Worship: Hope for the Waiting Community

Ivan T. Loo

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Abstract

WORSHIP: HOPE FOR THE WAITING COMMUNITY

by

Ivan T. Loo

The relationship between hope and worship has been neglected for too long in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Adventism in North America has lost much of its zeal for and emphasis on the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. A renewed awareness of corporate worship's importance would help Adventists more fully understand their unique role in Christiandom. Adventists need to gain a better grasp of the meaning of Christian hope. Worship services should be a time and place for experiencing, enhancing, and transmitting the believers' hope. Congregations that take part in liturgies incorporating the "Great Controversy" theme will be better equipped to fulfill their gospel commission. Worship should declare the Second Coming while aiding congregants in participating in the Kingdom's present manifestation. Relevant liturgical acts can help intensify a congregation's perception of God's rule as believers are taught how to wait. Adventist worship must more fully reflect God's sovereignty.
LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY

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WORSHIP: HOPE FOR THE WAITING COMMUNITY

by

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of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts
in Religion

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Each person whose signature appears below certifies that this thesis in his opinion is adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree Master of Arts.

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CHAPTER I

HOPE FOR A TIME OF CRISIS

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America is in a time of crisis. While it may legitimately be said that all times are times of crisis, currently the church finds itself in a situation where church leaders, members and even the general public possess information regarding the Adventist Church's dilemmas.

Within the recent past and presently continuing, an open debate has raged regarding many of the denomination's traditional interpretations of some of its fundamental doctrines. This has caused many who were led to blindly believe in the absoluteness of Adventist doctrine to either leave theological questions to the experts or abandon their beliefs. Such conditions are contrary to the founding fundamentals of Protestantism and Adventism, both were established on the principle of intense personal Bible study and personal conviction.

Recently, there have been a rash of serious financial and administrative setbacks that have shaken the faith of many Adventists. In the light of these leadership crises, some members have questioned their personal trust in God while a great many more have become cynical about the
church's structure and programs. Yearly promotions of repeated programs that have not changed to meet the ever transforming targeted audience has frustrated many earnest church members and bored many more into apathy. "Stalinistic" five-year-plans and denominational goals may have their influence on the world field, departmental leaders and session meetings, but they have not been widely accepted by most North American Adventist.

In spite of being confronted with the above conditions and developments, the total monetary giving of North American Adventists is still increasing. There must be a deep seated motivation leading to such faithfulness in the face of so many unfavorable developments. That strong commitment shown through the membership's offerings cannot be taken for granted. While the denomination may have a strong and growing membership, those members are a body in tune with the modern demands for financial and administrative responsibility. Individual congregations are verbalizing and acting on their concerns that local ministries be emphasized. In many cases this has led to a steady decline in the world missions offerings with an accompanying apathy towards a global mission and a neglect of that responsibility. A good share of this decline must be attributed to the denomination's leaders' patronistic attitude towards the laity. Such an attitude can be especially irritating to those in North America because it is they who have been
supporting the bulk of the world field for so many years. To be addressed and approached in such a manner is to some unrealistic and to others demeaning.

This is an age where North American lay members desire and are demanding increased meaningful roles in the church's organization and operation. Adventist certified public accountants and other financial experts within the church want their talents to be utilized in helping the church out of some of its monetary difficulties and especially in helping the church avoid future financial embarrassments. Many members register their indifference and contempt for the organized church's programs and projects through their noninvolvement in certain activities. Their next logical step would be to vote their disapproval by withholding their offerings to those programs or to the church. Further steps would be nonattendance and total withdrawal of financial support.

Church leadership cannot "blanketly" attribute indifference to a Laodicean church but rather must execute the responsibilities of their position in the light of the changing situations confronting them. Good leadership will respond with administrative changes as well as engage in thoughtful re-examination of the body's major goals and its proposal for accomplishing those goals.

Programs can be altered, dropped, or initiated. But what about the members back in the pews of the local
churches? What sincere actions are there that will be widely accepted by members while not being perceived as contrived or manipulative? The discussion that follows will suggest that the Seventh-day Adventist Church's understanding of worship deserves fuller attention and that a deeper appreciation of worship and its implications may aid both leadership and laity into a more fulfilling and more productive partnership under the direction of God.

The modern consciousness of history is understood and expressed in terms of crisis. Crisis situations bring with them new possibilities for good or evil. Customary methods and traditions are inadequate. Crisis is always related to order. The order of things is called into question in times of crisis and a new order is necessary for resolution. Clearly, changes are called for in these crucial times in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

One may characterize the overarching crisis confronting Adventism as a problem of lost self-identity. This identity crisis exhibits itself not solely in secondary areas of church practices such as dress, deportment, and entertainment but also in the fundamental beliefs of the Second Advent and the Sabbath. The understanding and appreciation of these two main doctrines of Adventism is on the decline. Related to that decline, though not nearly as important, there is also a growing unfamiliarity with the developmental history behind the denomination's formulation of these
doctrines. It has been almost a century and a half since the great expectation of the Millerite Movement. How very telling it is that the 1844 date is generally referred to in terms of disappointment rather than anticipation. How very unfortunate it is that many church members regard the Sabbath as mainly a day for their physical rest. These conditions reflect a growing identity crisis and possibly a substantial identity change.

The ideals of Adventism were originally communicated in positive and unmistakable terms. The Seventh-day Adventist message is one of challenge, warning, and hope. It requires a people who confidently look forward. Their roots have developed out of anticipation not disappointment and despair. While the disappointment of October 22, 1844 is a part of Adventist history and culture, that disappointment and the despair that accompanied it do not in any way characterize the body of this people's identity and message. The Adventist message boldly states that personal security, comfort, and ease are not the church's commission or goal.

In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention.

The theme that differentiates Seventh-day Adventism from the rest of Christianity is not the seventh day
Sabbath, it is the Adventist understanding of the expected soon Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The Sabbath doctrine is a development of the Advent doctrine. This is seen not only through the events related to the development of the doctrines in the church's history but also by the relationship that they have with each other. Both doctrines speak to God's ultimate sovereignty and the two are fundamentally linked together as made clear in Revelation 14:7. The witness of the New Testament explicitly and often relates Christianity with the Second Advent while infrequently directly relating it to the Sabbath. Clearly, the hope of the Christian is culminated in the return of Jesus. The Sabbath among its many functions reminds the world of that approaching day and allows believers a taste of what that event will usher in.

It could be said that in its worship the church is already at that moment in time when Jesus appears. His church has gathered to meet Him. It could be said that every Sabbath the worship of the church is its rehearsal for the day of the Lord when He shall appear in fact. In its worship the last-day church is on tip-toe, on the edge of its seat, on the threshold, eager to see and hear the Lord. In faith it reaches out to welcome Him. What it says and does on the Sabbath is in anticipation of that great day. It is a foretaste of the great event.

The "Three Angels' Messages" call for a proper worship of God. The issue of worshiping God is not so much form and practice but rather as Jesus said to the Samaritan woman in John 4:24, "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." The spirit of true worship
emphasizes God's lordship. True worship reflects and proclaims the believer's commitment to fulfilling God's will. The Seventh-day Adventist understanding of God's will is to a large degree expressed in the "Great Controversy" theme, the controversy between good and evil, between Christ and Satan. Adventist worship ideally reflects this theme and moves the participants ever closer to the side of God.

The "Great Controversy" theme is one that points towards a fulfillment. Christ's victory over sin and His eternal reign are the ultimate hope of Christian believers. True and acceptable worship of God are fundamental to the theme. From before the creation of the earth when Lucifer first entertained the thought of sin (Isaiah 14:14 "I will make myself like the Most High") to the angel's epilogue to the book of Revelation (Rev. 22:9 "Worship God"), the "Great Controversy" is expressed in terms of worship. God has laid out in Scripture the waymarks of this conflict. His revelation points to Righteousness' final and ultimate victory. Though the outcome is assured, revelation also tells that the way is neither fast nor smooth. Believers need encouragement to face these difficulties while simultaneously they need to be challenged. Worship provides both comfort and challenge; aptly stated in the Uppsala Document on Worship:

When we worship, God shows us that in the battle against the demonic forces of this world, which alienate man from his creator and his fellow-men and plunge him into the abyss of suffering and injustice, the final victory belongs to Jesus Christ.
Worship legitimately provides both hope and call. Worship requires that responsive Christians seriously take up God's will and consider His mercy. In worship, they celebrate and exercise the hope that has been given. Worship spans all time frames with its emphasis on the One worshiped. It is especially directed towards the future fuller fulfillment of God's revelation and mercy.

"Eschatological" signifies the eternal, qualitatively different realm of Reality the man of faith is claimed by in Christian worship; yet it affirms the presence of this Reality to his historical consciousness. It also signifies the essential mystery of worship as embracing past, present, and not least the future—the hereafter that is yet here. We cannot forget, parenthetically, that eschatology is the dominant mode of New Testament worship and the key that unlocks its normative meaning.

Worship provides a means for looking beyond the present and its situations. It enables worshipers to focus on God's glory. Ultimately, they look forward to heaven where the worship of God will continue and will occupy the saints forever, it is an activity that continues, "There shall be no more be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall worship him;" Rev. 22:3. Christian worship is rooted in the history of its faith and is connected with its ancient liturgy. Many of the Old Testament liturgical acts pointed towards the Christ event while many Christian worship acts were elaborations on the Old Testament practices. Today, liturgy is influenced and to a large degree determined by the prior experiences of the community of faith.
... [A liturgy] has to be old, because otherwise it isn't polished. It has to be old, because otherwise it won't have had enough imagination expended on it. It has to be old to be available to everyone born within that tradition. But it must be fresh enough so that it can continually contain new vision and changed vision... to use old symbols, but use them anew, to free them and ourselves of rigidity and stagnation.

Because Christian worship is not merely a review of past acts but rather a living history and statement of faith, it is capable of expressing and influencing the lives of its participants. All of the power and influence of ritual and action are minor compared to the main emphasis of Christian worship. That emphasis is of course the God behind the worship. As attested to by all serious works on Christian worship, God is the object and priority of worship. It is He who reveals Himself in the worship that He ordains.

Worship is the dramatic celebration of God in his supreme worth in such a manner that his "worthiness" becomes the norm and inspiration of human living.

It is this fundamental aspect of worship the Seventh-day Adventist church needs to seriously consider during this period of shaken group identity. By no means should worship be turned into a tool to mold and reform the masses, but the God-given powers of change inherent in worship are many. A thorough, church-wide study of the importance of worship and its implications could do much to aid the Adventist church in finding its identity and regaining a better understanding of its mission.
In recent years, there has been a liturgical renewal movement within the Adventist church. There has been Raymond C. Holmes' book, *Sing a New Song*. This book and related Adventist studies have led to various seminars and lecture series regarding the state and direction of Adventist liturgy. There have also been several uniquely Adventist liturgies prepared and presented in various worship services. "The Apocalypse as Liturgy" a liturgical service by Charles Teel, Jr. addresses the Adventist situations of waiting, anticipation, and mission by utilizing many parts of Revelation that are especially emphasized by Adventists. Liturgical reform need not necessarily mean new liturgy, rather a renewed interest and understanding of the importance of liturgy. Even with various works by Adventist writers about the importance of worship and associated seminars, the developments and rekindled interest have mainly been limited to educational centers and the largest of congregations. Unfortunately, even when there has been emphasis given to liturgy, it has been more experimental in nature and not truly reform. Adventist liturgical reform has not gone out to the masses.

If the Adventist church can gain a renewed interest in worship that attracts the interest of small rural as well as large urban congregations without mandating specific set liturgies but rather emphasizing a denominational desire to worship God "correctly", then the church may find a new and
honest vitality. There must be no sense of the renewed interest being another program. Respect must be given to the importance of this subject as well as respect for the sophistication and earnestness of the Adventist membership. Congregations in their communities face unique needs that can only be addressed adequately on a local basis. In the Protestant liturgical reform movement, there was at first too much emphasis placed upon variations and alterations to forms and actions only. As time has passed, there has been an increased maturity in how liturgical reform is viewed.

Adventists would do well to understand worship as a dialogue. God's communion with His people is the core of worship. The praise and glory given to God is part of the congregation's response. But there is much more dialogue and communication that transpires during the liturgical service, there is also the deepening of relationships among worshipers as they share common experiences and goals. The life of a congregation cannot be separated from that which occurs during the weekly Sabbath worship service. A primary element of Adventist worship must be hope or it would not truly be Christian nor specifically Adventist.

The relationship between worship and hope will be examined in the following chapters. First, the concept of hope itself will be considered as to its origin, impact, and necessity. Second, the weekly Sabbath worship service and other religious celebrations will be looked at to see how
they have relayed hope in the past and how they do and can function as conveyers of hope. Third, the desired developments in an earnestly waiting community will be considered. Fourth, a discussion regarding liturgy's role as a pedagogical medium will be entered. Fifth, the "Great Controversy" theme will be examined for its contributions to Adventist worship in the last parts of the twentieth century.

By definition, "corporate worship" is a group experience, it conveys and molds a congregation's identity. There is no question that the Seventh-day Adventist church faces may crises, but God has supplied sufficient assistance in the church's beliefs and practices to address each situation and thereby enabling the church to turn situations into opportunities for further growth. The concepts of hope and worship are fundamental to Adventism. These two can be curative as well as preventive agents.

... but in your hearts reverence Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence. I Peter 3:15
CHAPTER II

WHY HOPE?

Even with all of the difficulties confronting it, the Seventh-day Adventist Church must not forget that it belongs to God's church. As such, its identity and being come from God and therefore it is not bound to the same methodologies and values as worldly organizations. Adventism's emphasis on the immanent Second Coming places a sense of urgency on its activities. A danger exists in unquestioningly adopting the organizational and management practices of secular organizations. Church leaders and members need to recognize the fundamental differences between the goals of the church and business. These differences should affect the methodologies taken towards accomplishing those goals. While this does not excuse or make room for poor stewardship, several important aspects of church administration as well as the church's relevance to the world are addressed by an examination of its methodologies. The danger exists that the distinctive differences between the church and the world will be weakened or completely lost.

The single most decisive reason for the growing irrelevance of the mainline denominations in North America is that they are too "relevant," that is too adjusted and accommodated, to our lives and society. If the church wants to say something new to our society and have
anything of value to say about the future of our world it will have to recover its courage to be in conflict with the world for the sake of the transformation of the world."

"Running" a church like a corporation might lead to a prosperous organization for a period of time, but that success would be short lived because it would lack the conviction and power of the gospel. In the place of the dynamism of the clear "Word of God" would be a boring and passive organization having very little difference from the rest of peoples' lives. Secular methodologies based on the world-view of business are not the only alternatives. A later chapter will discuss a more balanced program of Christian planning and execution. Now, we focus our attention on a major aspect that differentiates Christian organizations, especially a church, from business. That factor is hope.

Secular hope looks forward to obtaining that which is lacked. Sakae Kubo writes of "hope as a compensation" as a fragile hope that depends upon human circumstances for the degree of fervor. Increased prosperity diminishes this kind of hope. Increased prosperity diminishes this kind of hope. Man's present vision establishes and limits this type of hope. Christian hope stands in stark contrast to mankind's hope because God's vision and desires provide its foundation. "It is always the end of God, rather than the ends of man, that provides surity."3

Modern society differs from past societies in that it emphasizes an emancipated society devoid of many of the associations and relationships found in previous ages.
Traditional structures have been laid aside in favor of a system that satisfies needs.

That means that this society, in contradistinction to all previous societies, restricts itself to such social relationships as bind individuals together in the satisfying of their needs by means of their divided labour. Men here associate themselves with each other necessarily only as the bearers of needs, as producers and consumers. Everything else that makes up a man's life—culture, religion, tradition, nationality, morals, etc.—is excluded from the necessary social relationships and left to each man's individual freedom. Social intercourse thus becomes abstract.

This increased individualism emphasizes modern society's function of basically satisfying felt needs. The church faces a difficult task in trying to communicate the transcendence of God to modern man. The elevated individualism of modern society does not comprehend a god that transcends felt needs. In the past, Christianity did not confront as difficult a task because theological truths generally were accepted on the basis of revelation and reason. But the modern generation no longer blindly accepts the authority of the Scriptures nor the validity of metaphysical thought. Society has laid aside many of the past religious assertions.

Modern man's greatest receptivity to transcendence relates to the future. Even with all of its emphasis on the present, modern society finds itself still subject to the uncertainty of the future. The message of Christ counters this uncertainty with an eschatological message based on an openness to and understanding of God's promises found in the
Old and New Testaments. Unfortunately, modern and Greek thought have influenced Christianity's message. General society, even many Christians, understand God's revelation and transcendence as an "epiphany of the eternal present." Just as Israel's neighbors practiced their religions, today's society emphasizes the present. Mankind is enticed by this world's safety and certainties as survival is sought.

Christianity does not reflect a hope for the present world's continuation nor is it even mainly based on past epiphanies. Rather, Christianity emphasizes the future promise built upon past assurances and God's faithfulness. This orientation towards the future directs the church towards a new creation; the fundamental conviction is that things cannot be very good until all things are new.

The contrast between Christianity's emphasis on the future and modern society's emphasis on the present is related to how former cultures understood the implications of various time periods. In Greek-Roman mythology, the past represented an everlasting foundation for reality. The Greeks viewed "history" not as something that one looked to for determining trends and developments from, rather, Greek thought primarily sought out the ever existent, the unchanging, the ever true-good-and-beautiful. Hebrew and Christian views of the past regard history as the foundation of God's promises even though not all of the promises have
yet been fulfilled. Therefore, for God's people the past reveals a developing reality that finds its completion only in the future. The "steadfastness of hope" (1 Thess. 1:3) for the Christian arises from the anticipation of hope, contrasted to the Greek world's steadfastness which was a product of self-control.7

The usual Greek concept of time involved "chronos" which is objective and impersonal. The Christian view of time as "karios" fundamentally asserts that time belongs to God.8 He is its Lord. The biblical message on time relates it to personal action and reference to an approaching end. A maturity of purpose, God's purpose, drives the believer forward. Regarding the 2 Peter 3:8-9 text stating that one day is like a thousand years,

This does not mean, as Hellenic theology interpreted it, that time intervals are unreal to God, who is outside time altogether. It means that what determines the moment of consummation has nothing to do with the almanack. Whether it takes a thousand years or one day is all the same to God. For the true measure of time is his karios and not man's chronos.9

Despite the difference in the basic meanings between Greek understanding of history and hope, as compared to Christian thought, the early church took on a great deal of Hellenistic thought. The influence of surrounding epiphany religions affected the church as it moved towards a disproportionate emphasis on the coming of the Spirit.10 The unbalanced charismatic conditions in the Corinthian church reflected to a large degree Hellenization's influence on
Christianity. Only a faithful following of God's revelation enables the church to correctly interpret God's will for the future.

A clearer understanding of Christian hope can be gained by a study of how Scripture uses the word "hope" and related terms. We now turn to The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology entry on "Hope, Expectation." 

Of the various terms which express hope or expectancy, the most frequently used and the richest in meaning in NT Gk. are the noun elpis, the vb. elpizo and their derivatives. Both words denote, on the one hand, the act of hoping, but both include also the idea of the object hoped for. Thus ta elpizomena means the good things hoped for, and elpis the object of good hope as well as the act of hope. 

In the Old Testament, hoping expressed a confession of assurance. Old Testament hope often named God as the object of hope. "For thou, O Lord, art my hope, my trust, O Lord, from my youth." (Psalm 71:5) Their hope brought confidence and humility that led the believer to become patient and persevering. The waiting called for is not inactive, rather it provides new strength for actions directed towards the future. "... but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." (Isaiah 40:31)

In the New Testament, the writings of Paul constitute the bulk of the material on hope. Elpizo and elpis play no great role in the gospels. The various words used for hope are never vague nor do they point to a fearful future,
rather they always express the expectation of something good. "For through the Spirit, by faith, we wait for the hope of righteousness." (Galatians 5:5) Faith in Christ as the Savior gives Christian hope its identity. Because of this, egocentrism never drives Christian hope, God always stands as the believer's center. 1 Peter orients the Christian experience primarily upon hope. Hope that is built upon faith expresses a new birth that continues to bring a person into a relationship to God that points towards their united future.13 The Christian's hope actively exhibits itself as joyful waiting even in the face of unfavorable situations. "Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer." (Romans 12:12)

Many passages present the idea of hope even though the word is not used. The book of Revelation does not use the word "hope", but the absence in Revelation may be due to the time perspective John wrote from. No one doubts that the book's messages convey comfort, assurance and hope.

Hope and fear are frequently set in antithesis. Hope therefore implies not merely instinctive impulse but a developed desire for future good, requiring the exercise of intelligence in relation both to the grounds of hope and to the picture of the desired end formed by the expectant mind.14

The promises of the Creator God who has acted in the past and promises His abiding presence as well as His return gives believers hope.

The essential predicate of God accordingly lies in the statement: Pistos o epaggeilamenos, 'faithful is he that promised'. His essence is not his absoluteness as
such, but the faithfulness with which he reveals and identifies himself in the history of his promise as 'the same'. His divinity consists in the constancy of his faithfulness, which becomes credible in the contradiction of judgment and grace. The word which reveals God has thus fundamentally the character of promise and is therefore eschatological in kind.  

God offers mankind a covenant that guarantees the future. The covenant asks man to love God and to cleave to Him (Deut. 6:5) as the foundation of true reality. Man "keeps" the covenant by "keeping" the words of the promise and by following the commandments. This involves obedience and a trust that remembers the believer's past experiences with God. God promised very definite and this-worldly things in the early part of the Old Testament. It involved a land flowing with milk and honey, release from bondage, victory over enemies, prestige and prosperity. Yet, the promise of salvation for all of mankind was established early in Genesis 3 and reaffirmed in the promises to Abraham.

The prophets' messages reminded Israel that God's promise pointed towards their responsibility for all of mankind. Israel constantly needed reminding that its history and future were significant because God had chosen to work through them to influence universal history. Because Israel rejected God's call, the prophets' messages took on an increasingly cosmic nature. Correspondingly, the language of judgment became more and more pointed as the language of hope grew increasingly idealistic. Zechariah 14:8 reveals
this idealistic language, "On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea; it shall continue in summer as in winter."16

Though most reject God and His promises, those that do follow His call will do so in a world of sin which includes persecution. In the face of this, hope drives a person towards a passion for the possible. Because their hope exists, there is always the possibility of new experiences that will deepen the relationship with God. The promises not only work in times of suffering, they work against suffering. Christians can no longer accept the present reality, they break out towards the future. "Peace with God means conflict with the world, for the good of the promised future stabs inexorably into the flesh of every unfulfilled present."17

Christianity goes beyond subjective feeling and vague belief, it recognizes the ongoing history of Christ. It turns toward the open history of Christ.18 Because of God's high estimation of individual freedom, the promise does not announce an inescapable fate. It does address and urge a different reality. Christ's Second Coming ushers in the final stages of the new reality.

The biblical witness concludes with a promise and a prayer: "He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming soon.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! (Rev. 22:20). In the last analysis all biblical faith finds its source in the divine Word of promise and ends in a prayer for the coming of the Lord and his kingdom."19
Such a forward-looking, selfless hope exhibits a confidence that exists because of a trust in God's faithfulness and in His sovereignty. John A. T. Robinson stresses that the end of things is what explicates the rest of reality. Only as one considers the finality of individuals and history does the data of Christian experience become explainable. But this view of the end is not something automatically given as a natural endowment to the believer. It comes as a gift from God continually being developed through an ever-growing relationship with God. It may be accepted or rejected with resulting circumstances on one's present and future.

Too many relate the term "Christian hope" only in terms of the final consummation of God's Kingdom. Many hymns express those idealistic desires. While a future perfect world is promised, the genius of Christian hope reveals itself as it affects the believer in his present situation. It places the believer in a forward-looking frame of reference.

Christianity is completely and entirely and utterly hope--a looking forward and a forward direction; hope is not just an appendix. So Christianity inevitably means a new setting forth and a transformation of the present. Eschatology (the doctrine of the Last Things) is not just one of Christianity's many doctrines. It is quite simply the medium of the Christian faith, the keynote, the daybreak colours of a new expected day which bathe everything in their light. For the Christian faith lives from the raising of the crucified Christ and reaches out towards the promises of Christ's universal future.
Christian hope addresses this society's anxieties. Anxiety stems from uncertainty and exhibits itself as a feeling that something terrible will occur very soon, it anticipates gloom. It believes that neither we ourselves nor no one else is capable of positively addressing the problems. Anxiety leads many people to view the future as forboding and only a threat to the present. Too many have lost the vision that the future challenges mankind to strive for something new.

Fears and doubts can crystalize into a general anxiety about life. Christian faith identifies this condition as a separation phobia. Anxiety needs to be named and confronted so that the true cure may be found and appreciated. Fellowship with Christ provides the solution for mankind's separation anxiety. A developing fellowship with Christ must possess and express hope.

Hope can be understood as the negation of the negative. The experiences of a negative present are contrasted by a confidence in a God who will be both ultimately victorious and currently active against the negatives of sin. Hope allows a person to make personal investments in the future as it brings about the realization of its object. A Christian keeps going because his hope causes him to live in a state of expectation. The Christian's confidence in God must confront this world's nature that forces him into the tensions of knowing and yet not knowing. A candid admission
that one experiences doubt does not deny hope, rather it strengthens faith's honesty.\textsuperscript{25}

Rather than being absorbed in one's own plight, hope turns desires toward God's will. Others may misinterpret this ability to transcend the time and space of one's own and the world's disorder. Believers participate in a change towards a new reality. The world may see it as childish or wish oriented, but Christians argue that the challenge to live realistically and responsibly in the present comes from the hope given by God.

The kind of Christian hope that challenges the present order of things has always been in short supply. Scripture connects hope with glory (Col. 1:27) that God freely offers. Christians are called to break out of the world's set patterns of thought and action.\textsuperscript{26} The normal concerns for personal security take on a radical change as believers become nomads in time working as agents of the Kingdom of God. The calling of God's purpose becomes the mission that hope inspires.

In biblical revelation the question shifts from "What have you been?" and "What are you being?" to "What are you being-toward? What future shapes your present and liberates you from your past?"\textsuperscript{27}

Believers are not called to blindly obey the call, rather hope provides eyes that more acutely discern the suffering found in the present and the promise of the future. Christian hope experiences Jesus Christ's sacrificial acts for the believer, it looks forward with eyes that
discern His promise. Hope always elicits a response to the call of God, anything less is not real Christian hope.

Ignoring the benefits and call for hope constitute sins against hope. Such sins of despair reveal one's rejection of God's offer of a passage to a new and meaningful reality. This sin of unbelief rejects God's revelation. If man acts as if everything were as before and that things will remain as before after seeing the promise of a new creation, he has committed the sin of despair. Such a person anticipates the nonfulfillment of what God has promised. This robs God of His glory, it doubts God's truthfulness, omnipotence, and His faithfulness. Unbelief does not let God be God.28

Paul recognized the total commitment that hope calls for, yet he realized the struggle one has in fully accepting the challenges of the new reality. In Phillipians 3:3-21 Paul portrays himself as still a wayfarer, still reaching for the fullness of life in Christ. The tension between the already and the not yet, Paul recognized as the difference between what had already been given and what yet remained to be achieved. His appeal to rejoice in the Lord, (Phil. 4:4-5) is based upon the assurance that the "Lord is at hand."

The gospel's call to freedom in the Kingdom of God presents the order of things as never satisfactory after one glimpses a vision of the Kingdom. Christ's work of battling against sin becomes the believer's conflict. The evidences of the incarnation, ministry, sacrifice, resurrection and
reign of Jesus Christ provide believers a guaranteed future.

The Kingdom of God is a miracle. It is the act of God. It is supernatural. Men cannot build the Kingdom, they cannot erect it. The Kingdom is the Kingdom of God; it is God's reign, God's rule. God has entrusted the Gospel of the Kingdom to men. It is our responsibility to proclaim the Good News about the Kingdom. But the actual working of the Kingdom is God's working. The fruitage is produced not by human effort or skill but by the life of the Kingdom itself. It is God's deed.

The Kingdom of God is the heart of eschatology. Christians are called to be nomads and crusaders in time moving towards the fulfillment of the Kingdom. While Christian faith anticipates the future, it is not altogether other worldly. It very much addresses the present, but only as the future reveals it. Abraham's responses to the calls of God towards a new covenant were radical responses. But the Kingdom is not an irresistible power; individuals and groups can reject it.

If an individual or group does accept the call, they must avoid several dangers associated with unbalanced and unchecked hope. Being based on expectancy, Christian hope must always remember that the temptation exists to let the euphoria of the movement run past the bounds of God's revelation. The book of Acts makes it clear that God is to be the leader of the church. The Holy Spirit performed the ministry through the believers, the church was to proceed at God's pace.

The influence of Greek thought about the unchangeable and untouched nature of God led the church to over emphasize
the presence of God in the present. This and other factors led to the epiphany emphasis of the early church as exampled in the Corinthian church's preoccupation with the demonstrative spiritual gifts. While the gifts are genuine and given by God, they can be viewed and placed out of their appropriate position. For many, the gifts take on an importance that begins to overshadow their original foundation. Calvary calls the believer into service not uncontrolled excitation.

The phrase "Theology of Hope" is used to describe a feature of post-Barthian theology that emphasizes the recovery of the significance of the future. The representative of this school of thought most utilized in this study is Jurgen Moltmann. While there are several others that have been influenced by the writings of Ernst Bloch, and have contributed to this trend such as Wolfhart Pannenberg, Moltmann holds the closest dialogue with practical Christian theology. Since our discussion deals not only with hope but also with the relationship between hope and worship in the Adventist church, most of the material regarding the "Theology of Hope" will come from Moltmann.

The phrase 'Theology of Hope' is associated in the first instance with Moltmann, who published a book of that title in 1964. Subtitled 'On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology', it set out to re-establish the eschatological character of all Christian doctrine and to make the future and hope for the future the dominant and guiding motifs of Christian theology. It stressed the centrality of 'promise' in Old Testament religion, the cosmic scope of apocalyptic, as taken over by New Testament writers, the way in
which the resurrection of Jesus Christ anticipates the future of creation, and finally the historical mission of the 'Exodus Church' in working for the liberation and transformation of human life in the light of the coming lordship of the risen Christ.  

Moltmann believes in an apocalyptic community that acts through the power of God as it understands that the present is motivated by the present yielding to the future. These acts formulate the call and mission of the eschatological church. The sense of "ought" moves the church into action. Christ's battle against sin becomes the church's battle against poverty, injustice, and oppression. Moltmann's emphasis can be better understood by changing some "re-" words into "pro-" words. Moltmann writes against the regressive character of "re": "reformation, revolution, renewal, restoration, even religion to "pro" words, pro-formation, pro-volution, pro-newal, pro-storation, and even pro-legion.  

It becomes clear as one reads Moltmann that his predominant concern is with hope for the historical future and with a theology of liberation (though by no means a one-sided, purely political liberation). But it would be a great mistake to think that this predominant concern displaces the ultimate Christian hope in Moltmann's theology. On the contrary, it is precisely the ultimate hope of resurrection, anticipated in Jesus Christ, that opens up, empowers and demands Christian hope for this-worldly liberation. Moltmann points out that both Joachim and orthodox Protestantism expound their understanding of the Kingdom in relation to its eschatological consummation in glory. There is plenty of material in Moltmann's writings to show that he believes this future consummation to constitute the ultimate basis for Christian hope, even if his main stress is on its import for the immediate historical task.  

The Theology of Hope as presented by Moltmann is not
without its critics. Many view its utilization by liberation theology to support changes often times regardless of methodologies as a weakness of the concept. Moltmann correctly explains that modern man is incapable of accepting the resurrection of Jesus as a historical concept. He states the only historical fact of the resurrection is the Easter faith of the first disciples. This shift of the reality of the resurrection to a faith event, something that happened to the crucified Jesus to something that happened to the disciples, is difficult for more fundamental Christians to appreciate or totally accept.

Moltmann's view of history and reality does much to stress the future, but there seems to be a belittling of past historical developments as concerns time-and-era prophecies. His view addresses the historical question in a new way and stresses the existential truth of faith. His concern no longer worries about correctness in a "historical" sense, rather proclamation is legitimate because of the event it addresses. What ties Moltmann's view to the past is not a common core of history nor the historic character of human existence; it is the problem of the future.

Though Moltmann presents hope in new and powerful language, there are some fundamental disagreements that Adventist theology has with the Theology of Hope's overall message. Adventism would do well to regain much of Moltmann's understanding and emphasis on the nature and importance of
hope, but there are major areas of difference with his application and understanding of historical reality. Sakae Kubo notes that the Theology of Hope is too optimistic about man's nature. There is no indication that society as a whole will take up the call without individual conversion. Adventist interpret unrepentant man and society by the reformers' doctrine of depravity. An utopian world without the drastic change brought about by the reality of the Second Coming is impossible in Adventist eschatology.

Moltmann wants to recover the eschatological character of the Christian faith, making it relevant to modern people. God's presence, not yet present in this world, is the great future toward which believers are bound. But for Moltmann, the future has hardly any substance. It centers primarily in this world and will be realized through the church's fight to establish justice and equality.

Moltmann speaks of the eschatological promise of the future, but does not include a final and ultimate confrontation between good and evil. There is a lack of a developed role for the Second Coming as a consummation of the radical change in the reality of existence and history. Adventist have based the surety of the future on God's actions of the past as well as God's sovereignty over the future. These accepted facts of faith exist because of the triumph of Christ over sin on the cross as well as His victory in the lives of believers. As Ellen White has stated, "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history."
Adventism continually reminds itself and the world about the already and the not yet nature of Christianity. They celebrate the Sabbath as present anticipation of God's ultimate rest. They also accept the mission of proclaiming the Kingdom of God and its consummation brought by the Second Coming.\footnote{36}

Hope points to the priority of the future, but it leads us to commit ourselves to transforming the present. The future is at the door of the present and may enter at any time.\footnote{37} Therefore, Adventists look forward to the blessed hope of the Second Coming.

The advent hope--the "blessed hope" of "the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13 RSV) is the very spirit of authentic Adventism. But the hoped-for advent has not yet occurred, and to the extent that the hope itself has faded, the nature of Adventism has significantly changed. If the problem of "the delay" has, in fact, changed Adventism, one important reason is that the nature of the advent hope has not been clearly understood.\footnote{38}

Just as Adventists have difficulties and disagreements with the Theology of Hope, there are disagreements on the nature of the hope in the Second Coming within Adventism. The differences in view relate to the issue of a seeming delay of Christ's return. Roy Branson describes the three main variants regarding this area within Adventism: the expansionist response, the moral response, and the cosmic response. The expansionist response relates the delay to the unfinished work of world-wide evangelism. The moral response points to God's waiting for a fuller development of
Christ's character in the lives of believers.

The danger of both the expansionist and moral responses to the delay of Christ's return is that they can transform the culmination of the history of salvation from God's action to humanity's. Both responses run the grave danger of changing the Second coming from the final act in the history of redemption to the apex of humanity's moral perfection. The cosmic response sees the idea of delay as a matter of human perception rather than reality. This response bases itself on God's prior acts and His promise. It calls for a faith that moves forward in action solely motivated and powered by God's sovereignty.

The Adventist church can respond to the delay with hope, not because of its own efforts, but because Christ's work in the past makes certain His return in the future. Nothing can alter the significance of what has already been accomplished. No delay can shatter confidence in a triumph already achieved. God, When He decides, can come. God, when He decides, will come.

Adventism is a branch of Christianity that is called to proclaim the hope that is found in Christ. Confidence and anticipation should be essential characteristics of every Adventist. An Adventist without an understanding of the nature and importance of hope is not only a crippled creature but a most confused and unhappy being.

To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Col. 1:27
CHAPTER III

A TIME FOR HOPE

Athol Fugard's play "Master Harold and the Boys" tells the story of a white youth in South Africa during the 1950's. Master Harold spends some time with two older black workers and learns about their plight and how they deal with it. Much of the story revolves around the preparation for a dance contest among the blacks of neighboring towns. The men explain to Harold the beauty and art of their dancing. The final phase of the contest would involve the best dancers from the rival towns. The men tell Harold of the excitement of the dance and the responsibilities of all involved. Harold asks how points are scored and if penalties were given for stumbles, slips, and bumps. The black men only laugh at the white youth's questions because they knew that such falterings on that day would be unthinkable.

The dance becomes a metaphor for a new and better world. By their dance, the South African blacks were learning to dance as if they were free. Practicing for this dance became the way of learning the steps of a far more important one, the dance of freedom.¹

The liturgy of God's people reflects their desire for and confidence in God. In worship they enact the reality of
their reconciliation with God. This should be especially true for Seventh-day Adventists because of their emphasis on the Sabbath. The Sabbath provides a special time for worship and acts as an opportunity for experiencing and expanding true freedom. The occasions of corporate worship go beyond Sabbath morning divine services, they also include special celebrations and religious festivals as well as less structured occasions. Unfortunately, congregations too often relegate worship and its implications to only the minutes spent sitting in the pews. But true worship provides us a hope where we learn to live in the world as the children of God's new creation.

If we are going to understand worship, we must understand it non-religiously. Worship is the way to learn to live in the world as witnesses to the gospel. God comes to us in Christ not to establish the church but to save the world.

Superficiality is the curse of this age. It shows itself in our activities, commitments, and relationships. Corporate worship reflects this influence in a preoccupation with showmanship and properness rather than an emphasis on content and the Holy Spirit's power. True worship that recognizes the importance of the Sabbath points out the fact that God always breaks into man's involvement with material and spatial things. God calls man to enter the realm of the eternal and the spirit.

Believers must seriously consider and then act upon their theology of worship. Theology and forms of worship
have always been related. How Christians think about God influences the shape of their worship practices which in turn influences their doctrinal beliefs. A Christian's understanding of worship must involve considerations of both God and man. We approach worship theologically as well as anthropologically, one without the other would lead to something less than worship acceptable to God.

To emphasize one or a few aspects of worship without regard to the other aspects leads to various unbalanced worship styles. An overemphasis on the importance of the word would lead to worship that resembles a "lecture room" setting. Many Protestant services have taken on this form with the resultant problem of the congregation becoming mere listeners that are "spoken to." The Catholic services of pre-Vatican II and even those influenced by Vatican II stress the role and acts of the priest. It has been described as a theater for the eye that can turn the worshiper into a spectator. Worship styles that continually stress programs and projects can lead to exploitation. This form resembles a corporation's productivity drives and advertisement campaigns. The worship style that concerns itself mainly with fellowship faces the danger of a congregation possessing a "social club mentality."

The components of worship must be examined to see that they say what they were intended to say. Their combined purpose is to reflect life in Christ as it really is. They
cannot be used as individual parts to construct what clergy or laity think worship should be. If Christian worship is to be real it must reflect Christ.

... for a liturgy to be real, it must be honest. In other words, if it is to be an authentic symbol, it must reflect life as it actually is; and any Christian definition of life will be centered in Christ, who is both the author and the means of life. In him we are given life, and in him we learn what it is to live. Thus, any adequate liturgical expression will be centered in Christ and will reflect life as defined by Christ. For a liturgy to attempt to do other than this, to avoid the fullness and the reality of life by withholding or distorting some features of it, is to negate its symbolic nature and to turn liturgy into mere ritual.

Sacramental theology is a liberating process, but it is not one that comes automatically. Study, work and courage are required to wrestle out a fuller understanding and form of what we do when we gather to worship God. This discipline called worship demands our very best.

Worship, very much related to Cox's concept of festivity, is a time set aside for the full range and expression of feelings. It must never be superficial nor frivolous. Proper worship requires a willing heart and a craving soul. Worship of God with the body is only possible when combined with worship with the soul.

Two of the main problems preventing worship from attaining its full potential are ignorance and indifference. Ignorance of worship's possibilities leaves most congregations captive to the familiar. Church goers are generally unaware of the many worship options available to them.
Ignorance produces insecurity and insecurity resists change. Indifference on the part of worship leaders ignoring the possibilities of heightened worship experiences increases the congregation's ignorance. These developments cannot be solely blamed on the changes in the congregation's perception of the church and religion. While the church members hold a large degree of responsibility for their own religious education and faith, in the field of corporate worship a greater responsibility belongs to the church's leaders for setting a tone and fostering a desire for continued growth.

It is customary to blame secular science and anti-religious philosophy for the eclipse of religion in modern society. It would be more honest to blame religion for its own defeats. Religion declined not because it was refuted, but because it became irrelevant, dull, oppressive, insipid. When faith is completely replaced by creed, worship by discipline, love by habit; when the crisis of today is ignored because of the splendor of the past; when faith becomes an heirloom rather than a living fountain; when religion speaks only in the name of authority rather than with the voice of compassion--its message becomes meaningless.

Because God lives and Christians aspire life in its fullest, Christian worship must be relevant. Not only must worship change to meet the developments in society but it also must help us meet the current age's demands. It should lead us to develop a sensitivity to social and cultural shifts. No radical change is required only a perceptive utilization of worship based upon God's reassuring presence and promise. The church is to remind itself and the world that its purpose in the world is to facilitate the worship
of God. By doing this it reminds this age of the powers of the coming age. The future age presses upon the current one as believers unite as the triumphant church. True worship addresses mankind's deepest desires. Worship is an act of man's relating himself to ultimate meaning. Unless man enters into a relationship with the eternal his life is meaningless. Unless worship facilitates that process in a relevant manner it is an illusion and meaningless.8

Adventist worship should be the most relevant of all denominations' because of the many important concepts that the church doctrinally espouses. The promise of the Second Coming should make Adventist worship speak to today's needs and problems. The Sabbath doctrine provides Adventism with a special time to remember its hope. The Sabbath plays a special role in the Adventist identity because it continually reminds believers of God's sovereignty as it gives order and direction to all of life.

Seventh-day Adventist worship, and especially its worship on the Sabbath, should be good worship. Good liturgy discloses God's life and presence with His people and the world. The weekly Sabbath expresses God's affirmation to humanity. It expresses and affirms the relatedness and ultimacy of God. God has provided a period of time where we can see the evidences of His nature. It is a day that promises a completion of all that is incomplete in our lives.9 The concept of time in Christian worship contributes to a
rediscovery of the key points of revelation and salvation history. It allows us to regain the significance of past events for our present life.

The Sabbath can only be a sign of God's creative power in us if we indeed manifest in our persons the evidence of that power. We must in fact be a "new creation." The Sabbath has no meaning at all unless there is a conjunction of God's creative power and its accomplished result in the life of the Sabbathkeeper. Holiness of time must be matched by holiness of being. Holiness of time must become holiness in time.10

Those who worship on the Sabbath anticipate the Second Coming as a delight. They anticipate Christ's final arrival by weekly laying aside routine and worldly cares. Those routines and cares can be reevaluated and revamped because of the insights gained from the Sabbath's blessings. We gather on the Sabbath to recall the past and to anticipate the future. As a people we join together in a common cause under the leadership of Christ, the Sabbath becomes something of a vehicle on our journey towards heightened awareness. It assures us that we are headed somewhere as it intensifies our passion for this life also. "The peace and gladness of the future become revolutionizing principles in the here and now, enlarging our vision, giving vigor and direction to our existence."11

Just like sacramental theology, the blessings of the Sabbath do not come automatically. The Sabbath's ritual rest in itself provides only some benefit, far short of the full blessings of the presence of God with His people. The fullness of the Sabbath is available only to God's people as
they center their existence in God's grace. Thus, the Sabbath acts as both foretaste and testing ground for experience with God. If we are unable to enjoy our relationship with God here on earth, and especially during Sabbath worship, we will be unable to enjoy it in heaven.

The Sabbath worship service is not the only religious celebration available to God's people. The Old Testament believers were given many feasts and other religious occasions intended to raise their understanding of their being God's chosen people. Religious celebrations, both Old Testament and Christian, emphasize the centrality of God in believers' lives and their community.

Celebrations actively proclaim the importance of both the past and the future in the present. Religious celebrations utilize signs and sacraments as a means of expressing interior realities. Festivity and fantasy enable man to relate himself to the past and the future. Festivity is more associated to the past as celebration recalls past deeds and achievements. Fantasy is more related to hope as the expected future is considered. Man finds himself in a world of constant change, he needs to be innovative and adaptive in his celebrations or they decay into mere activities.

Man is essentially festive and fanciful. To become fully human, Western industrial man must learn again to dance and to dream. He must draw from the richest wealth of experience available to him and must never be bound to existing formulas for solving problems. Festivity, by breaking routine and opening man to the
past, enlarges his experience and reduces his provincialism. Fantasy opens doors that merely empirical calculation ignores. It widens the possibility for innovation. Together, festivity and fantasy enable man to experience his present in a richer, more joyful, and more creative way.\textsuperscript{12}

A celebrational attitude enables the church to better understand its position and function in time. People cut off from their memories or visions sink into depression. Christian celebrations provide religious significance by placing the church somewhere between the Fall and the Kingdom, moving towards the latter. It gives believers an opportunity to express their common memories and collective hope. It provides a way to appreciate the past without being bound by it; the past serves as a dimension of reality that enlarges and illuminates the present. When we celebrate we stop doing things and redirect our attention towards the question of who we are. Celebrations always celebrate something, festivity is never an end in itself. When Christians worship they celebrate God's grace in human history.

Celebration finds its truest meaning as it expresses thanksgiving. The church is commanded to live in the spirit of thanksgiving in the midst of a sinful world. We must be careful to avoid celebrations that really celebrate nothing. Another error to avoid is to pretend to celebrate when the spirit of thanksgiving is not in us.\textsuperscript{13} Worship services that lack a festive spirit overemphasize moral earnestness, doctrinal clarity, and intellectual rigor while failing to attain any of them. Without a festive spirit of
thanksgiving, worship services are cold and at best tepid.

The general characteristics of good celebrations are found in both Old Testament and New Testament festivals and sacraments. Old Testament celebrations were more elaborate and structured while New Testament forms are fewer and more flexible.

The festal joy found in the Old Testament was a response to God's revelation. The festivals proclaimed the freedom God's people received. The new found and expected freedom from God revealed itself in Israel's eschatological worship.

In her cultus Israel celebrates the triumph of God as an actual fact, both in her own history and in creation. It also prays for and celebrates an anticipated triumph when all resistance to the will of God will have ceased, when the lion shall lie down with the lamb, and when nation shall no longer lift up sword against nation. When the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the bottom of the sea. Because of the centrality and unity of God, hope is expressed in terms of an absolute, a finality. In this sense we can speak of an eschatological dimension.

Waiting hope is a central theme in Jewish piety: "Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; yea, wait for the Lord!" (Ps. 27:14) "Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for him;" (Ps. 37:7) "My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning. O Israel, hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with him is plenteous redemption." (Ps. 130:6-7). The type of waiting that the Bible commanded was to give Israel her identity.
It contains all the joy and exhilaration of faith and purposeful living. It calls God's people to pause and see the Kingdom for which they await.

Israel's conception of its traditions must be interpreted in terms of retrospective questions and forward quests.

He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children; that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; (Ps. 78:5-7)

Historic experiences are recounted so that confidence in God's faithfulness might be awakened. This faithfulness cannot be treated as a doctrine from the ancients but it must be recounted, experienced, and expected. Tradition comes from history and moves toward future history.¹⁵

Two specific Old Testament examples of hope in worship will be examined, Passover (Pessah) and the Feast of Booths (Sukkot). But first, more general items of Old Testament corporate worship must be discussed. We must acknowledge that corporate worship is only one of many types of worship outlined by the Old Testament. There are prayers, offerings, sacrifices, studies, etc. Regarding the Sabbath services, the exact content and practices are not certain, the Sabbath was primarily observed in the homes. The Biblical reasons for Sabbath observance are creation and liberation. The Sabbath ideal is based on one's duty to emulate
God by resting on the Sabbath and to be a free person by engaging in spiritual activities.

Since the Sabbath was not attached to the Temple, as were the festivals, it assumed special importance in the scattered Jewish communities outside Palestine. Keeping the Sabbath in the face of social and economic disadvantage and in the face of many restrictions on pleasurable activities has become, to this day, the touchstone of the Jew's steadfastness as a member of the community of Israel.16

Deuteronomy 16:16 commands that all males were to appear before God at the festivals. Each of the three major festivals is linked to an agricultural harvest. The yearly cycle and the corresponding bounty were to remind Israel of God's protection and grace. Passover coincides with the barley harvest, Feast of Weeks coincides with the wheat harvest, and the Feast of Tabernacles comes during the time of the vintage and fruit harvests. In contrast to the Sabbath, these three main festivals were connected to the national center of worship.

The festivals were historical commemorations. The historical events were reenacted as memorials to God's grace and power.

The worshiper listens to this rehearsal, joins himself by sympathetic imagination with the original participants in the events, sees and hears afresh God's word and act. He then gives thanks and praise to God for what God has done, and returning to his own situation in life he solemnly renews his covenanted vows. This combination of historical narration, participation by means of memory and imagination in the original events, illumination derived from participation expressed in praise and thanksgiving, solemn renewal of covenant as the worshipper again faces his present life--such is the spiritual process which Biblical worship entails. As such it avoids the pitfalls of both magic and mysticism.17
The festivals were a form of worship that incorporated many other ritual elements. Passover and Booths each lasted a week while the Feast of Weeks was celebrated for only one day. The feasts had a morale-lifting effect on the people which helped them survive in a hostile environment.

Passover celebrates the redemption from Egypt and dramatizes the ideal freedom the believer aspires. No matter one's situation he could align himself to freedom and dignity.

In the eyes of the Gentiles he was a degraded and inferior person; in his own estimation he was an aristocrat, a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and one of the people whom God had redeemed from slavery. In time, he was sure, God would again redeem the Jewish people from exile and degradation. This ultimate redemption would vindicate the Jewish people in the eyes of the whole world. The Exodus from Egypt is therefore an ever-recurring theme in the Jewish liturgy, and it reaches its climax during the festival of Passover, especially during the elaborate home service known as the Seder.  

Some researchers have linked the booth (sukkah) of the Feast of Tabernacles to the simple huts found in the harvest fields. The sukkah was a shelter for rests and the center of celebration when the work was done. In the festival, the booths represented God's sheltering of Israel on the road from Egypt and during the conquest. The main element was the roof, the walls were decorated to express joy and bounty. The roof was made only of branches and leaves, reminding Israel that regardless of whether times were good or bad, that God's full deliverance was still to come.
The temple celebrations connected to Sukkot had several main parts. There was the libation of water; during the morning services water was ceremonially brought in a golden flask from the fountain of Siloam and poured into the basin near the altar.

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And you will say in that day: "Give thanks to the Lord, call upon his name; make known his deeds among the nations, proclaim that his name is exalted." Isaiah 12:3-4

They also had a grand lighting of candelabra and joyous dancing with torches. Also, there were sacrifices in recognition of Israel's responsibility to the nations. On the first day there were thirteen bulls sacrificed, on the second day twelve bulls, etc.; a total of seventy bulls were sacrificed for this purpose. These sacrifices were for the nations who would come to God, Israel was to look forward to that day. Israel had been called into the priesthood for the other nations.20

The Old Testament does not offer a systematic presentation of its faith. The lessons learned from the relationship between Old Testament worship and Old Testament hope can help direct modern faith and liturgy. God is the One who acts and soon His acts will come to fulfillment. Our worship needs to celebrate God's work. Our worship also needs to help us learn the needed patient attitude that encourages us to continue. Hebrews 10:23-25 expresses the Christian attitude of hope connected with worship. The
waiting called for is one of activity, love and good works.

The Eucharist's meaning goes far beyond that of the Passover. It specifies that the Old Testament hopes were fulfilled in the life, sacrifice, and reign of Jesus Christ. It addresses the church's dilemma of being part of the Kingdom that is not yet full. The Lord's Supper is one of Christianity's celebration of a historical event that points towards the future. In order to gain a fuller appreciation of its significance, a deeper knowledge of its background and role in church history needs to be gained. Some of Paul's complaints against some of the participants in his day was because some regarded the meal as magical food. The form and elements of the Eucharist in themselves are not endowed with special powers or blessings, but they can be part of God's revelation of His power and grace given to us in the past, present, and future.

We now talk of the various modes of Christ's presence with us--in the plural. He is in the midst of all of us as we gather in his name, just as he promised he would be. He is present in his word, read and proclaimed. He is present through the ordained person who presides in his name. He is present also through the bread and cup eaten and drunk in remembrance of him. What matters is that God in Christ is present. And so we give thanks.²¹

In the Eucharist we celebrate Christ's sacrificial gift. The bread representing His broken body presents us a powerful metaphor for our sharing ourselves. It speaks of hospitality and compassion. Eucharistic table fellowship means one bread for different peoples. It reminds the
church of its mission beyond its own community. The church is called to feed the world the broken bread of Jesus Christ. The source of hope that makes the mission a possibility is not the fragile church itself but the power of Jesus. By itself the church faces impending failure but Eucharistic hope proclaims ultimate victory. The participants in the holy meal present themselves before God and to each other. Accepting those who have failed in the past is part of the reconciliation called for in the Eucharist.

Throughout the ages Christian churches have emphasized various portions of the Eucharist, sometimes using it to espouse various doctrines and positions. The church over time built up the importance of the liturgy to such a degree that sacrament triumphed over the word. The reformers rejected the theology developed to explain and justify such a theology. For the average person of the mid-1500's the greatest impact of the Reformation was not in theology but in liturgy. The Reformers' rediscovery of the importance of the scriptures influenced all aspects of their life, especially their worship. Yet, even the Reformers' emphasis on the word did not prevent the Eucharist from being perceived by many as mainly a penitential practice. While soul searching contemplation on the sacrifice of Christ is an absolute necessity for participants, there too often is no other aspect of the sacrament stressed but that. Few would be bold enough to call any part of most eucharistic
services celebratory. In the Adventist church, has the service with its symbolic quantities, stylized forms, and time limitations made it irrelevant and beyond the realm of all but the most indoctrinated? But the very word "eucharist" is supposed to express thanksgiving; joy is not an inappropriate emotion for the Lord's Supper. The communion service should move believers to thank God among fellow worshipers so that together they can participate in and contribute to the Kingdom.

And therefore this eating and drinking are also a participation now in the feast of the future. The idea of a Messianic banquet was a major feature of first-century thought about the end time. The connection with the coming of the Kingdom is made by Jesus himself in the Gospel accounts of the Last Supper. That thrust toward the future is reiterated by Paul when he tells the Corinthians: "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (I Cor. 11:26). "Maranatha," "Our Lord, come!" ended the thanksgiving after the eucharistic meal in some parts of the primitive church. But those who had eaten and drunk with him in that meal knew his presence already in their midst, knew a foretaste of that future fulfillment.23

The Lord's Table provides the community of faith a grand occasion to open itself up to the coming of the Kingdom as well as the challenges that the Kingdom places on the present. The expectant congregation not only seeks communion with its coming Lord but realizes that it needs His abiding presence.

Adventist worship should have something to say about the eschatological nature of worship. The urgency of the Three Angels' Messages of Revelation 14 and the belief of
the soon Second Coming, Adventist worship should strongly proclaim the Kingdom. Christ the heavenly high priest assures His people and commissions them to be priests for the world. Celebrating within the church's family circle is inadequate, our gathering together prepares and refreshes us to further the Savior's cause. Adventist worship should remind us that there is but a short time left for sin's reign, but it also must tell us of the present call that God gives to individual believers and the corporate body.

Worship leaders always confront the temptation to make a good impression with their Sabbath services or other religious celebrations. This can become an idol of massiveness as it tries to impress with size, numbers, sights, volume, or uniqueness. Emphasis should be placed on what is central to the life and worship of God's people. Good worship requires a concentration on new life in Christ; outside of that, there is no other real "big effect."

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. Romans 15:13
CHAPTER IV

THE WAITING COMMUNITY

The Seventh-day Adventist church can appropriately represent the relationships between hope and worship as it understands itself to be the "waiting community". As previously stated, God's people are called to wait and to expect His actions. They are also called upon to participate in the growing Kingdom by serving the church and the world. Much as restaurant waiters take food to hungry customers, the waiting church is to take the message of the Lamb of God, the Bread of Life, to a starving world. To maintain its identity and to fulfill its mission, the church and its individual believers require the love and support of fellow members. Proper waiting is best done in community. Christians can be thankful that their group consists of more than fellow believers, Christ's church has been promised the gift of the Holy Spirit. The waiting community expresses itself as it waits, serves, and fellowships together.

The word "worship" at its root means giving worth to something. When Christians worship, they acknowledge that they can give worth to God only because God first gives worth to them. This fact is at the heart of Christian worship because it reminds us of the great value God places
on individuals as shown in the life and sacrifice of Jesus. Not only does God value us for salvation but He also entrusts us to represent His Kingdom here on earth.

The church must maintain its distinctive and fundamental difference that identifies it as God's possession. This involves its choice of goals and methods of operation. The church is the covenant community of God that lives by His revealed direction, it is to exist not as a voluntary organization nor an association of participants but it is to be the body of Christ that hopes and moves in the assurance and direction Christ gives.

The greatest threat in (church) management is that hope will be totally replaced by planning. Planning depends on hope's destruction of human despair. There will be no planning out of despair, except for nihilistic projections of death wishes. Without hope, planning sees no possibilities because it sees no ultimate goal. Hope, on the other hand, depends on planning. There will be no continuing hope which does not struggle against irrationality and randomness through responsible planning. Hope without planning is unembodied and unrealistic. In history hope and planning give life to each other.

The church's hopes and plans for the future advocate freedom in God. Its actions reveal a dissatisfaction with the present order as it moves toward the newly revealed possibilities. The church must strive for the future that God promises. Church planning depends on its hope to keep the sense of the future alive in the present. If it fails at this, planning lacks the essential contact with the future. The promise of freedom in God forces the church to turn to God's covenant. God's offer of freedom continually
reminds the church that it cannot afford pretentiousness; salvation has been offered to all not only the elect. Therefore, planning must reach past mankind's normal concerns of one's own race, culture, locale, etc.²

Planners and managers should serve the ordering and organization of the church for its life of liturgy and mission in the world. Planning presupposes a church commissioned to mission in hope. Planners who do not expect the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the world will seek something other than God's righteousness as the source of life. Persons in the Spirit who do not plan for the conditions which serve God's righteousness forsake the Holy Spirit's fight against the demonic spirits of our society and world.³

The church's planners and managers have a pastoral duty to lead the congregation into a life that espouses a new humanity in Jesus Christ. The church plans to foster mature and active members that freely participate in God's work. All members of the community are commissioned to proclaim the gospel. The core of the gospel is not just evangelization, it is also the telling of a story. It recounts the story of Jesus' life, the story of the Apostolic church, the story of today's church, and the story of a coming messianic age. The Christian community tells its story of Jesus with the bread and the wine as harbingers of its hope. It tells its own history of communion with God, its suffering and its triumph, as its own share of the gospel.⁴

Waiting servants do not periodically prepare for special occasions while neglecting the cause's mundane activities. God's true servants are always prepared and eager to do the daily work entrusted to them. This type of readiness
comes from an ongoing personal relationship with God. He proposes a unity that invites believers to address Him as "Abba". Our hope is directed towards our union with God and looks forward to a time when creation moves only under His control.

The Kingdom provides a righteousness that only God brings about, it is beyond man's ability to produce. If it was within man's unaided reach, it would shut out God's Kingdom. The mystery of the Kingdom is that it has entered this age without totally transforming the old order. The old age continues, but the powers of the new are readily available. The power of the future has only partially come. Thus, in spite of the world's worries and burdens, we can confidently wait and progress.

The power of a waiting hope causes changes to occur in believers' daily lives. Values are changed, ethical living takes on new meaning as part of the eternal Kingdom.

This is what eternal life means. This is what it means to be saved. It means to go about every day in the present evil Age living the life of heaven. It means that every local fellowship of God's people who have shared this life should live together and worship and serve together as those who enjoy a foretaste of heaven here on earth. This is what the fellowship of a Christian Church ought to be. May God help us to live the life of The Age to Come in the midst of an evil Age. God has already brought us into fellowship with Himself. This is the promise, the downpayment, the earnest, the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, the life of The Age to Come. This is the Gospel of the Kingdom. This is the life of The Age to Come.

Paul's later epistles emphasized exhortation over warning and admonition (Phil. 2:1-4). He concentrated on the
church's movement towards becoming the ideal Christian community. The community's progress would have completed the apostle's joy. That joy looked forward to and lived for the Second Coming. One contribution of the Theology of Hope has been that it has shown modern Protestantism that there has been too little attention paid to promise, hope, the future, and the mission of the church in the world. The Protestant emphasis on word and faith that leads to justification has led some to be complacent regarding service to others. An emphasis on preaching that produces justified people is insufficient as is a closed community that supplies insulated warmth protected from the cold world. The church must be understood as an extension of its mission. The church's mission existed before the church's founding. Christ's mission created the church and places its demands on all aspects of the church.7

As waiters that serve the love of God to the world, the waiting community proclaims the nature of Christ and the sovereignty of God. Messianic healing means taking suffering on oneself so that others may live. The suffering and sacrifices of Jesus reconciled those that believe, the church is called to proclaim this by word and life. Communion with Jesus leads to a service that finds the suffering of others insufferable.8

The worship experience allows the church to view the world differently as it reflects on the drama of the ages.
Worship invites all to look upon life with eyes that see the world as God does. Far from being other worldly, it demands a deeper engagement with the world because it shows the world to be God's arena of action. Genuine worship has the living and present Jesus as its only leader. Worshipers bear witness to His future through their eschatological service to the world. The church celebrates its mission and renews its identity through its liturgy. Worship provides a rhythm of withdrawal and return to the world. Worship brings us back to our true course. The world distracts our attention from eternal things and we require that time in which to be strengthened for continued service.

Next to God, the principal actors in this two-act drama of Christian worship are the men, women, and children in the pews. We all have energetic roles to play. We cannot sit passively, as an audience might. We have to reach out and move out. Without such action on the part of the people, the whole enterprise of corporate worship would be futile. Liturgy, after all, simply means public work. And worshipers have the Lord's work to do.

The proper balance requires that worship come before service. Service must flow out of worship or its activities become substitutes for the adoration that God deserves. Our lives should be filled with praises, thanksgiving, and adoration for God. But before we can take our commission from God, we must know Him to some degree. The liturgy helps fill this need. Just as we cannot be for and serve others adequately unless we live with others, we cannot truly be for God without living with Him in our worship.
A church that looks inward has become introverted and is self-concerned. Without compassion for the world it has lost the main purpose for its existence. When members view religion as an escape from reality, they withdraw from the world and use the church as a refuge. Instead of converting the world, they escape from it. The church then becomes a retreat rather than a mighty fortress from which attacks are launched. The church is no club or political party, rather it demands a radical transformation. It is open only to those who are prepared to undergo the death to self and enter new life in Christ.

The church's decisive call to death and new life must be expressed in its liturgy. If the liturgy does not call for total involvement of body and soul in surrender to the service of God, then its ceremonies, words, and activities are escapist rather than genuine. If the church's liturgy does not take the congregation to the world, the people are guilty of only playing church.

An emphasis on mission enables the church to appropriate God's purpose in the world. Doors that once seemed closed open to those approaching the world in service and in faith.

The waiting community finds its purpose in service but it finds its renewal in fellowship. The church learns, shares, and participates in the gospel as members regularly join together. The weekly worship service facilitates the
furtherance of mutual concern and group identity. Christian religious celebrations are social in nature just as the Kingdom of God is open and not secluded. Jesus' lordship exhibits itself in our community with others. Our fellow-ship with other believers characterizes our relationship with the Lord of the church. It is in community that the Kingdom of God proclaims its reality.

Our modern technological society has elevated and enabled individualism to develop to its high degree, so much so that many relationships previously necessary for normal living are no longer required. Only a small-scale world with limited possibilities for communication remains for our manic fast paced and at the same time leisure oriented society. The suburban lifestlye clearly depicts this, groceries are bought in huge impersonal supermarkets that are open twenty-four hours a day. Free time is spent shopping in huge malls where hundreds of thousands of others shop. Unique boutiques in one mall look the same as their counterparts in neighboring malls. Banking is done with electronic tellers while entertainment is obtained in cinema complexes or on video tape. Modern technological society is moving further and further away from humanity.

Christian congregations must counter these developments with human warmth, neighborliness, and community that can be called genuine. Christian community can be authentic because its foundation is the God who offers to dwell with
mankind. Because of Christ's presence the church can expect and proclaim a new creation, a newness and vitality in its relationships among believers and with the world. Christian fellowship goes beyond social gatherings, it demonstrates who our God is and what actions we do at His bidding. Regardless of our cultural and other backgrounds, Christian fellowship reminds us that we must be possessed by the resurrected Christ.

Just as worship and catechesis are not confined to any one form, neither is fellowship. It occurs whenever, wherever individuals exercise the corporate aspects of their new creation— that is their common identity in Jesus Christ. For fellowship to occur, relationships between Christian brothers and sisters must exist which surpass the limits of common friendship. There has to be a shared recognition of the existence of relationships grounded in Christ through a common baptism with him and by sharing in him through the breaking of bread in the Lord's Supper.11

Paul's Pentecost message pointed to the emergence of a new society. He gave the invitation to join God's new society. Fellowship within the new society is not optional, neither is it merely a social gathering. Through Christian association, members learn incarnational living. Members are led to recognize that full human experience is possible only as one belongs to Christ's body. Incarnational living involves possessing individual and group goals of establishing new social patterns with fellow believers. Our full stature as men and women in Christ depends on our new patterns of community.12

Seventh-day Adventists have the Sabbath as a reminder
and a time for their fellowship. Familial love of brothers and sisters in the faith shows itself as members respond to the needs of one another. Fellowship means association with like-minded people, therefore God's communion with His people acts to strengthen the ties among believers. The professional ministry holds the responsibility of trying to find ways and means for the whole community to share in the church's mission.

All attempts at achieving fellowship are irrelevant unless the connection between fellowship and ministry is remembered. The Christian community meets together as bearers of salvation. Their gathering celebrates the gospel commission, their fellowship activities express the presence of Christ. For the gathered community's fellowship to be sacramental, first, it must be sacrificial; the church's acts of love must reveal God's healing love. Second, it must be eschatological; its focal point is the new creation that is coming into fulfillment. Third, it must remember the covenant; God's promise is the driving force for the community. Fourth, there must be communion with the saints; individuals are given grace in the community of faith.13

Many church activities, including the weekly worship service, increase fellowship; by doing so they communicate the corporate nature of the gospel. Fellowship expresses the equality members have as the children of God. Communion spurs on Christian hope as the community cares for first its
own then the world. Christian fellowship exists on the intercession of members one for another, Christ's presence is always requested. The good things of the new society are meant to be shared.14

The Christian community undergoes continual interaction. Members possess the ministry of listening to both God and others. Without listening, fellowship does not exist. That communication facilitates the esprit de corps necessary for community. Christian fellowship is similar to Luther's concept of family over and against that of a voluntary association.

A geimenschaft is similar to a family; a gesellschaft to a voluntary association. The focus of a family is general and all inclusive; a voluntary association's focus is to particularity. A family asks for the involvement of your total personality. A voluntary association asks for only partial participation; that is, within a voluntary association, you play a role. In a family emotional sharing is in depth and breadth; within a voluntary association one is emotionally neutral. In terms of obligation, in a family our obligations are diffuse, whatever is necessary; in a voluntary association they are specific, by contract. In a family our worth is by ascription, you're one of us; in a voluntary association our worth is based on our performance or contribution.15

The family that God invites us to join has many members. In addition to fellow members we are also assured the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. True worship reminds us of our fellow participants. It places us in a proper perspective with the others involved. Worship requires that we place God at the center of life as He delivers us from egocentricity. God's promises are proclaimed in worship;
the Holy Spirit is Christ's promised gift to the church.

Some interpret the words "I will come again" as referring to the coming of the Holy Spirit, called the Paraclete (John 14:18, 28), since the latter is the main theme of the discourse (John 14:15-24; 15:26; 16:4-15).

There is a sense in which Jesus came into the lives of His disciples on the day of Pentecost through the sending of the Holy Spirit (a coming known as "realized eschatology"). Indeed, Christ makes His presence real in our lives through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us (John 14:16). But in the Gospel of John Jesus teaches not only His immediate presence in the believers through the Holy Spirit, but also His future presence through His personal Coming to take His followers to Himself.

Christ comes to His followers through the Holy Spirit in the present and comes for His followers personally in the future ("I will come again and will take you to myself" [John 14:3]). In John, the future Coming of Christ is not eliminated but rather actualized through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The church's mission is accomplished in the authority and power of the Holy Spirit. "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." (Rom. 15:13)

Believers go out of the church confident in the Holy Spirit to ease the world of its many pains. The Spirit gives ability to all believers (1 Cor. 12:6) for the work of the gospel. Because each member is gifted and empowered by the Spirit, each is a minister. The Spirit encourages and enables experimentation and innovation because believers are freed to attempt and accomplish much more than their natural abilities would ever give them the vision for. An earnest desire for the Spirit changes the congregation's ministry into one that emphasizes the work of the laity over that of
the professional ministers. In Old Testament Israel, the Spirit was said to be with the leaders. In the Christian church, the Holy Spirit is given to the whole church, specifically to every believer. It is Christ who shapes the church as He pleases. He does it around His people and the spiritual gifts that they utilize.

The waiting community lives for the Kingdom. God's reign over time assures the church that the awaited advent is at hand and ever drawing closer. But the church must avoid the dangers of over excitement and indifference. Kubo warns against two related dangers, mysticism and absenteeism. In mysticism, the believer reaches out for direct communion with God until he is absorbed into oneness. This can become a selfish obsession that neglects others and the demands of daily living. In absenteeism, it is concluded that God has forsaken the world. The sense of abandonment leads to such excessive longing for the coming age that the present is forgotten.

Worship can help keep the waiting community in a proper balance. The community's desires can be expressed and re-shaped in worship. Emotions can be displayed and re-directed in worship. Worship can help the community live its true identity.

Without having seen him you love him; though you do not now see him you believe in him and rejoice with unutterable and exalted joy. As the outcome of your faith you obtain the salvation of your souls.

1 Peter 1:8-9
Liturgical provision the church many benefits, but the
benefits gained are not the reason behind Christian worship.
God's worthiness is the fundamental and only reason for
worship. Any added benefits must be viewed not as the
result of some process but rather elements of grace given by
God to develop His church. Liturgy is not a tool to be used
and manipulated for any reason, whether it be to support a
doctrine or promote a program. Liturgy is not a pedagogical
device, but it does perform pedagogical functions. Liturgy
contributes to the educative process, its rituals and tradi-
tions help shape believers' social patterns, and its com-
munal nature teaches participatory congregational life.

Public worship has always been understood to be revela-
tion because it provides occasions for human aspirations to
confront God's grace. This confrontation if taken seriously
leads to changes in the worshiper's outlook. Worship should
involve the whole being. Body, mind, spirit, and emotions
are laid on the altar of worship. This results in liturgi-
cal living.

It means, rather, risking a life informed, directed,
and enthused by the liturgy . . . a life of change.
For one who is living liturgically, life is a whole--
all of one piece. The life that is actually lived in the world is the life that is offered in the liturgy, interpreted and renewed by it. The life that is formed by the liturgy, directed and inspired, is the life that is lived. The result is liturgical man who has both the confidence and the skill to risk the venture of life.

Worship utilizes many educational processes in its celebrations and gatherings. Worship helps the church hear God's message. In a sense, the congregation sits at the feet of the Great Teacher and learns of Him and His Kingdom. This privilege was intended to be exhilarating and active, very much in contrast to the boredom of many irrelevant sermon oriented services. True worship not only expresses experience with God, it also stimulates that experience.

Ideally, worship deepens our religious commitment and renews our dedication to God's service. We should leave a worship service with increased enthusiasm for Christianity. This does not mean that worship is merely a means to an end. It does not imply that the center of Christianity lies elsewhere, say, in service to others, or in meeting the challenges of everyday life with confidence in God. Worship is an end in itself. It is its own reason for being. But genuine worship will enrich the rest of life, too.

The Sabbath and its worship service teach about God's sovereignty. The Sabbath as a day of delight points to the redemptive act of Christ. It underscores the creative power of God as the distinctive basis for worship. Its celebration brings the people of God together to renew their roles in the Kingdom. The Sabbath teaches worshipers to celebrate and to live their redemption. Worship means giving worth to that which is beyond us, we worship God. Celebration is a recognition of the grace that we have received. We worship
that which is beyond us, we celebrate that which has been
given to us.\textsuperscript{4} The Sabbath teaches us about and gives us
opportunities for both.

The church has long recognized liturgy's educative
value. Liturgy showed its effectiveness in the struggle
going against the Gnostics, and it was crucial to the Reformers'
position regarding the Scriptures. Nevertheless, one's
understanding of liturgy's educative potential is dependant
upon one's understanding of the pedagogical process. One of
the main concepts to be grasped in relation to this subject
relates to Francis Bacon's remark that, "knowledge is
power". Knowledge is never gained from neutral teachers.
The selection process that determines what will be studied
reflects the bias of the teacher, thus teaching is an exer-
cise of power. Liturgy cannot be neutral neither should it
be manipulative.\textsuperscript{5}

Paulo Freire's views on education are helpful for a
better comprehension of liturgy's pedagogical role. Freire
begins with Bacon's axiom that "knowledge is power". Freire
distinguishes two approaches to education: education as
inculcation and education as liberation. The first has the
teacher exercising power over the student while the second
has the teacher empowering those who learn. In order to
teach the lessons of freedom and hope that liturgy offer, it
is necessary that the learning from worship be viewed as an
enterprise undertaken by all of the church as it
investigates and celebrates its new life. Liturgy must never be neutral and naive. It must always act as a medium of socialization and as a form of consciousness-raising. Liturgy functions as both kerygma (evangelization) and didache (cathechesis), but it also teaches the difference between the two. The first is aimed at non-believers, liturgy reveals aspects of the Kingdom to those outside its reign. In the second, liturgy strengthens and brings believers into a fuller identification with the Kingdom. Even though different groups are addressed for different purposes, the liturgy utilizes the same forms. While worship can only be done by believers, the liturgy does speak to non-believers. True liturgy's contents and actions always communicate a desire for new life in God. The service inspires thought that goes beyond intellect and emotion. It opens the future and the world of wonder to its participants. It reflects the values of the Kingdom. As members participate in the service their perception of reality is enlarged.

There are three starting points of contemplation about God; three trails that lead to Him. The first is the way of sensing the presence of God in the world, in things; the second is the way of sensing His presence in the Bible; the third is the way of sensing His presence in sacred deeds. These three ways correspond in our tradition to the main aspects of religious existence: worship, learning, and action. The three are one, and we must go all three ways to reach the one destination. For this is what Israel discovered: the God of nature is the God of history, and the way to know Him is to do His will.

Moral growth has long been associated with worship.
The eighth century Old Testament prophets, especially Amos, reminded Israel that worship's activities were in vain unless it was accompanied with consideration for others. Moral transformation implies death to the old ways. The innocence of a child represents those in the Kingdom because in themselves they are weak and powerless. Worship teaches that the true greatness of moral living is humble service. The innocent child sitting at the feet of Jesus is not a student but a teaching aid.

In Jesus' ministry a child becomes central, not as one who receives instruction, but as the one whose very presence becomes the clue to answering the disciples' question. The child becomes a teaching aid in flesh and blood, a sign of hope, a pointer to the Kingdom. For some adults the presence of children in church, whose being there affects the style and content of Christian worship, is an encouragement to growth in love, faith and hope; but for others children seem to be a stumbling-block, a stone of offence.

Worship's elements teach lessons about the Kingdom. Music and hymns combine content and emotion to shape Christian lives. Prayers (spoken, silent, and congregational) reflect and instruct our theology as we give thanks to and petition the Lord. Scripture readings focus the congregation's attention on the revelation provided in Scripture. Preaching in the church is Christ's continued presence among His people as He gives instruction through the power of the Holy Spirit. Preaching continues the miracle of the incarnation. In the offering we give because we need to give. We offer gifts to God as part of our praise and thanksgiving.
Worship involves the privilege of cheerful giving. The gathered community listens and expects to hear something that will bless it and build its faith during the worship service.

Unfortunately, liturgy does not usually fulfill its potential. Too often it is not God's Kingdom that is expressed but the themes and methods of the dominant culture. Unless worship services remain directed towards addressing the Kingdom, they face the dangers of individualism, dehistorization, and disengagement from the world. Individualism places worship's emphasis on the salvation of individuals rather than on extending the rule of God. Dehistorization lacks historical awareness which leads to a limited vision concerning the future. Disengagement from the world places the Kingdom mainly in the far distant. Sincere worship must avoid these dangers.

Members become socialized into the new Kingdom through worship's rituals and traditions. Worship does not usually mean imparting new knowledge about God, rather it involves rediscovering past salvation events. Christian celebration teaches that worshipers must elevate Christ and His offer of new life, it denounces the unreal and all that is dehumanizing and oppressive. Meaningful traditions edit the past and adapt themselves to the times and address present circumstances. Ritualization in worship expands the consciousness and gives God's "yes" to the good in our lives and God's
"no" to factors contrary to His Kingdom.

Worship's preaching goes beyond the sermon, it includes the other activities of the liturgy.

It involves converting, instructing, reforming conduct, giving a new gesture language, and instituting units of customary behavior. Thus, the preaching of the gospel includes all of Paul's activity in establishing, instructing and sustaining a community. It includes the formal units of tradition which he transmits, but it also includes his instructions and example which show the members of the community what it means to be a member of the new commonwealth. Notice that there is no room here for the artificial distinction between kerygma and didache. It issues in Paul's injunction, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (I Cor. 11:1).

Thus, in Paul's use of the term, tradition is not limited to accounts of words and deeds of Jesus, but includes the whole range of the customary thought and behavior of the community under his guidance. There is the affirmation that the whole tradition comes from the Lord. This affirmation is important in our sociological study as authentication for a manner of life, and not as authentication of a line of tradition going back to Jesus.

Education in worship involves the process of ritualization. It enables the participant to receive and to send revelation through stylized forms of customary acts. Merely learning the meaning of certain acts is inadequate; ritualization involves the individual's participation in the group's life.

Rituals and symbolic acts express and represent a community's myth, these symbolic interactions with persons and groups aptly transmit the community's values. The social aspect of worship is important because values lie more in the world of socialization than in the world of instruction, cognition, and overt curriculum.
Ritualization in worship is an inevitable fact. The church faces the challenge of choosing, promoting, sustaining, and modifying good liturgy over bad. It must give life and create a vision.

While rituals are essential at the most fundamental levels of human development and human communication they can easily become wooden, compulsive and "the only way to do things" to the point of negating the very spirit of love, thanksgiving, trust or rebirth which they are ostensibly celebrating. The vision of reality which is pointed to by the ritualization can become distorted.

The lessons and benefits of worship require active participation on the congregation's part. In order to appreciate and experience the blessing that the liturgy offers, congregants must first listen to God's voice. Christian worship begins with the principle that we come to meet with God because He has called us to "come". Our response to that call is a corporate response. All believers are called to participate because all have become priests in Christ. Participation is the right and duty of all Christians. Worship is fully open only to those whose eyes have been opened to the mystery of Jesus through belief.

If the truth of participatory worship is learned, members are moved to take up their roles as prophet-priests and the clergys' function becomes that of enablers. Worship can be viewed as the group's offering to God. This changes the emphasis from the worship service being the work of the clergy to that of the entire congregation offering itself to God. Congregants become more aware that worship is not for
their enjoyment or approval, but for the glory of God. Worship is all about regularly giving God our obedience and adoration.

Passive liturgical participation is an easy trap into which to fall. For this reason, it is essential that the forms of worship enable and encourage a full and conscious level of active participation, externally and internally. Acclamations, responses, psalmody, symbols, antiphons, colors, hymns, spirituals, Scripture songs, gestures, actions, and silent reverence are means through which active participation may occur. The presence of such modes not only invites active participation, but also instructs the worshiper about the reciprocal relationship between internal and external participation.¹⁵

Worshipers are called into fruitful participation, their mission is constantly before them. Worship leaders must ask themselves if they are giving their people adequate opportunities that lead the congregation towards a deepening experience with God. Leaders need to know their people. They need to know that every congregation's composition, situation, and outlook differs from any other congregation's. Liturgical leaders must prayerfully find ways to apply the transforming power of worship to their church's various services.

The practical application of liturgy has special significance for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Adventist emphasis on the eschatological nature of worship should drive the church toward insuring the continued relevancy of its worship. Worship's relevance to the world requires an attitude that comprehends that change is mandatory in worship.¹⁶ Most of current Protestant worship is too cerebral,
words have been given too large a percentage of liturgy's work. The other senses also need to be exercised in worship.

The corrective factor for all developments in Adventist worship is that they must be scripturally based. Otherwise, there is the constant danger that elements will be accepted merely on the basis that it is appealing, entertaining, or fun. Highly desirable elements of worship, such as beauty, are by-products not the main purpose of worship. Adventist liturgical reform must take the varied tastes of a world church into account. It must also take into consideration the wide difference in available resources that congregations possess. Liturgy must fit its local congregation.

For the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world, awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Titus 2:11-14
CHAPTER VI

A GREAT THEME LEADS TO A GREAT CONCLUSION

All living religions have one thing in common, they are relevant religions. They are kept relevant either because of the impact made upon adherents or because believers continually reinterpret the religion's application to their situation. The Seventh-day Adventists' "Great Controversy" theme of God's conflict against evil addresses man's quest for relevancy and provides an identity and call to mission. True liturgy teaches about the "Great Controversy" theme as well as gives opportunity for committed involvement in God's work. Adventism needs to consider its approach towards liturgy in the light of the "Great Controversy". Within the boundaries of Christian faith, its worship services should distinctively proclaim God's growing and coming Kingdom.

Adventist liturgy should reflect an eager anticipation for the physical presence of Jesus brought by the Second Coming as well as cherish the Kingdom's present manifestation. The Bible's prophetic and apocalyptic literature provides reassurance of God's power and presence in the face of seemingly overwhelming evil. The "Great Controversy" theme reveals that God will be victorious and that His plan will succeed. The Scriptures in essence reveal God's plan
The Word of God does indeed teach that there will be an intensification of evil at the end of the Age, for Satan remains the god of This Age. But we must strongly emphasize that God has not abandoned This Age to the Evil One. In fact, the Kingdom of God has entered into This Evil Age; Satan has been defeated. The Kingdom of God, in Christ, has created the Church, and the Kingdom of God works in the world through the Church to accomplish the divine purposes of extending His Kingdom in the world. We are caught up in a great struggle—the conflict of the ages. God's Kingdom works in this world through the power of the Gospel. "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come."  

Worship enables participants to better understand and enter the struggle. Worship actively clarifies the issues related to experiencing the Kingdom and anticipating the Kingdom's fulfillment. Adventism proclaims the prophetic end of the present age and the nearness of the next. Liturgy must stress that sense of urgency, its message must be, "the end is soon".3

Jack Provonsha's comments on the content of prophetic messages can be applied to Adventist worship. Provonsha writes about prophetic role and prophetic style. Prophetic style differs from that of a scholar in that it is more likely to cry out for righteousness than employ the scholar's methodic ways. Prophets stood up to be noticed, they often utilized extreme symbolic acts. Prophetic role involves participating in the consummation of the Kingdom.4 Adventist worship must reflect the church's commitment to God as it faces the final climatic struggles of the "Great
Adventist worship should help answer some of the recurring questions that often paralyze many church members. The issues of "sign setting" and "why not yet" can be addressed in the liturgy. The worship elements help us interpret the rationale behind prophetic signs; their presence is not so much to tell us the quantity of time remaining, rather they tell us the quality of the times we exist in. Prophetic worship helps its members remember that time belongs to God, and that He is the One that accomplishes His purpose.

The so-called delay is a problem only to the extent that the nature of the advent hope is misunderstood. An advent hope that retains its sense of the transcendence and mystery of God cannot be disappointed, for disappointment comes when predictions or expectations are not fulfilled and the anticipated events do not occur.

The genuine advent hope is eager for the Second Coming of God in the person of Christ, but it is willing and able to wait until the time when God himself chooses to come again to humanity.

Seventh-day Adventism's Sabbath points mankind to the greatest blessing available in this world, the presence of God. The Sabbath liturgy acts as a communications event that conveys its message in many ways. Liturgy involves the recovery of supernatural facts that engage participants in relationships. It helps the congregation choose its commitments. Liturgy helps believers use the gift of imagination to more clearly comprehend the grand story of salvation. As worship invokes the imagination, it awakens the mind to the
possibilities associated with the Kingdom. Liturgy should
show that new relationships with time and people are pos-
sible. Participation in the "Great Controversy" requires
imagination, belief, and expectation.

Christian hope for the historical future is real-
istic hope, however, because it acquires from the per-
spective of eternity a critical and uninflated char-
acter. It does not embrace unrealistic, short-lived,
enthusiasms; it does not identify God's kingdom with
some particular utopian scheme; it does not ride rough
shod over people as they are. Above all, it recognises
human sinfulness and the seriousness of the problems
facing man's attempts to build a better world. It
recognises the provisional nature of all social and
political achievements and the continuing need to allow
the power of God's future to transcend and re-fashion
every present form of human community. The realism of
Christian hope also consists in its recognition of the
inevitable limitations of this-worldly hope that stem
from the unavoidable facts of death, suffering and
evil.7

The hope available from the "Great Controversy" theme
can be proclaimed through the church's liturgy. If Advent-
ism would seek a renewed understanding of worship, a new
vitality for the Kingdom would be gained. Administrators
need to recognize the unique needs of each congregation,
therefore massive programs or special departments for wor-
ship are not required. A sincere dedication to a better
understanding of worship is needed on the part of church
leaders; liturgical reform must be at the local church
level. If the best communicators in the administrative arms
of the church would use their speaking engagements to chal-
lenge local congregations to catch a glimpse of worship's
importance for these times rather than their going about
promoting various departments and justifying expenditures, the church would be much better served.

Every congregation faces different situations. Worship must be the expression of the worshipping people, not a form handed down from administrative councils. Therefore, unless local congregations see their worship as being honest to Adventist Christian belief and reflecting the lives of their own people it will never be true liturgy. Funding liturgical renewal requires no large monetary budget at any of the church's levels, but it does require earnest hardworking study and effort.

The beauty of the "Great Controversy" theme is that God is sovereign and that He will soon eradicate sin. This great theme ends in a recreated earth where, as Revelation 21:22 says, worshipers will have no temple other than the presence of God and the Lamb. Many of the aspects of worship during the current sinful era will no longer apply, but many of worship's functions will continue. Among them will be liturgy's role as a teacher, liturgy's opportunities for fellowship, and liturgy's proclamation of a hope that expects further revelation and communion with the God who dwells with mankind.

And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. By its light shall the nations walk; and the kings of the earth shall bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. Revelation 21:22-26

2 Ibid., p. 260.


4 The "Three Angels' Messages" Revelation 14:6-12 links the importance of the two doctrines in the First Angel's Message by linking judgment with worship to the Creator; Judgment is often related to the Second Coming (Matt. 25:31-32) and worship of the Creator is often related to the Sabbath (Ex. 20:11).


6 Scriptural quotations taken from the Revised Standard Version.


9 Margaret Mead, "Ritual Expressions of the Cosmic Sense," quoted in Babin, p. 94.


Notes on Chapter II


4 Moltmann, Theology of Hope, pp. 307-308.

5 Ibid., pp. 84 & 99.

6 Ibid., p. 34.


8 Robinson, pp. 56-57.

9 Ibid., p. 60.

10 Moltmann, Theology of Hope, p. 156.


12 Ibid., p. 238.


15 Moltmann, Theology of Hope, p. 143.


17 Moltmann, Theology of Hope, p. 21.

20 Robinson, p. 41.
22 Ibid., p. 54.
25 Note the chapter, "What to do with doubt" in Ellen White's book *Steps to Christ*. She contends that there will always be the possibility of doubt, but that sufficient evidence has been revealed to assure each individual.
30 Hebblethwaite, p. 184.
32 Hebblethwaite, p. 185.
37 Rice, pp. 346-349.


40 Ibid., p. 16.
Notes on Chapter III


2Ibid., p. 1080.


8Ibid., p. 119.


11Charles Scriven, "Gladness In Hope," in Festival of the Sabbath, p. 83.

12Cox, p. 12.


18Millgram, p. 200.


20Ibid., pp. 128-129.


22Schaper, p. 114.

23Micks, The Joy of Worship, p. 73.
Notes on Chapter IV


2 Ibid., p. 155.

3 Ibid., p. 157.


5 Ladd, The Gospel of the Kingdom, p. 67.

6 Ibid., p. 78.


8 Jurgen Moltmann, "The Diaconal Church in the Context of the Kingdom of God," in Hope for the Church, pp. 29-30.

9 Micks, The Joy of Worship, p. 74.


12 Martin, The Family and the Fellowship, p. 15.


16 Bacchiocchi, p. 69.

17 Martin, The Family and the Fellowship, p. 27.
Notes on Chapter V

1 Babin, p. 14.
2 Rice, p. 290.
3 Ibid., p. 291.
6 Ibid., pp. 347-349.
7 Heschel, p. 31.
9 Searle, pp. 356-357.
12 Westerhoff, p. 249.
15 Ibid., p. 232.
16 Foster, p. 148.
Notes on Chapter VI

1. Guy, p. 120.


6. Guy, p. 120.

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