

Addressing Apparent Contradictions Between the Shepherd's Rod message and the Spirit of Prophecy

The enemies of Truth have always resorted to unethical tactics to avoid the plain teachings of the Bible and often take portions of scripture out of their proper context or pit one passage against another in a effort to make the Bible contradict itself. This underhanded method of study is the result of surface reading and failure to harmonize all that has been written on the subject. Such treacherous and fundamentally disingenuous methods of analysis have been used as weapons against the Shepherd's Rod message ever since its inception. A common tactic was to attempt to pit the Spirit of Prophecy against the teachings of the Rod. Brother Houteff faced these deceptions head on with sound logic and solid Bible reasoning on numerous occasions. Below is a compilation of examples that were first publicized in the Symbolic Codes for your admonition and prayerful contemplation.

A Summary of Apparent Contradictions Between the Spirit of Prophecy and the Shepherd's Rod

Topic	Apparent Contradiction	Rod Answer
The destroying weapons are during the seven last plagues.	5T 212 vs the Rod on Ezekiel 9	Symbolic Code, Vol. 1, No. 10, p. 9
Fate of unfaithful SDA's during the mark of the beast	5T 81 vs Ezekiel 9	Symbolic Code, Vol. 1, No. 5, p. 5
What is the former rain?	DA 827 vs 2 SR 256, 257	Symbolic Code, Vol. 1, No. 5, p. 5
Where does Mal. 3:1-3 Apply?	GC 424, 425 vs 1 SR 151, 170; 2 SR 184, 240	Symbolic Code, Vol. 1, No. 5, p. 5
School teachers paid with tithe?	9T 248 vs 1 SR 34	Symbolic Code, Vol. 1, No. 5, p. 6
Time of Trouble and the Tribulation	Matt. 24:21 vs Dan. 12:1	Symbolic Code, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 3
The time the seals begin	S.D.A. teaching vs 2 SR 194-221	Symbolic Code, Vol. 2, No. 7, 8, p. 9, 10
"Daily" doctrine or "daily" sacrifice?	EW 75 vs 2 SR 130-134	Symbolic Code, Vol. 2, No. 10, p. 6

Topic	Apparent Contradiction	Rod Answer
Who is the messenger of the covenant?	GW 42.2 vs 2 SR 240.2	Symbolic Code, Vol. 1, No. 5, p. 5
Only 144,000 living saints in final harvest?	EW 15 vs Rev. 7	Symbolic Code, Vol. 1, No. 18, p. 7-9

Destroying Weapons Seven Last Plagues

Question: "5 T 212, bottom of page, seems to teach that the destroying weapons are the seven last plagues. The SRod teaches that Ezek. 9 is the purification of the church. Please explain the apparent contradiction."

Answer: Relative to 5 T 212, let us first observe a parallel, in certain respects, from pre-Noatic times. Jude proves that Enoch was a messenger of God, and yet that he warned his generation of the destruction of the world by the second advent of Christ when, in fact, the flood was the event which was to and subsequently did destroy the world of Enoch's time! Enoch simply was not shown the truth of the flood. Therefore, he preached the destruction then in terms of the coming of the Lord.

So it was with Sr. White. As no one had light on the destruction of Ezekiel 9 she made the comparison with it to the seven last plagues with which they were more conversant. Nevertheless, later on in 3 T 266, 267; 5 T 210-212; TM 431, etc. she applied Ezekiel Nine to a time before the seven last plagues. Thus, Ezekiel Nine is applicable at two different times — first, at the time of the separating of the firstfruits, the 144,000; and second, at the time of the separation of the second fruits, the great multitude of Rev. 7:9." — **Vol. 1 Symbolic Code No. 10, pg. 9**

Dealing With Unfaithful S.D.A.'s During the Mark of the Beast

Please harmonize the apparent contradiction:

"Vol. 5, p. 81 says, 'The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands, and conformed to worldly customs, will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death.' But the SRod teaches that the unfaithful ones will not be permitted to unite with the church at that time."

The teaching in the SRod regarding the purity of the church in the time of the Loud Cry is as plain a truth as any ever taught. It is possible that one can not harmonize this subject with every statement written by Sr. White, but this should not cause us to lose faith in the message, for there are many passages in the Spirit of Prophecy which the denomination is unable to harmonize. This difficulty arises among us as a people because we do not as yet fully understand all the events connected with the closing of the gospel work. However, though

the mark of the beast is yet future, and difficult to define ahead of time, we may submit a thought on how the above quotation will meet its fulfillment, which will show the possibility of the church being free from the unfaithful and yet how some who have been unfaithful will at the same time "yield to the powers that be."

The SRod does not claim that all those professing to be S.D.A's "who have step by step yielded to worldly demands," will fall under the slaughter weapons of Ezekiel's vision, but rather that every active member who does not receive the "mark" (or seal of Eze. 9), excluding those who have departed from the organized work but who yet claim to be Seventh-day Adventists -- a class at the present time numbering thousands.

According to Vol. 5, p. 81 some of those who are independent of the organization but still claim to be S.D.A's will not "subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death," but will "slide into any position to suit the tenor of their feelings." T.M. 112." — **Vol. 1 Symbolic Code No. 5, p. 5**

What is the Former Rain?

Question #2: "The SRod says the former rain is the Spirit of Prophecy, but the Desire of Ages, p. 827 says it is the outpouring of the Spirit in apostolic days.

The spiritual meaning of the word "rain" according to Joel's prophecy is not the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Pentecostal power only, but rather a revelation of truth as is evidenced by the marginal reading -- "a teacher of righteousness." "And it shall come to pass afterwards (after the revelation of truth -- rain) that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh." Joel 2:23, 28.

Here we see that verse 23 promises a revelation of truth, for righteousness is developed only by a knowledge of the truth, while verse 28 promises an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on "all flesh" to endue them with power to proclaim the revelation (rain) of "the teacher of righteousness." Thus these two manifestations of the Holy Spirit -- the truth and the power to proclaim it -- compose the rain in its fullness.

As to the time of the former and the latter rain, the former according to the meaning of the word -- "preceding in time or place" -- must naturally precede the latter. Therefore, the Desire of Ages is correct, for to the church before the SRod came, the experience of the apostles was the former rain, whereas to us at the present time the "former rain" is the Spirit of Prophecy, and the "latter rain" the SRod.

If one should insist that the word "former" must apply only to the time of the apostles and the word "latter" to something in the future, then such a position is not only contrary to the Scriptures, but denies the fact of the Spirit of Prophecy. Moreover, Joel's prophecy refers directly to our time and not to the early Christian church. Saith the prophet, "He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month." (Joel 2:23.) If the former rain is not the Spirit of Prophecy at the present time, and the "latter rain" the SRod, then how can it be possible that both former and latter fall at the same time, seeing

that the apostolic experience of almost 2000 years ago does not profit us at all?" — **Vol. 1 Symbolic Code No. 5, p. 5**

Where Does Malachi 3:1-3 Apply?

Question #3. "The Great Controversy says that Malachi 3:1-3 and Dan. 7:9 refer to the same event, while the Rod says Malachi 3:1-3 refers to the purification of the church."

The "same event" mentioned in "The Great Controversy" we must understand to have begun in 1844 and to stretch forth up to the close of probation, which period includes the judgment of the dead and the judgment of the living. The purifying work of Malachi Three applies to the judgment of the living. Any fair Bible student knows that the words, "but who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appears? for He is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's sope: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness," cannot apply to the judgment of the dead. Nevertheless, for this work (the judgment of the living and the judgment of the dead, which takes place in the heavenly sanctuary), the Lord came in 1844. Thus the judgment of the living and the judgment of the dead being the two phases of the Investigative Judgment, it is true that the Lord came to the heavenly temple in 1844. Hence, both "The Great Controversy" and the SRod are correct." — **Vol. 1 Symbolic Code No. 5, pp. 5, 6**

School Teachers Should be Paid With Tithe

Question #6. "The SRod teaches that the school teachers should be paid by the tithe, but what about Vol. 9, p. 248, last paragraph?"

The SRod of itself does not teach one way or another regarding the above question, but simply quotes from the writings of the same author who wrote Vol. 9, p. 248. Therefore, the questioner would have to study deeper in the writings of Sr. White and learn how to harmonize all the statements on that subject. Nevertheless, for his convenience and help we offer the following explanation:

We do not know how we could make plainer the question that those who teach the Bible should be supported by the Lord's tithe than the Spirit of Prophecy has explained it. Sr. White has stated that those who "teach the Word of God, explaining the Scriptures, educating the students in the things of God, should be supported by the tithe money." (6T 215.) Moreover, she says, "This instruction was given long ago and more recently it has been repeated." These instructions were not followed then, and it is certain they are not followed now. The trouble largely lies in the fact that these instructions which have been given "again and again" have been slighted which, if available, would explain themselves. However, we may add a few remarks which we hope may be helpful.

Let those who object to the teachers' receiving tithe money settle the problem with Sr. White, for the SRod states only what the Spirit of Prophecy has said on the subject and no more. But if you pray and study, I am confident you will arrive at the truth, and the apparent

contradiction will be removed. It seems that you cannot harmonize Vol. 6, pp. 210, 211, where it speaks of paying tuition, with the above quotation. The object of the instruction in these particular Testimonies is that every school must be supplied with a good Bible teacher supported by the tithe money. But let it be remembered that our schools also teach secular subjects for which the tithe can not be appropriated. Therefore, those who teach secular things in our schools should not be required to teach the Bible, and are to be supported by tuition. In addition to this there are other school expenses. Thus it would take tithe and tuition fully to carry on the program of the present day system of our church schools.

The trouble with the people is that they make the Rod say things which it really does not. You write that Sr. White has stated that the ministry only should receive the tithe. If you mean by this that only those who are ordained or preach the message are entitled to the tithe, then we know not of such a statement, for the Bible teaches that all who are connected with the gospel or "temple" service are to be supported by the tithe, for all of the tribe of Levi were supported by the tithes, which principle our church has not followed at all. The original tithe system would include the local elders, the deacons, the singers, etc. See 1 Chron. 15." — **Vol. 1 Symbolic Code No. 5, p. 6**

How to Harmonize Matthew and Daniel

Question: "Please explain Matt. 24:21 and Dan. 12:1; i.e., if the tribulation of Matthew took place in the period of the 1260 years of papal supremacy, which event is in the past, and the time of trouble, foretold by Daniel, in the future, how could I harmonize Matthew's record with that of Daniel, for Matthew writes that there will be no greater tribulation than the one from 538 to 1798 A.D., while Daniel claims that the time of trouble is to be greater than any 'since there was a nation.'"

Answer: It is true that in the eyes of a surface reader Matthew contradicts Daniel and Daniel contradicts Matthew, but when the student of prophecy is led by the Spirit of God, Who dictated the Scriptures, he sinks the shaft deep into the mine of truth, for he knows that the Scriptures in themselves are in perfect harmony.

Speaking of the tribulation, says the scripture: "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved;" i.e., God's people would have been completely wiped out from the face of the earth had it not been for the never failing promise: "But for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matt. 24:22), whereas in the time of trouble Michael will stand up to deliver every one that shall be "found written in the book." In other words, during the time of the tribulation the righteous were killed and the wicked delivered, whereas in the time of trouble the righteous will be delivered and the wicked killed. Therefore, the tribulation and the time of trouble are two outstanding events, each one being the greatest of its kind in the annals of prophetic history -- one the greatest against the righteous and the other the greatest against the wicked. Thus we see that, both Matthew and Daniel are correct -- showing that each event is the greatest of its kind.

As the tribulation is the greatest "since the beginning of the world," it shows that there has never been as great a tribulation against God's people as there was during the above stated

period; and as Jesus said that there never shall be the like, He assures us that God will not permit the wicked after 1798 A.D., to again "wear out the saints," whereas the time of trouble, says Daniel, is the greatest "since there was a nation" showing that the deluge was either greater or equal to it, also that the time of trouble could be followed by a greater one, for He says, "even to that same time" instead, "nor ever shall be."

Thus we see that when we take into consideration the meaning of each word instead of making thoughtless and hasty conclusions, the Scriptures prove to be not only most perfect and wonderful and yet simple, but also inspiring, making wise the humble -- and lightening the path of him who as did Christ, delights to do the will of God.

David by personal experience said: "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou through Thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Thy precepts." (Ps. 119:97-100.) — **Vol. 2 Symbolic Code No. 2, pg. 3**

TIME SEAL BEGINS

Question:

"What Biblical proof have you for placing as you do the seals of Revelation, chapters four to seven and the first part of the eighth? Why make them span the entire world's history, when the Seventh-day Adventist denomination has been teaching for years that they begin after the crucifixion?"

Answer:

The questioner has a perfect right to ask for Biblical proof of our interpretations of the Scriptures, but he must remember that our rights are as good as his. Hence, before answering his questions, we would like to ask him to give us but one Scripture as the basis upon which he can establish that the seals span the Christian era only. Our being as well informed as the questioner on all the doctrines which the denomination teaches, and of the proofs upon which they are based, we are free to say that the strongest and the only foundation upon which the denominational interpretation stands is grounded upon the presumptuous idea that the white horse and he that sat on him, going forth conquering and to conquer (Rev. 6:2), represents the early Christian church in her best spiritual condition. This position is assumed upon the unmitigated presumption that the color of the horse (white) must represent the purity of the early church, and that the words, "conquering and to conquer," stand for her rapid growth after Pentecost.

We agree that "white" stands for purity, and that "conquering and to conquer" could represent the growth of the church, but what proof would that be if such an idea is contradicted by all other truth? For example, we call the reader's attention to the fact that when John was about to be shown in vision the events in the seven seals, it was about sixty-five years after the Pentecost and in the period when the church was already declining from her spiritual condition. The voice which he heard said to him: "Come up hither, and I will shew

thee things which must be hereafter" (Rev. 4:1); that is, the event which he was to be shown was to transpire in the future, "hereafter," from the time John had the vision. Now let us take notice of the event he saw. Says John: "I was in the Spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals. And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much,...and one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." (Rev. 4:2; 5:1,3-5.)

The event of which John prophesied was to transpire in the future from John's time instead of having already taken place.

Hence, the idea that the white horse with its rider represents the rider in her purity after the Pentecost is only a presumption. Moreover, it is taught that the book with the seven seals is the book of "Daniel and Revelation," and that those who interpreted the seals are the ones who opened the book, whereas, a "strong angel proclaimed with a loud voice," that "no man in heaven, nor in the earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon." Consequently, we would like to ask the questioner how could the men who interpreted the seals open the book if they could not even "look thereon"? Still further, whoever heard that the church could be symbolized by a man riding on a horse! *Furthermore, those who are fighting against the sealing message on the pretext that it contradicts the Spirit of Prophecy have themselves altogether closed their eyes to the voice of the Spirit of Prophecy by a flat contradiction of it, for they claim that the book with the seven seals is the book of "Daniel and Revelation," whereas, the Spirit of Prophecy, in perfect harmony with "The Shepherd's Rod," says: "Thus the Jewish leaders made their choice. Their decision was registered in the book which John saw in the hand of Him that sat upon the throne, the book which no man could open. In all its vindictiveness this decision will appear before them in the day when this book is unsealed by the Lion of the Tribe of Judah."* — "Christ's Object Lessons," p. 294.

The above quoted passage shows that this book contains the names and record of those who profess to be the people of God. Then, how could it be the book of "Daniel and The Revelation"?

We would not take longer in disproving the former interpretation of the seals, but we shall briefly prove the reason why the seals cover the entire history of the human race.

One of the proofs that the seals include the entire world's history is in the fact that the book with the seven seals is "The book of life," which contains the record of God's professed people, and also in the fact that it was to be opened in the day of judgment. Hence, it proves that in 1844, when the judgment began, Christ opened the book before the throng that surrounded the throne, and this being the Lamb's book of Life (which no one but the Lamb could open), containing the record of the people from Adam's time and on, it is obvious that the seven seals, which were broken at the beginning of the judgment, contain the entire history of the human race, divided into seven periods, which sealed the book up to the day of judgment.

See our exposition on the seals in "The Shepherd's Rod," Vol. 2, pp. 194-221." — **Vol. 2 Symbolic Code No. 7, 8, pp. 9, 10**

"DAILY" DOCTRINE, OR "DAILY" SACRIFICE?

Question:

"How do you harmonize 'Early Writings,' p. 75 with 'The Shepherd's Rod,' Vol. 2, pp. 130-134, where the former claims that, 'When union existed, before 1844, nearly all were united on the correct view of the "daily"; but in the confusion since 1844, other views have been embraced,' whereas, the latter holds a view which was not then known at all? Is it not correct that the 'daily sacrifice' of Daniel 8:12 means the 'sacrificial altar of Jehovah'?"

Answer:

Taking for granted that the words, "correct view," mean "correct meaning," then why did not the denomination since 1844 teach it, for the view which the denomination has held since is not the exact view which was held before 1844?

They may have been before 1844 united on the "view" that the "daily" was "not a test question" or, that it was not of basic importance, or, that its "true meaning" was not understood, or, that "under present conditions, silence is eloquent." In fact, there is many a possible view upon which they have been united, but which would not necessarily contain the meaning of the "daily."

Before we scrap the Rod in its interpretation of the "daily," let us be at pains to produce the testimony of history or of the Spirit of Prophecy, that the view of the "daily" upon which nearly all were united when union existed before 1844, was that it referred to the altar of paganism, or to any other kind of an altar. Then, we may begin to worry about the "Shepherd's Rod" interpretation of the "daily," for if the view of the "daily" was the "sacrificial altar of paganism," and the Spirit of Prophecy says that the view was "the correct view," then when one teaches that the correct view of the "daily" is the sacrificial altar of Jehovah," one indicts the Spirit of Prophecy, and not the Rod, for the Spirit of Prophecy says that the word, "sacrifice," is supplied by man's wisdom, and "does not belong to the text," because without the word "sacrifice" cannot of itself be connected with any act of sacrificing.

Moreover, the critics of "The Shepherd's Rod" are willing with one hand to whip the Rod with implications that its interpretation contradicts the Spirit of Prophecy, whereas, with the other hand, they deal a severe blow to the Spirit of Prophecy by insisting that the word, "sacrifice," belongs to the text, for without it their interpretation of the "daily" is shattered and scattered to the winds." — **Vol. 2 Symbolic Code No. 10, pg. 6**

The "Messenger Of The Covenant" — Who Is It?

Please explain how to harmonize "The Shepherd's Rod," Vol. 2, p. 240, par. 2, with "Gospel Workers," p. 42, par. 2, -- subject, "The Messenger of the Covenant."

To the surface reader "The Shepherd's Rod" and "Gospel Workers" appear to be in direct opposition to each other, but when the subject is well studied, then they will be found to be in perfect agreement. Such apparently conflicting statements are not found only in these two publications, but in "Gospel Workers" itself, for while Christ is named the "Messenger of the Covenant" on p. 44, this same title is applied to Moses on p. 20. Here follows the comparison:

"When Moses was chosen as the messenger of the covenant, the word given him was, 'Be Thou for the people to Godward.'" -- "Gospel Workers," p. 20.

"Christ the Messenger of the covenant, brought the tidings of salvation." -- "Gospel Workers," p. 44.

If we conclude that "The Shepherd's Rod" is wrong by saying that the promised Elijah's message of Malachi 4:5 is the "messenger of the covenant," and the "Gospel Workers" for applying the same title to both Christ and Moses, then we might as well infer that Christ likewise misapplied the same scripture, for "Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John...But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come." (Matt. 11:7, 9, 10, 14.)

Here we see that Jesus applied the message of Malachi Three to that of John the Baptist, and named him the Elijah that was to come, but when the Jews, priests, and Levites asked John saying, "Art thou Elias?...he saith, I am not." (John 1:19, 21.) Shall we here conclude that both Jesus and John violated the truth? What then?

Moreover, the "Gospel Workers" applies Malachi 3:1 to Christ's first advent, but the same author in "The Great Controversy," p. 424, par. 3, applies it to Christ's coming to the most holy place in the heavenly sanctuary in 1844; and on p. 425, is applied to the soon expected purification of the church. Again, on p. 426, the author states that "...Dan. 8:14; the coming of the Son of man to the Ancient of days, as presented in Dan. 7:13; and the coming of the Lord to His temple, foretold by Malachi, are descriptions of the same event; and this is also represented by the coming of the bridegroom to the marriage, described by Christ in the parable of the ten virgins, of Matthew 25."

If only one of these applications could be right, then which one should we choose? When the questioner harmoniously unifies the above scattered periods to which Malachi 3:1 is applied, then "The Shepherd's Rod" will prove to him to be in perfect harmony with "The Great Controversy" and "Gospel Workers." Though one statement seems to contradict the other, yet we are compelled to conclude that every one of these inspired applications must be correct. Says the great apostle, "Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That Thou mightest be justified in Thy sayings, and mightest overcome when Thou art judged." (Rom. 3:3, 4.)

The trouble does not lie in the statements themselves, but rather in man's limited knowledge of the truth therein, which proves that we are in the period of the Laodiceans, --

"wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." But the worst part of it all lies in that the Lord is saying to the church of today, "Thou knowest not" your great ignorance in not understanding rightly the Word of truth, and she does not believe Him! The apparent contradictions being discussed in this article are harmonized, in short, as follows:

Any fair Bible student will, without difficulty, perceive at a glance that the perfect fulfillment of Malachi Three is yet future, and is directly applicable to the imminent "purification of the church," -- "temple" -- for saith the Lord, "Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' sope." (Mal. 3:2.)

Though Christ and the "Gospel Workers" apply this scripture to Christ's first advent, any student of sacred history knows that it did not meet its perfect fulfillment there, for the Jews did not "delight" in Him as prophesied in Malachi 3:1, but instead, they hated Him. Neither did Christ at that time purify His church as described by the prophet. But by the fact that Christ applied Malachi Three to John the Baptist's message, and as this scripture did not meet its fulfillment at that time, it proves that John was a type of the Elijah that is to come before the coming of the "great and dreadful day of the Lord" (Malachi 4:5), at which time the prophecy will be fulfilled in its fullness.

Therefore, as John was a messenger to God's own people at that time, just so at this time the Elijah of Malachi's prophecy represents a message which is to be delivered not to the world, but to the professed people of God. As John was their last prophet, his message was their final means to fit them for the Messiah's appearing, for which cause said the Master, "If ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. (Matt. 11:14) Likewise, Elijah's message of today must be to the professed people of God, and is to be their last means to fit them for Christ's appearing at this time.

Thus as John "...declared that those who claimed to be the chosen people of God were defiled by sin, and that without purification of heart and life they could have no part in the Messiah's kingdom" (Desire of Ages, p. 104), just so the Elijah's message at this time will denounce the denominational corruptions -- "the abominations in the midst thereof" (Etc. 9:4) -- rebuke the prevailing sins, and exclaim: "What greater deception can come upon human minds than a confidence that they are right, when they are all wrong!...They know not that their condition is deplorable in the sight of God....The message to the church of the Laodiceans is a startling denunciation." -- "Testimonies for the Church, " Vol. 3, pp. 252-3.

The above proves that the cleansing of the ancient temple in Jerusalem was a type of the purification of the church, which will take place at a time when the house of God is made a house of merchandise by selling denominational publications and raising goals (8 T. 250), for when Christ "had made a scourge of small cords, He drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; and said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence: make not My Father's house an house of merchandise." (John 2:15, 16.)

The "Great Controversy," p. 424, applying Malachi Three to Christ's coming to the heavenly sanctuary in 1844, and on p. 425, to the impending purification of the church at this present time, to which the parable of the ten virgins refers to, must now be harmonized.

The fact that Malachi Three is again applied to two different periods, -- the one of 1844 and also to the one in which the church is to be purified -- proves that Malachi's prophecy apprehends both the judgment of the dead and the judgment of the living. Consequently, there are two such comings of the Lord "to His temple" and two purifications, -- first, the cleansing of the temple (sanctuary) from the wicked dead (the investigative judgment), and second, the purification of the church (temple) from the living wicked, at which time Malachi 3:1-3 will meet its perfect fulfillment. The parable of the ten virgins is applicable to the latter. See "The Shepherd's Rod," Vol. 2, pp. 180-186.

Here follows the explanation of the "messenger of the covenant." As Christ was the "Messenger of the covenant" at His first advent; also Moses, while leading Israel out of Egypt; in like manner, John the Baptist's message; and the one to the Laodiceans -- all four were compared to the message of Malachi 3:1. Here we see that the title, "messenger of the covenant," referred to by Malachi, is applied to more than one person, in the same manner as the promises which were made to ancient Israel are now applicable to modern Israel -- the 144,000.

Says the Spirit of Prophecy, "...It is necessary now that the minds of God's people should be open to understand the Scriptures. To say that a message means just this and nothing more, that you must not attach any broader meaning to the words of Christ than we have in the past, is saying that which is not actuated by the Spirit of God." -- R. & H., Oct. 21, 1890.

The word, "covenant," means nothing more or less than an agreement, -- promise. This being true, Moses was a "messenger of the covenant;" namely, the promise God made to Abraham that He was to deliver his posterity out of Egypt by a prophet -- messenger. John also came in fulfillment of prophecy as he himself declared that Esaias had prophesied of him (John 1:23), and according to Christ's own statement (Matt. 11:7, 9, 10), Malachi had also prophesied of John.

As God had made a written covenant with His ancient people that He was to send them the Messiah, Christ came in fulfillment of that covenant, and having brought a message by His teachings, He was the "Messenger of the covenant." But the words of Malachi in chapter three, verse one, make plain that before the Lord comes "to His temple," He will send a messenger to prepare the way, at which time He is to purify the sons of Levi, -- those who minister in "His temple" -- the church. As he that "is filthy" at the moment probation closes must remain "filthy" (Rev. 22:11), it follows that this work of purification which the Lord is to perform at His coming must be accomplished in probationary time, and long before the gospel work is finished, for He cannot finish it with the impure "sons of Levi," -- ministry. This particular coming of the Lord is also predicted in Vol. 5, pp. 80, 690.

In view of the fact that Christ at His coming to purify the church will not in person preach the message as He did before the crucifixion, but send someone other than himself, how

could He at this time be the "messenger of the covenant?" There is but one answer to this -- the one who brings the message must be the "messenger of the covenant," and when the Lord sends him he will fulfill the promise of Malachi 4:5. Having prepared "the way," the Lord will "sit as a refiner and purifier of silver" (Mal. 3:3), "and it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem; when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion." (Isa. 4:3, 4.)

Furthermore, though the title, "messenger of the covenant," is applied to more than one messenger, it rightfully belongs to the Holy Spirit, and only for the reason that the Spirit of God is in them are they designated by that title. For example, we call the reader's attention to 1 Pet. 3:18-20. There it is stated that Christ went and preached to the antediluvians by the same "Spirit" Who "quickened" Him. Being stated that He went by the Spirit and not in person, it proves that Christ accomplished this by that same Spirit through Noah. Hence, Christ being the "Messenger of the covenant, and He being in Noah by the Spirit, compels us to acknowledge that the title, "messenger of the covenant," belongs not only to those mentioned in this article, including Noah, but to all God's chosen messengers in whose message is Christ, by that same Spirit.

It is for the fact of this union -- the Spirit in the messengers that the Word says, "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. (2 Pet. 1:21.) Briefly summarized, the words, "messenger of the covenant," mean nothing more or less than to say, The Holy Spirit in Heaven's visible representative, or the invisible Christ in the message." — **Vol. 1 Symbolic Code No. 4, p. 6**

A MESSAGE TO THOSE WHO ARE IN DOUBT

There have come to us a number of questions concerning the 144,000 the great multitude, and the slaughter of Ezekiel Nine, which we shall endeavor to answer in this for all.

Those who are desirous to know the truth on this subject, if they restudy "The Shepherd's Rod" volumes and the five tracts they will find therein their questions answered. However, for convenience' sake we shall briefly call attention to some facts in answer to these questions.

As far as Ezekiel Nine meeting its fulfillment before the close of probation and the great multitude being a part of the living saints is concerned, even though "The Shepherd's Rod" may be wrong as to the time of the slaughter, it is far better to place God's visitation before the close of probation and prepare to meet the Lord now instead of putting it off until after the close of probation, for if we make ready now to meet the Lord in peace we shall also be ready then. Neither would we sin before God if we set our goal for a "great multitude" of saints instead of for 144,000 only. The doctrine of a pure church also is in God's plan, but of a defiled one is in the plan of Satan. The sower of the evil seed is the only one who through his agencies by deed and by doctrine is determined to reduce the number of saints and to keep the church defiled by multiplying the "tares" among the "wheat."

Permit us to call attention to a view of which, perhaps, most of the opponents of "The Shepherd's Rod" have never thought of. If there are only 144,000 living saints to be translated at Christ's coming, as claimed, then most, if not all, of the S.D.A. church member do not stand one chance in a thousand. Allow us to give account of this overwhelming statement.

We are told that our denomination is now numbering over 400,000, and though the Third Angel's Message has entered many countries, in comparison with the parts of the world that it is yet to enter, it has but hardly touched the great harvest field. While thousands have heard its fearful warnings, there are millions after millions that have never heard even as much as the name "Seventh-day Adventist."

If the present rate of growth should continue until the Third Angel's Message shall be preached in all the world, can the reader comprehend the size of the S.D.A. denomination when Christ comes? As there is no fear of decreasing but rather increasing the present percentage of growth as we are told from the pulpit from Sabbath to Sabbath, it is certain that the denomination at the second coming of Christ will have reached into millions. Here is the point. If there are only 144,000 to be translated without tasting death, then the millions of living S.D.A.'s at the close of probation will have to die either by the seven last plagues or by the brightness of His coming if not translated. Consequently ask yourselves, What chance do you stand?

Moreover, what is the use of bringing a multitude into the church, making them believe that they are saved when in reality they are lost? As it is contrary to God's desire to bring into the church those who are not saved (tares) the brethren's position of only 144,000 living saints is nothing short than of a thought which conveys the idea that the denominational rapid growth, as told by sweeping statements from the pulpits, is not God's doing, but the doing of the sower of the evil seed whose chief business is to choke out the wheat by a full field of "tares." Is not such a program a most terrible deception rather than salvation?

Doubtless our brethren are honest in their conclusions of the statement in "Early Writings," p. 15, as they see it, for it conveys the idea that the 144,000 are the only living saints who are to be translated. We would have come to the same conclusion had we not gone further than that particular page of "Early Writings." Let us call attention to several passages of inspired revelations on this vital subject which to our understanding refutes the brethren's position of Ezekiel Nine, of the 144,000 and of the great multitude.

If they can make the following fit their interpretations of the great multitude, the 144,000, and of the slaughter, we shall be pleased to have them set us right, but if they cannot do so then we hope they would be humble enough to admit that their idea on the subject is unreliable as they would expect us to do had we been in their position. We know that all the contradictions brought to bear against "The Shepherd's Rod" thus far, have served to confirm many in its message, for no other idea have we ever found that could harmonize every Bible and Spirit of Prophecy statement in connection with the Third Angel's Message than the one presented by "The Shepherd's Rod."

The apparent discrepancies between the Rod and the Spirit of Prophecy are fabricated by men whose minds are filled with private interpretations, opinions of uninspired men, self-exaltation, etc., to such an extent that their vision of the Scriptures and the writing of Sr. White has so greatly shrunk that they cannot see both ends of one subject at the same time, and when they are brought face to face with the truth they prefer to change their former position rather than to acknowledge the truth! We can prove this statement in black and white through the official organs of the denomination, i.e., "The Review and Herald," and "The Signs of the Times," etc.

For the sake of brevity we are calling attention to one instance only. Any one can either procure or find access to "The Signs of the Times," of May 3, 1927 in which appears an article entitled, "The 144,000, Their Triumph and Reward." There you will find that before "The Shepherd's Rod" came the denomination was then teaching the subject of the 144,000 and of the great multitude exactly as "The Shepherd's Rod" has it; that is, the 144,000 are to be sealed first, being the firstfruits, and then by their ministry they are to bring the second fruits, "the great multitude," and that both companies are living saints!

By changing their former position in an attempt to refute the message of the hour they declare that their teaching, regarding these two fruits, in 1927 was erroneous, and may we not ask them now, What assurance have they given us that their latest interpretation is correct?

Here follow questions for the opponents of "The Shepherd's Rod" to consider.

In "Testimonies for the Church," Vol. 9, pp. 267, 268, we find that Sr. White quotes Revelation 6:12-17 and 7:9-17 where it tells of the "great multitude" and how the wicked are to be frightened when Christ manifests His power prior to the commencement of the millennium. Then she adds: "In these Scriptures two parties are brought to view. One party permitted themselves to be deceived, and took sides with those with whom the Lord has a controversy. They misinterpreted the messages sent them, and clothed themselves in robes of self-righteousness."

If the great multitude are the righteous dead of all ages how could they be living together with the wicked just before Christ's coming, and how could they while dead accept the messages? Would not John have seen them arise if they were the resurrected ones? If the Bible does not say they are the dead then what right have "those who have betrayed their trust"? As our brethren have a perfect right to demand that "The Shepherd's Rod" should prove its doctrines by Inspiration, we ask, Are not their doctrines subject to the same test? If there is only one close of probation, no purification of the church, and the slaughter of Ezekiel meets its fulfillment only after the close of the final probation, then how do they explain the following statements which are applicable at the time when the warning of Ezekiel Nine is proclaimed to the church. Says the Spirit of Prophecy:

"Here we see that the church -- the Lord's sanctuary -- was the first to feel the stroke of the wrath of God. The ancient men, those to whom God has given great light, and who had stood as guardians of the spiritual interests of the people, had betrayed their trust. They had taken the position that we need not look for miracles and the marked manifestation of God's power

as in former days. Times have changed. These words strengthen their unbelief, and they say, The Lord will not do good, neither will He do evil. He is too merciful to visit His people in judgment. Thus peace and safety is the cry from men who will never again lift up their voice like a trumpet to show God's people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins. These dumb dogs, that would not bark, are the ones who feel the just vengeance of an offended God. Men, maidens, and little children, all perish together." (Testimonies for the Church," Vol. 5, p. 211.)

Note that the slaughter took place in the church, and that because the ministry had betrayed their trust. They rejected the warning and contended against the fulfillment of Ezekiel Nine as a miracle. They said, "The Lord will not manifest His power as in former days" and Inspiration places the blame on them for the sins among God's people.

If the slaughter comes after the close of probation, how could God finish His work with wicked ministers who have betrayed their trust? If the slaughter falls after the close of probation, and if they believed in its fulfillment, how could they say, "The Lord will not manifest His power as in former days....He is too merciful to visit His people in judgment"? For the ministry unanimously agrees that God will manifest His power after the close of probation. Therefore, the prophetic Word of God in the above reveals the fact that the ministers will reject the fearful warning as foretold by the prophet Ezekiel.

They have made the term "general destruction" of "The Testimonies for the Church," Vol. 3, p. 267 to mean the destruction of the wicked in the church and in the world all at the same time. But let us allow Sr. White to interpret her own meaning of the word "general destruction." It will be noticed in "The Great Controversy," p. 26, while speaking of the destruction of ancient Jerusalem, says those who did not desert the city were "involved in the general destruction of the wicked." Therefore, if the words "general destruction of the wicked" at the time Jerusalem was destroyed did not mean all the wicked; both in the church and in the world, why should the same words mean now the destruction of the wicked in the church and in the world?

If the present corrupt ministry is to remain in the church until after the close of probation, then what about the following quotation which comes from the pen of inspiration and was published in "The Review and Herald," of Nov. 19, 1908? "Only those who have withstood and overcome temptation in the strength of the Mighty One will be permitted to act a part in proclaiming this message when it shall have swelled into the Loud Cry."

The above quotation clearly states that no impure ministers will have a part in the work of the Loud Cry of the Third Angel's Message! If the church is to remain in her present condition till the close of probation, how could the above quotation be correct which is just as authoritative as "Early Writings," p. 15, and how could it be said of the church:

"Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict. 'Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners,' she is to go forth into all the world, conquering and to conquer" ("Prophets and Kings," 725), if the church is to be defiled and demoralized until her work is finished and probation closed?

If the purification of the church is to take place after the close of probation and if the present church leadership is to complete the work, then how can our brethren explain the following quotation which is found in "The Testimonies for the Church," Vol. 5, p. 80, from which we quote?

"But the days of purification of the church are hastening on apace. God will have a people pure and true....Those who have trusted to intellect, genius, or talent, will not then stand at the head of rank and file....They are self-sufficient, independent of God, and He can not use them...The Lord has faithful servants, who in the shaking, testing time will be disclosed to view....But, it may be under a rough and uninviting exterior the pure brightness of a genuine Christian character will be revealed."

If the purification takes place after the gospel work is finished, then why should He disclose another set of servants, and why say, After the purification He cannot use those who are self-sufficient and independent of God?

If the living saints are only 144,000, why are they called the "firstfruits"? If there are no second fruits (the great multitude) how could the 144,000 be called the "firstfruits," seeing that where there is no second there can be no first? Grant that their interpretation of the "firstfruits" is correct and that "firstfruits" means the best and not first in time, it, too, calls for second fruits; that is, even though the 144,000 be the best instead of the first, there still must be second fruits in quality if not in time, which does not only mean another company of living saints, but also greater in number, than 144,000, as nature reveals by the fact that seconds always in quantity exceed the firsts.

If there is no slaughter before the close of probation, then how do our brethren explain Isaiah 66:16, 19, 20 where it says those who escape from the slain of the Lord were sent "unto the nations" to declare God's "glory among the Gentiles" and that those who escape from the slaughter "shall bring all your brethren...unto the Lord out of all nations"?

If those who escape from the slaughter were sent to all nations and brought all the brethren are not the 144,000 in the time when the message shall go to all the world then who are they? If they escape from a slaughter after the close of probation, why should they declare God's "glory among the Gentiles" if He cannot save them at that time? Moreover, if the "general destruction" takes all the Gentiles (the wicked) there would be none left to whom the escaped ones could declare God's glory.

If the brethren can harmonize the above quotations with their interpretation of the 144,000 and of the great multitude, we will be glad to know it, and if not we hope that they will take their stand on the side of present truth.

We are sorry that some of our brethren strain at a gnat and swallow a camel by stressing the statement in "Early Writings," p. 15, and by ignoring hundreds of pages from the same author. Their question, Why "Early Writings," p. 15, speaks of the 144,000 only and says nothing of the great multitude, may also be asked of Daniel for he, in like manner, foretold only of the rise of the papacy and said nothing of its deadly wound. Hence, as they contend with "The