

ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE

THE INVESTIGATIVE
JUDGMENT IN
THE WRITINGS OF
ELLEN G. WHITE

ROBERT W. OLSON

**The Investigative
Judgment in the
Writings of Ellen G.
White**

Ellen G. White

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About the Author

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

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by Robert W. Olson

Contents

Information about this Book	i
Chapter 1—A Pillar Of The Adventist Faith	iv
Chapter 2—The Heavenly Sanctuary	viii
Chapter 3—Heaven’s Judgment Begins	ix
Chapter 4—The Cleansing of the Sanctuary	xi
Chapter 5—The Heavenly Records	xiii
Chapter 6—Judgment Begins at the House of God	xvi
Chapter 7—The Basis of God’s Decision	xviii
Chapter 8—The Blotting Out of Sin	xxi
Chapter 9—The Judge	xxiii
Chapter 10—The Close of the Millennium	xxv

Chapter 1—A Pillar Of The Adventist Faith

It was in February, 1845, on her “first journey East” that “the precious light in regard to the heavenly sanctuary” was opened to Ellen White ([Letter 2, 1874](#)). On February 15, 1846, she wrote Enoch Jacobs:

“God showed me the following, one year ago this month: I saw a throne and on it sat the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.... I saw the Father rise from the throne and in a flaming chariot go into the Holy of Holies within the veil, and did sit.... And I saw a cloudy chariot with wheels like flaming fire. Angels were all about the chariot as it came where Jesus was. He stepped into it and was borne to the Holiest where the Father sat.”—[The Day-Star, March 14, 1846](#), p. 7. (See also [Early Writings, 55](#).)

In her earliest account of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, published in 1858, she explained why Christ had entered the holy of holies in the heavenly sanctuary:

“As the priests in the earthly sanctuary entered the most holy once a year to cleanse the sanctuary, Jesus entered the most holy of the heavenly, at the end of the 2300 days of [Daniel 8](#), in 1844, to make a final atonement for all who could be benefited by His mediation, and to cleanse the sanctuary....

“I saw that every case was then decided for life or death. Jesus had blotted out the sins of His people.... While Jesus had been ministering in the sanctuary, the judgment had been going on for the righteous dead, and then for the righteous living.”—1 SG 162, 197, 198.

Ellen White later adopted the phrase “investigative judgment” for this particular aspect of Christ’s ministry ([The Spirit of Prophecy 4:266](#), etc.), though others appear to have used the term before she did (e.g., see James White, [The Review and Herald, January 29, 1857](#), p. 100).

As the years passed, she made it abundantly clear that the doctrine of the investigative judgment was a cardinal tenet of Scripture and was of vital importance to Seventh-day Adventists. She believed that through the Holy Spirit, she and other pioneer Adventists had been divinely led to understand the subject correctly. When A. F. Ballenger began teaching that Christ entered into His ministry in the holy of holies at His ascension rather than in 1844, Ellen White wrote:

“In clear, plain language I am to say to those in attendance at this conference [the General Conference of 1905] that Brother Ballenger has been allowing his mind to receive and believe specious error. God has not indited the message that he is bearing. This message, if accepted, would undermine the pillars of our faith.”—
Ms 62, 1905, pp. 1, 2.

A year later she wrote W. W. Simpson, a minister in San Diego, California:

“The truths given us after the passing of the time in 1844 are just as certain and unchangeable as when the Lord gave them to us in answer to our urgent prayers....

“At that time one error after another pressed in upon us; ministers and doctors brought in new doctrines. We would search the Scriptures with much prayer, and the Holy Spirit would bring the truth to our minds. Sometimes whole nights would be devoted to searching the Scriptures, and earnestly asking God for guidance. Companies of devoted men and women assembled for this purpose. The power of God would come upon me, and I was enabled clearly to define what is truth and what is error.

[3]

“As the points of our faith were thus established, our feet were placed upon a solid foundation. We accepted the truth point by point, under the demonstration of the Holy Spirit. I would be taken off in vision, and explanations would be given me. I was given illustrations of heavenly things, and of the sanctuary, so that we were placed where light was shining on us in clear, distinct rays....

“I know that the sanctuary question stands in righteousness and truth, just as we have held it for so many years.”—[Letter 50, 1906](#) (Portions in [Gospel Workers, 302, 303](#))

A few months later Ellen White reacted to several articles in Dr. Kellogg’s *Medical Missionary* journal, which she felt muddied the waters on the subject of the sanctuary. In an editorial on “The Earthly Sanctuary,” Elder George C. Tenney had stated:

“Man is a dual being, intellectually speaking. He is created with an intelligence which is formed of his bodily, or, as we might say, his animal, propensities and desires.... This department of human nature corresponds with the first compartment of the sanctuary....

“But man is also endowed with an intelligence that is distinct from his animal nature, and infinitely superior to it. This is called the ‘inward’ or ‘inner man.’... When Christ comes to us in the merits of His own blood and as High Priest enters into the heart, the holiest place, He speaks life and power to the dormant energies of divine glory, and then from the human soul the glory shines forth.”—[The Medical Missionary, June 1904, 169](#), p. 170.

In response to this and other editorials, Ellen White wrote Tenney:

“I have been surprised and made sad to read some of your articles in *The Medical Missionary*, and especially

those on the Sanctuary question. These articles show that you have been departing from the faith. You have helped in confusing the understanding of our people. The correct understanding of the ministration in the heavenly sanctuary is the foundation of our faith.”—[Letter 208, 1906](#) (Portion in [Evangelism, 221](#)).

Clearly, the subject of Christ’s ministry in the heavenly sanctuary was of great importance to Ellen White. She urged her fellow Adventists not to treat the matter indifferently, but to study the question so thoroughly that they would be able to explain it to others. “We should not rest,” she wrote, “until we become intelligent in regard to the subject of the sanctuary” ([Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 278](#)). [4]

Further, she declared:

“The subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be clearly understood by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. Otherwise, it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith essential at this time, or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill....

“It is of the utmost importance that all who have received the light, both old and young, should thoroughly investigate these subjects, and be able to give an answer to everyone that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them.”—[The Spirit of Prophecy 4:313](#).

Following her own counsel, she repeatedly set forth detailed explanations of Christ’s ministry in the heavenly sanctuary and His work of investigative judgment. Her 1858 account ([ISG 157-162, 197-201](#)) was enlarged in 1884 ([The Spirit of Prophecy 4:307-315](#)), and expanded still further in 1888 ([The Great Controversy, 479-491](#)).

In addition to these definitive treatments of the subject, Ellen White refers frequently to the heavenly judgment in all of her writings. She seems always to have the judgment in view. It will be well worth our while to review the high points of her teachings on this foundation pillar of the Seventh-day Adventist faith.

Chapter 2—The Heavenly Sanctuary

Basic to the doctrine of the investigative judgment is the existence—in whatever form—of a sanctuary in heaven where Christ is currently engaged in His mediatorial work on behalf of mankind. Ellen White insists that there is indeed such a sanctuary and that an understanding of the heavenly can be gained by a study of the earthly. She states:

“God forbid that the clatter of words coming from human lips should lessen the belief of our people in the truth that there is a sanctuary in heaven, and that a pattern of this sanctuary was once built on this earth. God desires His people to become familiar with this pattern, keeping ever before their minds the heavenly sanctuary, where God is all and in all.”—[Letter 233, 1904](#), quoted in *Christ in His Sanctuary*, pp. 11, 12.

Ellen White reminds her readers further that, since the earthly services were an “example and shadow” of the heavenly, therefore “what was done in type in the ministration of the earthly sanctuary is done in reality in the ministration of the heavenly sanctuary” ([The Great Controversy, 420](#)).

Chapter 3—Heaven’s Judgment Begins

To Ellen White a plethora of Scripture references point to the opening of heaven’s grand assize—the investigative judgment. After quoting [Daniel 7:9, 10](#), she writes:

“Thus was presented to the prophet’s vision the great and solemn day when the characters and the lives of men should pass in review before the Judge of all the earth.... Attended by heavenly angels, our great High Priest enters the holy of holies, and there appears in the presence of God, to engage in the last acts of His ministration in behalf of man—to perform the work of investigative judgment, and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits.”—[The Great Controversy, 479, 480](#).

Other passages in the books of Daniel and Revelation specifically applied to the beginning of the judgment are [Daniel 8:14](#); [7:13](#), [Revelation 14:7](#), and [11:19](#) ([The Great Controversy, 424, 433](#)). The coming of the Lord to His temple as foretold in [Malachi 3:1](#) and, in the parable of the ten virgins, the coming of the bridegroom to the marriage ([Matthew 25:10](#)), were also both understood to be descriptions of the same event.

Not only the year—1844—but even the very day—October 22—when heaven’s judgment began was foretold in the prophecies. Ellen White fully endorsed the Millerite computation, which settled on October 22 as the terminal date for the 2300-year period. She states:

“I saw that they were correct in their reckoning of the prophetic periods. Prophetic time closed in 1844, and Jesus entered the most holy place to cleanse the sanctuary at the ending of the days.”—[Early Writings, 243](#).

“The tenth day of the seventh month, the great Day of Atonement, the time of the cleansing of the sanctuary, which in the year 1844 fell upon the twenty-second of October, was regarded as the time of the Lord’s coming. This was in harmony with the proofs already presented that the 2300 days would terminate in the autumn.

“The computation of the prophetic periods on which that message was based, placing the close of the 2300 days in the autumn of 1844, stands without impeachment.”—[The Great Controversy, 400, 457](#).

Chapter 4—The Cleansing of the Sanctuary

[5]

“Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed” ([Daniel 8:14](#)). The sanctuary to be cleansed in 1844 could only be the heavenly sanctuary, as the earthly temple had no more function after the rending of the veil at Christ’s death. But is there anything in heaven that needs to be cleansed? To those who were repelled at such a thought, Ellen White observed that the cleansing of “both the earthly and the heavenly sanctuary” was “plainly taught” in [Hebrews 9:22, 23](#) ([The Great Controversy, 417](#)). Explaining the heavenly by the earthly, she wrote:

[6]

“As anciently the sins of the people were by faith placed upon the sin offering and through its blood transferred, in figure, to the earthly sanctuary, so in the new covenant the sins of the repentant are by faith placed upon Christ and transferred, in fact, to the heavenly sanctuary. And as the typical cleansing of the earthly was accomplished by the removal of the sins by which it had been polluted, so the actual cleansing of the heavenly is to be accomplished by the removal, or blotting out, of the sins which are there recorded. But before this can be accomplished, there must be an examination of the books of record to determine who, through repentance of sin and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. The cleansing of the sanctuary therefore involves a work of investigation—a work of judgment.”—C 421-2.

But why was an investigation necessary? Weren’t sins, when confessed, immediately forgiven and forever forgotten? Forgiven, yes, Ellen White explained, but not yet forgotten. She noted that, in the type, “the blood of the sin offering removed the sin from the

penitent, but it rested in the sanctuary until the Day of Atonement.” So, in the antitype, “the blood of Christ, while it was to release the repentant sinner from the condemnation of the law, was not to cancel the sin; it would stand on record in the sanctuary until the final atonement.” After the dead are “judged out of those things which were written in the books,” “then by virtue of the atoning blood of Christ, the sins of all the truly penitent will be blotted from the books of heaven. Thus the sanctuary will be freed, or cleansed from sin” ([Patriarchs and Prophets, 357, 358](#)). (See also [The Great Controversy, 420](#).)

Chapter 5—The Heavenly Records

Ellen White finds ample Biblical evidence for books of record in heaven. She cites [Revelation 20:12](#), [Philippians 4:3](#), and other texts, for the book of life; [Malachi 3:16](#) for the book of remembrance; and [Ecclesiastes 12:14](#), [Matthew 12:36, 37](#), and other references for the books which contain a record of the sins of men ([The Great Controversy](#), 480, 481). She refers to the names of these heavenly books somewhat loosely. The book of life contains “the names of all who have ever entered the service of God” ([The Great Controversy](#), 480), as well as “the good deeds of the saints” ([Early Writings](#), 52). The book of remembrance also includes “the good deeds” of God’s children, with a record of wrong actions as well. The youth were warned:

“Men may forget, men may deny their wrong course of action, but a record of it is kept in the book of remembrance, and in the great day of judgment, unless men repent and walk humbly before God, they will meet this dread record just as it stands.”—[The Youth’s Instructor](#), April 4, 1905.

The “evil deeds of the wicked” are recorded in the “book of death” ([Early Writings](#), 52), while in the “book of records” every name is inscribed, and “the acts of all, their sins, and obedience, are faithfully written” ([The S.D.A. Bible Commentary](#) 7:987). [7]

God knows and has a record of everything. Ellen White asserted, “Every wrong word, every selfish act, every unfulfilled duty, and every secret sin, with every artful dissembling” is entered in the books of heaven with “terrible exactness” ([The Great Controversy](#), 482). God has an exact catalog of “every unjust account and every unfair dealing.” We are held responsible not only for what we have done, but “for what we have left undone,” for “undeveloped characters,” and “unimproved opportunities” ([The S.D.A. Bible Commentary](#) 7:987).

“As the features of the countenance are reproduced with marvelous exactness in the camera of the artist, so is the character faithfully delineated in the books above.”—[The Spirit of Prophecy 4:311](#).

“Page after page the history of our life experience is written, with the motives that prompted us to action. All will appear as a real life picture, showing how much of our life was given to pleasing self, how much to blessing others, how much to honoring God, how much to answering the purpose of God in our creation.”—[The Review and Herald, January 3, 1891](#), p. 17.

Especially comforting are Ellen White’s assurances that the good is recorded just as faithfully as the evil. She states:

“Every temptation resisted, every evil overcome, every word of tender pity expressed, is faithfully chronicled. And every act of sacrifice, every suffering and sorrow endured for Christ’s sake, is recorded.”—[The Great Controversy, 481](#).

“God sees many temptations resisted of which the world, and even near friends, never know; temptations in the home, in the heart; He sees the soul’s humility in view of its own weakness, the sincere repentance over even a thought that is evil; He sees the whole heart’s devotion to the upbuilding of the cause of God, without one tinge of selfishness; He has noted those hours of hard battle with self, battles that won the victory—all this God and angels know.”—[Letter 18, 1891](#).

Ellen White urged the youth in particular not to forget that their lives were being closely—even meticulously—observed, and that one day our life records must be faced. To her *Youth’s Instructor* audience she wrote:

“We are never alone. We have a Companion, whether we choose Him or not. Remember, young men and young women, that wherever you are, whatever you

are doing, God is there. To your every word and action you have a witness—the holy, sin-hating God. Nothing that is said or done or thought can escape His infinite eye. Your words may not be heard by human ears, but they are heard by the Ruler of the universe. He reads the inward anger of the soul when the will is crossed. He hears the expression of profanity. In the deepest darkness and solitude He is there.

“Day by day the record of your words, your actions, and your influence, is being made in the books of heaven. This you must meet.”—[The Youth’s Instructor, May 26, 1898](#). (See also [The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 3:1153](#).)

[8]

It was quite evidently Ellen White’s purpose, not so much to delineate the contents of each heavenly book or to describe what they looked like, as to emphasize the fact that God’s records are complete, and to appeal to her readers to be prepared for the judgment. In the typical service “all were required to afflict their souls by repentance and humiliation before the Lord” on the Day of Atonement. So we today should afflict our souls by “sorrow for sin and true repentance.” We should put away the “light, frivolous spirit indulged by so many professed Christians,” and endeavor, through “earnest warfare,” to subdue the evil tendencies which strive for the mastery in our souls ([The Great Controversy, 490](#)).

Chapter 6—Judgment Begins at the House of God

Drawing her cue from the sanctuary in the wilderness, Ellen White taught that the investigative judgment deals only with the names of those who, at sometime in their lives, have confessed their sins to God. She stated:

“In the typical service only those who had come before God with confession and repentance, and whose sins, through the blood of the sin offering, were transferred to the sanctuary, had a part in the service of the Day of Atonement. So in the great day of final atonement and investigative judgment the only cases considered are those of the professed people of God. The judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work, and takes place at a later period.”—[The Great Controversy](#), 480.

Elsewhere she referred to “the professed people of God” as “all who have ever entered the service of God” ([The Great Controversy](#), 480) “children of God” ([The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 7:987](#)), “all who have believed on Jesus” ([The Great Controversy](#), 483), and “those who in all ages have professed to be followers of Christ” ([The Great Controversy](#), 428).

The judgment of the dead began in 1844 and “when that work shall be completed, judgment is to be pronounced upon the living” ([Selected Messages 1:125](#)). How soon will the judgment of the living begin? Ellen White answers, “Soon—none know how soon—it will pass to the cases of the living” ([The Great Controversy](#), 490). Though we don’t know how soon, we do know that “the great work of judging the living is about to begin” ([Testimonies for the Church 6:130](#)). That statement was written in the year 1900.

When the Lord takes up the names of the living, will He (or does He) decide their destiny one at a time, so that the judgment

is completed on some of the living while not yet begun on others? There are those who think so, for Ellen White said, “We know not how soon our names may be taken onto the lips of Christ, and our cases be finally decided” ([Selected Messages 1:125](#)).

On the other hand, there are those who believe that time is not a factor with God, that He may even now have completed His judgment of the living, and that the records of the living are summed up anew, day by day, and even hour by hour, for Ellen White has also said, “God judges every man according to his work. Not only does He judge, but He sums up, day by day and hour by hour, our progress in well doing” ([The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 7:987](#)).

[9]

Chapter 7—The Basis of God’s Decision

Far more important than when God will decide is how He will decide our destiny. What standard does He use and how will He determine whether or not that standard has been met? Ellen White answers these questions for us. The standard, she says, is “the law of God...by which the characters and the lives of men will be tested in the judgment” ([The Great Controversy, 482](#)). In support of her position she quotes [Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14](#), [James 2:12](#), and [Romans 2:12-16](#). She is also quick to point out that faith in Jesus Christ is essential in order for men to be able to keep God’s law and that “without faith it is impossible to please Him” ([The Great Controversy, 436](#)).

Since all men are different, and no two people have identical heredity and backgrounds, God does not expect the same response from one as from another. Ellen White states:

“He has given light and life to all, and according to the measure of light given, each is to be judged.”—[The Desire of Ages, 210](#).

“Those who have an opportunity to hear the truth, and yet take no pains to hear or understand it, thinking that if they do not hear, they will not be accountable, will be judged guilty before God the same as if they had heard and rejected.... Jesus has made atonement for all sins of ignorance, but there is no provision made for willful blindness.”—513C 1145.

“None will be condemned for not heeding light and knowledge that they never had, and they could not obtain.”—513C 1145. (See also [Testimonies for the Church 2:691](#).)

When Ellen White speaks of light that is brought to an individual, she specifies that it is not light unless he understands it. “We shall not

be held accountable,” she states, “for the light that has not reached our perception, but for that which we have resisted and refused” ([The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 5:1145](#)). Again, she declares that it is “the truth that has reached their understanding, the light that has shone in the soul” that will condemn sinners in the judgment ([The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 5:1145](#)).

On such a basis, there is hope even for those in heathen lands who have never had the opportunity of hearing the gospel. Ellen White unequivocally declares:

“Among the heathen are those who worship God ignorantly, those to whom the light is never brought by human instrumentality,

yet they will not perish. Though ignorant of the written law of God, they have heard His voice speaking to them in nature, and have done the things that the law required. Their works are evidence that the Holy Spirit has touched their hearts, and they are recognized as the children of God. [10]

“How surprised and gladdened will be the lowly among the nations, and among the heathen, to hear from the lips of the Saviour, ‘Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me’! How glad will be the heart of Infinite Love as His followers look up with surprise and joy at His words of approval.”—[The Desire of Ages, 638](#).

Again and again, she emphasizes the importance of our attitude toward the needy and the suffering. She states:

“At the last day the final decision by the Judge of all the earth will turn upon our interest in, and practical labor for, the needy, the oppressed, the tempted. You cannot always pass these by on the other side, and yourselves find entrance as redeemed sinners into the city of God.”—[The Review and Herald, October 30, 1886, p. 738](#).

“He has plainly stated that the decisions of the last day will turn upon the question of practical benevolence.”—[The Review and Herald, July 11, 1899](#), p. 437.

“When the nations are gathered before Him, there will be but two classes, and their eternal destiny will be determined by what they have done or have neglected to do for Him in the person of the poor and suffering.”—[The Desire of Ages, 637](#).

Ellen White promises us that “The Judge of all the earth will render a just decision. He will not be bribed; He cannot be deceived” ([In Heavenly Places, 360](#)). We are admonished, “See that you have the oil of grace in your hearts,” for “the possession of this will make every difference with you in the judgment” ([The Review and Herald, March 7, 1894](#), p. 194). We are reminded, too, that it is “only the work accomplished by much prayer, which is sanctified by the merit of Christ,” that “will stand the test of the judgment” ([Christian Service, 263](#)).

Chapter 8—The Blotting Out of Sin

Those whose life records are examined in the investigative judgment will have either their names or their sins blotted out. “When any have sins remaining upon the books of record, unrepented of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the book of life.” On the other hand,

“All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life.”—[The Great Controversy](#), 483.

Ellen White encourages her readers to confess their sins and believe that God will forgive them. She writes: [11]

“We have the precious promise that every sin, if sincerely repented of, will be forgiven. To turn to God with contrition of soul, claiming the merits of the blood of Christ, will bring to us light, pardon, and peace. But we must turn to the Lord with full purpose of heart, with a decision to be doers of the words of Christ. Our past sins will sometimes come to mind, and cast a shadow over our faith, so that we can see nothing but merited punishment in store for us. But at such times, while we feel sorrow for sin, we should look to Jesus, and believe that He has pardoned our transgressions.”—[The Review and Herald](#), January 13, 1891, p. 17.

“We can have a clean record in heaven today, and know that God accepts us.”—[The S.D.A. Bible Commentary](#) 7:989.

The blotting out of sin, which takes place “in the closing work of Judgment” ([The Spirit of Prophecy 4:309](#)) will be followed by the close of probation ([The Great Controversy, 436](#)), the placing of all confessed sins on Satan ([Early Writings, 280, 281](#)), the time of trouble ([Spiritual Gifts 3:134](#)), the seven last plagues ([Early Writings, 36](#)), and the second coming of Christ ([The Great Controversy, 485](#)).

Chapter 9—The Judge

It is the “Ancient of Days,” “the Judge of all the earth,” “God the Father,” who presides in the investigative judgment ([The Great Controversy, 479](#)). While the Father presides, the Son, according to [1 John 2:1](#) and [Hebrews 9:24](#), appears as the sinners’ intercessor and advocate, “to plead in their behalf before God” ([The Great Controversy, 482](#)). “Jesus stands in the holy of holies,” we are told, “now to appear in the presence of God for us. There He ceases not to present His people moment by moment, complete in Himself” ([The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 7:933](#)). It is not until the investigative judgment is completed that Christ will assume the office of Supreme Judge. Ellen White states:

“The One who has stood as our Intercessor; who hears all penitential prayers and confessions; who is represented with a rainbow, the symbol of grace and love, encircling His head, is soon to cease His work in the heavenly sanctuary. Grace and mercy will then descend from the throne and justice will take their place. He for whom His people have looked will assume His right—the office of Supreme Judge.”—[The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 7:989](#).

Christ is the judge who will pronounce the sentence of reward or punishment, the One appointed to “execute the judgment” ([The Desire of Ages, 210](#)). Ellen White explains further:

“The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. He hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man....

“God designed that the Prince of sufferers in humanity should be judge of the whole world. He who

[12]

came from the heavenly courts to save man from eternal death; He whom men despised, rejected, and upon whom they heaped all the contempt of which human beings inspired by Satan, are capable; He who submitted to be arraigned before an earthly tribunal, and who suffered the ignominious death of the cross, He alone is to pronounce the sentence of reward or of punishment....

“In that day of final punishment and reward, both saints and sinners will recognize in Him who was crucified the Judge of all living.”—[The Review and Herald, November 22, 1898](#), p. 745.

It is doubtless in this light—that Christ executes judgment—that the following citations are to be understood:

“There is only one Judge—the One who died for us, who took upon Himself our nature and all the infirmities of humanity, that we might stand on vantage-ground with God.”—[The Review and Herald, January 19, 1905](#), p. 9.

“The Father is not the Judge. The angels are not. He who took humanity upon Himself, and in this world lived a perfect life, is to judge us. He only can be our Judge. Will you remember this, brethren? Will you remember it, ministers? Will you remember it, fathers and mothers? Christ took humanity that He might be our Judge.”—[Testimonies for the Church 9:185](#).

Chapter 10—The Close of the Millennium

During the thousand years which follow Christ's return, the saints join the Lord in judging the wicked ([The Great Controversy, 661](#)). At the close of the Millennium the drama reaches its peak when "the whole wicked world stand arraigned at the bar of God" ([The Great Controversy, 668](#)).

"What a solemn scene it will be! What a reckoning will have to be made for nailing to the cross One who came to our world as a living epistle of the law. God will ask each one the question, What have you done with my only-begotten Son? What will those answer who have refused to accept the truth? They will be obliged to say, 'We hated Jesus, and cast Him out.'"—[The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 5:1106, 1107](#).

Before the assembled inhabitants of the universe Christ pronounces sentence upon the rebels against His government. The books of record are opened and the wicked are conscious of every sin they have ever committed ([The Great Controversy, 666](#)). "The whole life will come in review like the scenes in a panorama" ([The Review and Herald, November 4, 1884](#), p. 690). The sins of all the wicked will be openly known. Nothing will be hid. Ellen White declares:

"When the Judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened, there will be many astonishing disclosures.... Secret sins will then be laid open to the view of all. Motives and intentions which have been hidden in the dark chambers of the heart will be revealed. Designing

ambitions, selfish purposes, will be seen where the outward appearance told only of a desire to honor God and to do good to men... Hypocritical, ambitious teachers may now be admired and [13]

exalted by men; but God, who knows the secrets of the heart, will strip off the deceptive covering, and reveal them as they are. Every hypocrite will be unmasked.”—[The Review and Herald, January 1, 1884](#), p. 2.

“In that solemn and awful hour the unfaithfulness of the husband will be opened to the wife, and the unfaithfulness of the wife, to the husband. Parents will then learn, for the first time, what was the real character of their children.”—[The Review and Herald, March 27, 1888](#), p. 194.

“The fruit of every selfish, arbitrary exaction will be made plain, and men will see the results of their doings even as God sees them.”—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 224](#). (See also [Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 241, 242](#).)

Sin will be confessed then, and the confession will be “most public” ([The Review and Herald, December 16, 1880](#), p. 770). Too late to benefit the wrongdoer or to save others from deception, the confession will only testify that the sinner’s condemnation is just. Even “Satan bows down, and confesses the justice of his sentence” ([The Great Controversy, 670](#)). This, of course, is the primary purpose of the whole judgment process. It is God’s means of vindicating His own character and His government. It is His method of convincing the universe that He has been eminently fair and just in all His dealing with men and angels since time began.

“The judgment scene will take place in the presence of all the worlds; for in this judgment the government of God will be vindicated, and His law will stand forth as ‘holy, and just, and good.’ Then every case will be decided, and sentence will be passed upon all. Sin will not then appear attractive, but will be seen in all its hideous magnitude.”—[The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 7:986](#).

This grand climax of all history was often in the mind of Ellen White. She writes:

“When speaking to congregations, there is always before me the final judgment, which is to be held in the presence of the world, when the law of God’s government is to be vindicated, His name glorified, His wisdom acknowledged and testified of as just to believers and unbelievers. This is not the judgment of one person, nor of a nation, but of a whole world of intelligent beings, of all orders, of all characters. The judgment takes place first upon the dead, then upon the living, then the whole universe will be assembled to hear the sentence. I feel as if I were in the presence of the whole universe of heaven, bearing my message for time and for eternity.”—[Letter 109, 1898](#).

“In the day of final judgment, every lost soul will understand the nature of his own rejection of truth. The cross will be presented, and its real bearing will be seen by every mind that has been blinded by transgression. Before the vision of Calvary with its mysterious Victim, sinners will stand condemned. Every lying excuse will be swept away. Human apostasy will appear in its heinous character. Men will see what their choice has been. Every question of truth and error in

the long-standing controversy will then have been made plain. [14]
In the judgment of the universe, God will stand clear of blame for the existence or continuance of evil. It will be demonstrated that the divine decrees are not accessory to sin. There was no defect in God’s government, no cause for disaffection. When the thoughts of all hearts shall be revealed, both the loyal and the rebellious will unite in declaring, ‘Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, Oh Lord, and glorify Thy name? ... for Thy judgments are made manifest’ ([Revelation 15:3, 4](#)).”—[The Desire of Ages, 58](#).

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February 25, 1980