal to the world his spirit of unity and love. But before this unity can exist among them, there must be a genuine renovation of every heart; there must be a vital connection with God; the character must be formed after the divine similitude.

“Though each is charged with responsibility, and each has a part to act, ‘none of us liveth to himself.’ **God has designed by the unity of his people to impress upon a sinful world, and also to reveal to the heavenly intelligences, the fact that Christ has not died in vain.** ‘Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.’ The pure and holy principle of love distinguishes the character and conduct of Christians from those of worldlings. Standing out from the world, we are to become representatives of the goodness, mercy, and love of God. Thus we may be spectacles unto the world, and to angels, and to men.” *Review and Herald, November 3, 1896.*

The only way for God’s word to come to pass in this generation is for perfect love, unity, and order to be reached in His church. What an awesome task! What a solemn charge! But He has promised four times and with a double oath, “as He lives and reigns,” it will happen! What is that message that is proclaimed by a united, organized, and glorious church? It is a call to come out of Babylon. “And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen... Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” *Revelation 18:2, 4.* How is this message a declaration of God’s glory, or character? It is a call of mercy, He calls his people to separate from the corrupt, fallen, religious system so that they are not destroyed in the destruction he is about to rain upon Babylon. “Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.”

Amos 3:7. He warned Lot before He destroyed Sodom and saved all who were willing to come out of that city. He warned Noah of the flood and saved all who were willing to come out of the world into the ark. "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." *Luke 17:26*.

"The Scriptures are constantly opening to the people of God. There always has been and always will be a truth specially applicable to each generation. The message given to Noah was present truth for that time; and if the people had accepted that message, they would have been saved from drinking the waters of the flood. Now suppose a certain people should say, 'We have all the truth that our fathers had; we don't want any more,' and the God of heaven should send them a message as he did to Nineveh. What would be the result?—The same as would have resulted to the Ninevites if they had not repented." *Review and Herald, June 29, 1886*.

This final message is God's glory, revealing His character, by mercifully calling His people out and away from the doom that awaits the wicked, but His character is also one of justice. He declares that He "will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." *Exodus 34:5-7*. This justice and mercy is seen in the warning of the judgments to fall on Babylon and all those who will not separate from her.

"We have a covert, a stronghold into which we may run and be safe. Our prayers must reach the mercy-seat, where mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. The grace which is sufficient for all, will enable us to rise above the severest trials, and to endure the most trying tests. Never was there a period when so much was at stake as there is now. Never was there a generation upon whom rested such weighty responsibilities as upon this generation; for God has entrusted to the men of this time the last warning message." *Review and Herald, April 23, 1889*.

"Different periods in the history of the church have each been marked by the development of some special truth, adapted to the necessities of God's people at that time. Every new truth has made its way against hatred and opposition; those who were blessed with its light were tempted and tried. The Lord gives a special truth for the people in an emergency. Who dare refuse to publish it? He commands his servants to present the last invitation of mercy to the world. They cannot remain silent, except at the peril of their souls. Christ's ambassadors have nothing to do with consequences. They must perform their duty, and leave results with God." *Great Controversy, 1888 Edition, page 609*.

"In every age there is a new development of truth, a message of God to the people of that generation. The old truths are all essential; new truth is not independent of the old, but an unfolding of it. It is only as the old truths are understood that we can comprehend the new. When Christ desired to open to His disciples the truth of His resurrection, He began 'at Moses and all the prophets' and 'expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself.'

Luke 24:27. But it is the light which shines in the fresh unfolding of truth that glorifies the old. He who rejects or neglects the new does not really possess the old. For him it loses its vital power and becomes but a lifeless form.” *Christ’s Object Lessons* page 127.

It is a solemn responsibility and fearful work that this generation is required to do. But God has promised that it WILL be accomplished. The earth WILL be filled with His glory. His character WILL be perfectly reflected in His people and His government WILL be perfectly reflected in His church.

What a reward awaits those who are faithful in His work! For of the final generation, the 144,000, it is written, “And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.” *Revelation 15:2-4*. They sing the song of Moses and the Lamb because they have fulfilled the promise given to Moses by the Lamb. They have been His instruments to lighten the earth with His glory!

Did you notice that they mention the fact that all nations shall come and worship? This is the direct fulfillment of the prophecy and oath given to Moses. This is what Sister White said was beginning in her day through the missionary activities of the church. The world today is a very different place than it was in 1915. Almost half the world hadn’t even heard of Christ back then, but today almost the entire world knows about Him. There are only a few isolated tribes left, here and there, who have not heard about Christ. The entire world will soon have had an opportunity to know Him. All nations will soon receive the final message as was promised so many centuries ago!

The song of Moses was written after the victory of God over Pharaoh’s army at the Red Sea, and the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage. Israel sang “The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father’s God, and I will exalt him... The LORD shall reign for ever and ever.” *Exodus 15:2,18*. It is this same song of victory that the 144,000 sing after their victory over the forces of evil and the bondage of sin. For we read after the destruction of Babylon, “And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God... Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.” *Revelation 19:1,7*. The 144,000 sing the song of Moses because they have “gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark,

and over the number of his name.” *Revelation 15:2*

The final triumph is sure because it was sworn to Moses by a double oath that it would happen and repeated three more times to successive generations. By the love and unity, order and faith, of the final generation of God’s Church, the earth will be lightened, and is being lightened by His glory! Don’t you want to be a part of it?

The republic of the Unites States, when it was founded, was not perfect, it had many flaws, but it was based on two perfect and everlasting principles, republicanism and protestantism, civil and religious liberty. Benjamin Franklin and the founding fathers of this country understood how hard it is to keep a republic, for Satan hates this form of government and does everything he can to destroy it. The people of the United States have not kept their republic, just as prophecy indicated they would not.

Even God’s church finds it hard to keep a republic, this is plainly seen by the repeated counsels sent from the Lord’s prophet about kingly authority. Kingly authority is pleasing to the natural heart but it is not the plan of God.

Even though God’s church has not kept it’s republic and has repeatedly stumbled and fallen away from the pattern, we must pick up and begin again. God has not changed His plan of order and we must come back to it and try again to keep it.

“The Lord has declared that the history of the past shall be rehearsed as we enter upon the closing work. Every truth that He has given for these last days is to be proclaimed to the world. Every pillar that He has established is to be strengthened. **We cannot now step off the foundation that God has established. We cannot now enter into any new organization; for this would mean apostasy from the truth.**—Manuscript 129, 1905.” *Selected Messages Vol. 2, page 390.*

Our victory is as sure as was the victory of Israel over the heathen nations of Canaan, but we must do our part and do the work allotted to us to do, for God will not do our work for us. In order to reach the heavenly Canaan, we must follow heaven’s plan of perfect order, and if we do this, God has promised that the final church **will** accomplish His purpose.