

# “Within the Veil”

By: Pastor J. Isaac Richards  
Good Shepherd Bible Sabbath Fellowship  
Independent Seventh-day Baptist Congregation

For many years I held membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and pastored churches both in the Conference and in independent circles. After 21 years of publicly lecturing around the world on SDA doctrine and prophecy, I have come to the conclusion – from personal Bible study and by comparing scripture with scripture – that the doctrine of an investigative judgment commencing for the righteous on October 22, 1844, is unbiblical and a gross error that undermines the true gospel of Jesus Christ. Based on this conclusion – as well as many other facts of history proving the following conclusion – I have also had to reject the prophetic ministry of Mrs. Ellen G. White who, along with the early pioneers of Adventism, taught this error along with several others, including the belief that God shut the door of mercy forever on the world and on sinners in 1844. Contrary to popular modern-day Adventist belief, the doctrine of the investigative judgment was formed much later in their history, and only after the continued predictions of the coming of Christ failed up until 1851. The theology of an investigative judgment for the righteous commencing on October 22, 1844, only began to form after 1851 (although much ground work was laid before this time based on Day of Atonement symbolism from the Old Testament types of the sanctuary service and the belief that this type was connected to the correct understanding of Daniel 8:14), and was not officially taught in the denomination until 1857, a full 13 years after the Great Disappointment of 1844. I submit this short treatise and study for those interested to know my reasoning behind why I cannot see an atonement taking place in 1844 any longer, offering scripture proofs for my reasoning. The following is what I wrote to some of my former colleagues who have questioned my changed position on this point. This study stems from a correspondence between myself and a friend of mine who is an SDA Pastor. This is my reply to him adapted with additional material and corrections:

Dear Brother,

Thank you for your honest reply to my question; your answer was pretty much to be expected and would probably have been my own answer previously if someone would have asked me the same a couple of months ago. The problem, however, is that, according to an actual comparison of scripture with scripture, this answer is not biblical or based on the facts of history, the scriptures of truth, or the types of the Old Testament.

Now in saying this, I do not mean to imply that the answer you gave is not sincere or truthful in the sense that you are not honestly giving your understanding of the Bible; but the problem is that it does not agree with the testimony of scripture. Please allow me to explain and to also prove point by point that our Savior Jesus Christ had to enter the most holy place in the very presence of God at His ascension rather than in 1844, and that the doctrine of the investigative judgment for the righteous beginning on October 22, 1844, also contradicts the plain testimony of the scriptures.

Now if I am wrong in any of this I most certainly stand to be corrected and reproved for I am just a man, but I ask that the candid reader at least look at the evidences brought forth to see if they are Biblical or not; and if not, to plainly show me my error from the Bible. I will be as concise as possible.

Point #1: The Old Testament types.

The Bible is clear that God's presence and throne were symbolized by the Shekina glory which appeared over the mercy seat of the ark which was only kept in the most holy place and not the holy. See Ex. 25:22; 30:5; Lev. 16:2; Numbers 7:89; 1 Samuel 4:4; 1 Kings 8:6; 1 Chronicles 13:6; Isaiah 37:16; Psalm 99:1; Hebrews 9:5. God's throne was never placed in the holy place. Neither is the table of showbread ever described anywhere in the Bible as an alternate throne. The throne of God had to be the ark since it's foundation was the law. Psalm 97:2; Isaiah 33:22. Therefore, to place the throne of God in the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary instead of the most holy place destroys the type and contradicts the scriptures. The earthly was built as a pattern of the heavenly and cannot contradict it. See Hebrews 8:5.

Point #2: God's throne is in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary and always has been.

First, the fact that there is a sanctuary in heaven is abundantly plain in scripture. Psalm 11:4; Revelation 11:19; 15:5; 16:7; Hebrews 8:1. Some will refer to Revelation 4:5 in an attempt to prove that God's throne was at one time in the holy place since it is stated that the seven lamps of fire (a reference to the seven branched golden candlestick of the earthy tabernacle that was in the holy place) was "before the throne". However, a careful reading of the scripture does not allow the throne of God to be in the holy place. This claim is based on trying to show that, from the type, the candlestick was directly facing the table of showbread; therefore, it is reasoned, that the throne must be the table of showbread. However, the altar of incense is also said to be "before the throne" (See Revelation 8:3); yet it is obvious that the incense altar was placed directly before the veil which faced the ark of the covenant which symbolized the throne of God, and not the table of showbread. Further, the Bible itself is clear that both the candlestick and incense altar were placed before the ark in the Old Testament type. See Ex. 30:1-6; Lev. 24:1-4; Ex. 40:24-25; 1 Kings 7:49; 2 Chronicles 4:20. Based on those aforementioned scriptures, in order to harmonize the testimony of scripture, and to allow the Bible to explain itself, John the revelator simply saw what the type proves: that is, the throne of God in the most holy place, before which were placed the incense altar and candlestick. The reason why this could be is based simply on the fact that there is no literal veil in heaven separating the holy and most holy places. "All is terror and confusion. The priest is about to plunge his knife to the heart of the victim, but the knife drops from his nerveless hand, and the lamb, no longer fettered, escapes. At the moment that the expiring Saviour exclaimed, "It is finished," an unseen hand rent the veil of the Temple from the top to the bottom. Thus God said, "I can no longer reveal My presence in the Most Holy Place." Type had met antitype in the death of God's Son. The Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world, is dead. The way into the Holiest of all is laid open. A new and living way, which has no veil between, is offered to all. From henceforth all may walk in this way. No longer need sinful, sorrowing humanity await the coming of the high priest. It was as if a living voice had spoken to the worshipers: There is now an end to all sacrifices and offerings. The Son of God has come according to His word, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do thy will, O

My God” [Psalm 40:8]. “Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” [John 1:29]. – {12MR 416.3}

Again, in case you missed it: “A new and living way, which has no veil between, is offered to all.”

“By the rending of the veil of the temple, God said, I can no longer reveal My presence in the most holy place. A new and living Way, before which there hangs no veil, is offered to all. No longer need sinful, sorrowing humanity await the coming of the high priest”. – {5BC 1109.4}

Point #3: “Within the veil” can only, and ever had only, one meaning in scripture: that is, inside the most holy place.

When the apostle Paul wrote to the Hebrew believers that Christ went “within the veil” (see Hebrews 6:19-20; 10:19-20), it is obvious that the readers (who were Hebrews and not Gentiles) were familiar and acquainted with the Old Testament sanctuary services and types. Although he uses the language “second veil” in chapter 9:3, yet this is the only single instance in scripture where this phrase is used. In every single instance where the word “veil” is used in the Bible in connection with the sanctuary, without exception, it is only exclusively referring to the veil which separated the holy from the most holy place. And further, the phrase “within the veil” in every single instance in the Bible, without exception, only refers to entering into the most holy place. See Ex. 26:33; Lev. 16:2, 12, 15; Num. 18:7. Those are 5 witnesses that “within the veil” only refers to the most holy place. Furthermore, the phrase “without the veil” only refers to the work done by the priests in the holy place. See Ex. 26:35; 27:21; 30:6; 40:22, 26; Lev. 24:3. Thus we have at least 6 more witnesses to the fact that “without the veil” means the holy place, while “within the veil” can only refer to the most holy place. So no less than 11 witnesses agree with Paul’s epistle to the Hebrews that “within the veil”, whither Christ our forerunner has gone with his blood, was and is nothing less than entering into the very presence of God in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, and that this was done by the time he wrote his epistle before his death in 68 AD.

Point #4: Christ offered his life as an atonement for sin at his death on the cross and then ascended to heaven to present his blood in atonement before God in 31AD, and not in 1844.

Notice the following scriptures that clearly state that “we have received the atonement”, have been “reconciled to God”, have our sins “no more in remembrance”, receive cleansing, etc, from the New Testament authors. Romans 5:10-11; 2 Corinthians 5:18; Colossians 1:21; Hebrews 8:12; 10:16-18; 1 John 1:9. And that is only a few scripture references. The New Testament authors are clear that believers can have the assurance of salvation in Christ once faith is exercised in the “lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world”.

“In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.” Ephesians 3:12.

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” 1 John 5:11-13

Point #5: The 70 week prophecy of Daniel 9:24.

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.”

The word here used for “reconciliation” is the Hebrew word “kaphar”, which is the identical word used in Leviticus 16 for “atonement”. Therefore, according to Daniel’s prophecy of the coming Messiah, Christ would bring “atonement for iniquity” and also “anoint the most holy” within the 70 weeks cut off from the 2300 days. The words “most holy” are the combined Hebrew words “qodesh qodesh” which taken combined only can refer to the most holy place of the sanctuary. It is a similar rendering in Hebrews 9:3 where the words “hagia hagian” are used to describe the “holiest of all” where the ark was placed. In fact, the Septuagint version uses this same phrase in Daniel 9:24 to describe the most holy which was anointed within the 70 weeks of Daniel’s prophecy. In other words, according to this prophecy, Jesus Christ would offer himself as an offering for sin, to make “atonement for iniquity”, and enter the most holy place to present his blood for cleansing in the presence of God within the 70 weeks of the 2300 days. And the apostle Paul agrees with this when he writes the following: “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” Hebrews 9:24.

Point #6: The Day of Atonement was a type of cleansing that Christ offers to those who believe on him, and not a type of judgment on believers.

The doctrine of the investigative judgment, as Seventh-day Adventists hold and teach it, was not fully formulated until at least 1857 and not in 1844, contrary to what we believe. James White first used the phrase “investigative judgment” in 1857 and formerly opposed Joseph Bates teaching this in 1845-51. Up until this time nothing of the sort was taught at all. In fact, the understanding of those disappointed in 1844 when Christ did not come was that Jesus had gone into the most holy place and shut the door of mercy forever on the world, and that only those Adventists who had believed William Miller’s teachings were shut in with Christ and sealed in the most holy place in 1844. This was based on Samuel Snow’s typology of the sanctuary which helped form the basis of the midnight cry, Hiram Edson’s vision in the corn field, and O.R.L. Crosier’s article in the Daystar laying out an argument of Christ’s ministry in the most holy place based on the Old Testament types of the day of atonement. Incidentally, even the date of October 22 is suspect based on the testimony of history by both classical Jews as well as Karaites, that Yom Kippur took place in 1844 on September 23 and not October 22. But that is irrelevant at this point.

The point I am trying to make is that the day of atonement was a type to teach how God would remove sin from the believer in the offering provided, and not a judgment of investigation for the believer. There are several problems with the theology that SDAs teach in this regard. First, it is taught that sin is symbolically transferred to the sanctuary through the blood of sprinkling. But this is clearly not the case in the Bible. Sin pollutes God’s sanctuary, while blood cleanses it. Blood never pollutes. See the following proofs that sin, and not the blood of sacrifices, pollutes God’s sanctuary: 2 Chronicles 36:14; Psalm 106:38-39; Jeremiah 34:15-16; Zephaniah 3:14; Leviticus

16:16. So it is sin, and not blood, that pollutes God's sanctuary and God's holy name. In contrast, blood cleanses. See Leviticus 14:52; 16:15-16, 19; Ezekiel 43:20-23; Hebrews 9:22.

It is evident, therefore, that it is the sins of God's people that defile the sanctuary, and not the blood of the sacrifice which God has provided as a way of escape from wrath and to cleanse the people from their sins. The question must be asked then, when did Christ offer His blood for cleansing as both sacrifice and priest to cleanse the people from their sins? Let us allow Paul to answer this question:

“And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” Hebrews 9:22-28.

The day of atonement, therefore, was a type of how Christ would offer his blood in atonement as both sacrifice and high priest for the sins of the people, and to provide a “new and living way” whereby the defiled consciences of men and women could be cleansed; for this is the clear meaning of the whole context of Hebrews 9 and 10 read together without any chapter breaks or divisions.

Point #7: “The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing.” Hebrews 9:8

As long as the first tabernacle stood there was also an earthly priesthood, along with earthly sacrifices, under the first or old covenant whereby people approached unto God and showed their faith in the coming sacrifice that God would provide. But it is evident that once the true sacrifice arrived in earth's history that a “new and living way” to God would be opened to all through faith in Christ as “the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world”. Thus the writer of Hebrews lays out the argument that Jesus is of a different order of priesthood “after the order of Melchizedek” and not of Levi, “of a greater and more perfect tabernacle”, “which the Lord pitched, and not man”.

So when did the earthly tabernacle lose its significance and a “new living way” open to all? When was the way into “the holiest of all” made manifest?

“All is terror and confusion. The priest is about to plunge his knife to the heart of the victim, but the knife drops from his nerveless hand, and the lamb, no longer fettered, escapes. At the moment that the expiring Saviour exclaimed, “It is finished,” an unseen hand rent the veil of the Temple from the top to the bottom. Thus God said, “I can no longer reveal My presence in the Most Holy Place.” Type had met antitype in the death of God's Son. The Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world, is dead. The way into the Holiest of all is laid open. A new and living

way, which has no veil between, is offered to all. From henceforth all may walk in this way. No longer need sinful, sorrowing humanity await the coming of the high priest. It was as if a living voice had spoken to the worshipers: There is now an end to all sacrifices and offerings. The Son of God has come according to His word, “Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do thy will, O My God” [Psalm 40:8]. “Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” [John 1:29]. – {12MR 416.3}

Point #8: An investigative judgment for the righteous, where their sins come in remembrance before God, contradicts the plainest teachings of Jesus and the testimony of scripture on this point. Notice the plain words of Christ on this point:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” John 5:24

The word used for “condemnation” is “krisis” which Strong’s states as follows:

Greek: κρίσις

Transliteration: krisis

Pronunciation: kree'-sis

Definition: (Subjectively or objectively for or against); by extension a tribunal; by implication justice (specifically divine law): - accusation condemnation damnation judgment.

KJV Usage: judgment (41x), damnation (3x), accusation (2x), condemnation (2x).

Occurrences in Bible: 48

Occurrences in verses: 47

So Jesus states that those who believe on him do not come into judgment; that is, a tribunal with the basis of the divine law. Yet this is exactly what SDA’s teach: that Christians who place their faith in Christ, who become new creatures in Christ, who have their consciences purged from dead works to serve the living God, who have been washed and regenerated and renewed by the Holy Ghost, who have been reconciled to God by the death of His Son, who have been adopted into God’s family and translated into the kingdom of his dear son, who have been sanctified and who have received the atonement (all phrases used by the New Testament authors), suddenly in 1844 by a fluke of prophecy now have all of their sins brought to remembrance and are closely investigated to see whether they are saved. Yet all of this in the face of God’s word which declares that “the Lord knoweth them that are His”. 2 Timothy 2:19.

To further prove this point, and that the sins of believers are blotted out once they are confessed and forsaken, and not in 1844; and that it is impossible that the righteous dead would come up in

judgment in 1844 when their cases would supposedly come up before God, thus not allowing for their sins to be blotted out until that time, I submit the following evidence:

Moses was resurrected and taken to heaven prior to 1844, before which time his sins supposedly would have been brought up in judgment and blotted out.

As was Enoch translated to heaven prior to his case being decided in 1844.

As was Elijah.

As was the great multitude of witnesses who were resurrected after Christ's resurrection.

And all of this prior to 1844 when their books were supposed to be opened and their cases eternally decided in an investigative judgment for the righteous. So either God judged them worthy of eternal life and blotted out their sins prior to taking them all to heaven, and the theory of an investigative judgment commencing in 1844 is incorrect; or SDA theology is correct and the SOP (writings of Ellen White) is correct at the expense of God contradicting himself and making the Bible a mockery.

I haven't even mentioned the souls under the altar (Revelation 6:9-11) who were judged righteous and given white robes under the fifth seal which was also prior to the dark day, etc, under the sixth seal and prior to 1844. Nor did I mention Ellen White stating that she saw Fitch and Stockman in heaven in vision, along with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and others...does this mean that their cases had been decided by December of 1844 only two months after the great day of atonement had commenced? The whole theology is unsound.

Point #9: The 2300 days

The language of this prophecy states in the original: "And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be justified or vindicated or set right". The Hebrew word for "cleansed" is "tsadaq" which means:

Hebrew: קָדַשׁ

Transliteration: tsâdaq

Pronunciation: tsaw-dak'

Definition: A primitive root; to be (causatively make) right (in a moral or forensic sense): - {cleanse} clear {self} ({be} do) just ({{-ice} {-ify} -ify {self}}) ({be} turn to) righteous (-ness).

KJV Usage: justify (23x), righteous (10x), just (3x), justice (2x), cleansed (1x), clear ourselves (1x), righteousness (1x).

Occurrences in Bible: 41

Occurrences in verses: 40

This is a different word than the word used in Leviticus 16 for the day of atonement cleansing.

In other words, after 2300 days God's sanctuary would be set right and vindicated from the activity of the little horn power which trampled it under foot and cast the truth to ground "and practiced and prospered". In fact, in every reference of a judgment sitting and books being opened, it is referring to judgment on the papal power and on the wicked in general, and to the vindication of the righteous. See Daniel 7:8-27; 8:14-25; Revelation 20:11-15. And it is the same with the 3 angels' messages of Revelation 14. In context, the judgment hour message of the first angel is connected with a declaration of judgment on Babylon and the consequences of worshipping the beast and his image delineated in the second and third messages.

Our current understanding of the 2300 day prophecy, as far as starting and ending dates is concerned, hasn't changed at this point. We still believe in the day/year principle and the starting date of 457BC according to Daniel 9 which brings the end date to 1844. But I believe the prophecy is misunderstood based on the text. The phrase "then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" we have historically applied to the day of atonement when this is not possible given the context or language of the chapter. The word used for "cleansed" is not the same word used in Leviticus 16. The original says "then shall the sanctuary be justified or set right". The word for cleansed in Daniel 8:14 is the same word used in 2 Chronicles 29:15-18 when the temple was cleansed and set right from being defiled with pagan idolatry. And this what Daniel 8 is teaching as well. The question from the angel to Christ was "how long shall paganism and papalism trample the sanctuary and host?" And the answer is given "unto 2300 days, then shall the sanctuary be set right or justified or cleansed from pagan idolatry". So in 1844 the filth and errors of Rome would finally be purged from God's church on earth, which work began with the Protestant reformation with Luther and the doctrine of justification by faith, continued through that time with the restoration of other truths such as baptism by immersion for believers, the true meaning of the Lords supper, the Sabbath, and completed with the truth of soul sleep in death, hellfire and the destruction of the wicked, and the understanding of Christ's high priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary.

Point #10: The witness of the Sabbath and 10 commandment law of God through the centuries.

In order to preserve an historic identity, the SDA church has sought to portray the doctrine of the investigative judgment as unique among themselves and as standing as repairers of the breach in pointing the world to the broken law of God that the papacy sought to obscure and to change. Therefore, 1844 has stood as a pivotal date where God is now judging men based on his law now revealed in the most holy place to the world, of which the Sabbath truth is the testing point. Yet history is clear that there have always been witnesses for truth throughout the ages who have kept the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, including the Sabbath. Also, both before and after 1844, such groups as the seventh-day Baptists held the Sabbath truth out to the world and presented the 10 commandments as binding, all without the necessity of showing the date of 1844 as being a commencement date to make the Sabbath of force since that time. How can SDA's claim that they are the sole people to stand as repairers of the breach since 1844 if others were already in existence prior to this time who did the same, and even were the ones to share this truth with them?



In closing, this has been just a short study sharing some preliminary thoughts as they came to my mind. I have not yet written these things down or formulated an official hypothesis or presented them to others; but to my mind the scriptures are abundantly clear that Christ - according to the scriptures - ascended to the most holy place in 31 AD to minister as our great high priest in the very presence of God and to offer his blood in atonement for our sins. If I am wrong in this I beg you to please show me from the Bible my error and how this understanding can endanger my soul or the souls of any others who trust in Christ for redemption, for cleansing, and for salvation.

“But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?...It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” Hebrews 9:11-14, 23-24.

“For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” Hebrews 10:1-25.

God bless and be with you, my brother. I hope to get a reply from you because I am very interested to know what arguments or reply can be given to these points. For unless I am greatly deceived, I can see nothing else than these points being biblical and based upon the plainest testimony of the scriptures without being twisted or contrived.

An update on the above study being sent out now to several pastors and other SDA friends of mine who are well studied: Not one has attempted to answer these points from scripture, nor have I received any reply other than to express surprise at my change of position. But not one Biblical defense on their part. In good faith, this may simply be due to a lack of time to respond or a lack of interest in this subject. As one who believes firmly in the rights of conscience, I condemn no man for believing differently than I do – although I am quite sure that I have been condemned already by many for apostatizing from the truth confirmed by the visions of Ellen White, but sadly lacking in scriptural support.

In closing, I would like to include the following commentary from a chapter of A.F. Ballenger's book, "Cast Out For the Cross of Christ", entitled, "But How About the Testimonies?". I pray it blesses the soul of each reader who is honest in heart and seeking the truth of the Bible as for hid treasure. May Christ be your Helper ever near, and may God bless you as you covenant to walk with Him who loved you, who died on a cruel cross to save you, and shed His blood that you might be redeemed from all iniquity and eternally saved in His everlasting kingdom.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Sincerely in Christ our Blessed Savior,

J. Isaac Richards

Cast Out for the Cross of Christ, by Albion F. Ballenger, 1909

CHAPTER XII. "BUT HOW ABOUT THE TESTIMONIES."

Many of the brethren, after listening to Scripture evidences of my position, have admitted that from the standpoint of the scriptures, the teaching appeared sound; but invariably they would remark in substance: "Yes; but how about the testimonies?" The only answer I am able to make to this question is found in the following copy of a letter recently addressed to Sr. White:

Dear Sr. White:

For some time I have been constrained to write to you regarding my convictions on the sanctuary. Many of my friends have urged me to do this, while others have thought it useless inasmuch as, in their opinion, the letter would never reach you.

Nevertheless, I have decided to write, and state my difficulty frankly.

My first difficulty is with the interpretation which you give to the following scripture found in Heb. 6:19,20, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec."

I cannot help believing that this term "within the veil" refers to the holy of holies of the heavenly sanctuary and the scriptures which convinced me, are given below.

On one side I have placed the interpretation given this scripture by the Word of God and on the other side the interpretation which you have given it. You will note that you merely assert that this term applies to the first department of the heavenly sanctuary, but you do not refer to any scripture which uses the term and applies it to the first apartment. What I am pleading for in this letter, is, that if there be a "thus saith the Lord" to support your statement, that, out of compassion for my soul you furnish it.

“Within the Veil”

As the Bible Interprets It.

"And thou shalt hang up the veil under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy.' Ex. 26:23. And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat." Lev. 16:2. "And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil." Lev. 16:12. "And he shall kill the goat of the sin offering that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with his blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat." Lev. 16:15. "Therefore thou and thy sons with thee shall keep your priest's office for everything of the altar, and within the veil." Num. 18:7.

Sr. White, you refer the terms "within the veil" to the first apartment, while the Lord applies the terms "without the veil" and "before the veil" to the first apartment, as appears from the following scriptures.

And thou shalt set the table (of shew bread) "without the veil." Ex. 26:35.

"And thou shalt command the children of Israel that they bring thee pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always in the tabernacle of the congregation, without the veil, which is before the testimony." Ex. 27:20,21.

"And he put the table in the tent of the congregation, upon the side of the tabernacle northward without the veil." Ex. 40:22.

"And he put the golden altar in the tent of the congregation before the veil." Ex. 40:26.

"And the priest that is anointed shall take of the bullock's blood, and bring it to the tabernacle of the congregation: and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the Lord, before the veil of the Sanctuary." Le. 4:5, 6.

"And the priest that is anointed shall bring of the bullock's blood to the tabernacle of the congregation, and the priest shall dip his finger in some of the blood, and sprinkle it seven times before the Lord, even before the veil." Le. 4:17.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel that they bring thee pure olive oil beaten for light, to cause the lamps to burn continually without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation." Lev. 24:1-3.

“Within the Veil”

As You Interpret It.

"The ministration of the priest throughout the year in the first apartment of the sanctuary, 'within the veil' which formed the door and separated the holy place from the outer court, represents the work of ministration upon which Christ entered at His ascension. It was the work of the priest in the daily ministration to present before God the blood of the sin offering, also the incense which ascended with the prayers of Israel. So did Christ plead his blood before the Father in behalf of sinners and present before him also, with the fragrance of his own righteousness, the prayers of penitent believers. Such was the work of ministration in the first apartment of the sanctuary in Heaven. Thither the faith of Christ's disciples followed him as he ascended from their sight. Here (in the first apartment) their hopes centered, 'which hope we have,' said Paul, 'as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever.'" G.C. pp.420,421

Five times the Lord uses the term "within the veil" and in every case it is applied to the second apartment of the sanctuary, and not to the first.

Seven times the Lord uses the terms "without the veil," and "before the veil," and in every instance he applies it to the first apartment or tabernacle of the congregation, and never to the court outside of the door of the tabernacle. But if "within the veil" applies to the first apartment as you teach in your interpretation of Heb. 6:19,20, then the term "without the veil" must apply to the space in the court outside the tabernacle door. Every one of these seven scriptures which plainly state that "without the veil" and "before the veil" is in the first apartment, is a divine witness to the truth that "within the veil" in Heb. 6:19,20, must apply to the second apartment.

There are therefore twelve witnesses, a twelve-fold "thus saith the Lord" testifying that the term "within the veil" refers to the holy of holies, and not to the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary as you assert.

At my secret trial four years ago, three leading brethren were chosen to answer me. (It is interesting to note in passing that two out of the three were then and are still under your condemnation

inasmuch as they both teach that the "daily" of Dan. 8:13 refers to the heavenly service instead of paganism as taught by you in Early Writings.) In private conversation with me one took the position that "within the veil" meant within the sanctuary, but did not refer to either apartment. Another asserted at the trial that the term applied to the first apartment as you have interpreted it. The third, compelled by the witnesses quoted above admitted in his answer that the term "within the veil" does apply to the holy of holies, but that it is spoken prophetically, and although the scripture says Christ IS entered "within the veil" we are to understand it to mean that he WILL enter in 1844. This babel of voices did not help me to see my error, if error it be.

Before publishing my MS. I sent it to several ministers holding official positions, whose loyalty to the denomination is unquestioned, and asked them out of love for the truth and my soul, to show me from the Scriptures, where I was in error. I promised that should they do this I would never publish the MS.

Not one of these brethren attempted to show me my error from the Word. One wrote thus:

"Candor compels me to say that I can find no fault with it from a Bible standpoint. The argument seems to be unassailable."

Another said:

"I have always felt that it was safer to take the interpretation placed upon the Scriptures by the Spirit of Prophecy as manifested through Sister E.G. White rather than to rely upon my own judgment or interpretation."

This last quotation expresses the attitude of all those who have admitted that my position seemed to be supported by the Scriptures, but hesitated to accept it.

Honestly, Sister White, I am afraid to act upon this suggestion; because it will place the thousands upon thousands of pages of your writings in books and periodicals between the child of God and God's Book. If this position be true, no noble Berean dare believe any truth, however clearly it may seem to be taught in the Scriptures, until he first consults your writings to see whether it harmonizes with your interpretation. This is the principle always advocated by the Roman church and voiced in the following quotation:

"Like two sacred rivers flowing from Paradise, the Bible and divine Tradition contain the Word of God. Though these two divine streams are in themselves, on account of their divine origin, of equal sacredness, and are both full of revealed truths, still of the two, TRADITION is to us more clear and safe." Catholic Belief p.54.

It was against this putting of an infallible interpreter between the man and his Bible that the Reformation waged its uncompromising war.

The Romanists robbed the individual of his Bible, denouncing the right of "private interpretation;" while the Reformation handed the Bible back to the individual while denouncing the papal dogma that demands an infallible interpreter between the child of God and his Bible.

The brethren urge me to accept your interpretation of the Scriptures as clearer and safer than what they call my interpretation. But I have not interpreted this Scripture, I have allowed the Lord to do this and have accepted his interpretation. Let me illustrate:

The first mention of the Sabbath in the New Testament is found in Matt. 12:1. It does not there tell us which day is the Sabbath, assuming that the reader knows which day is referred to, or if not, he will be able to learn from the Old Testament, which day it is. When one turns to Ex. 20:8-12 and reads, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord," is not that God's interpretation? Has anyone the right to reply, "That is your interpretation." Surely not.

In like manner, the first and only instance where the term, "within the veil," is used in the New Testament, is found in Heb. 6:19. It is taken for granted that the reader will know to which apartment the Holy Spirit refers; but if not, the searcher can learn from the Old Testament which place is meant. Now, when I turn to the Old Testament and find that in every instance this term is applied to the holy of holies, can it honestly be charged that this is my interpretation? I have not interpreted it, but have given that honor to the Holy Oracles themselves. And now Sister White, what can I do? If I accept the testimony of the Scriptures, if I follow my conscientious convictions, I find myself under your condemnation; and you call me a wolf in sheep's clothing, and warn my brethren and the members of my family against me. But when I turn in my sorrow to the Word of the Lord, that Word reads the same, and I fear to reject God's interpretation and accept yours. Oh that I might accept both. But if I must accept but one, hadn't I better accept the Lord's? If I reject his word and accept yours, can you save me in the judgment? When side by side we stand before the great white throne; if the Master should ask me why I taught that "within the veil" was in the first apartment of the sanctuary, what shall I answer? Shall I say, "Because Sister White, who claimed to be commissioned to interpret the Scriptures for me, told me that this was the true interpretation, and that if I did not accept it and teach it I would rest under your condemnation?" Oh, Sister White, that this answer might be pleasing unto the Lord. Then would I surrender to your testimony. Then would you speak words of encouragement to me again. Then would my brethren, with whom I have held sweet counsel, no longer shun me as a leper. Then would I appear again in the great congregation, and we would weep and pray and praise together as before.

But on the other hand should the great and terrible God say to me on that day, "But disobedient servant, WHAT DID I SAY?". Oh what could I answer?

If I surrender my convictions to escape the testimonies of condemnation which you heap upon my head; if I yield the Word of God that I might again enjoy the love and fellowship of my brethren, how can I again look into the face of him who died for me? How could I again lay my Bible open upon my bed, and kneeling, plead for light upon his Word? No, no, I cannot do that. I must go on my pilgrimage alone. And while I would not put myself in the company of Him who was despised and rejected of men, the Man of sorrows, the Man of the lonely life, yet I am comforted in the thought that he knoweth my sorrow and is acquainted with my grief.

Your younger brother in Christ, A.F. BALLENGER. Tropic, Cal.