

Twelve Strikes and he's Out?

www.sdadefend.com

and Dr. Ford's So-
called New Theology

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2. Scripture Citations

Unless otherwise specified, I employ the New International Version (NIV), 1990 British edition, throughout for all such citations, with all emphasis supplied.

3. DARCOM Series

Reference to the seven volumes of the Daniel and Revelation Committee's apologia for exclusive Seventh-day Adventist dogma is facilitated by the designations *DARCOM 1-7*. The "full" bibliographies are as follows, sharing these details – ed. F. B. Holbrook (Washington [2, 3]/Silver Spring [1, 4-7]: Biblical Research Institute):

DARCOM 1: Shea, W. H., *Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation*, 1992².

DARCOM 2: *Symposium on Daniel: Introductory and Exegetical Studies*, 1986.

DARCOM 3: *The Seventy Weeks, Leviticus, and the Nature of Prophecy*, 1986.

DARCOM 4: *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, 1989.

DARCOM 5: *Doctrine of the Sanctuary: a Historical Survey (1845-1863)*, 1989.

DARCOM 6: *Symposium on Revelation: Introductory and Exegetical Studies, Book 1*, 1992.

DARCOM 7: *Symposium on Revelation: Exegetical and General Studies, Book 2*, 1992.

Twelve Strikes and he's Out? www.sdadefend.com and Dr. Ford's So-called New Theology

The earnest Christians at the large web site www.sdadefend.com would likely deem it a badge of high honour to be called ultra right-wing Seventh-day Adventists. For they valiantly defend their precious Church's historic teachings and mores against perceived attacks on two fronts, certain apostate leaders and teachers of heresy, especially Dr. Desmond Ford and what they label his new theology.

Many things *can* and *should* be said here. All that can concern this brief essay, though, is a relatively minor menu item of this web site. However, it does offer quite an excellent sampling of its credibility.

Most readers will be aware that in August, 1980, many of Seventh-day Adventism's world-wide officials and scholars attended the Glacier View Colloquium in Colorado to assess Dr. Ford's 1000-page Position Paper after suspicions of heresy had widened and deepened.¹ In the ensuing correspondence with his Division President, he appended to his letter of August 26, 1980 his own summary of twelve consensus points from that Colloquium which he considered confirmed his Paper.² One of the menu items of this site in the **DOCTRINES** section of its Main Menu is its **New Theology Errors Special**, which links to its rebuttal, "Reply to Des Ford's 12 Points". It is this rebuttal which I evaluate here.

However, I must also venture a little further. This rebuttal closes with a contextual survey derived largely from official Church literature.³ This begins with the accurate statement: "*The final decision of PREXAD to recommend that the Australasian Division revoke Dr. Ford's ministerial credentials, [sic] was partly based on his 'Twelve Points.'*"⁴ Yet even if it echoes isolated opinions in official literature,⁵ it is an attack on sweeping, *official* Seventh-day Adventist conclusions, not merely Dr. Ford, whenever his summary is accurate! I will therefore append a brief appraisal of his accuracy at each point. However, this is no place to assess his theology, let alone mere Seventh-day Adventist *conclusions* beyond its *official* statements. My primary concern can be merely a critique of www.sdadefend.com's *unofficial* apologia.

The www.sdadefend.com Rebuttals

Point 1

Dr. Ford's initial point is this: "It is the little horn, and not the sins of the saints, which defiles the sanctuary."⁶ In denial, Seventh-day Adventism's unofficial apologists at www.sdadefend.com insist:

The Little Horn power in Daniel 7 and 8 is Rome. It is not the work of the cleansing experience within the heavenly Sanctuary to remove from it Rome's sins. But Desmond Ford believes that the Little Horn power is Antiochus IV Epiphanes, a minor Syrian king of the second century B.C. It is inconceivable that this petty king is all there is to this Judgment.

The cleansing or restoration of the Sanctuary in heaven that takes place at the end of the 2300 year prophecy of Daniel 8:14, [sic] is understood by comparing Scripture with Scripture. The daily sacrifices in the earthly sanctuary typified the death of Christ, and with it the daily ministrations in the heavenly Sanctuary by which the sins of God's people who asked for forgiveness were transferred to the records of the heavenly Sanctuary. As in the earthly type, the transgressions of God's people were transferred to the Sanctuary by means of the sacrificial blood carried into it.

At the end of the year, the cleansing or justifying of the Sanctuary took place. This was done by cleansing the record of sin from the Sanctuary. This occurred at the time of the final atonement or Day of Atonement experience (Lev 16). Down near the end of time, at the termination of the 2300 year prophecy, the Heavenly Sanctuary must also be cleansed of the records of sin contained within it. All who have ever professed faith in Christ are recorded in the Book of Life. During the Investigative Judgment, the records of their life deeds are examined to see whether or not their profession was a genuine one. In some cases, names are removed, and in others names are retained. And their sins are blotted out. Read *Great Controversy*, pages 417-422, [sic] and 479-491 for a thorough study and many Biblical references.

Point 2

Ford's second point is that "The cleansing of Daniel 8:14 has to do with restoring the damage done not by the saints but by the little horn." But to this stance www.sdadefend.com demurs as follows:

Point Two is closely related to Point One. Ford is again speculating. In the earthly type, it was not the sins of the surrounding nations that were taken within the sanctuary in the daily service, it was the sins of God's people that were transferred into it. This is repeatedly shown in Leviticus, the first ten chapters (read Lev 10:17). And in the yearly service... described in Leviticus 16, only the sins of God's professed people were involved, not some particular apostate religion or some heathen people. The little horn power... did not defile the sacrifice—Calvary—nor did it defile the work that followed it, within the heavenly Sanctuary, which in 1844 culminated in the beginning of the Investigative Judgment and the Cleansing of the Sanctuary.

The principle of "transfer of sin" is clearly taught in the Bible. And it is only the sins of God's people that are transferred. This is the only thing that, in Scripture, ever defiles the sanctuary.—And [sic] we cannot understand the heavenly Sanctuary without first understanding the principles underlying the earthly. A man sins and because of this he, himself, "bears his iniquity" (Lev 5:17). He must come to the priest with the sacrifice and confess "that thing" (Lev 5:5). The priest makes an atonement for the sinner (Lev 4:30-31) as he transfers the sin to himself by eating of the flesh (Lev 8[6?]:26, [sic] 10:16-18). In doing this the priest is symbolic of Him who "bare the sin of many," upon whom the Lord laid "the iniquity of us all" (Isa 53:12,6 [sic])...

Point 3

Thirdly, as Dr. Ford views it: "The meaning of the key verb in Daniel 8:14 is not basically 'cleanse,' but justify, vindicate, restore." However, the apologists at www.sdadefend.com agree only in part:

The Hebrew word used here in Daniel 8:14 is nisdaq [sic], a word that is rather broad in its spectrum of meanings. Its basic one is "make right," "justify," "vindicate," or "restore," but "purify" or "cleanse" may be included within its range of concepts. Narrowing the word down closer than this is difficult, because in 8:14 the verb nisdaq [sic] is in the passive (niph'al) form, and this is not found elsewhere in Scripture. Nisdaq [sic] comes from the root word, sadaq [sic], which includes all of the above meanings. The basic thought of nisdaq [sic] in 8:14 is "to be put in a rightful condition." And this is exactly what took place on the Day of Atonement—the Sanctuary was restored to its rightful condition—it was cleansed.

Daniel 8:14 connects Daniel 7 and 8 with Leviticus 16. Now, Leviticus 16 deals with the righting of the Sanctuary by the putting away of sin from it, but Daniel 7 and 8 are concerned with the other aspect of this work—[sic]the vindication of the character of God in this final work of cleansing—[sic]and these two chapters in Daniel explain the Investigative Judgment and give the prophetic date when it shall begin. God's decisions in the Investigative Judgment regarding who will be saved and who will be lost will justify His work in the Sanctuary, and will evoke from all men the confession, "Thy way, O God, is in the Sanctuary" (Ps 77:13), and "Just and true are Thy ways" (Rev 15:9). No longer will "the place of His Sanctuary" be "cast down" (Dan 8:11)—for God and His work in the Sanctuary will be declared right (Dan 8:14). The Sanctuary will be cleansed from the records of sin and restored to its rightful place, God will be vindicated before all, and the people of the Sanctuary will be made right and restored to their original home.

Point 4

Fourthly, Dr. Ford is firmly persuaded that "There is no obvious verbal link between Daniel 8 and Leviticus 16." Not so, protest the concerned apologists at www.sdadefend.com, without hesitation:

Daniel 8:14 and Leviticus 16 are indeed connected by a very obvious verbal link. 8:14 is speaking about the restoring of the sanctuary to its rightful place. How this was done in the type is revealed only in Leviticus 16. The daily service, explained in Leviticus 1-10, involved a continual transfer of sin to the sanctuary. The yearly service, explained in Leviticus 16, explains how this sin was ultimately blotted from the sanctuary. Ford is trying so hard to keep us from seeing the obvious, [sic] that he no longer sees it himself. Daniel 8:14 tells us the length of time of this time prophecy. Daniel 9:25-27 explains the events at the beginning and first part of this prophecy. Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14, 22, 26-27 explains the Investigative Judgment that would begin at its conclusion. Leviticus 16 explains the cleansing that follows this examination... In the antitype, it comes down at the end of time, just prior to the second coming of Christ. The investigation must precede the rewards, for when He returns He will give every man according to his works (Rev 22:12).

As a result of God's decisions regarding who shall live forever and who shall die an eternal death, all will say, "Thou art righteous, O Lord" (Rev 16:5), and, "True and righteous are Thy judgments" (Rev 16:7). Satan himself will be led to acknowledge God's justice (G. C. [sic] 670-671). The word translated "just" and "righteous" in these passages in Revelation is dikaios [sic], which is equivalent to the Hebrew word, saddiq [sic], derived from sadaq [sic], which is used in Daniel 8:14.

Four events occur as a result of the work of the antitypical examination and cleansing of the sanctuary: (1) The Sanctuary itself will be cleansed from its records of sin and it will be restored to its rightful place. (2) The God of the Sanctuary and His Law will be vindicated before all the universe. (3) The people of the Sanctuary will

be made right and restored to their original home, forever to live with Jesus. And (4), the dominion of Satan and his followers will be removed and they will be as the chaff which the wind driveth away. The little horn power—Satan through Rome—has sought to destroy God’s people (7:21,25 [sic]), dishonor the character of God (7:25), and take away from men’s minds the truth of Christ’s mediatorial work in the Sanctuary (8:11), and as Ford is doing, cast it to the ground. But the little horn and its errors will be destroyed.

Point 5

Dr. Ford’s fifth point is, “The year-day principle is not explicit in Scripture.” But this will never do:

The year-day principle of prophetic interpretation is very clearly given in Scripture. In Numbers 14:34, a number is given—[sic]forty days (Num 13:25, [sic] 14:34) and then we are told that it will be fulfilled in an actual span of forty years (Num 14:33-34). This is a Bible Time Prophecy, and this instruction is part of a direct quotation from God, found in verses 27-35. If we cannot accept what is Biblical and that which is told us directly by our Creator Himself, what will we believe? There is nothing left for us to accept but error. Then there is Ezekiel 4:5-6. A number is given—forty days. We are then told that it will be fulfilled in a predicted time span of forty years. This is the day-year principle—a valid principle of interpreting time lengths of prophecies given to us in the Bible. We didn’t dream up this day-year principle as a speculation apart from the Bible. We found it a distinctive principle given us within the Bible.

There are two main types of Bible prophecy—Classical and apocalyptic. Classical prophecies dealt with ancient Israel and the surrounding nations. Literal predictions are involved. Literal persons, places and events are described. Time-spans in years are generally given. These were literal prophecies and employed literal time.

Apocalyptic prophecies, on the other hand, very frequently made use of symbols. Angels frequently appear. Scenes from both heaven and earth were shown to the prophet. The overall struggle between good and evil is a persistent theme. Symbolic descriptions are primarily used, and time periods in very short periods, generally days, are usually given. These are symbolic prophecies and employ symbolic time.

Classical prophecies dealt with situations which were to arise in the immediate or near future. They were accompanied by predicted time-spans covering many years. But apocalyptic prophecies were strikingly different. Long-range, panoramic views were given, such as the interlocked prophecy of Daniel 2, 7, and 8, which carries us from Nebuchadnezzar’s time (Dan 2:38) down to the Second Advent (2:44). Yet time-span prophecies are given in connection with this dovetailed prophecy that would be only a few days in length—if interpreted literally. These apocalyptic prophecies, so gigantic in scope and so powerfully given in symbol, were not to be interpreted in literal time. We were to use the key God has given us—the day-year principle...

Point 6

To some extent, the apologists at www.sdadefend.com choose to interpret Dr. Ford’s sixth point: “Hebrews 9 does draw on the Day of Atonement to illustrate that which Christ did by His sacrifice.”

In other words, did Christ enter the Most Holy Place and complete the atonement in 31 A.D.? According to the sanctuary types of Leviticus 1-10, and 16, He did not. According to the time prophecy of Daniel 8:14, He did not. According to the teachings of Paul in Hebrews 9, He did not. Let us consider Hebrews 9:

(1) The Greek word for “sanctuary” in this chapter is ta hagia which means “the— [sic] plural.” hagia means “holies,” or “holy places.” Paul is speaking of the sanctuary of two holy places, or rooms. Ta hagia is used only nine times in the N.T., and all are in the book of Hebrews (8:2; 9:1,2,8,12,24,25 [sic]; 10:19; 13:11). Paul defines terms in 9:1-3, where he tells us about the entire sanctuary, then the first apartment, and then the second apartment. He gives us two meanings of ta hagia: 9:1 (“sanctuary”)—the entire sanctuary of two apartments, and 9:2 (“sanctuary”)—the first apartment. Ta hagia means the entire sanctuary, but in 9:2 he applied it only to the first apartment. Can ta hagia also mean “second apartment?” No, it cannot, for in 9:3, Paul specifically tells us the word he has in mind when he speaks of the most holy place,—[sic]and he uses a different Greek word: hagia hagian [sic] (“holy of holies”—literally). The King James Version correctly translates ta hagia in 9:24 (“holy places”), and incorrectly translates it in 9:8 (“holiest of all”), and 10:19 (“the holiest”). In 9:12 and 9:25 it gives “holy place.” Ta hagia can only mean “first apartment” or “two-apartmented sanctuary,” and nothing else... Jesus did not enter once and for all into the most holy place in 31 A.D. He entered the sanctuary and first apartment then.

(2) The message of Hebrews 9 also disproves Ford’s theory. Chapter 7: Jesus is our priest. Chapter 8: His priesthood is carried on in the Sanctuary in heaven. Chapter 9 is divided into four sections: [1] 9:1-7, [2] 9:9-11, [3] 9:12-23, and [4] 9:24-10-18 [sic]. It is by a misreading of verse 8 that Ford introduces his error. Here is the error: Verse 6 speaks about second apartment, and verse 8 speaks about holiest of all, therefore verse 8 and the following verses are speaking about the Day of Atonement. Here is the truth: 9:1-5 tells about the two rooms and what is in each one. 9:6-7 tells about the two phases of its work—the daily and the yearly services. 9:8 begins a new development of thought: Here is what it says:

In view of all we have so far learned (in the book of Hebrews), the Holy Spirit is teaching us that the priest would not enter the heavenly Sanctuary (ta hagia-[sic]incorrectly translated “the holiest” in KJV) as long as the earthly one still had a significance, or meaning, before God. 9:13:23 [sic] brings a still further development of thought: Christ has entered this sanctuary with His own blood, not with animal blood. 9:24:10:18 [sic] tells us more: Christ’s [sic] ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary will take away our sins, and this is something that animal blood and the sacrificial “shadow” laws could near [sic] do. 9:19-39 is an appeal to come to Jesus in the Heavenly Sanctuary today, by faith, and have patience and continuence [sic] in right living, while His entire work on our behalf continues. Endure to the very end of your life,— [sic] and you are to do this by faith...

Point 7

Dr. Ford receives no commendation whatever from www.sdadefend.com for his seventh point: “‘Within the veil’ applies to the second veil, not the first, and points to access to the Most Holy Place.”

Ford is here referring to Hebrews 6:19, [sic] Jesus went “within the veil” into the Heavenly Sanctuary at His ascension in 31 A.D. He entered directly into the presence of God at that time, as He went “within the veil” into the first apartment (G. C. 412:0 [sic]) before the throne of God (EW 55-56). The first apartment veil is mentioned 11 times in the O. T., [sic] and in the King James Version is called a “hanging.” The second apartment veil is mentioned 24 times. The sanctuary veil is mentioned six times in the N.T. Three of these refer to the veil rent at Christ’s death (Matt 27:51, Mk 15:38, Lk 23:45); the other three are found in the book of Hebrews: (6:19, [sic] 9:3, [sic] 10:29). The key is 9:3. Describing the parts of the sanctuary, Paul tells us the “second veil” is before the hagia hagian[sic]—the holy of holies. Paul recognizes and points out that there are two veils in the sanctuary (although Ford says there is only one). In 31 A.D., Jesus went within the veil into the Sanctuary. The early Christians were to follow Christ “within the veil” into His first apartment mediation. We today are to follow Him “within the veil” into His final atonement ministry within the second apartment. In Hebrews, Paul speaks of “within the second veil” when specifically discussing the veil before the second apartment (9:3). He thus shows that he considered both veils to be “entering veils.” Where he only spoke of “veil,’ [sic] we must use our knowledge of the daily and yearly ministry types given us in the Old Testament in order to understand the meaning. And these types reveal a continuous daily mediation within the first apartment, prior to briefer yearly service within the second that would cleanse the sanctuary of sin. Thus we see that “within the veil” in Hebrews 6:19 refers to the first veil that leads into the first apartment, [sic]

Point 8

Dr. Ford’s eighth point is that “Hebrews does not teach a two-apartment ministry (or two phases).” Not surprisingly, the devout Seventh-day Adventists at www.sdadefend.com disagree completely:

Point Eight is closely related to Point Ten. Ford artificially divides Scripture in order to eliminate its basic truths. He says that the book of Hebrews does not teach a two-apartment ministry. (1) He says this, well-knowing that the other primary explanations of the sanctuary service—Exodus and Leviticus—very clearly teach a two-apartment ministry. Read Exodus 25 over to Leviticus 11, and also chapter 16. (2) He says this, well-knowing that the book of Hebrews teaches it also (Heb 9:1-7).

In Hebrews we find Paul’s most carefully organized book... Step by step he introduces and develops his concepts to the Hebrew Christians of his time. But it is not until Chapter Eight that he brings in the fact that Christ our priest has a Sanctuary that He mediates in, and then we are immediately told that this Sanctuary is in heaven. Then in Chapter Nine Paul for the first time explains what this Sanctuary is like. In 9:1-5 he tells us about the two apartments of this Sanctuary and what is in them. In 9:6-7 he mentions the daily and the yearly services. Then in verse 8 he continues by telling us that the way into the heavenly Sanctuary (ta hagia, incorrectly translated “the holiest” in the KJV) was not to be clearly revealed as long as the earthly still had meaning in God’s eyes. At the death of Christ this took place. At this point in Hebrews Nine, Paul turns His [sic] attention to explaining about the blood of Christ and how greatly inferior to it is the blood of animals.

In Paul’s explanation of the Sanctuary service, he clearly shows the similarities between the heavenly and the earthly sanctuaries, that the heavenly is patterned after the earthly, that within the sanctuary there are two apartments, and that within each is a special priestly service.

This truth that the earthly sanctuary and its services are patterned after the one in heaven is clearly stated in Scripture. The earthly was to be constructed according to a divinely given pattern (Ex 25 [sic] :8-9,40, [sic] 26:30, [sic] 27:8, Num 8:4). Paul, in introducing the fact of the heavenly Sanctuary in Hebrews Eight, carefully fills out this picture. The ministry of the earthly priests was an “example and shadow of heavenly things” (Heb 8:5), and in proof of this he then quotes Exodus 25:40 (Heb 8:5). Jesus is the priest of the heavenly... sanctuary (Heb 8:1-2). He is the priest of the tabernacle “not made with hands” (Heb 9:11), the one which “the Lord pitched and not man” (Heb 8:2). The “shadows” of earth (Heb 10:1) help us to more clearly grasp the realities of heaven.

Point 9

For a change, though, the apologists of www.sdadefend.com respond, “There is no disagreement here”, to Dr. Ford’s ninth point: “Christ, not the Father, is the great Judge in the final judgment.”

The Father is the Judge (1 Pet 1:17; 2:21-23), but elsewhere, the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son (Jn 5:22, 27). For this purpose Jesus came into the world (Jn 9:39), but He was not at that time the Judge (Jn 12:47), although its basis was laid then (Jn 12:31). The judgment takes place at the time of the decisions over the Mark of the Beast, prior to the Second Advent (Rev 14:6-12, cf. 11:18-19, Mal 3:1-4, G. C.424:3,426:1 [sic] and Dan 12:1). The [sic] Second Advent will be a time of Judgment or separation (Matt 25:31, 2 Tim [sic] 4:1). There will be a Judgment during the Millennium (Rev 20:4), when the saints will sit on judgment thrones judging the world and angels (Rev 20:4, 1 Cor 6:2-3). This will be followed by a Judgment after the Millennium (Rev 20:12-15). God will judge the world by Jesus Christ (Rom 2:16; 3:6) and will stand [sic] before His judgment seat (Rom 14:10, 2 Cor 5:10 (cf. [sic] Matt 27:19, Ac 18:12). Jesus will execute the Judgment (Jude 15).

The Spirit of Prophecy clarifies the picture very nicely: At Calvary, the Father assumed the character of Judge toward Christ (TM 246 [“Now is come the Judgment”—Jn 12:31] . [sic] In the Investigative Judgment prior to the Second Advent, the Father presides as the Judge (GC 479), Jesus appears as our Advocate (GC 482-4 [sic]), and Satan is the accuser (GC 484). The Judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work and takes place at a later time (GC 480). Following the Investigative Judgment, the separation between the good and bad takes place at the Second Coming (COL 122-123). Christ is the Judge in the Sentencing Judgment of the wicked during the Millennium (DA 210, EW 52-53, 291, GC 661). The redeemed will participate in it (EW 52,290-1, [sic] GC 661). Satan and his angels are judged at this time (EW 291, GC 661). At the close of the Millennium, the Executive Judgment occurs, and again Christ is the Judge (DA 210, EW 52-54, 291, GC 666) and will pronounce the final sentence (GC 666). Christ has been appointed to execute the judgment (DA 210).

Point 10

Dr. Ford equally concludes that “We should not speak of our Lord’s heavenly ministry in terms of apartments.” But this, his tenth point, is vigorously disputed at the web site www.sdadefend.com:

... Paul tells us that the Old Testament sanctuary had two apartments and he carefully describes them and the work done within them (Heb 9:1-5). And he tells us that its holy places were “patterns of things in the heavens” (9:23)... The Sanctuary in Heaven is the Great Original, of which the Sanctuary built by Moses was but a copy.

This abiding place of the King of Kings, where “thousand thousands minister unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before Him” was prophetically seen by Daniel in a vision of the last days (Dan 7:10). John the Revelator in vision saw “a door opened in Heaven.” He was called to enter it (Rev 4:1), and within he was granted a view of the Temple of God in Heaven, there to behold “seven lamps of fire burning before the throne” (Rev 4:5). According to what he there saw, the throne was in the first apartment, for John saw the seven-branched lampstand beside it. And he saw One come and stand before the altar—the altar of incense—having a golden censer in His hand, “and there was given unto Him [sic] much incense, that He [sic] should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar (the altar of incense within the first apartment) which was before the throne” (Rev 8:3).

John the Revelator thus beheld the coming of Christ to the golden altar to begin the daily mediation within the first apartment of the Sanctuary in Heaven (Rev 8:3-4), just as Daniel the Prophet beheld the coming of Christ to the second apartment of that Temple to begin the Final Mediatorial work of the Investigative Judgment (Dan 7:9-10, 13-14, 22, 26-27)... that Malachi saw in Malachi 3:1-3. Thus, in Revelation 8:3, John looked within the first of the two apartments of the heavenly Sanctuary and viewed the Mediatorial Work of Christ... (Rev 8:4). Then, in his view of the last days, John beholds another entering within the Sanctuary. “The Temple of God was opened” and he looked within the inner veil upon the holy of holies, and beheld the ark of the testament. Thus in our day attention was to be directed to the heavenly Sanctuary and the Law of God within the ark.

Point 11

Penultimately, Dr. Ford states that “The N.T. viewed the second advent as imminent in its day.” Yet even this sweeping theology is virtually anathematical to the apologists of www.sdadefend.com:

This is something of a strange objection to Adventism. One would think that Ford should be able to find better reasons for rejecting the Third Angel’s Message and the Advent Movement than this. Here is his point: Christ was supposed to return for His Second Advent shortly after his [sic] resurrection and ascension to heaven, therefore it is not possible for there to be an Investigative Judgment and a Second Advent in our day. This may seem to be ridiculous reasoning, but theologians sometimes use strained arguments in order to convince others of their ideas. Here is the Scriptural truth of the matter:

The hope of Christ's return was the joy of the Christian world in early New Testament times. But by the time of the second letter that Paul wrote, recorded in Scripture, the early Christians were frankly warned against any such anticipation (2 Thess 2:1-8). He outlined the progress of history from his day forward, showing an understanding of several key points in Daniel's prophecy relating to the fall of the papal power. Although Paul recognized that "these last days" began with the first advent of Christ, he also understood that there was not to be an abrupt end of "these last days" for some time to come. Certain events, requiring time, must take place prior to the Second Advent.

Another example is the prophecy of Revelation Twelve, in which it is shown that though Satan viewed the period following the birth of Christ to be a "short time" (Rev 12:12), yet following this, the predicted flight of the woman—the true church—into the wilderness for 1,260 years would occur.

Then there are the words of Jesus Himself. He did not indicate that there would be a rapid preaching of the gospel to "the cities of Israel" to be followed immediately by His return, before the rest of the world was warned. Read Acts 1:8, Matt 28:19-20, and 24:14. Our safety is in the words of Inspiration.

Desmond Ford has tried so hard to convince himself that his errors are correct that he has officially stated that Christ was incorrect—[sic] in error in regard to some of His ideas. "As we have seen, Christ expected the End [of the world] in His generation, and viewed Jerusalem's fall as part of the eschatological woes."—Manchester Thesis, page 109. Learning from liberals produces error and self-delusion.

Point 12

Finally, Dr. Ford concludes on the positive note, "Sacrificial blood purifies rather than defiles." But Seventh-day Adventism's unofficial apologists at www.sdadefend.com dispute him to the very end:

Point One and Two are closely related to this Twelfth Point. In Scripture, sin is transferred to the sanctuary through blood. This is solidly Biblical, and is explained in the Reply to Point Two. This principle of transfer of sin is taught not only in the first ten chapters of Leviticus, it is also taught in Leviticus 16:21. Great Controversy, 417-422 carefully explains this principle of transferral of sin to the sanctuary by means of blood. Ford is making an issue that does not exist: It is not the blood that defiles, but the sin that it transfers.

Day by day, throughout the year, the sins of Israel were thus transferred to the earthly sanctuary. The blood represented Christ who thus was transferring sin from His repentant child to the sanctuary. On the yearly Day of Atonement these were then cleansed from the sanctuary itself with blood (Lev 16)...

The earthly sanctuary service teaches us that a substitute was accepted in the sinner's stead; but the sin was not thus canceled by the blood of the victim. Rather, a means had been provided by which it was transferred to the sanctuary. By the offering of blood, the sinner acknowledged the authority of the law of God, confessed his guilt in transgression of it, and expressed his desire for pardon through faith in the Redeemer,—[sic]but he was not yet entirely released from the condemnation of that law. This did not occur until the Day of Atonement, at which time the high priest went into the most holy place with blood, and sprinkled it upon the mercy-seat, directly over the law that had been transgressed, to make satisfaction for its claims.

Such was the service performed "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things" (Heb 9:24). And what was done in type or symbol in the earthly sanctuary is done in fact—in reality—in the heavenly. This work of atonement for the removal of sin from the heavenly Sanctuary began in 1844, at the termination of the 2300 year prophecy. But before this can be accomplished, there must first be an examination of the books of record in order to determine who, through genuine repentance and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. At its conclusion, sins are blotted out of the heavenly Sanctuary—and Christ returns for His people.

Evaluation

Basic Hermeneutics

I cannot be certain that every reader will share mostly common ground with me in this assessment. But I can at least reduce confusion by initially stating of my basic hermeneutics. I am a conservative, not fundamentalist, Christian in the grand Reformation tradition, *Sola Scriptura*. I analyse a passage of God's Word on three distinct levels. **Context** defines its key **words**. Each passage is shaped by its book's **purpose** and **structure**. And the book belongs to a literary **genre**, in a discrete **Testament**.

Ellen White's devotees, as at www.sdadefend.com, also face her *equivalent* caveat: "You are to lay aside your ideas at the door of investigation," FE 308. For proof-texting is "wrestling the Scriptures to your own destruction." I am therefore keen to observe whether they heed her cogent counsel, CWE 40, to employ nothing but "sound arguments" that will "bear the closest and most searching scrutiny."

Point 1

Seventh-day Adventism's unofficial apologists at www.sdadefend.com do not begin well by virtually pointing us to Ellen White's GC for their theology. *Dr. Ford's claims can be assessed **only** by open-minded exegesis of Dan. 8:14 in context.*⁷ Instead, they say little more than "He disputes our *settled* stance."

Even an alert, *open-minded* youth would give Dr. Ford a **perfect** score. For one thing, far beyond the *slightest* quibble, the Little Horn's atrocities, 9-12, are what *specifically* defile the sanctuary cultus. Hence the *specific question*, 13, and its *specific answer*, 14! For another, the saints are **absent** in this *entire* context except as *persecuted*, 24, as in 7:21, 25. In fact, I scour the book in vain for even a *hint* that *any* judgment damns *anyone* but the Little Horn,⁸ 7:8-11, 26. Even then, Seventh-day Adventism **excludes** such tyrants from *pre-Advent judgment*!⁹ And the saints are only **rewarded** *corporately*, not *individually*, 21f., 27.

That is, these apologists perpetuate their beloved pioneers' practice of *building distinguishing dogma from **proof-texts** torn jaggedly from their totally transparent contexts*. Only, the latter have the excuse of an era largely *devoid* of finesse in exegesis. The former have **no** excuse to wallow in their ignorance.

Their routine leap from Daniel to Moses may be assessed in their fuller rebuttals.¹⁰ But in passing, why do they *fully* endorse Ellen White's pioneer theology when *she is capable of stark error*, as in siting the judgment of Rev. 20:11-15 *before* the millennium, GC 480? It is equally a striking index of her actual grasp of Dan. 8 that she seems **nowhere** to have even mentioned its **chief** character, that Little Horn!

However, the question remains, Are they attacking Dr. Ford *alone*, or the *majority* of the world-wide Seventh-day Adventist leaders and scholars who attended the Glacier View Colloquium? Here is the portion of their ensuing Consensus Statement¹¹ relevant to this summary point and its companions. Its Hebrew transliteration is original. I have italicised its wording most related to those four points:

The prophetic period of 2300 days (Dan. 8:14) remains a cornerstone of the Adventist understanding of the final judgment. Although this part of our doctrine of the sanctuary is the one most frequently questioned, careful study of the criticisms in the light of the Scriptures confirms its importance and validity.

Three aspects of this prophecy, especially, have been called into question: the year-day relationship; the meaning of the word translated "cleansed" (Dan. 8:14, KJV.) and its connection with the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16); and the context of the prophecy.

The year-day relationship can be Biblically supported, although *it is not explicitly identified as a principle of prophetic interpretation*. It seems obvious, however, that certain prophetic time periods are not meant to be taken literally (e.g., the short periods in Revelation 11:9, 11). Furthermore, the Old Testament provides illustrations of a year-day interchange ability in symbolism (Gen. 29:27; Num. 14:34; Eze. 4:6; Dan. 9:24-27). The year-day relationship also is recognizable in the interlocking of Daniel 8 and 9. Additional support is found from parallel prophecies of the 1260 days-years in Daniel and Revelation (Dan. 7:25; Rev. 12:14; 13:5). Since the prophecy of Daniel 8 is parallel to those of chapters 2, 7, and 11-12, all of which culminate in the kingdom of God at the end of history, it is proper to expect the period represented by the 2300 days to reach to the end time (Dan. 8:17). This is made possible for us by the exegetical application of the year-day relationship.

According to many older versions of the Bible, at the end of the 2300 days the sanctuary is to be "cleansed." The Hebrew word here is *nitsdaq*, which has a broad range of possible meanings. *Its basic idea is "make right," "justify," "vindicate," or "restore";* but "purify" and "cleanse" may be included within its conceptual range. *In Daniel 8:14 it is evident that the word denotes the reversal of the evil caused by the power symbolised by the "little horn,"* and hence probably should be translated "restore." While *there is, therefore, not a strong verbal link between this verse and the Day of Atonement ritual of Leviticus 16,* the passages are, nevertheless, related by their parallel ideas of rectifying the sanctuary from the effects of sin.

Daniel 8 presents the contextual problem of how to relate exegetically the cleansing of the sanctuary at the end of the 2300 days with the activities of the "little horn" during the 2300 days. This wicked power casts down the place of the sanctuary (Dan. 8:11) and thus occasions the need for its restoration or purification. The "little horn," however, is on earth, whereas we understand the sanctuary to be in heaven. But a careful study of Daniel 8:9-26 points to a solution of this difficulty. It becomes clear that heaven and earth are interrelated, so that the attacks of the "little horn" have a cosmic, as well as historical, significance. In this way, we may see how the restoration of the heavenly sanctuary corresponds to – and is a reversal of – the earthly activity of the "little horn." But... we wish to encourage ongoing study of this important prophecy.

Clearly, the apologists at www.sdadefend.com are in dispute with their Church, not just Dr. Ford! He happens to have summarised the relevant portion of its Statement **closely**. Moreover, the latter takes careful *exegetical* account of the Little Horn in Dan. 8. They **ignore** him completely *eisegetically*!

Point 2

Here the precision of the apologists at www.sdadefend.com is largely restricted to their initial statement, “Point Two is closely related to Point One.” For one thing, it is *ludicrous* to claim that “Ford is again speculating.” He sits humbly at Daniel’s feet as a mere student. *They completely ignore his manifest message by clinging to their hidebound opinions in leaping back to Moses.* So much, in fact, that they virtually *rebuke* the seer for his clear context of 8:14! This portion of the Word they profess to heed rebukes their heresy: the sin of the saints is “the only thing that, in Scripture, ever defiles the sanctuary.”

Indeed, so slight is their grasp of the relevant biblical data that they fail even to mention Hezekiah’s restoration of the derelict Temple, summarised in his edict: “Remove all **defilement** from the sanctuary”, 2 Chr. 29:5. The record does not detail precisely what that defilement entailed. But the Hebrew noun נִדְדָּה (*niddā*), normally applied to a woman’s monthly period,¹² and sometimes extended to the abhorrence of sinfulness,¹³ is here synonymous with טִמְאָה (*tumā*),¹⁶ and though it can apply to a *state* of uncleanness,¹⁴ only illicit *objects* could have been dumped in the Kidron Valley. It is especially important to note here that *the sanctuary was cleansed in the very act of trashing its illicit contents.* And the relevant verb טָהַר (*tāhēr*), employed three times in 15-18,¹⁵ is the very one employed in Lev. 16:19 for the cleansing of the internal altar, and of the *contrite* people, 30, by *the Day of Atonement ritual*. In contrast, *unrepentant* sinners also defiled the sanctuary!¹⁶ But that pollution was removed by their removal from the nation, not by the Day of Atonement ritual! There was likewise no special cultus for the cleansing of the *equally* polluted *land*.¹⁷ That is, *even the climactic Day of Atonement ritual played an extremely specialised rôle in cleansing the altar of incense and the people from the pollution of sin.* It is a naïve, utter waste of time to look to Moses if, as in Dan. 8:9-14, the culprit is not a contrite child of Abraham.

For another, *nowhere* in any of their rebuttals do they come to terms even with Moses’ theology of the sanctuary cultus as it treats the *day-to-day* sins of the *common individual*. Having discussed the issue extensively elsewhere,¹⁸ here I repeat just four crucial details. Not a *single* drop of the blood of the relevant sacrifice went beyond the altar of burnt offering *outside* the Holy Place, Lev. 4:27-35. And this very blood is *the sole instrument of atonement*, Lev. 17:11b! So no priest could *possibly* effect atonement by eating *any* portion of *any* sacrifice, which would have been *completely drained* of blood, 19:26. Indeed, there is not a *single* Bible reference providing atonement for sin through eating its sacrifice. That includes Lev. 10:16-20,¹⁹ on which Seventh-day Adventism dangles the *full* weight of its dogma perilously.

Moreover, here Dr. Ford summarises the relevant portion of its Consensus Statement **precisely**. So it is really their own Church, not their arch “heretic”, whom these zealous apologists are attacking!

Point 3

The apologists at www.sdadefend.com begin well by virtually citing their Church’s Consensus Statement. In the process, they rightly imply that Dr. Ford has summarised it **precisely**. So there is no criticism! However, they jump their rails in attempting to drag the purport of the specifically **juris-tic** verb נִשְׂדָּק (*nišdaq*) in Dan 8:14 back into the **purgative** portions of Lev. 16. Nor is it relevant that at its outer limits, its semantic spectrum may include the nuance *cleanse*.²⁰ For *no nuance of any word is active unless an author specifies it by the context in which he embeds it.* And Daniel offers no hint that he employs *nišdaq* as a mere synonym of *tāhēr*. Even if he did, the use of the latter in 2 Chr. 29:15-18 puts paid to *every* suggestion that the Day of Atonement ritual **alone** provided cleansing for the sanctuary.

The remainder of this portion of apologia ventures into Seventh-day Adventist sectarian theology by no means crucial to evaluating Dr. Ford’s third summary point. However, it is a simple matter to provide any open mind with cogent evidence that the former is inept *eisegesis* of Daniel’s prophecy.²¹

Point 4

I need add little more here to what I have said immediately *supra*.²² However, although Dr. Ford’s summary point faithfully echoes the Consensus Statement, I do suggest that the stark dichotomy between Dan. 8 and Lev. 16, on which the prime Seventh-day Adventist dogma founders, would be more manifest were its critics as replete as I have been over the pollution and cleansing of the sanctuary.

Point 5

The year-day principle of prophetic interpretation is a major *sine qua non* of Seventh-day Adventism's very *raison d'être*. Having critiqued it comprehensively elsewhere,²³ here I will be brief and selective.

In this portion of their rebuttal, the apologists at www.sdadefend.com are at pains to insist that this ideology is revealed *clearly* and *explicitly* in Holy Writ. However, they do little more throughout than expose the lamentable paucity of skill which they bring to the towering task of Bible study. Nor does their dearth of familiarity with this ideology place them in *any* sound position to correct others.

According to its lonely exponents, a specific period cited in terms of *days* is read as literal *years*. For example, those 1,260 *symbolic days* of Rev. 12:6 depict 1,260 *literal years* of papal supremacy between A.D. 538 and 1798. That is, this prophecy is viewed as treating this *one* event. However, there is *none* covering the 1,260 days *per se*, even as a historical antecedent. This distinction is *crucial* and *decisive*!



Figure 1: the *Precise Year-day Equivalence Theory*

In contrast, *no such process* occurs in Nu. 14:34. Even Dr. W. G. Johnsson, Seventh-day Adventism's senior Editor, admits: "In the past... we could appeal only to Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6—a rather weak case."²⁴ And Dr. W. H. Shea, its leading, official apologist, perceives the basic problem: "In this instance *a past day* stands for *a future year*; in apocalyptic *a future day* stands for *a future year*."²⁵ Moreover, *the reference mentions two distinct events*, the 40 days the spies explored Canaan, and the 40 years the nation was punished. But *that is not how the year-day principle functions*, as we have just observed.



Figure 2: the *Distinct Essence of Nu. 14:34*

Precisely the same objection cripples Seventh-day Adventism's second classic proof-text. *Eze. 4:4-6 likewise cites two events, not just one*. Moreover, it is even *more remote* from the definition than is Nu. 14:34. As Dr. Shea himself concedes,²⁶ while historicism interprets *prophetic days* as *literal years*, the former completely *reverses* this standard procedure when it associates *past years* with *future days*!



Figure 3: the *Distinct Essence of Eze. 4:4-6*

The basic problem is well exposed by reference to 2 Pet. 3:8. Here the apostle's context is the fulfilment of prophecy, and he begins by specifically associating *days* and *millennia*. But I have yet to find a Seventh-day Adventist who here derives anything like *a day for a thousand years* ideology of prophetic interpretation. For Peter is not discussing that subject. He is affirming God's merciful omniscience.

Likewise, no appeal to respect for sacred Scripture can alter the unequivocal fact that neither Nu. 14:34 nor Eze. 4:4-6 ever had the *slightest* relevance to interpreting prophecy. These tenacious relics of rather naïve Seventh-day Adventist pioneer theology are nothing but *proof-texts torn from their contexts*.

As for labelling Bible prophecy as apocalyptic or classical, the apologists at www.sdadefend.com appear to do no more than summarise theology which first surfaced widely among Seventh-day Adventists in the official, DARCOM²⁷ apologia sponsored by its Biblical Research Institute following the Glacier View Colloquium to settle doctrinal doubts highlighted in the Ford fiasco. The tragedy is that the DARCOM scholars displayed a consistent dearth of facility in the complex controversy.²⁸ And the irony is that their unofficial mimics at www.sdadefend.com seem blissfully unaware that, although they castigate Dr. Ford for sitting at the feet of liberal scholars,²⁹ the DARCOM scholars gleaned their theology primarily from *liberal scholarship that questions Daniel the prophet's historicity*!³⁰ In the process, they and their mimics *ignore* some of the Ellen White theology they claim to heed!³¹

And as for Dr. Ford, he selects only a single sentence from the relevant section of the Consensus Statement, which he quotes *accurately*. Yet this time these apologists echo its context fairly faithfully.

Point 6

The first two passing denials with which the apologists at www.sdadefend.com reject Dr. Ford's sixth point may be dismissed at once. There is **NOTHING** in the Book of Leviticus which would lead a meticulous exegete to deduce that Christ our High Priest had **ANY** Holy Place ministry in heaven.³² And **NOTHING** in Dan. 8 typifies **ANY** of his High Priestly service.³³ So we may move on to the Book of Hebrews. Even then, here I will mostly summarise what I have covered in some detail elsewhere.³⁴

There are at least four lines of explicit exegetical evidence which treat the decisive detail of where Jesus went when he returned to heaven: the location of the Father's throne; the meaning of the phrase εἰς τὸ ἐσώτερον τοῦ καταπετάσματος (*eis to esōteron tou katapetasmatos*), rendered "within the veil", Heb. 6:19; the meaning of the expression τὰ ἅγια (*ta hagia*); the typology of 9. These do not include the typology which Seventh-day Adventism confidently believes it observes in 8:5. For Moses erected the wilderness sanctuary *in accordance with a scale model*, Ex. 25:40, not a **vision** of heaven's Temple.³⁵

However, if their typological theology is correct, Seventh-day Adventists face a solid brick wall in the very first line of evidence: *there is not a single biblical indication that the Father ever centres his presence among the Israelites other than in their sanctuary's Most Holy Place*, "enthroned between the cherubim"³⁶ of its ark of the covenant, despite Ellen White's claim. *Nor is there the slightest hint that he ever moves to the Holy Place!* It follows that, when Christ returned to heaven and "sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven," Heb. 8:1, it cannot **possibly** have been merely in its Holy Place.³⁷

Likewise, we moderns may ask of 6:19, Which curtain does the author have in mind, the outer or the inner? But the only salient question is, How would his **initial** readers have grasped these words? The assured answer is that *they would have recognised them as a specific citation of Lev. 16:2 from the Septuagint*. And Lev. 16:2, in its Day of Atonement setting, has one curtain **alone** in mind, the **second**.³⁸

However, it is not surprising that, *in isolation*, the apologists at www.sdadefend.com should interpret the "noun" *ta hagia* as other than heaven's Most Holy Place. And they have some support in respected Bible translations like NASB, NEB and (N)RSV. But the careful exegete suspends *all* judgment till *all* of the evidence has been weighed with open mind. And that leads to the confident conclusion that *ta hagia* equates with the **entire** heavenly sanctuary, not merely some Holy Place or even Most Holy Place.³⁹ Indeed, even Dr. Ford has quite a salient exegetical lesson to learn in the matter:⁴⁰

There is no doubt, though, that Dr. Ford is *perfectly* correct that the typology of Heb. 9 is founded on the Day of Atonement,⁴¹ with the patent inference that Christ returned to heaven's equivalent of the earthly Most Holy Place – **the ethereal Temple ITSELF, devoid of all ACTUAL apartments**.⁴² In lieu, these devout, unofficial apologists at www.sdadefend.com offer us quite indefensible *eisegesis*.

The question remains, Are they disputing Dr. Ford *alone*? The portion of Seventh-day Adventism's *official* Glacier View Consensus Statement here and in three of his following points reads as follows:

The Book of Leviticus describes the various services of the Old Testament sanctuary...

The Book of Hebrews compares and contrasts these services with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary (chap. 9:1-10:22). It argues that by His once-for-all death Jesus accomplished what Israel's repeated offerings could never achieve. *He is the reality symbolised by the Day of Atonement sacrifices*, as by all the ancient services...

... Now we know that the Hebrew sanctuary itself was... a symbol of the true sanctuary "which is set up not by man but by the Lord" (Heb. 8:2, R.S.V.; 9:24)... Now we know that all the Levitical priests and Aaronic high priests were but prefigurations of the One who is the great High Priest because He is in Himself both God and man (chap. 5:1-10). Now we know that *the blood of animals carefully selected so as to be without blemish or spot ... was a symbol of the blood of the Son of God*, who would, by dying for us, purify us of sin...

Despite the importance of the Old Testament sanctuary, it represented limited access to God. Only those born to the priesthood could enter it (Heb. 9:1-7). But in the heavenly sanctuary Christ has opened for us the door to the very presence of God; by faith we come boldly to the throne of grace (chap. 4:14-16; also 7:19; 10:19-22; 12:18-24). Thus the privileges of every Christian are greater even than those of the high priests of the Old Testament.

There is no intermediate step in our approach to God. Hebrews stresses the fact that our great High Priest is at the very right hand of God (chap. 1:3), in "heaven itself. . . [sic] in the presence of God" (chap. 9:24). *The symbolic language of the Most Holy Place, "within the veil," is used to assure us of our full, direct, and free access to God* (chaps. 6:19-20; 9:24-28; 10:1-4)...

Clearly, then, these apologists are disputing their own Church again, which Dr. Ford cites *accurately*.

Point 7

Having commented on this point immediately *supra*, permit me merely to issue the devout apologists at www.sdadefend.com with this sincere invitation: demonstrate even a **single**, *salient* error in my fuller analyses, either lay or scholarly, to which I refer, especially if they demand revision of my verdict that *you display a striking incapacity in Bible study here*, and I will apologise fully and publicly.

However, the fact that, yet again, you are truly fighting your *Church*, not Dr. Ford, is not my concern.

Point 8

I have likewise just disposed of this point. And I could issue a similar challenge that this apologia is scarcely worth the paper on which it is printed. Instead, I have just two comments to add. First, it is a great pity to observe such zealous Decalogians treading so carelessly all over God's Ninth Commandment with their utterly **ludicrous** charges that Dr. Ford teaches what he does "**well-knowing**" that it is **thoroughly** refuted in both the OT and the NT!! He teaches what he does, *despite* the cost, since he knows that their sheer *fallacies* cannot be extracted by *cogent* exegesis *anywhere* in Holy Writ.

Nevertheless, secondly, in this instance, at least, Dr. Ford happens rather seriously to misrepresent their Church's Consensus Statement. For twice over it mentions *phases* of Christ's High Priesthood: "This first *phase* of the heavenly ministry of Christ is not a passive one." "The final *phase* of Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary is that of judgment, vindication, and cleansing." And to these *explicit* statements could easily be added a number that repeat the thought implicitly if not with synonyms.

Point 9

Because "There is no disagreement here", I will accept this invitation to move on, with gratitude.⁴³

Point 10

Having equally dismissed this spectacular example of the sectarian distortion of sacred Scripture, at least in the Book of Hebrews, it remains for me to comment on the degree to which Seventh-day Adventism's unofficial apologists appear to sit humbly at the feet of John of Patmos as mere *students*.

Frankly, they have the audacity to attempt to *teach* him his *inspired* profession! For they are forcing a mostly **foreign** meaning into his words! For one thing, it is sheer futility to search for a two-apartment Temple *anywhere* in his book, even his surpassing throne-room vision of 4:⁴⁴ For another, even if it could be demonstrated that the angel oblatting at the altar of incense, 8:3-5, actually is Christ,⁴⁵ the pericope has **nothing whatever** to do with his High Priestly ministry, or even the close of probation.

First, in the Greek, the verb *hurled* has no object. So its implied object is either *censer* or the closer noun, *fire*. Context certainly favours the latter: "The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there came hail and **fire** mixed with blood, and it was **hurled** down upon the earth... The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mountain, all **ablaze**, was **thrown** into the sea... The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, **blazing** like a torch, **fell** from the sky...", 7-10. This shouts aloud that *the very prayers of the saints* – those of 6:10 – *are answered in launching God's judgment on their foes!*

Secondly, this is confirmed by the 24 elders *likewise* "holding golden bowls *full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints*", 5:8. Golden bowls recur only in the bowl septet as the vessels of God's wrath.⁴⁶ This *equally* implies that these prayers are instrumental in this judgment – a symbolic *double entendre!*

However, Dr. Ford is taking certain liberties with this Consensus Statement here. For it does not mention apartments. And, as above, it does recognise two phases of Christ's High Priestly ministry.

Point 11

Let me begin by returning these apologists' hasty, opening words to them. If the NT indeed has a *sustained* stress on imminence, Seventh-day Adventism's dogma of a pre-Advent judgment beginning with Adam in 1844 is bizarre. For *it is the very essence of historicism that a sequence of events must occur, precisely as forecast, between Christ's First and Second Advents*. If the NT prophecies involve *even the possibility of the Parousia's imminence*, they entirely exclude the **certainty** of their fulfilment in our day.

This is especially evident in the epistle to the Hebrews where *the inspired apostle taught his flock to expect Christ's Return in their day!*⁴⁷ Neither he nor they merely **assumed** so! How, then can Seventh-day Adventism credibly claim even that "Hebrews is not in fact concerned with the question of time"⁴⁸ let alone instruct the world that it details Jesus' heavenly ministry which **must** stretch beyond 1844!?

Having already surveyed the sustained NT teaching, *even by Christ's four favourite disciples present at his Olivet Discourse*, that he **could** and **should** have returned soon after the fall of Jerusalem,⁴⁹ here I will assess merely these apologists' efforts to demonstrate that imminence was just a *transient* belief.

First, there is **nothing** in 2 Thess. 2:1-8 which speaks against the imminence pervading the rest of the NT. For one thing, despite Ellen White's erroneous endorsement of the KJV translation of 2 in which Paul seems to deny "that the day of Christ is *at hand*"⁵⁰ even the NKJV puts it "**bad** come."⁵¹ For another, his caveat that "the secret power of lawlessness is **already** at work", 7a, is the very diction of imminence, not of historicism. For yet another, it is nothing but speculation for champions of the latter ideology to assert that he had the papacy in mind, let alone viewed it in Daniel's book.

Secondly, the apologists at www.sdadefend.com actually **hijack** the evidence in Rev. 12:12! It is the temporal expression *short time* which controls the interpretation of the 3¹/₂ times, not *vice versa*, especially as the former chimes with the imminence *permeating* John's prophecy from start to finish.⁵²

Thirdly, Seventh-day Adventism is suffering under a major delusion, which waxes more and more embarrassing as year follows weary year, *centuries* past the so-called Dark Day of May 19, 1780, in enlisting the support of Jesus' Olivet Discourse for its crucial historicism. If it is treated with the dignity of routine, conservative hermeneutics, *he is heard clearly timing his Return with the fall of Jerusalem*.⁵³

Finally, it would take me too far beyond the bounds of this brief review to explore these apologists' passing aversion to Dr. Ford's second, Manchester dissertation. However, I will make two broad points. They are **ignorant** to label the likes of Professor F. F. Bruce liberal! And they appear to labour under the delusion that seeking a doctorate is like attending tertiary lectures! One chooses an appropriate University, usually on the basis of a respected authority in one's field of interest. Then *one employs its library facilities, not its lecture halls, to research one's subject for oneself!* One's supervisor and even examiners will not agree with one's *every* deduction. Yet as long as one's case is *fully* researched and *well* argued, they will pass one's thesis. Likewise, Prof. Bruce wrote the Foreword to Dr. Ford's commentaries on both Daniel and the Revelation. And both times he expressed his substantial **disagreements**.

As for the precision of Dr. Ford's summary point, his critics are attacking this unequivocal appeal in their own Church's Consensus Statement to "give due weight to *the strong and widespread sense of the imminent Second Advent that we find in the New Testament* (e.g., Rom. 13:11-12; 1 Cor. 7:29-31; Rev. 22:20)."

Point 12

One must ask why, in closing, the apologists at www.sdadefend.com cover ground traversed *repeatedly* before but add virtually *nothing* new, yet again attacking their own Church, not just Dr. Ford!

Summary and Conclusion

Here I can evaluate the *New Theology Errors Special* of the website www.sdadefend.com in theological terms alone. Its zealous author(s) would make their pioneers proud! And they are especially faithful to the sectarian theology they cherish in Ellen White's writings! But sadly, time and again they fail to qualify as "a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth", 2 Tim. 3:15. For, rather than apply the *paramount* Berean Test, Acts 17:11, to unfamiliar theology, they seem to *bury their heads in the sands of time with pervasively closed minds*. The irony is that, in reiterating their familiar, hoary theology, loudly professing respect for Holy Writ, they do not allow even the *possibility* that their Fundamental Beliefs may require the occasional revision, as Ellen White conceded at times,⁵⁴ and as implicit in their own Church's Consensus Statement. And they most *certainly* fail to respect her pleas to employ nothing but "**sound** arguments" that will "bear the **closest** and most **searching** scrutiny."⁵⁵ In particular, there is a *specific* NT doctrine of pre-Advent judgment. However, it has **nothing whatever** to do with 1844, or books, or even Christ's High Priestly ministry.⁵⁶

- ¹ An excellent coverage is *Spectrum*, 11/2 (November, 1980). ² *Ibid.*, 77.
- ³ E.g., “Events since Glacier View”, *Ministry*, October, 1980, 14f.
- ⁴ PREXAD is an acronym for the GC President’s Executive Advisory Committee.
- ⁵ E.g., “Appraisal of Parmenter-Ford Correspondence”, *Ministry*, October, 1980, 12-14. Frankly, this is largely *ludicrous!* For example, its anonymous author may not be ignorant or dishonest, but he or she seems in deep denial in this response to Dr. Ford’s Point 1: “The consensus statement... upholds the historic position of the Seventh-day Adventist Church on Daniel 8:14, while... focusing on the restoration of the heavenly sanctuary from the attacks of the little horn. Because this little-horn power is an apostate Christian power, it is also under scrutiny during the cleansing of the sanctuary. It is therefore incorrect to conclude that ‘it is the little horn, and not the sins of the saints, which defiles the sanctuary.’... In no way does the statement exclude defilement of the sanctuary by the sins of God’s professed people.”
- ⁶ See my n. 2.
- ⁷ E.g., see my “Seventh-day Adventism’s Dogma of an Investigative Judgment through Ellen White’s Eyes – a Brief Evaluation”, November, 2000, 20-22.
- ⁸ Not necessarily identical with the Little Horn of 8.
- ⁹ E.g., see www.sdadefend.com’s reply to # 9. ¹⁰ Especially 3f. ¹¹ E.g., *Ministry*, October, 1980, 16-19.
- ¹² E.g., Lev. 12:2, 5; 15:19, 20, 24, 25, 26, 33; 18:19; Eze. 18:6; 22:10; 36:17.
- ¹³ E.g., Lev. 20:21; Ezra 9:11; Lam. 1:17; Eze. 7:19, 20; Zech. 13:1.
- ¹⁴ E.g., Lev. 5:3; 7:20, 21; 14:19; 15:3, 25, 26, 30, 31; 16:16, 19; 18:19; 22:3, 5; Nu. 5:19; 19:13; Judg. 13:7, 14; 2 Sam. 11:4; Ezra 9:11; Lam. 1:9; Eze. 22:15; 24:13; 36:17, 25, 29; 39:24; Zech. 13:2.
- ¹⁵ 15, 16, 18. ¹⁶ E.g., Lev. 15:31; 20:3; Nu. 19:13, 20.
- ¹⁷ E.g., Lev. 18:27, 28; Nu. 35:33f.; Deut. 21:23; Jer. 2:7; Eze. 36:17f.
- ¹⁸ E.g., see my “An Open Letter to the Volunteer Apologists at the Website: www.Ellen-White.com”, January, 2001, 2f. Cf. my “Investigative Judgment”, 2f. See also my new Appendix of this essay.
- ¹⁹ E.g., see my “Investigative Judgment”, 3. Cf. my “Open Letter”, 3f. ²⁰ E.g., see my “Investigative Judgment”, 21.
- ²¹ E.g., see my *ibid.*, 14, 18, 20-22.
- ²² That the Day of Atonement treated *corporate sins alone* further refutes the prime SDA dogma. E.g., see my *ibid.*, 3-6.
- ²³ In my forthcoming book *As in a Mirror*. But briefly meantime, “The Seventy ‘Weeks’ of Daniel 9:24-27: a Solid Foundation for Seventh-day Adventism’s Crucial Year-day Principle?”, June, 2001, 2-7.
- ²⁴ “Three years after Glacier View”, *Adventist Review*, September 22, 1983, 3.
- ²⁵ “Year-day Principle—Part I”, *DARCOM 1*, 86 (stress original). ²⁶ *Ibid.*, 88.
- ²⁷ Acronym for Daniel and Revelation Committee.
- ²⁸ Pending my book (see my n. 23), see my “Seventh-day Adventism’s Upstart Doctrine of Determinism in the Books of Daniel and Revelation – a Selective Appraisal”, November, 2000, *passim*.
- ²⁹ @ Point 11. ³⁰ E.g., see my “Upstart Doctrine”, 4.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, 4f. ³² See @ Points 2, 3. ³³ See @ Points 1, 2, 3.
- ³⁴ E.g., see my “Investigative Judgment”, 10-14. ³⁵ E.g., see my *ibid.*, 8. ³⁶ Ps. 80:1; 99:1. Cf. 2 Ki. 19:15 (= Isa. 37:16).
- ³⁷ E.g., see my “Investigative Judgment”, 10f. ³⁸ E.g., see my *ibid.*, 11.
- ³⁹ E.g., see my *ibid.*, 12f.
- ⁴⁰ Let me place it on public record that I deeply respect Dr. Desmond Ford, especially for his unruffled Christian experience despite his obscene abuse in callous, sanctimonious, SDA hands. Nor have four decades erased the slightest memory of a young man’s conversion as he preached about Christ’s approachability through the healing of Mt. 9:20-22. Completely *independently*, I agree with almost his every gospel detail. However, elsewhere I often disagree. Worse, Dr. Ford’s greatest infirmity is his excessive confidence in his scholarship, to the extreme that *he finds it very difficult to face the cogent criticism even of his peers*. Although this is well worth mentioning as a salient factor in the outcome of the Glacier View Colloquium, one example must suffice here. In its myopia, Good News Unlimited rarely meets the needs of SDAs in transition for *specific* rebuttals of their Church’s sectarian dogma. A refreshing exception is their booklet *Good News for Adventists* (Auburn: GNU, 1985). However, among a number of significant errors (see my n. 56), in Dr. Ford’s famous summary, “Eighty Wrongs Don’t Make a Right!”, 52f., is his denial, no. 41: “That any of the usages of the plural *hagia* with the article ever means anything other than the Most Holy Place in type or antitype.” For the exegetical facts of this matter, see @ my n. 39.
- ⁴¹ E.g., see my “Investigative Judgment”, 13.
- ⁴² See my n. 39.
- ⁴³ However, it is worth noting in passing that Rev. 20:4 does not detail the judgment alluded to in 1 Cor. 6:2f. John is *quoting* Dan. 7:22, in the *identical* context of *end-time persecution*, in which *benign judgment is pronounced on NOT by the saints*.
- ⁴⁴ E.g., see my “Investigative Judgment”, 8f.
- ⁴⁵ The adjective *ἄλλος* (*allos*) confines him to the *same* genus as the trumpet angels, 2.
- ⁴⁶ 15:7.
- ⁴⁷ E.g., see either my “‘Signs of the Times’ – How Biblical is Seventh-day Adventism’s Historicist Interpretation of Jesus’ Olivet Discourse?”, April, 2001, 7f., or my “Upstart Doctrine”, 3.
- ⁴⁸ Consensus Statement. ⁴⁹ See my n. 47. ⁵⁰ E.g., AA 265; GC 456f.
- ⁵¹ Cf. GNB, NASB, NEB, NIV, NLT, (N)RSV, etc.
- ⁵² E.g., see my “Investigative Judgment”, 24-26. Cf. my “Upstart Doctrine”, 8-11.
- ⁵³ E.g., see my “Olivet Discourse”, 1-7.
- ⁵⁴ E.g., “If the pillars of our faith will not stand the test of investigation, it is time that we knew it. There must be no spirit of Pharisaism cherished among us”, TM 107. Cf. CWE 44.
- ⁵⁵ 5T 708 (stress supplied), quoted in CWE 40; GW 299.
- ⁵⁶ E.g., see my “Investigative Judgment”, 23-26. It is a pity, then, that Good News Unlimited should have published Brad McIntyre’s essay, “Does the Bible Teach an Investigative Judgment?”, *Good News for Adventists*, 25-27, with the unqualified conclusion: “Does the Bible teach the Investigative Judgment? Only for those who force it.”

Appendix

Blood into the Earthly Holy Place at Long Last?

More than 40 percent of the large website www.sdadefend.com is devoted to its two-part portion boldly entitled **How Firm our Foundation!** The subtitle, *A Scriptural Vindication of the Faith Delivered to the Pioneers of Our Church*, is a reference to the motivation in minuscule print in the top left-hand corner: “An In-depth Scriptural Reply to Desmond Fort’s [*sic!*] October 27, 1979 Student Forum Lecture at Pacific Union Collage [*sic!*], Entitled, “There is a Problem Here””. This was the precursor to the *official* Glacier View Colloquium. However, the sincerity of the authors of this *unofficial*, Seventh-day Adventist apologia should not be queried. And that theology should be assessed open mindedly.

The body of my essay employs its virtual summary to sample the theological acumen of this website, and the results speak eloquently for themselves. However, there is one detail in **How Firm our Foundation** which I have chosen to evaluate separately in this Appendix in order to bring some finality to my evaluation of the *foundation* of Seventh-day Adventism’s paramount sectarian dogma of a pre-Advent judgment starting with Adam in 1844. And that foundation is its claim, well expressed by Ellen White in PP 354f., that *day by day* the earthly Holy Place was polluted by the sin of **common INDIVIDUALS** as the priest took in the blood of each *specific* sacrifice and sprinkled it before the veil.

Ellen White details *only a single exception* to this procedure: “In some cases the blood was not taken into the holy place; but the flesh was then to be eaten by the priest... [Lev. 10:17 cited]” However, she still gives the very distinct impression that at the end of the priest’s well-beaten path was the inner curtain of the earthly sanctuary *highly* polluted by an *incessant* sprinkling of sacrificial animal blood.

Rather, in two recent essays² I have subjected Ellen White’s theology carefully to the Berean Test, Acts 17:11, and discovered that she is **totally** deluded. For one thing, the blood of the sacrifice for the sin of the **common INDIVIDUAL**, who *typifies* those who face Seventh-day Adventism’s pre-Advent judgment, was drained *in toto* at the base of the **external** altar of burnt offering. Lev. 4:30, 34, except for a smear on its horns. For another, even if her exception had read, “in *most* cases...”, eating the sacrifice had **nothing** to do with atonement, especially after it had been *totally* drained of its atoning blood.

As the website www.sdadefend.com reports Dr. Ford, # 20, the relevant part of his concern is:

We’ve spoken about how every day the blood went into the Holy Place and was sprinkled there... The blood usually didn’t go into the Holy Place at all. Very, very rarely, the blood went into the Holy Place. Usually it was poured outside of the altar.

His critics protest at great length! Nonetheless, all that really counts here is the brand new element in their rescue mission, which I have italicised, with sufficient context for precision in its evaluation:

Blood from the Daily sacrifices regularly went into the Holy Place... Four sin offerings are described in Leviticus 4. For a ruler or one of the people, the blood of the sacrifice was poured out at the base of the altar (4:25, 34). But in the case of a sin offering for the priest or for the entire congregation, it was carried into the Holy Place... and was sprinkled “seven times before... the veil of the sanctuary,” (4:5-6, 16-17), and some of it was placed upon the Golden Altar of Incense that stood in the First Apartment nearest to the Presence of God (4:7, 18). Quite obviously, the blood of the Sin Offering on behalf of all of God’s people was taken into the Sanctuary in the Daily ministrations. *In order to avoid an excess of passage in the First Apartment, our Heavenly Father wisely arranged that there not be a continual movement into and out of it.* But to use this fact as a basis for denying the truth of blood being... daily... taken into the First Apartment is a perversion of Scriptural interpretation. The blood of the offering was taken directly into the First Apartment, or the flesh was eaten by the priest... By eating the flesh, the sin was transferred to the priest. [Lev. 10:17 quoted]...

In the type, the priest could not personally atone for sin by giving his own life, as Christ in the antitype did, and so *the earthly priest gave his own sin offering which was carried into the Holy Place and there sprinkled.* (Lev 4:5-6). So, *in every case, the blood atonement/or [sic - for?] every man was ultimately brought into the First Apartment and sprinkled within it.* [Lev. 17:11 quoted]

... Not only does sin defile a man, it also defiles whatever it touches. Adultery defiles the land and the sanctuary (Ez [*sic!*] 23:37-38). Murder defiles the land (Num 35:33). Profaning the Sabbath defiles both the Sabbath and the Sanctuary (Ezek 23:38). Uncleaness defiles the tabernacle (Lev 15:31; 16:16). Worship of Molech defiles

the tabernacle (Lev 20:3). In all these cases it is sin that defiles,—[sic]the land, the Sabbath, the Sanctuary, and the human heart... It is for this reason that there was a Day of Atonement—to remove this defilement. But this is the truth that Dr. Ford wants to remove from our landmarks. The message of the Advent Movement is that there is a Day of Atonement to blot out sin. The message of Desmond Ford is to blot out the Day of Atonement...

We have seen from the Bible that it was not a “rare” thing for blood to be brought into the Sanctuary (and Great Controversy, 418:1-2 says it was done from day to day)...

An excellent summary of the Biblical material on this is to be found in Great Controversy, pages 417:2-421:0... The sinner brought a... lamb, goat, etc.... to the altar, confessed his sin, and placed his hands on the substitute's head, thereby... transferring his sin to the substitute's. The substitute was then slain and its blood taken ... either directly into the First Apartment, or by the sin having been transferred to the priest by his eating of it, and *then taken into the First Apartment when the blood from the priest's sin offering was taken within it...*

In sum, the efficacy of the blood of a priest's *personal* sacrifice for sin extended to cover a **common individual's** sin. Therefore, the sanctuary's Holy Place was polluted by sin, *without a single exception*.

Let me settle a couple of relatively minor matters before assessing this rather ingenious apologia. First, it is a mindless breach of the Ninth Commandment to accuse Dr. Ford of attempting to “blot out the Day of Atonement.” The critic means Seventh-day Adventism's dogma of Christ's end-time ministry in heaven's Most Holy Place. But he should offer Dr. Ford full, gracious credit for enthusiastic fidelity to its *normative* purport of the work of Christ completed *before* he returned to heaven. Indeed, one sound pointer to the Spirit's control is a willingness to give credit *wherever* credit is due.

Secondly, one searches the Ellen White corpus completely in vain, it seems, for even the slightest *hint* that the blood of a priest's sacrifice had **any** relevance to a common individual's sin. In fact, she draws this *specific* conclusion from the priest's sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice in the Holy Place or eating its flesh: “**Both ceremonies alike** symbolized the transfer of sin from the penitent to the sanctuary.” She does **not** include the priest's blood manipulation for his **own** sin in the latter ritual.

Thirdly, it is interesting to observe the precision of the theology of sanctuary pollution here in contrast to the myopia in “Reply to Des Ford's 12 Points”, verifying the cogency of my relevant critique.³

The fundamental problem with this latest effort to pollute the Holy Place with the sin of common individuals is that *Holy Writ simply says nothing of the sort*. Nor are *any* of its important doctrines left to mere deduction! On one hand, the context of the priest's blood manipulation in the Holy Place is quite specific: ““If the anointed *priest* sins, bringing guilt on the people, he must bring to the LORD a young bull without defect *as a sin offering for the sin he has committed*””, 4:3. There is no suggestion here of *anyone* else's specific sin being covered by this sacrifice. On the other, the common individual enjoyed the *immediate* benefit of his personal sacrifice: ““*In this way* the priest will make atonement for him, and *he will be forgiven*””, 31b, compare 35b. Indeed, this closure is just as complete and instantaneous as that enjoyed by *corporate* sinners, 20b, after the blood of their sacrifice entered the Holy Place!

It remains to glance at the claim of Dr. Ford's critic that, as Ellen White says *day by day*, he is wrong to insist that only *rarely* did blood enter the Holy Place. The striking fact of the matter is that there were only five priests, Ex. 28:1, then just three, Nu. 3:2-44, serving a vast nation of 603,550 men, not counting dependents, 1:1-46; 2:1-32! This is an average of more than 200,000 individuals per priest! It follows that, unless he were more sinful than his people, he would need to officiate at more than 1,000 sacrifices per day to enter the Holy Place with the blood of his own a mere twice a year, on average! And if each separate sacrifice depended for its efficacy on the priest eating its flesh, Dr. Ford's critic has substituted “an excess of passage in the First Apartment” – an important theological detail, by the way, recorded in both Rev. 23 and PP ch. 74 – for an excess of passage in the priest's alimentary canal!

Indeed, the summary question must be asked, “If God really wished such sin to register day by day within the Holy Place, *why not precisely the same extremely simple procedure* as for a priest, 5-7, or the entire nation, 16-18?” The stark **contrast** between the blood manipulations of the two types of sacrifices eloquently testifies that *this heresy attempts to obliterate a manifest distinction ordained by God himself!*

¹ Accessible in the Table of Contents, curiously as [4] under Nature of Christ.

² “Investigative Judgment”, 3, “Open Letter”, 2-4, detailed in nn. 7, 18 respectively of my main essay.

³ See my main essay, 8.