

WHY FREE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS?

By J. W. MANNS



"Stirred by the Spirit of God to Break every Shackle, and assert Their Liberty in Christ Jesus."

Mrs. E. G. White.

"Stand with anybody that stands right. Stand with him while he is right, and part with him when he goes wrong."

Second Biennial Session of the General Assembly of Free Seventh-Day Adventists, held January 15th to 23rd, 1921. Conducted at Bethel Church of Free S. D. A., 610 36th Street, West, Savannah, Ga.



WHAT IS THE REASON FOR THE EXISTENCE OF FREE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS? WHY CANNOT THEY WORK IN HARMONY WITH THE ORIGINAL BODY OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS? ARE THE ORGANIZATIONS FIGHTING ONE ANOTHER?

It is the purpose of this tract to logically answer the above questions, and to prove to every candid mind that our cause is a just one.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

We stand upon the principle advocated by our Father Abraham. When he saw that other methods had failed, he said: "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen, for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right, then I will go to the left." Gen. 13:8-9.

Thus, for what seemed to Abraham to be good for the two, he and Lott, though brethren, separated.

Paul and Barnabas, notwithstanding they were both chosen of God, they separated, Barnabas taking Mark and sailed unto Cyprus, and Paul the great and Chief Apostle chose Silas and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. Acts 15:36-41.



EVANGELIST J. W. MANNS

It can be clearly seen from the above record of Sacred History that in order to safeguard the interest of all concerned, at times, separations are of a necessity.

From the pen of Bishop Moore I quote the following: "In the course of human progress, and the current of events, human institutions are constantly undergoing superficial or radical changes arising from forces developed by new intellectual, moral and social conditions, which a progressive, enlightened civilization fixes upon men. Indeed, were it not for these changes, mankind would be hopelessly consigned to a state of moral, intellectual, religious and social imbecility and deficiency; they would be so without remedy. Those most eventful changes have been the constant safeguards of all the vital interests of human society, either secular or religious; they have disenfranchised thought; they have unfettered religion; severed the chains of vassals; given prosperity to kingdoms, and exalted the most debased of mankind, socially and religiously. They have made potent, moral and intellectual forces that no antagonisms could withstand. Even religion, however immutable in its nature, and its source, having to deal with the mutable creature, man, in the application of its systems of operation, has to depend upon organic or systematic changes."

Because bigoted white leaders among Seventh-day Adventists have failed to consider the necessity of such vital changes, but have fixed a permanent bar against the Negro leadership in the organization, many of the most intelligent Negro

ministers are separated from the denomination, some of whom have become entirely disgusted and have sought other positions, such as doctors of medicine and chiropractic. Others have resorted to real estate speculations, and still others to the farm, etc. It is also true, that many have given up the Christian hope, and are looking to the cold world, from which there can be no lasting peace of mind.

We, however, with the great Apostle Paul, have resolved, that nothing shall "separate us from the love of Christ." "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

HOW, AND WHEN, NEGROES BECAME SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

About thirty-five years ago the white leaders of Seventh-day Adventists began a definite work among the colored people of the South. For about ten years the two races experienced little or no difficulty in the North and West in equal enjoyment of religious rights and privileges. But as the denomination grew in popularity and influence, race prejudice began to engender Negro proscription. As the number of Negroes increased in the churches, the race friction and proscription grew more rapidly.

Then to add sin to sin, some of the white

leaders of the denomination, a few years ago, began in a most deceptive and un-Christian way, the work of segregation in all their churches East, West, North and South.

This, of course, was contrary to their former teachings and profession. A few of the more intelligent Negroes resented this unscriptural course and demanded an explanation. But as these white leaders could not use the Holy Bible to support them in their base acts of prejudice and proscription, and knowing full well that almost the whole Negro membership confidently believed in the writings of Mrs. E. G. White, they resorted to what they thought would force all Negro members to believe to be the writings of Mrs. White, and in 1909 issued "Testimonies" for the Church, Vol. 9. And in this book will be found two garbled chapters dealing with the Negro question that will work any fair-minded Christian hard to believe that God had anything to do with the book.

The reader will please notice, Mrs. White makes a sweeping claim for all of her inspired writings or "Testimonies." In Vol. 5, page 67, we read: "In these letters which I write in the testimonies I bear, I am presenting to you that which the LORD HAS PRESENTED TO ME. I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. **THEY ARE WHAT GOD HAS OPENED BEFORE ME IN VISION, THE PRECIOUS RAYS OF LIGHT SHINING FROM THE THRONE.**"

Here, as you can see, is a claim for absolute

infallibility for all of Sister White's writings. While we Free Seventh-day Adventists do believe that Sister White was divinely inspired, we do not believe everything that bears her signature. Neither do we believe that everything she spoke or wrote was inspired, any more than everything or act done or written by other prophets was inspired.

In 1 Sam. 16:6, 7, we read: "And it came to pass, when they were come, that he (Samuel) looked on Eliab, and said, surely the Lord's anointed is before him. But the Lord said unto Samuel, . . . I have refused him." Now, did the Lord inspire Samuel to utter these words, "THE LORD'S ANOINTED IS BEFORE HIM?" No. Then who told him? Ah, surely Samuel of himself thought Eliab was the proper man. Then, was Samuel a false prophet? Not one would so decide.

Again, Elijah affirmed most positively, "I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away." 1 Kings 19:10-18. Did God reveal to him that he was the only prophet left? If not, who told him? And does this mistake prove that he was a false prophet? No, indeed not.

Now it is evident that what was true of Samuel, Elijah, Paul, John and other prophets must equally be as true of Sister White in the same respect, namely, the Lord did not reveal to her every thing she said or did.

Note how God inspired Peter to speak concerning all nations, when he was called to the home

of Cornelius in Caesarea: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons. But in every nation he that feareth Him (God) and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Acts 10:34-35. This will include the Negro with all other races, whether white or black, red or brown.

In 1895, Sister White, speaking by inspiration and published in the "Southern Work," said: "Who, says Paul, maketh thee to differ?" "The God of the white man is the God of the black man, and the Lord declares that his love for the least of his children exceeds that of a mother for her beloved child." He loves them all and makes no difference between white and black. Page 6. On page 12, we read: "We should be careful not to strengthen prejudices that ought to have died just as soon as Christ redeemed the soul from the bondage of sin."

Again, page 54, "Walls of separation have been built up between the whites and the blacks. These walls of prejudice will tumble down of themselves as did the walls of Jericho, when Christians obey the word of God, which enjoins on them supreme love to their Maker, and impartial love to their neighbors." On page 55, "Many among this race (Negro) have noble traits of character and keen perception of mind. If they had an opportunity to develop, they would stand upon an equality with the white people."

Reader, it can be clearly seen that the Spirit of God speaking through Peter and Paul, was evidently the same who spoke through Mrs. White, if she was moved by the spirit of inspiration, in-

asmuch as each of them agree in revealing the mind of God concerning all nations of mankind. For God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of earth." Acts 17:26.

During the former years of Mrs. White, and when colored people were but few in the white churches of Seventh-day Adventists, all writings and visions concerning them which bore her signature would stand the test of the Bible.

But when Negroes began to multiply in the denomination, and, too, demand the same rights as were accorded the white membership, the question of what to do with them, became a great problem. Hence the creation of a General Negro Department with local Negro missions or departments, and Testimonies, Vol. 9, with two garbled chapters destined to keep the Negro ministry and membership in a proscribed place in the denomination with a permanent bar fixed to Negro leadership.

To the candid, fair-minded person, read for yourself. Could you believe that the God who loves us all, and condemns all prejudice, discrimination and racial distinction, could, or would inspire Mrs. White or any other prophet to write such ROT, as are the following statements:

"Opportunities are continually presenting themselves in the Southern States, and many wise, Christian colored men will be called to the work. But for several reasons white men must be chosen as leaders." "Testimonies," Vol. 9, page 202.

But how can the sane, thinking man, white or black, harmonize the above statement in Test., Vol. 7, page 225, with the following statement found in Test., Vol. 9, page 214, which was also published some ten or twelve years later?: "The colored people should not urge that they be placed on an equality with white people." Can you tell why?

No self-respecting colored person could believe such junk. No self-respecting set of white leaders of Seventh-day Adventists would ask intelligent Negroes to accept such junk as inspiration from the shining throne of God.

But S. D. A. (white) have handed this doctrine down to the Negro membership, and all must believe and accept such teachings or be excommunicated.

But one says: You want social equality with white people. No, I beg to differ. We only ask for a fair deal in the Church of God, and among His people. And since we are denied the rights and privileges which are granted others, and, to add sin to sin, excommunicate us, because we contend for such rights, there is no other course for us to pursue but stand together as a people, and look and work for ourselves.

In the organization of the Church of God in the wilderness, God, through Jethro, instructed Moses as to the qualifications of those who should be chosen as leaders. He said: "Moreover thou shalt provide out of ALL the people able (not white only) men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness, and place such over them to

Now, pray tell me, what are those "several reasons," which necessitates that white men, and they only, "must" "be chosen as leaders"? Please note, the colored men may be wise and Christians, but, not because they are unlearned, nor is it because they have no ability, but because they are "colored," and for this reason only, "white men must be chosen as leaders." Could the God who knows no caste or color, inspire such a statement?

Mrs. White says in the little book, "Southern Work": "God cares for colored people. . . . The fact that their skin is dark does not prove that they are sinners above the other race." Page 38.

It is a strange thing, how the white leaders of the Seventh-day Adventists denomination twist the writings of Mrs. E. G. White and make her teach one thing about the colored people in the early nineties, and again in 1909 make her teach something else. Can God change in such a way? Listen, from "Testimonies," Vol. 7, page 225, we read:

"Christ came to this earth with a message of mercy and forgiveness. He laid the foundation for a religion by which Jew and Gentile, black and white, free and bond, are linked together in one common brotherhood, recognized as equal in the sight of God."

The above statement is in harmony with the blessed old Book—the Holy Bible. "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." Acts 10:34, 35. Christ died for all, white and black alike.

be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens." Ex. 18:21. Thus it can be seen that requirements which God calls of those who stand as leaders among His people are ability and character, and not white and black, red or brown.

A BREAKING OF SHACKLES PREDICTED

In a number of the Review and Herald, July 23rd, 1895, Mrs. E. G. White wrote: "Laws and rules are being made at the centers of the work that will soon be broken into atoms. Men are not to dictate. It is not for those in places of authority to employ all their powers to sustain some while others are cast down, ignored, forsaken, and left to perish. None are to exercise their human authority to bind the minds and souls of their fellow men."

"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 (not the spirit of apostasy) to break every shackle, and assert their liberty in Christ Jesus." "Church Order and Discipline," page 154.

Do the white leaders believe this Testimony? If so, are they not sinning in rejecting it, and are thus separated from God? "Any sin in them separates them from God, and, in a special manner, dishonors His name." Test. Vol. 5, page 661-662. Vol. 1-137.

Because the white leaders of the Seventh-day Adventists denomination have stubbornly disregarded the fundamental principles of Bible Christianity, which principles underlie the foundation of the "Third Angels' Message," as proclaimed by the founders of the organization, a Church of Free Seventh-day Adventists has been organized.

We, Free Seventh-day Adventists, believe all the fundamental principles of the doctrines as were taught by the founders of the Seventh-day Adventists denomination.

Second. We are free because it is not Christian to estimate men by their outward appearance, nor by their color. Acts 17:26. 2 Sam. 14:14.

Third. Because birth, nationality, color, nor station do not elevate nor degrade men. Acts 10:26-35.

Fourth. Because we accept the Bible alone as our supreme rule of faith and practice. 2 Tim. 3:16, 17, and we accept only such other writings as harmonize with the Word of God. Isa. 8:20.

Fifth. Because the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 2 Cor. 3:17.

Sixth. Because we respect not the person of men, but condescend to high and low. Rom. 12:16. James 2:5-9.

Seventh. Because we are working and praying to realize that promise, "All are one in Christ." Gal. 3:27-28.

Eighth. Because we plead for freedom in

fear of their fellow men. Isa. 8:12, 13. 51:12, 13.

Ninth. We are free because the white leaders of the Seventh-day Adventists denomination discriminate against colored people. They do this abominable, most detestable, discriminating in the organization, the Church, the office, the school and sanitarium, notwithstanding the Negro membership must make great sacrifices to aid in building up these wonderful institutions now owned by the S. D. A. denomination.

Tenth. We are free because Negro Seventh-day Adventists, as a rule, are barred from Seventh-day Adventists Northern and Western schools, where schools of the world make no distinction among the races.

Eleventh. We are free because the white leaders of the Seventh-day Adventists denomination bar even Negro Seventh-day Adventists patients from their sanitariums, when the worldly institutions of the same kind, accept colored people of every walk of life.

Twelfth. We are free, because Negro Seventh-day Adventists are barred from holding any clerical position in the Seventh-day Adventists Publishing houses, tract societies and conference offices.

When the white leaders of Seventh-day Adventists are questioned about these fictitious rules and laws, and demanded to give reason for their existence, like PANTHERS they shout, "Because of the prejudice of the unconverted white people against our denomination." But this, we have

Christ for each and every one. Free to think, to believe and act as the Word and Spirit of God shall direct. Ex. 5:1.

This is in harmony with the teaching of Sister E. G. White, from the Church Officers Gazette, No. 2, Vol. 3, page 5, issue of February, 1916. We quote:

Freedom in Thought.—"Ye were now turned, and had done right in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbor." Jer. 34:15. "What should man do? What should we not allow? Allow no one to be brain for you, allow no one to do your thinking, your investigating and your praying. This is the instruction that we need to take to heart today." "Special Testimonies on Education," page 193. What belongs to every individual? "There are rights which belong to every individual. We have an individuality and an identity that is our own. No man can submerge his identity into that of any other. All must act for themselves, according to the dictates of their own conscience." "Special Testimonies to Ministers and Workers." No. 9, page 59.

Many minds are in bondage through laziness, others through fear of men. Others through admiration of ability of some individuals; others through superstition and still others through the lack of individual accountability. During the centuries that have gone, men have lost much because of this bondage; and at the present they are losing much from the same evil. In the world there are but few who think for themselves."

It is the privilege of all men to be free from

proved to be a lie of their own manufacturing.

There is more prejudice in the Seventh-day Adventists Church against the Negro than what is to be found in any other denomination under heaven. The prejudice existing in this professed commandment keeping Church would shame the Papacy, and make the devil blush.

Are we to be condemned because we will not submit to such treatment measured to us at the hands of a professed Christian organization? Shall we hold our peace, and mourn: LEAVE IT TO THE LORD? I answer no, in the loudest tone. In Isa. 58:1, we read: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins."

"For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait as he that setteth snares: they set a trap, they catch men. . . . The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means: and my people love to have it so." Jer. 5:26.

There are hundreds of Negroes yet in the Seventh-day Adventists denomination who know, and have been burnt by the heat, but fearing they will commit a sin against the Holy Ghost, they hold their peace and sigh: "LEAVE IT TO THE LORD." They well know that if they dare speak against such malpractices of these leaders, out they must go. I spoke openly against the evils, namely, prejudice, discrimination and Negro proscription. But I did it at cost of my position as a minister in the denomination.

Thus, is fulfilled the prophecy of Isa. 66:5: "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, let the Lord be glorified, but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed."

Having been cast out, not out of the Lamb's Book of Life; no, no, but out of the S. D. A. Conference Book, we are determined, with the pure religion, and undefiled before God, our Father, to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." Gal. 5:1.

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

Religion has, under the most palpable Divine directions, made important institutional changes, as its epochs have been measured in the economy of God's Church. Revealed religion has not only in the course of its history been subject to institutional changes, but also in the expressed nature of its faith, the application of its practical dogmas, in its degree of the toleration of conscience and expressed judgment, and the common history of its votaries. In the history of its organizations those changes have either been instituted by the majority or by the minority. In the history of all religious sects existing since the establishment of Christianity, among the many institutional changes that have affected more or less the destiny of human society, they originated invariably in some one or more of five distinct principles as the cause. Such principles as the orthodoxy of doctrines; the right of religious conscience; the free exercise of human judgment; full religious

liberty; or the proper form of ecclesiastical economy. All the schisms or secessions, superficial or radical, reforms or expulsions, that have marked the history of Christian sects, have involved one or more of these principles as the cause. When heterodoxy, religious intolerance, ecclesiastical errors find support with the controlling element of a religious body, there are three sources to which the majority or minority can resort as the advocates of right principles: First, a persistent effort to effect a remedy. Second, an expulsion of the heretics or refractory ones, by the faithful adherents to right; or, third, by the withdrawal of true adherents to principles, from the main body. To the first of these three remedies for reform, the faithful advocates of truth frequently resort, but without avail. The second remedy has often been practical where the main body was not corrupt. The third is the only practical means that a powerless minority can adopt to free themselves from participation in corrupt dogmas, and maintain right religious principles; this course has the written sanction of God. Come out of her. Rev. 18:4.

God says "Come out," but our WEAK-KNEED colored brethren and sisters all shout: "STAY WITH THE CONFERENCE." "OUT OF THE CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION YOU WILL BE LOST." Thus, they make the Conference the hope of our salvation.

"Come out of her" (Rev. 18:4) was the course pursued by the celebrated reformers, Luther of Germany, Knox of Scotland, Wesley of England,

William Miller and others of America. In the 15th and 17th centuries, Luther, Knox and Wesley all left their Mother Churches to enjoy liberty of conscience and action, and free advocacy of Christian purity; and although excommunicated and anathematized by fulminating bulls, the former two, and the latter persecuted and stigmatized, yet, what untold blessings these great religious beacons of reform have bequeathed to the Christian world, that has its millions yet to number and enjoy them. It is this same love of right and freedom of conscience and religious liberty that prompts us who have laid the foundation of our connection, FREE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS, and who, because of the departure of the Mother Church, Seventh-day Adventists (white) from Christian principles, must forever stand free and separated.

It is to be admitted ours is not an effort or attempt at reformation of corrupt fundamental Christianity, for "And this gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a WITNESS unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Neither are we attempting to show that the fundamental doctrines as were taught by the founders of the Seventh-day Adventists denomination are false and rotten, but it is to throw off undue religious restriction, that Christianity does not sanction, in which the Mother (white S. D. A.) Church has departed from the simple Christian rule, "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you," and to have no respect of person, and when she began to tolerate respect

of person contrary to the Word of God. We believe we have made a noble effort to secure for ourselves and our race religious privileges which we could not, nor ever would be able to enjoy among our WHITE BRETHREN,—SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS.

We who have made this attempt at religious liberty are not unlike Christian reformers of early times: We have invoked unkind, unjust and decrying criticisms; and that from our white and colored Seventh-day Adventists brethren, but thank God, not to the defeat of our glorious cause.

HOW LONG WILL OUR WHITE LEADING S. D. A. MINISTERS BUILD UP THE WALLS OF PREJUDICE?

Let Sister White answer this question. From the Southern Work, page 76, we read: "We have no time to build up walls of distinction between the white and black races. The white people who embrace the truth in the Southern field, if converted to God, will discern the fact that the plan of redemption embraces every soul that God has created. The walls of sectarianism and caste and race will fall down when the true Missionary Spirit enters the hearts of men. Prejudice is melted away by the love of God." On page 8 we again read:

"The black man's name is written in the Book of Life beside the white man's. All are one in Christ. Birth, station, nationality, or color

cannot elevate or degrade men. The character makes the man. If a red man, a Chinaman, or an African gives his heart to God in obedience and faith, Jesus loves him none the less for his color. He calls him his well beloved brother. The day is coming when the kings and lordly men of the earth would be glad to exchange places with the humblest African who has laid hold on the hope of the gospel."

"They are journeying to the same Heaven, and will be seated at the same table to eat bread in the Kingdom of God." Page 10.

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John 8:36.

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Gal. 5.1.

Published by The Banner Publishing Association.