

SIMPLIFYING FAITH LECTURE SERIES

By H.E. Metropolitan Bishoy

#9 Response to the Seventh Day Adventists' Attack on Jesus Christ

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God, Amen.

Introduction

We continue our lecture on the Seventh Day Adventists, because Galal Doss (owner of Family Foods/Family Nutrition, and Avon Beauty Products) has launched a violent attack against the Coptic Orthodox Church, and other denominational churches in Egypt.

Mr. Doss distributes pamphlets, publications, and other obscure novelties. One such pamphlet is titled *The Final Warning to Earth*.

This year, as in the previous two years, he freely distributed an extremely superfluous calendar bearing the Adventist teachings.¹ One named *The Neglected Commandment*, and the other, *The Desire of All Nations*. On the outer jacket he proclaims, "We are not Jehovah's Witnesses, nor are we affiliated with any denomination." We know he is not a Jehovah's Witness, yet he **is** an Adventist!

We need to recall a similar occurrence from the fifth lecture²; Charles Russell initially joined the Adventists, but later founded the Jehovah's Witnesses. This offshoot relationship binds the two sects (The Seventh Day Adventists and the Jehovah's Witnesses), in addition to their many shared doctrines with the Jews. Two such doctrines are hallowing the Sabbath, and not believing in the immortality of the human spirit (similar to the Jewish Sadducees). Various Jewish doctrines are shared by the Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses and the Jews.

Galal Doss' Adventist Base

Truly we are perplexed as to who exactly is provoking Galal Doss! He claims to not be affiliated with any sect, and his activities do not occur inside the Adventist 'church' located in Rameses Square in Cairo. They occur at his factories and private villas. There seems to be some type of competition (rivalry) between him and the Adventist 'church'. His affiliation with the Adventists is evident, contrary to his claim, in that he distributes the same books that the Adventists print and distribute.

¹ He gained access to the addresses of many of our Coptic Congregationalists through the computer, and mailed them this complimentary calendar.

² The Simplifying Faith Lecture Series

- Page 267³ of *Prophet of the End* (published and distributed by the Seventh Day Adventists) lists:

The Great Controversy, The Desire of Ages, The Ministry of Healing, The Path to Life, Patriarchs and Prophets, and The Acts of the Apostles

To obtain a copy of the above mentioned books, or for correspondence and more information please write to:

Church of the Seventh Day Adventist
P.O. Box 12
New Cairo (Heliopolis), Cairo, Egypt.

- The list on Galal Doss's bulletins includes: *The Great Controversy, The Desire of Ages, The Ministry of Healing, Patriarchs and Prophets, and The Acts of the Apostles.*

- As for his personal pamphlet, *Who is Michael the Archangel*, he writes on the back:

My dear reader, if you wish to obtain any of the following books by Mrs. Ellen White: *The Great Controversy, The Desire of Ages, Patriarchs and Prophets, The Acts of the Apostles, and The Ministry of Healing*" please write to the following address:

Galal Doss
P. O. Box 45
10th of Ramadan City, Egypt

He adds: Other Important Publications: He will come, The Final Warning to Earth, The Canon of Observing Sunday⁴, Answering the Roman Church on Observing Sunday (Rome's Challenge?), Babylon the Great, The Conception of Observing Sunday, and Prophet of the End.

This list, located on the last page of, *Who is Michael the Archangel*, also includes other publications. He, similar to the Adventists, believes that Archangel Michael is Jesus Christ.

His distributed writings and pamphlets make it impossible for him to deny that he believes in the doctrines of the Seventh Day Adventists. It is deceptive for him to write on his extravagant calendar, "We are not Jehovah's Witnesses, nor are we affiliated with any denomination." He might state, "We are not Jehovah's Witnesses⁵", but for him to write, "nor are we affiliated with any denomination," is outright lying! He is an Adventist to the core!

A Call to Ban Family Foods and Avon Products

He tries to force his doctrines upon his factory workers, employing various methods. He schedules training forums, sermons, and meetings, then gives his high-paying high-status positions to those who attend. Those who refuse to attend are persecuted at work and refused comparable benefits. It is unethical for him to take advantage of the workplace to attempt to convert originally Orthodox persons, teaching them unorthodox doctrines!

This is why we encourage our Coptic Orthodox congregation to **ban Family Foods and Avon Products**. And, if he does terminate our Coptic Orthodox engineers and workers, many of our

³ Of the Arabic version

⁴ A cynical title no less

⁵ There is even a rebuttal for this claim

businessmen everywhere are willing to hire them⁶. We are not concerned lest our people are terminated, but on the contrary, we are concerned lest they remain!

He would not be so quick to relinquish them, because they are truly artistically gifted. To the extent that after he had required them all to sign preliminary resignations, when they threatened to file a complaint against him with the Workers Office, he reneged, collected the resignations, and stopped coercing them to sign.

We as Coptic Orthodox are faced with a Million-Dollar⁷ Propaganda Campaign. We are puzzled as to the monetary funding. The products of his two companies are prevalent however. He also makes fasting foods to entice Copts to buy them, but alternate products are available.

THE URGENCY OF OUR COUNTER-ATTACK: THE BELIEF IN GOD

In all honesty, we are not only anxious regarding the Orthodox faith from Galal Doss's attack. We are also anxious for **the belief in God Himself** as the creator, the belief in our Lord Jesus Christ, and the brutal assault upon the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, which no Christian conscience would ever accept. We are also alarmed at the Jewish bearing that exists in the Adventist doctrines. It is impossible for us to remain silent on such an issue! In our struggle against innovations and heresies, such as the Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses who falsely claim to be Christians, we call upon the Holy Bible to be the ultimate judge.

The Sinless Redeemer

Their most critical book on the Adventist's doctrines, *Seventh Day Adventists Believe... A Biblical Exposition of 27 Fundamental Doctrines*⁸, was issued by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, which was held in the United States. In this book⁹ they say, "*When Christ took the human nature that bore the consequences of sin, He became subject to the infirmities and weaknesses that all experience.*" By this they mean to say that Christ was just like anyone else, susceptible to sin. They confirm this again in the same book saying, "*Temptation and the possibility of sinning were real to Christ. If He could not sin He would have been neither human nor our example*". Their attempted debate is: 'If He was not able to sin, then how could we say that He resembled us in everything, or that He took flesh and became a complete man'.

We want to begin by responding to this point, because it is a claim that no Christian conscience could accept. In fact no Egyptian would accept this understanding, not only Christians!

❖ The Bible is vivid in saying that He was "*Made like His brethren... yet without sin*" (Heb 2:17, 4:15).

⁶ Coordinating through the church

⁷ or Pound

⁸ We have at least one copy of this book

⁹ Page 47 of the English translation

❖ We say in the Divine Liturgy¹⁰, “[You] resembled us in everything, except for sin alone”.

❖ Our teacher Saint Peter writes in his first Epistle:

*“Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but **with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.** He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart” (1 Pt 1: 18 - 22).*

The Scripture, placing a mandate on us to live as saints, says, *“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord”* (Heb 12: 14), but a different criterion is established for our Redeemer, Our Lord Jesus Christ! How can our Redeemer have a natural tendency toward sin, as the Adventists claim? Even if they try to explain that He did not sin? Having the natural tendency toward sin, or being availed the ability to sin, or having inherited Adam’s sin, all this does not make Him fit for being a redeemer, or hallowed as *“The holy of holies”* (Dan 9: 24).

The Holy One is Jesus Christ

Saint Peter the apostle says in the same chapter, *“As He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, Be holy, for I am holy”* (1 Pt 1: 15 – 16). God initially uttered this expression *“Be holy, for I am holy”* as recorded in the Pentateuch (Lev 11: 44 & 45), and Saint Peter cited the same phrase and applied it to our Lord Jesus Christ. He confirms this truth by saying, *“Knowing that you were ... redeemed ... with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot”*. His main emphasis is that **Christ’s blood**, with which we were redeemed, **is the blood of the Holy One**.

The angel announced this Holy One to Saint Mary saying, *“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that **Holy One** who is to be born will be called the Son of God”* (Lk 1: 35).

The declaration, *“The precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world”*, reveals that it was the Heavenly Father’s intention, prior to creation, for this precious blood, of His Holy Christ to purify us from sins. Based on this he says, *“Purified your souls in obeying the truth”*. If He will purify us, how can His blood be contaminated with sin? If He were contaminated, then He Himself would need salvation and redemption!

Saint Paul the Apostle confirms the same of Christ by saying, *“Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since **He always lives** to make intercession*

¹⁰ From the Prayer of Reconciliation of the Divine Liturgy of Saint Gregory

for them. For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is **holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens**" (Heb 7: 25 - 26). He declares that, although He shared our flesh and blood, and although He incarnated and became human, there is a vivid dividing line between Him and sinners. Thus he described Him as, "*Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens*".

Can the Divinity Unite with Sin?

In the womb of Saint Mary, the Holy Spirit formed the human nature with which God the Word united from the instant of its formation. Would the Holy Spirit create anything inclined towards sin?! Even more outrageous, how can the divinity unite with a humanity inclined toward sin? Under such conditions, how can the unity occur between the divinity and humanity?

The Adventists flip-flop, sometimes saying Jesus Christ is Archangel Michael, at others saying He is the Only Begotten Son of God who is equal to the Father in essence; claiming to believe in the Trinity. These claims are contradictory!

They claim that Christ is God Incarnate, who is the Only Begotten Son of God, and at the same time they claim that "*the possibility of sinning were real to Christ*". Is this not blasphemy against God! Who would accept such nonsense? Who would accept that: if God incarnated, then He could sin? This is blasphemous; both Christians and Non-Christians would reject the concept of the divine incarnation.

This is why we began our discourse stating that we are not simply defending the doctrines of our church, but are defending God Himself against such claims which no person's conscience would accept, if he only believes in the existence of God, even non-Orthodox or even non-Christians. This is a very serious issue, yet now we shall see what is even more atrocious!

ELLEN WHITE

Ellen White was undeniably demon possessed! This girl, who was hit by a rock when she was nine years old (inducing life threatening seizures), attended a total of three years of schooling.¹¹ Can a person who only received three years of primary education write 50,000 pages of doctrine? The English version of *The Desire of Ages* has 835 pages¹². This is only one of Ellen White's books. How did she write all these words?

Let us finger through *The Desire of Ages*, where she writes of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose coming all the ages eagerly anticipated, for the salvation of the world. Let us see who this savior of the world is, in her viewpoint. She displayed no respect or esteem, but only informality and irreverence for the person of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Hope or Despair!

¹¹ As stated in *Prophet of the End*

¹² The Arabic translation contains 853

On page 753¹³, she writes, “*Satan with his fierce temptations wrung the heart of Jesus. The savior could not see through the portals of the tomb. Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father’s acceptance of the sacrifice. He feared that sin was so offensive to God, that their separation was to be eternal.* (So, she deems that there was absolutely no place for hope in Christ, not in resurrection, nor in His Father accepting His sacrifice.) *Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father’s acceptance of the sacrifice*”. If it is a hopeless case, then why is He offering Himself as a sacrifice?

She continues on the following page in the same sacrilegious manner towards our Lord Jesus Christ: “*With amazement angels witnessed the Savior’s despairing agony*¹⁴”. How could one say that our Lord Jesus Christ was in a state of despair?

Despair was Judas’ primary sin! It is written in the Bible: “*Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, ‘I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.’ ... Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.*” (Mt 27: 3 – 5). He was remorseful, but Judas’ problem was that with his remorsefulness he felt despair, and so committed suicide. He perished when he killed himself, as confirmed by Saint Peter: “*For it is written in the book of Psalms: ‘Let his dwelling place be desolate, And let no one live in it’; and, ‘Let another take his office’*” (Act 1: 20). Christ also said of him in his presence, “*It would have been good for that man if he had not been born*” (Mt 26: 24). How could one say that our Lord Jesus Christ was in a state of despair?

On the following page Ellen White, whom they consider a prophetess, writes, “*Many who believed on Him heard His despairing cry [on the cross]. Hope left them. If God had forsaken Jesus, in what could His followers trust?*¹⁵” Is this acceptable? Christ gave a despairing cry! How then will Christ be an inspiration and model to the future martyrs, of whom it was written in the Revelation, that in their struggle against the Devil, “*They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death*” (Rev 12: 11). If Christ fell into despair while He was on the cross, then why did the salvation and redemption take place?

The Devil is the one saying these words! The Devil’s greatest feat would be in formulating a religion that corrupts the doctrines, and certainly the belief in God.

The Fate of the Human Race Trembles in the Balance

She writes on page 690¹⁶ about how the world’s fate for salvation was trembling in the balance: “*Turning away, Jesus sought again His retreat, and fell prostrate (in the garden of Gethsemane), overcome by the horror of a great darkness. The humanity of the Son of God trembled in that trying hour. He prayed not now for His disciples that their faith might not fail, but for His own*

¹³ Pages 753 of the Standard English hardback pagination. Page 714 in the Arabic translation.

¹⁴ Pages 753-754 of the Standard English hardback pagination. Page 715 in the Arabic translation.

¹⁵ Pages 754-755 of the Standard English hardback pagination. Page 716 in the Arabic translation.

¹⁶ Pages 690 of the Standard English hardback pagination. Page 654 in the Arabic translation.

tempted, agonized soul.” Despite, the same evening He said to Saint Peter the Apostle, “*I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail*” (Lk 22:32).

She even makes statements contradictory to what is written in the Bible! He says, “*I have prayed for you*” and she claims that “*He prayed not now for His disciples*”, but was praying for Himself.

“*The awful moment had come, -- that moment which was to decide the destiny of the world. (Strange... is the fate of the world not guaranteed!) **The fate of humanity trembled in the balance.** (What a terrifying prospect; although God planned the redemption for humanity, His economy is *trembling!*) *Christ might even now refuse to drink the cup apportioned to guilty man.*¹⁷ So Christ could have refused to fulfill the redemption! Christ spoke profusely regarding His insistence upon fulfilling the redemption, and that He fulfills it through His own authority and will.*

Separating the Son from the Father

She goes on to express strange concepts regarding the separation of the Son from the Father, then contradicts herself and claims the contra opinion. On page 686¹⁸ she writes, “*As Christ felt His unity with the Father broken up, He feared that in His human nature He would be unable to endure the coming conflict with the powers of darkness. In the wilderness of temptation the destiny of the human race had been at stake.*” (Again!)

Galal Doss, wrote a similar expression in his book, *The Desire of All Nations*; as he was influenced by her. He wrote, “The desire of all nations was born miraculously... in His efforts to let his task, which was surrounded by vast threats, be successful...” It is clear that he is trying to subtly introduce the teachings of Ellen White. On the last page of this pamphlet he writes, “whoever wishes to obtain a free copy of *The Desire of Ages*, please mail P. O. Box 45.”

Ellen White continues: “*With the issues of the conflict before Him, Christ’s soul was filled with dread of separation from God*”¹⁹. It is not even appropriate to say that a saint is separated from God, how much more “*The holy of holies*”? How can He be *the holy of holies*, while separated from God and subject to sin? In the book of Daniel it says, “*For anointing the holy of holies*” (Dan 9:24). Who is being anointed, but the Christ! Is it the Heavenly Father? Impossible! “*Anointing the holy of holies*” is meant about the Christ. Therefore, is it appropriate to say that *the holy of holies* is separated from God?

She continues, “*Satan told Him that if He became the surety for a sinful world, the separation would be eternal.*”²⁰ She means that if He guaranteed the sinful world by fulfilling the redemption, then the Father would tell Him, ‘Since You guaranteed a corrupt and useless thing, therefore, You not only deserve to be separated from Me during the trials and passions from Thursday night till the resurrection on Sunday’s dawn, but forever’.

¹⁷ Pages 690 of the Standard English hardback pagination. Page 654 in the Arabic translation.

¹⁸ Pages 686 of the Standard English hardback pagination. Page 650 in the Arabic translation.

¹⁹ Pages 686 of the Standard English hardback pagination. Page 651 in the Arabic translation.

²⁰ Pages 686 of the Standard English hardback pagination. Page 651 in the Arabic translation.

Moreover, “*He would be identified with Satan’s kingdom*”²¹ as if it were not enough that He would be separated from God.

Christ Terrified and in Jeopardy!

Satan can tell Him any preposterous claims, but the problem is that Ellen White claims that Christ was fearful and terrified of this situation. She writes that, “*With the issues of the conflict before Him, Christ’s soul was filled with dread of separation from God*”, and He was not assured “*of the Father’s acceptance of the sacrifice*”. If He is not assured “*of the Father’s acceptance of the sacrifice*”, then He is also in jeopardy of being lost and becoming identified with Satan’s kingdom! Would God agree to such jeopardy? “*He would be identified with Satan’s kingdom, and would never more be one with God.*”²²

We restate her claim that He had no hope (hope being intrinsic and not prompted by Satan). “*Hope did not present to Him [Christ] His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father’s acceptance of the sacrifice.*” That someone would be so hopeless is in itself a sin, and if He reaches this stage, then He Himself is not fit to save others. Without hope man cannot be saved. She speaks of His hopelessness and despair!

His Need for an Intercessor

If Christ is the intercessor for the sins of the human race, as He said on the cross, “*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do*” (Lk 23: 34), she wrote, “*As the substitute and surety for sinful man, Christ was suffering under divine justice. He saw what justice meant. Hitherto He has been as an intercessor for other; now He longed to have an intercessor for Himself.*”²³ So, she claims that while He was on the cross, offering His intercessory sacrifice for the sake of the entire human race, He lost His role as an intercessor! She says, “*He has been as an intercessor for other*”. When was this? When He was a child, or when He was being baptized in the Jordan River, but *now He longed to have an intercessor for Himself!*

Here Comes His Savior! Is it Archangel Michael?

“*Now He longed to have an intercessor for Himself*”. Who will intercede for Him? If He needs an intercessor, there is no one left but the angels. Since humans are sinners, and He needs someone who will intercede on His behalf, who else can do it but the angels? They say that He is Archangel Michael, but, it seems they want to reach a point of placing Him even lower than Archangel Michael.

Now, let us see her what cunning thoughts lead her to. When speaking of Christ in the garden of Gethsemane she writes, “*In this awful crisis, when everything was at stake, when the mysterious*

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

cup trembled in the hand of the sufferer, the heavens opened, (Woo! Here comes Christ's savior!) a light shone forth amid the stormy darkness of the crisis hour, and the mighty angel who stands in God's presence, occupying the position from which Satan fell, came to the side of Christ. (The devil wishes to glorify himself so he says that the angel who took his position is the one who saves Christ.) The angel came not to take the cup from Christ's hand, but to strengthen Him to drink it, with the assurance of the Father's love. He came to give power to the divine-human suppliant. (Here she calls Him the divine-human, yet at the same time she degrades Him in an dreadful manner). He pointed Him to the open heavens, telling Him of the souls that would be saved as the result of His sufferings. (Oh, so Jesus did not know that people would be saved until the angel told him!) He assured Him that His Father is greater and more powerful than Satan, (Our Lord Jesus Christ, the king of glory, King of kings and Lord of lords did not know that the Heavenly Father is greater and more powerful than the devil! So, He was poor and desperately hopeless until the angel came to tell Him, "No, Your Father is greater than the devil, what could you fear?") that His death would result in the utter discomfiture of Satan, and that the kingdom of this world would be given to the saints of the Most High. He told Him that He would see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied, for He would see a multitude of the human race saved, eternally saved. Christ's agony did not cease, but His depression and discouragement left Him. The storm had in no wise abated."²⁴ Thanks to the angel's rescue, Christ's discouragement is gone, He has been delivered from that hideous sin of despair into which He had fallen, and the fate of the world no longer trembles in the balance!

Throughout all this, sometimes they say that Christ is Archangel Michael, at others they say the angel who took over the devil's position is the one who saved Him. Soon Christ will not even reach the rank of Archangel Michael!

"And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the... Devil... and his angels" (Rev 12: 7 - 9). Archangel Michael overcame, and it is known that he took Satan's position. How is it then that Christ is Archangel Michael, and at the same time, Archangel Michael is the one who came to rescue Christ from despair?

Does God Separate from Him, or Does He Share in His Sufferings?

After writing about the separation of the Father from the Son during Crucifixion, she returns to contradict herself by saying, *"But God suffered with His Son. Angels beheld the Saviour's agony. They saw their Lord enclosed by legions of Satanic forces, (How did the Father suffer with Him, and yet was separated from Him? Contradictions in thoughts and teachings!) His nature weighed down with a shuddering, mysterious dread. There was silence in heaven. No harp was touched. Could mortals have viewed the amazement of the angelic host as in silent grief they watched the Father separating His beams of light, love, and glory from His beloved Son, they would better understand how offensive in His sight is sin."*²⁵ It did not suffice her to say that the Father separated from the Son, she added that the Father separated His beam of light, love, and glory from His beloved Son. If He withdraws His beam of love from Him, then does He not cease to be beloved? All her writings are full on contradictions.

²⁴ Pages 693-694 of the Standard English hardback pagination. Page 656 in the Arabic translation.

²⁵ Pages 693 of the Standard English hardback pagination. Page 655 in the Arabic translation.

Temptation on the Mount

In the temptation on the Mountain they say that Christ could have erred. She writes, “*When Jesus entered the wilderness, He was shut in by the Father’s glory. Absorbed in communion with God, He was lifted above human weakness. But the glory departed, and He was left to battle with temptation.*”²⁶ The glory left Him – to human weakness!

The Great Day of Atonement

They believe that Christ moved from the Heavenly Holy to the Holy of Holies in 1844 on the Great Day of Atonement to purify the Heavenly Holy. She tried to introduce this doctrine by writing that, “*Jesus refused to receive the homage of His people until He had the assurance that His sacrifice was accepted by the Father. He ascended to the heavenly courts, and from God Himself heard the assurance that His atonement for the sins of men had been ample, that through His blood all might gain eternal life.*”²⁷

Ascension to Heaven

Of His ascension to heaven she writes, “*The angelic throng... (wanting to revel in the arrival of the Only-Begotten Son) are eager to celebrate His triumph and to glorify their King. (What King? He had been in a pitiful condition!) But He waves them back. Not yet; He cannot now receive the coronet of glory and the royal robe. He enters into the presence of His Father.*”²⁸ Was she in heaven at that time to see Christ push away the angels exclaiming, ‘No, I won’t wear the coronet of glory or the royal robe’? She makes proclamations utterly unsupported by the Holy Bible. To the contrary, the Holy Books repudiate her words saying, “*He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption*” (Heb 9:12).

²⁶ Pages 117-118 of the Standard English hardback pagination. Page 99 in the Arabic translation.

²⁷ Pages 790 of the Standard English hardback pagination. Page 748 in the Arabic translation.

²⁸ Pages 833-834 of the Standard English hardback pagination. Page 788 in the Arabic translation.

BIBLICAL RESPONDS

The Determined Purpose and Foreknowledge of God

Writing of the possibility that the redemption might not have occurred destroys many points, including God's economy for the salvation of the human race.

📖 Our teacher Saint Paul, in speaking of the Father, writes, "*Having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth -- in Him. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,*" (Eph 1: 9 – 11). So, was the fate of the world trembling in the balance? How can that be, if this is *according to* [His] *purpose*?

📖 "*According to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,*" (Eph 3: 11). She writes that *the eternal purpose* was trembling in danger?

📖 "*According to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,*" (2 Tim 1: 8 – 9). If this is so, how can she say that the fate of the world trembled in the balance?

📖 Also, when Saint Peter stood on Pentecost, he reprimanded the Jews saying, "*Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know -- Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it*" (Act 2: 22 – 24). So, everything that occurred for the redemption was *by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God*, even death; *it was not possible that He should be held by it*.

📖 When Christ spoke to the Jews, He said, "*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then the Jews said, It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?*" *But He was speaking of the temple of His body*"²⁹ (Jn 2: 19 – 21). He was daring them, 'Kill Me, and I will rise on the third day'. He said to His disciples, "*The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up*" (Mt 17: 22 – 23).

📖 Even the Jews acknowledged Christ's proclamation that He would rise on the third day, therefore they went to Pilate with this request, "*We remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, After three days I will rise. Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people,*

²⁹ Here Saint John comments on their incomprehension.

He has risen from the dead. So the last deception will be worse than the first” (Mt 27: 63 – 64). That is why Pilate placed guards on the tomb. How was our Lord Jesus Christ not certain that He would rise, if He Himself challenged the Jews and told them “destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up!”

The Separation of the Father from the Son is an Impossibility

- ❖ First of all, we believe that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are One God. So, how can the Father separate from the Son if they are One God!
- ❖ Secondly, the verse, which the Adventist followers³⁰ and others rely upon to support this idea, is the one our Lord Jesus Christ uttered upon the Cross. He said, “*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is translated, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*” (Mk 15: 34). King David prophesied this verse in psalm 22 saying, “*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning?... They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.*” (Ps 22: 1, 17, 18). They allege that when He asks, “*Why have You forsaken Me*”, then the Father has separated from the Son. Who said that these words mean that the Father separated from the Son? The Father was never separate from the Son. Let us continue reading this psalm so know what he meant.

Psalm Twenty-Two

“You who fear the Lord, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel! For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from Him; But when He cried to Him, He heard.” (v. 23-24).

“Be not far from Me, For trouble is near” (v. 11).

“Be not far from Me” and *“Why have You forsaken Me”*, with *“But You, O Lord, do not be far from Me”* (v. 19), and *“For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; **Nor has He hidden His face from Him; But when He cried to Him, He heard**”*. What do all these verses mean?

They say the Father hid His face from the Son while on the cross because He carried the sins of the world. However, in the Book of Isaiah it is written, “***Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief.***” (Is 53: 10). It was said that Christ, “***For the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame,***” (Heb 12: 2).

The word, “***Nor has He hidden His face from Him***” vividly nullifies the idea that the Father hid His face from the Son.

³⁰ including Ellen White

Two meanings of “*Why have you forsaken Me*”

★ In the first meaning He is asking, ‘Why did you leave Me in this bodily pain, as the carrier of the punishment of man’s sin?’ The response is, ‘I have left You to carry this pain because You have made Yourself an offering for sin.’ He said it in the Book of Isaiah, “*He was led as a lamb to the slaughter... make His soul an offering for sin... He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.*” (Is 53: 7 – 12).

The Father smelt the aroma of delight and pleasure in the obedience of the Only-begotten Son. From one perspective, divine justice was compensated as the Son trod the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, being humanity’s representative who fulfilled divine justice by revealing both God’s Holiness and wrath against sin. From the other perspective, the Father took pleasure in the actions of the Only-begotten Son.

His Holiness Pope Shenouda III, may the Lord preserve his life, mentioned a simple analogy once. A son goes to the dentist with his father. As the dentist operates the drill on his teeth, the father holds the son’s hand, who screams in pain, “Dad, why are you leaving me?” The father responds, “I have not let you go, I’m still holding onto you.” The son replies, “Why are you letting the doctor do this to me?”

So, “*Why have You forsaken Me*”, in this first instance, means ‘Why have you left Me in this pain?’

Christ said this on the cross; in this psalm there are references to His crucifixion, so He was reminding the Jews of it. It says, “*They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me.* (Here He is speaking of the Jews)... *They gape at Me with their mouths, Like a raging and roaring lion.* (v. 13) “*All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!*” (v. 7, 8).

As though he is directing to Jews to read psalm 22, which begins with “*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me*”. Go see how it speaks of your evil deeds.

The rest of the psalm says, “*Many bulls have surrounded Me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me. They gape at Me with their mouths, Like a raging and roaring lion.*” (v. 12, 13). If they read these words about themselves, they would know that they were strong savage bulls. He later says in verse 16, “*The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.*” lest they think that ‘strong bulls’ are respectful persons. As if on the cross, our Lord Christ was telling the Jews and the High Priests to go search how psalm 22 foretold of their deeds.

★ In the second meaning, as humanity’s representative (the second/new Adam), He is uttering the question on everyone’s tongue. He asks, ‘Lord, for 4000 or 5000 years death reigned over humanity. Why have you left man these thousands of years to be reigned by death, submitting to its authority? Why have you left me, I the man?’

Now, add the following verse to the previous: **“For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.”** (Ps 16: 10). The condemned man asks, ‘Why have you left me under the authority of death,’ yet of Christ it was declared, **“It was not possible that He should be held by it [death]”**.


Thus he continues in the same psalm saying, **“But You, O Lord, do not be far from Me; O My Strength, hasten to help Me!** (How could He separate from Him if He is *not far?*) **Deliver Me from the sword, My precious life from the power of the dog. Save Me from the lion's mouth And from the horns of the wild oxen! You have answered Me. I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You.”** (Ps 22: 19 – 22). He is confident of the Resurrection; **I will declare Your name to My brethren,** ‘I will appear to the disciples and also tell Mary Magdalene, **“Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me”** (Mt 28: 10)’.

“You who fear the Lord, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel! For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from Him; But when He cried to Him, He heard.” (v. 23, 24). He declares that **He heard**, then how can they say that He separated from Him!

Then, after the trouble passed, King David prophesied³¹, **“You who fear the Lord, praise Him! ...For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from Him; But when He cried to Him, He heard. My praise shall be of You in the great assembly; I will pay My vows before those who fear Him. The poor shall eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the Lord. Let your heart live forever! All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the Lord, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You. For the kingdom is the Lord's, And He rules over the nations.”** (v. 25 – 28). Whoever wants to argue the first two statements, ought to read the rest of the psalm.

He says, **“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me”**, then he says, **“The poor shall eat and be satisfied”**, and, **“For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from Him”**. The Father **did not** hide His face from the Son, ever!

SAINT PAUL’S DEFENSE

 Saint Paul expounded on this, **“So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. As He also says in another place: You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek; who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death,** (Was He not expressing humanity here? Was He not representing man? Why is His humanistic expression unexpected? Why is it not accepted that He offered prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears, and He *did* die on the cross!) **but was heard because of His godly fear”** (Heb 5: 5 – 7).

³¹ even if by faith alone

One might ask, ‘How can you say He was heard if he did die?’ The answer is that He wanted to reveal to us that, as the intercessor of the whole of humanity, He is asking the Father makes a passover for humanity from death to life. Thus the prophet sang, “*Death is swallowed up in victory... O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?*” (1 Cor 15: 54 - 55).

This cry was carrying humanity from death to life. Did you expect Him to fulfill the redemption effortlessly? This *is* the work of redemption; He cried for the liberation of humanity from death. This is why it says, “*and [He] was heard because of His godly fear*”.

He was heard because of His godly fear, not because of the humiliating image Ellen White portrayed, writing that He was desperate and had no hope. How was He heard? He was heard because He arose from the dead victorious, and became the cause of salvation to those who obey Him.

On Christ’s Work on the Cross

In the same epistle Saint Paul the apostle on Christ’s work on the cross wrote:

📖 “*For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, **appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.***” (Heb 7: 26 – 28)

📖 “*For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit **offered Himself without spot to God**, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*” (Heb 9: 13 – 14).

On the Relationship between Hope and Salvation

Saying that Christ our Lord lost hope is utterly unbecoming of Him. If Saint Paul calls for the average believer to live in hope, what about *the holy of holies*? If he writes, “*And now abide faith, **hope**, love*” (1 Cor 13: 13), then how can she say that our Lord Jesus Christ had no hope? Without hope man cannot be saved.

Examples for the relationship between hope and the salvation of man would be the following:

📖 “*But, beloved, we are confident of **better things** concerning you, yes, things **that accompany salvation**, though we speak in this manner. For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to **the full assurance of hope until the end**, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*” (Heb 6: 9 – 12). So, in order to speak of better things that accompany salvation, man needs to adhere to *the full assurance of **hope until the end***.

Until the end means he cannot live in hope for a while, and later loses hope. If he loses hope, then he is lost.

📖 “That by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to **lay hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil,**” (Heb 6: 12, 18, 19). Whoever wishes to enter the heavenly kingdom needs to lay hold of hope.

When they want to stabilize a wind tossed ship, they drop an anchor or two, which sink into the sand and fasten the ship in place, thus preventing it from sinking. If he writes, *This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil*, then who is the leader or forerunner of this hope? We find the answer in the following verse:

📖 “Where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.” (Heb 6: 20). Could a hopeless forerunner say, “I go to prepare a place for you” (Jn 14: 2)! If so, then how did He enter as a forerunner on our behalf? He is “*the Prince of life*” (Acts 3: 15), the “*King of peace*” (Heb 7: 2), and with the same measure we say He is “*the God of hope*” (Rom 15: 13), and “*the captain*” (Heb 2: 10) of the hope march.

📖 He is even more than this, “*But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.*” (Heb 8: 6). Why? Because this *better covenant* and *better promise* are built on Christ’s redemptive work. In the same epistle it is written, “*By so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.*” (Heb 7: 22). Meanwhile Ellen White writes, “*Satan told Him that if He became the surety for a sinful world... He would be identified with Satan’s kingdom*”. Is this acceptable! It is written that *He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.*”

There is a promise from God for salvation. This promise was “*According to the eternal purpose*”, “*According to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will*”, and, “*His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus*”?

The Role of Each Hypostasis of the Holy Trinity in Salvation

Salvation is not an exclusive act by Christ, but also by the Heavenly Father.

📖 It is written, “*But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many... Much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.*” (Rom 5: 15, 17). This is a gift from the Heavenly Father, how can the Father’s gift be in jeopardy? Is the Father unable to secure His gift!

📖 In speaking of the Father's redemptive role also (lest anyone think that the Son is the sole savior) Saint Paul writes, "*But when the kindness and **the love of God our Savior** toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, **through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit**, whom He poured out on us abundantly **through Jesus Christ our Savior**," (Tit 3: 4 – 6).*

God our Savior [is the Father, How? Because it is written that] *according to His mercy* [How?] *through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior..* This also shows the Holy Spirit's role in salvation; He saved us through (baptism) *the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. He poured out* [the Holy Spirit] *on us abundantly through* [Whom?] *Jesus Christ our Savior.* Therefore, salvation is not exclusively the work or case of Jesus Christ. Salvation is the case and decision of the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

📖 Salvation was not solely the work of the Son, because the Son Himself said, "*My Father has been working until now, and I have been working... Whatever He does, the Son also does*" (Jn 5: 17, 19), yet each of the three hypostaseis had His role in the one work of salvation. The Son offers Himself a sacrifice on the cross, which the Father smells as a pleasant acceptable sacrifice, and, it is written "*Christ, who **through the eternal Spirit** offered Himself without spot to God*," (Heb 9: 14). Therefore, the Son offered Himself through the Holy Spirit to God without spot.

Just as we saw the Trinity in the Jordan River: the Father's voice coming from heaven, "*This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*" (Mt 3: 17), the Son baptized in the water, and the Holy Spirit "*descending like a dove and alighting upon Him*" (Mt 3: 16), on Golgotha the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit were working. How can we say that the Father separated from the Son? If the Father separated from the Son, redemption would never have occurred, which would have been a great disaster, piercing deep the entire Christian faith.

On Hope

📖 Returning to the issue of hope, we find that hope is a precondition for man's salvation. Our teacher Saint Paul writes, "*We also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. **For we were saved in this hope***" (Rom 8: 23 – 24). If we were **saved in this hope**, how then can our Savior Himself lose hope?

How does Ellen White, whom they call the prophetess of the last days, dare to say that *Hope did not present to Him* [our Lord Jesus Christ] *His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice?* Oh, so hope didn't know how to talk to Him! Are these acceptable Christians doctrines? In case anyone has forgotten her passage, she wrote, "*Satan with his fierce temptations wrung the heart of Jesus. The savior could not see through the portals of the tomb. (This is even after dying on the cross!) Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice.*"

She also wrote, “*In that thick darkness God’s presence was hidden... The angry lightnings seemed to be hurled at Him as He hung upon the cross. Then Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*” (The angry lightnings seemed to be hurled at Him! Nature was proclaiming her anger at the sins of the Jews.) *As the outer gloom settled about the Savior, many voices exclaimed, The vengeance of Heaven is upon Him. The bolts of God’s wrath are hurled at Him, because He claimed to be the Son of God. Many who believed on Him heard His despairing cry. Hope left them. If God has forsaken Jesus, in what could His followers trust?*³²” That is true. *If God has forsaken Jesus, in what could His followers trust?* If Christ Himself has lost His faith and hope, which is impossible, then what would the believers do!

Galal Doss Attends our Meeting

We have exhausted much effort in correcting this reputation. His Holiness presented numerous sermons on the Adventists at the Theological Seminary, recorded many cassette tapes, and wrote many articles in the Keraza Magazine prior to the spread of these various publications.

I was invited to a meeting concerning the Adventists at Saint Mary’s Church in Masarra, on June 30, 2002 which lasted approximately two and a half hours. I responded to several of their claims, such as their accusation that we are idol worshippers, and the issue of keeping the Sabbath. I confirmed that Sunday is the Day of the Lord – the day in which we rejoice in His Resurrection from the dead. Ellen White writes of Saturday, in *The Desire of Ages*, “We rejoice in His presence in the tomb”. Does she rejoice in His presence in the tomb, along with the Jews? They are Jews! I also responded to the issues of incense and candles, their denial that evil doers will be tortured (see Mt 18: 34), and their belief that Christ inherited Adam’s sin. Of course, I could not respond to all their doctrines in one meeting.

After the meeting they informed me that Galal Doss and his wife (a non-Egyptian) were present. I said, “That’s good, so he heard many Biblical responses to the erroneous doctrines of the Adventists”. To my astonishment, at his meeting (some people attended to know his response to our meeting) he said that there are certain points that Anba Bishoy did not cover. That is to be expected since it is not feasible in one sermon to respond to all the thoughts of such a sect as the Adventists. Instead of making such a statement he should have debated the issues discussed: present his viewpoint, present our viewpoint, and allow the hearers to choose. Regardless of all our efforts to correct his thoughts, he insists on clinging onto this destructive wave.

Become Proactive – Broadcast the Truth and Exchange Book

The church cannot be silenced on this issue. The proverb says *prevention is the best medicine*. It is imperative that she **distributes an abundance of books, pamphlets, flyers, and tapes at our churches and to the homes**. We have to precede and pinpoint to our congregation the Adventists’ errors, before they deceive them with deceiving or sweetened words, dissolving the poison in the honey.

³² Pages 754 - 755 of the Standard English hardback pagination. Pages 715 - 716 in the Arabic translation.

This is what is happening. Whoever reads *The Desire of Ages* finds much interpretation that *appears* to contain beneficial meditations and explanations – this is what the reader might see. At the heart of this 800+ page book are errors, which if they were coalesced would produce about ten pages. These 10 pages, out of the 800, could destroy the entire faith. This is why we caution our congregation against reading these books.

When they distribute these complimentary books, we advise our congregation to give them to us, and we will replace them with beneficial Orthodox books.

We hope the priests and servants throughout Saint Mark’s mission warn their congregationalists against these sects, and collect these books and pamphlets. Some have asked, “What could be done with these books?” I responded, “Bring them to us, even if they are in large quantities, and one option is to distribute them to the students of the Coptic Seminaries, their branches, and the Coptic Institutes as study material when discussing this sect.” This provides an opportunity to study these sects along with responses to their claims, yet we do not recommend distributing them to the congregation. If we use these books, we need to use them for educational purposes, to respond to the heresies and sects.

Concluding Remark of Hope

We have a promise from our Lord Jesus Christ, that the Coptic Church will remain solid and firmly grounded in the faith, because the Bible says, “*Blessed is Egypt My people,*” and “*There will be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt*” (Is 19: 25, 19).

We also have a promise concerning the church as a whole, “*The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it*” (Mt 16: 18), and “*No weapon formed against you shall prosper*” (Is 54:17). Regardless of Galal Doss’ funding, whether in millions of dollars or pounds, we pray that our congregation remains firm and confident in the faith through the intercessions of the Ever Virgin Saint Mary, and the prayers of His Holiness Pope Shenouda III.

Glory be to God forever, Amen.