

Seventh-day Adventism



Is It Another Gospel?

Many questions arise today concerning the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Some consider them to be fellow Evangelical Christians and others consider them to be so far out as to be a cult. What are the facts concerning Seventh-day Adventism?

Their Prophetess, Ellen G. White, interpreted the Bible for the group. After William Miller's failed prophecy of Christ's Return in 1843, and then 1844, Mrs. White invented the "Investigative Judgement" teaching to try and explain away this failure and also to gain control over Miller's followers.



Ellen G. White

Investigative Judgement teaching

This is a teaching born of a failed prophecy, namely, that instead of coming to earth visibly in 1844, Christ entered into the second apartment in heaven, there to begin a work of final atonement, which would blot out a believer's sins only after "Investigative Judgement" of the sinner.

This teaching is the opposite of the full atonement taught by the Christian Church, and also mocks at the words of our saviour from the Cross, **"It is finished!"** (John 19:30). Hebrews 10:12 also states, **"But He, having offered ONE sacrifice for sins FOR ALL TIME, sat down at the right hand of the God."** Christ paid fully for our sins, atoning for them fully. No Scripture teaches otherwise.

What Do Seventh Day Adventists Think of Christ?

Seventh-day Adventists claim to recognise the full deity of Jesus Christ, that He is truly God, and indeed He is. They are in full agreement with the historical Christian Church on this point. The tragedy is that they are still tainted with the Arian heresy that Jesus Christ is Michael. Seventh-day Adventists will be quick to inform you that Jesus is Michael the Archangel, but that He is called "Michael" in heaven. Could this be?

Michael is mentioned in three books of the Bible: Daniel, Jude and Revelation. Daniel 10:13 says, **"... Michael, ONE of the chief princes..."** notice please that Michael is not unique at all but merely one of several. Are we to assume then that there are many Christs, of which Jesus is one? That's ridiculous! Also, Seventh-day Adventists teach that Jude 9 refers to Christ, although Michael is plainly identified as an Archangel (or "chief of the Angels," a translation Seventh-day Adventists claim is not correct). The context shows that Michael did not dare rebuke Satan. Jesus, on the other hand, repeatedly rebuked Satan (Matthew 17:18; Mark 9:25, etc.). Further, Hebrews 1:6 commands all the angels to worship Jesus. God would hardly command angels to worship another angel. No Scripture says Jesus is Michael, and the contexts of the "Michael Scriptures" show plainly that Jesus Christ is not Michael.

Who Bears Our Sins?

The answer to the above question comes quickly to the Christian because the Scripture plainly teach that Christ **"Bore our sins in His own body on the tree,"** (1 Peter 2:24.) 2 Corinthians 5:21 says that Christ was **"made... to be sin for us."** The Seventh-day Adventists

go one step further, and say that Christ will in turn lay our sins on Satan! (The Great Controversy p 485). Their strange interpretation of Leviticus chapter 16, making Satan the Scapegoat, is unsupported from Scripture, and is further proof that they would add to Christ's finished work of Atonement.

The Saturday Sabbath

Ellen G. White made much of the Saturday Sabbath (sunset Friday to sunset Saturday), and believed that Christians should keep the Jewish Sabbath, even claiming that those not keeping the Sabbath would receive the Mark of the Beast! Hence this becomes a condition for salvation, again adding to the atoning work of Christ.

Let us say at the outset that no Christian objects to worship on Saturday, rather than Sunday, and those wishing to make Saturday their day of worship should feel free to do so without condemnation from anyone. What do the Scriptures show regarding the Sabbath? Exodus 31:16-17 shows that the Sabbath was given as a token of the Covenant between God and Israel. Sabbath keeping has never been a command for the Gentiles (or non-Jews). When a dispute arose in the early church, Colossians 2:16-17 settled it by stating that no one was to judge a Christian **"... in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day."** Hebrews chapter 4 shows that the fulfilment of the Jewish Sabbath was not the keeping of the same day by Christians, but the entering of Christians into God's rest. The early Christians preached on the Jewish Sabbath because the Jews were gathered in the synagogue on that day (Acts 17:2-4), but the Christians always met together on the first day of the week - Sunday - the day of Christ's resurrection, (Acts 20:7).

Seventh-day Adventists have accused Christians with, "Shame on you, worshipping on Sun day, a day dedicated to the Sun god." The Christians' response might be, "So, you would rather have me worship on Saturn's day (Saturday) as you do, a day dedicated to the pagan deity, Saturn?" While it's true the names of the days of the week have pagan origins, these have little or no meaning now (apart from a few spiritist pagans in Scandinavia). All the Seventh-day Adventists we know use the calendar, which is of pagan origin. If we are true Christians, we are 24 hours a day, every day, and we are free to meet for worship on whatever day we choose. Christ came to set us free!

The Vegetarian Diet and Scriptures

Seventh-day Adventists stress a vegetarian diet, and we concede that they are indeed a healthy people and free to eat what they wish. White wrote, **"... if we subsist upon the flesh of dead animals, we shall partake of their nature,"** (Counsels on Diet & Foods, p 390). The Bible doesn't teach such nonsense. Jesus Himself ate fish and lamb. In fact the Jews were obliged to eat lamb to celebrate the Passover - one of the most significant Feasts of the Lord. It is called that because God commanded it, in detail.

Romans 14:1-3 puts the situation nicely: **"Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgement on his opinions. One man has faith that he may eat all things, but**

he who is weak eats vegetables only. Let not him who eats regard with contempt him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats, for God has accepted him." Diet has no bearing on salvation for true Christians.

Striving to Keep the Law

The Seventh-day Adventists have divided up the Law God gave to Israel, although God Himself and the Jews never did. Seventh-day Adventists are still trying to keep the law through rigid conduct and adherence to the letter of the Law, and many other "laws" set up by their prophetess. What do the Scriptures show regarding the Law? First of all, we are saved by grace, and cannot add to grace regarding our salvation, because Christ has done it all. Our good works are a result of salvation, not a condition of our salvation! Ephesians 2:8-9 says, **"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast."** We recommend that readers turn to Galatians 3:19-29 and read the purpose of the Law as it applies to Christians. Not only was the Law a "tutor" or teacher to lead the Jews to Christ, but Romans 13:10 states that **"... love, therefore is the fulfilment of the Law."** Romans chapter 10, based on Deuteronomy chapter 30, sums up the situation by saying, **"For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone who believes."** Jesus Christ established a New Covenant based on love. Hebrews 10:9 says, **"... He takes away the first in order to establish the second."** As believers in Christ, we are under the new Covenant (or Law), not the old one! Christ came to set us free!

Soul Sleep and the Denial of Hell

The Seventh-day Adventists, along with the Jehovah's Witnesses, Christadelphians and other misguided offshoots of Christianity, deny emphatically the existence of a literal hell. Jesus Christ, however, stated in Matthew 25:46 that **"these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."** The same Greek word for "eternal" is used in both cases. If one is to deny eternal punishment, then they must also deny eternal life.

The careful Bible student will look carefully at the three Greek words translated as "hell." They are not interchangeable. The final destination of all will be in eternity either in the presence of Jesus Christ, or eventually in the Lake of Fire (Gehenna). The penalty is eternal, but the punishment is not. Genesis 3:22 shows that had Adam eaten of the Tree of Life he would have lived eternally. He would not die. God prevented that occurring, so Adam died. 1 John 5:11-12 shows us that eternal life is only available to those who have Jesus Christ. It's called "Conditional Immortality." It's conditional on one's acceptance or rejection of Jesus Christ. There is no escape from the judgements of God, and the denial of His realities, revealed in His word, will not make them any less real when the time comes.

A Word on Ellen G. White

Jesus saw fit to repeat a warning in Matthew chapter 24, namely to look out for **"false prophets."** Seventh-day Adventism places so much trust in their prophetess that they need to be reminded of Jesus' words. If Ellen G. White is a true prophet, then there is nothing to be feared from an examination of her prophecies and writings. The Adventist Ministry Magazine of October 1981 contained many startling statements, including this from p.8. **"We believe the revelation and inspiration of both the Bible and Ellen White's writings to be of equal quality. The superintendence of the Holy Spirit was just as carefully and thorough in one case as in the other."** White herself

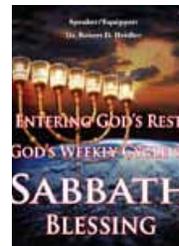
wrote, **"The atonement was not completed at the cross. This fact may startle you."** (The Pillars, p28.)

Donald McAdams, president of the SDA Southwest Union College, sees the problem clearly when he wrote, **"Do we use Ellen White in such a way as to give her control over the interpretation of Scripture in much the same way that the Catholic of Luther's day gave church tradition the right to interpret Scripture? The answer for most Adventists is yes, we do. ... If we grant Ellen White hermeneutical control over the Scriptures we will blunt, perhaps destroy, our witness. We will be seen as a cult that makes the Bible say what we want it to say."** ("Ellen White's Role in Adventist History," p3, 5). That reflects strongly what Christians have been saying too.

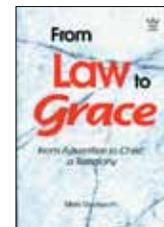
We urge all honest-hearted Seventh-day Adventists to read the book, **"The White Lie"** by Walter Rae, and check out the documentation thoroughly. (Rae was a SDA minister for 33 years, and their top expert on the writings of Ellen G. White. Rae has challenged Adventists to find even 20% of her work as original and not plagiarised from others' writings.) Honest seekers can reach only one conclusion, namely that Ellen G. White does not live up to the high office afforded her by the Seventh Day Adventists.

In Conclusion

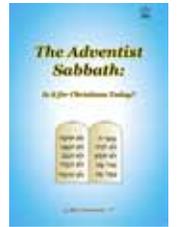
Readers now have the opportunity to form their own conclusions concerning the Seventh-day Adventists - Christian or Cult? Our opinion is that as long as they continue to misrepresent Jesus Christ as Michael; the continuing idolising of their founder, despite her false prophecies and teaching; and also their claim that there is salvation exclusively within their organisation, they fall into the definition of a cult. We rejoice, however, to see many Seventh-day Adventists being set free to be our full brothers and sisters in Christ.



"Entering God's Rest: The Sabbath Blessing" by Dr Robert Heidler (DVD, for true understanding of the Sabbath)



"From Law to Grace: From Adventism to Christ" (book)



The Adventist Sabbath (book)



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