

c/o Potomac University
Washington 12, D.C.
November 18, 1958

Elder A. V. Olson
Elder H. W. Lowe
Elder A. L. White
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
Washington 12, D.C.

Dear Brethren:

May we please set down on paper a few thoughts as the result of our meeting yesterday?

1. We do wish to thank you brethren for your patience in thus devoting an entire day to talking with us. We know how busy you are. We deeply appreciate your sympathetic attitude and gracious courtesy throughout the interview. And we appreciate your counsel to us and your personal interest in us.

2. We have written a letter to Elder Beach, in respect of the October 24 letter to Brother Hudson, which was discussed yesterday. You will find a copy enclosed, which is self-explanatory.

3. We deeply regret that you have the impression that we will not receive counsel from you. We wish we might relieve your minds of that feeling. Perhaps we cannot. We respect your position, your age, your experience, the fact that you are the Lord's servants. We believe we are honest when we say we respect authority, though we may disagree with certain of your interpretations of evidence. Perhaps we should say no more than that we pray the Lord to grant us that heaven-born humility and grace to stand before you respectfully and loyally though in our hearts we do not agree on all points, and must say so honestly.

Most readily will we admit numerous weaknesses and mistakes in our paper of 1950. Certain quotations should have been presented with more complete context, though we constantly worked toward as much brevity as possible. Let us cheerfully admit that the inclusion of added context might in some cases have given "a little different impression," as was stated yesterday. The difficulty is that we cannot see that the addition of such context would have made really significant and important difference in the end, though it would have been better to use it, in spite of length. After all is said, the inspired warnings of the grave danger of infatuation with a false Christ and Spiritualism are there, and we don't know how to get around them.

We gladly admit that the bulk of Sister White's correspondence to the brethren in the 1890's does not make specific reference, by name, to Minneapolis or 1888. Our difficulty, brethren, is that the rather frequent references specifically to it convince us that she regarded the tap root of the difficulty as going straight back to the 1888 reaction, and the perpetuation of it through the 90's. We hope you will not regard this as a desire to refuse your counsel; we want to be sincere in talking with you. We have learned in the mission field that an African who is given to saying, "Yes, kwana, yes, kwana," often cannot be trusted. The honest, sincere African who will openly disagree with the missionary is frequently the most loyal.

4. We would beg of you to note our emphatic denial of ever having written or said that "the denomination is worshipping a false Christ," or

that "the denomination is receiving a false holy Spirit." We noted with regret that these statements or thoughts are attributed to us. May we respectfully remind you that in our manuscript, pages 4 and 155, as well as elsewhere, we categorically state that the presence within Israel (the denomination) of the "seven thousand" who have never bowed the knee to Baal renders impotent Baal's final attempt to subjugate the Israel of God. The "elect" are not represented as being overcome by deception, though the confusion and infatuation of "many" in the church with Baal seriously retards her work and paralyzes her true progress--until the time of disillusionment and repentance.

We would beg of you also to note that the title of chapter 11, "Predictions of Infatuation with a False Christ," does not say that "the denomination is worshipping a false Christ." We understand the predictions have been fulfilled, yes, in two ways: (a) Babylon's fall has steadily progressed so that she is now receiving Spiritualism as what she thinks is the "holy spirit"; and (b) individuals, even ministers among the remnant church, even "many" have been ~~even~~ confused and infatuated with Babylon's doctrine of "righteousness by faith" and her "experience," and so blinded by love of self, that they have been infatuated with the false Christ, themselves. This is a grave danger and a serious problem; but it is not to say that "the denomination is worshipping a false Christ." We have always said that the predominant element in the denouement of the final crisis will be the "seven thousand" who have not bowed the knee to Baal; they are right now the "salt of the earth"; and by God's grace they are right now holding the church together. There is an intense struggle going on right now and the outcome is certain, that of victory for the true Christ.

May we suggest that the reason why some others may be making the statement, as you say, that "the denomination is worshipping a false Christ," is because you brethren at headquarters have given out the impression that you completely repudiate the warning we sent in 1950 concerning the frightful danger of involvement in a subtle form of Spiritualism etc. Conscientious and intelligent and loyal Adventists have read this warning and consider it sane, reasonable, intelligent, and pertinent. When you declare it wholly unworthy of consideration, as you have certainly done, are they not rather goaded, desperately, to the conclusion that you may be after all, trying to cloak the existing evil, and support the inroads of the false Christ? Your repudiation of the warning seems to them to be unreasonable; one can hardly blame some for concluding that there must be somehow some influential patronage of the false Christ. We are sure that you brethren do not want to give that most unfortunate impression, any more than we want to give the impression that we say the "denomination is worshipping a false Christ" in the sense of an entire or wholesale devotion to him.

5. We note the statement made yesterday that we should present a "positive" study of "righteousness by faith." May we suggest that we have three manuscripts in process of preparation: one on the cleansing of the sanctuary and its relation to the development of Christ-like characters ready for translation; one on Galatians, an attempt to make it real and simple and inspirational to the lay member of today; and one on the Cross and the Atonement as central in true Christian experience and victory over sin. Two of these manuscripts were started before we wrote the 1950 manuscript submitted to you; nothing has been done to them since due to the very unfavourable reception "1888 Re-examined" elicited. It seems to us that we should complete these and submit them to you before we return to Africa, that you might know very clearly what we believe

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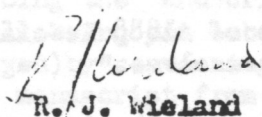
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lost by any means we "should run" or have run, "in vain." If we are after all heretics, better that you should know the whole picture, and the sooner the better. If we should be straight in our understanding of the everlasting gospel, the three angels' messages, you should also know it.

It would require not more than one or two month's work to write or to re-write and complete in final form these manuscripts which are now in extremely rough form, being only in the first draft stage. We wish it might be possible for us to have this much extension of our furlough. We can hardly quit our present work at the Seminary in mid-semester; and we must make preparations for sailing almost directly after the close of this semester. It is, of course, quite impossible to do the writing while carrying more than full work at the Seminary.

We would say, lastly, that there is great need for a presentation of the righteousness of Christ that would illuminate the glorious doctrine of the cleansing of the sanctuary, and make it real and gripping to our people. Our present concepts are narrow; we should be growing in understanding far more than we have grown since the era of 70 years ago. We believe that as the Law is magnified and made honourable, the "cleansing of the sanctuary" will be also, and its relationship to righteousness by faith become clear.

Sincerely yours,


R. J. Wieland


D. K. Short