

The

Holy Flesh Movement

1899-1901

by

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p 1 -- PREFACE -- While serving as pastor of the Marion, Indiana, District of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the writer had occasion to visit with the late Jesse E. Dunn, who at the time was residing near Rockford, Indiana. The course of the conversation turned to the book - Questions on Doctrine I - which had just been published. A discussion of certain controversial concepts including the section on the incarnation of Christ led to the observation by Dunn that a similar teaching had been advocated by the leaders of the Holy Flesh Movement in Indiana. This sparked the research which resulted in this present manuscript.

Jesse Dunn who was the Book Agent (now known as the Publishing Department Secretary) for the Conference at that time, volunteered to help reconstruct the story of what happened. He, himself, wrote to, and placed the writer in contact with individuals who could supply information as to the activities and teachings of the ministers involved in the Holy Flesh Movement. Before his death, he gave the writer the complete file of his own correspondence during the time of the initial research.

Later when this writer was head of the Bible Department of Madison College, a student who was interested in research was assigned this subject for further investigation. Circumstances did not permit the student to finalize his findings; however, the material gathered has been incorporated into the overall picture which is given in this manuscript.

While attending Andrews University, following the closing of Madison College, the writer chose this subject as the topic of his thesis for the course Research in Theology. This manuscript is a revision and modification of that

p 2 -- research paper.

A debt of gratitude is due Dr. E. K. Vande Vere, who at the time was Chairman of the History Department of Andrews University, for the reports which he supplied from the Review and Herald concerning the work in the Indiana Conference which paralleled the letters, statements, and pamphlets which had been gathered by the writer involving the Holy Flesh Movement. A copy of this research paper was sent to Dr. Vande Vere after it was completed in absentia. He replied: Yesterday, I read the paper with care. It seems to me that you have wrung every bit of material possible from your sources. It's too bad that the whole episode could not have been written in 1905. Hence as matters stand, it is quite likely that no one else will ever shed more light on the affair than you have. I hope a copy of your paper will always be available at the White Estate or in the White Library - - for those who in the future might be interested enough to read.

Somehow I wonder if it was not the kind hand of Providence that guided you into this topic. I'm sure that reviewing this history of extremism has done something for you and for all of us. 2

The writer is also grateful to Elder Arthur L. White of the Ellen G. White Estate for checking either for verification or repudiation in the records extant in the Document File, certain statements which came from the memory of the sincere and honest folk who willingly sought to help the writer reconstruct the picture of what took place in those emotion filled years during the rise and demise of the Holy Flesh Movement. A couple of years later in an exchange of correspondence concerning the subject, Elder White wrote: - "You have probed the subject of the holy flesh movement more deeply than any one else I know" 3

It must be remembered that the basis for the statements presented apart from the published and written records of the period come from the memories of those attempting to recall events that took place at least fifty years before.

p 3 -- It must also be kept in mind that the statements made as to what occurred are conditioned by the emotional involvements of the persons making the statements.

The Movement was short lived, covering a period of about two or three years (1899 - 1901), and therefore, published or written material from that period relative to the Movement is scarce and difficult to find. One of its major teachings was not fully developed in the minds of its advocates at the time it was cut short, so that a full picture of what might have happened will never be known. Ellen G. White in a forthright testimony which ended officially the whole affair declared: If those who speak so freely of perfection in the flesh, could see things in the true light, they would recoil with horror from their presumptuous ideas. In showing the fallacy of their assumptions in regard to holy flesh, the Lord is seeking to prevent men and women from putting on His words a construction which leads to pollution of body, soul, and spirit. Let this phase of doctrine be carried a little further, and it will lead to the claim that its advocates can not sin; that since they have holy flesh, their actions are all holy. What a door of temptation would thus be opened! 4

We may yet see the full results of such a development, or the opposite extreme, in the Church. In the same testimony the servant of the Lord warned: Many such movements will arise at this time, when the Lord's work should stand elevated, pure, unadulterated with superstition and fables. We need to be on our guard, to maintain a close connection with Christ, that we be not deceived by Satan's devices. 5

The primary assumption upon which, the teachings of the Holy Flesh Movement was based concerned the doctrine of the Incarnation as understood and taught by the advocates of the Movement. The major objective of this research, manuscript will be to show the underlying controversy that developed over this primary assumption, and the lesson that this experience should teach the Church inasmuch as the same concept relative to the Incarnation of Christ has again been

p 4 -- introduced into the Church during these last two decades.

1 Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine, Review & Herald Publishing Association, (Washington D. C.), 1957

2 Dr. E. K. Vande Vere, Letter to William H. Grotheer from Andrews Universit , Berrien Springs, Michigan, undated.

3 Arthur L. White, Letter to William H. Grotheer from Takoma Park, Washington, D. C., dated December 13, 1968.

4 Ellen G. white, Selected Messages, bk. ii, p. 32

5 Ibid., p. 35

p 5 -- Chapter 1 -- THE LOOM OF THE FABRIC -- The 19th Century was drawing to a close. An air of expectancy and concern pervaded the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Elder A. F. Ballenger was proclaiming at worker's meetings, and at camp meetings, that the time had come to receive the Holy Spirit. In writing of these meetings, and relating what he had said, Ballenger stated - "You and I can afford to resist unto blood, striving against sin; but we cannot afford to sin. It is too late to sin in thought, word or action; for it is time to receive the Holy Ghost in all of His fulness, - time to receive the seal of God." 1

In another report of his camp meeting experiences, Ballenger wrote: The loudest cry of the loud cry is due today. To the careful observer, there are signs that show its presence near...

At the Indiana meeting, between thirty and forty people from the city arose for prayer. As I stood there that Sunday afternoon, and called the people of the world and the other churches to repentance, and saw them forced to their feet by the power of God, I thought, what power will be manifested when God's people are clean!

When I am conscious that I am not clean, I cannot preach with power, neither can I preach with "unwonted power" when I know that my people are not clean. Cleanse the Seventh-day Adventist Church of all uncleanness, and I will promise the loudest cry of the loud cry the same day. 2

Attending these worker's meetings and camp meetings in the Indiana Conference was a forty-three year old man by the name of S. S. Davis. He had been licensed to preach by the conference in 1893, 3 and was ordained two years later in 1895. 4 Following his ordination, Elder Davis was asked to go to Evansville, Indiana, to establish the work there. In 1898, an unsigned item appeared in the "Indiana News Notes" of the Review, noting that a Mission had been established

p 6 -- in Evansville. It was in need of help and that such items as clothing and provisions of food would be appreciated. It had been named the Helping Hand Mission and was located at 914 Main St. Bible studies were being conducted in addition to the regular services at the Mission. 5

Under the dateline of August 15, 1898, a report was given by S. S. Davis of the work in Evansville. It read: Sabbath and Sunday, August 13, 14, were eventful days in the history of the work in this place. In the

Sabbath meeting the Spirit was present to impress hearts, and nine persons requested baptism. Among them was a Baptist minister of considerable prominence, who himself baptized twenty-eight converts to the Baptist faith at one time not long ago. We secured the use of the baptistery in the First Baptist church, and at three o'clock Sunday we administered baptism. Sunday night our meeting was well attended. The subject was "The Baptism of the Holy Ghost;" and the Spirit was poured out in a large measure. It seemed that we were filled to the utmost of our capacity to receive. We have reached the time of the message, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost;" and we are actually having pentecostal times and apostolic experiences. The message is rising, and grand and awful times are upon us. This message will close with power and great glory; and if it is the will of the Lord, I want to live to see it triumph. 6

The relationship between the doctrinal emphasis of Davis and the messages of Ballenger is attested in a biographical sketch written by Davis' daughter. She recalled: He [Davis] attended a conference worker's meeting in '97 or '98 where a special inspirational message was given by Elder Ballenger... The Laodicean message and a song written by Elder Ballenger and his sister, entitled, "Receive Ye the Holy Ghost," were stressed. I never heard of Elder Ballenger again, but his messages had inspired all the Indiana Conference workers. 7

It is interesting to observe that while Davis was sent to Evansville in 1895, it was not until 1898 - after listening to Ballenger at a worker's meeting that he began to tell of the "power" connected with his ministry.

Jesse E. Dunn relates an experience he had with Elder Davis, when Davis was serving as head of the Helping Hand Mission in Evansville, Indiana. A co-ordinated

p 7 -- program for evangelism involving welfare ministry through the Mission and interest created by colporteur work was begun by Davis. Since Dunn was the State Agent, he was asked to go to Evansville to assist in the initiation of the plan. The idea was to secure as many three-months club subscriptions to the Signs of the Times as possible. Then Davis in the public meetings would refer to the Signs in his sermons, and this way it was hoped to encourage home study of the truth along with the public presentation. 8

After accomplishing the initial objective, Dunn left to care for the Book work in other parts of the State, but returned as soon as possible to appraise this approach to evangelism. In the meantime, Elder S. S. Davis had come in contact with a group of Pentecostal people. He said to Dunn, upon the latter's return

to Evansville - "Brother Dunn, they have the 'spirit'; and we have the truth; and if we had the 'spirit' as they have, with the truth we could do things." 9

The interest of S. S. Davis in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is understandable in the light of what had and what was taking place in the Church during the last decade of the 19th Century. At the 1888 General Conference Session, the message of righteousness by faith had been presented by Elders Waggoner and Jones. 10 In 1892, the servant of the Lord had written:

The time of test is just before us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. 1

It was understood by the Church that the expressions, "loud cry", and the "light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth", were synonymous with the concept of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Latter Rain.

Five years later came the memorable 1893 General Conference Session.

p 8 -- (This was the year that Davis was granted a license to preach.) Of the 1893 Session, L. H. Christian has written: It was really at the General Conference Session in 1893 that light on justification by faith seemed to gain its greatest victory, and it was the thought that it is the righteous life of Christ here on earth that is imputed to us by faith which brought great blessing. 12

But still the fulness of the Holy Spirit was not realized. Then in 1898, Professor E. A. Sutherland commented on what he had seen of the manifestations of the power of the Holy Spirit at the Illinois and Indiana camp meetings noting that the church was on the verge of the reception of the Latter Rain. He then alluded to the 1893 Session of the General Conference in these words: The latter rain would have come in 1893 if our people had moved out in all the truth. In the year 1898 there is no line of truth, so far as I know, that has not been accepted. We shall see the manifestations that the Lord has spoken of, that will take place just before the latter rain. 13

The year 1898 also marked a change in the administration of the Indiana Conference. Due to the failing health of his wife, it was necessary for Elder W. B. White to resign and move to Arizona. 14 Until

another conference president could enter upon his duties, Elder I. D. Van Horn assumed oversight of the work in Indiana. 15 At the Spring Council in Battle Creek, March 10 to April 3, it was voted to ask Elder R. S. Donnell of the Upper Columbia Conference to "take the presidency of the Indiana Conference." 14 This he accepted, arriving in Indiana about the middle of the year.

In 1899, a camp meeting and conference session was held at Alexandria, Indiana. Elder Donnell was confirmed in the presidency by election. In a report of this meeting, Elder A. J. Breed, Superintendent of District #3, * commented

* -- Prior to 1901, several conferences were grouped together as a District with a Superintendent appointed by the General Conference. Indiana was in District #3.

p 9 -- that "there were some features of the meeting that I was sorry to see; but before it closed, a victory was gained, and these were overcome." 16 What these features were is not defined in the report.

In December of 1899, Elder S. S. Davis began his work as Conference Revivalist. This appointment and date could be considered the beginning of what came to be called the Holy Flesh Movement. A report of the results of this work appeared in the Review several months later. It read: EVANSVILLE, ELNORA, SALEM, LINTON, FARMERSBURG, TERRE HAUTE, BOGGSTOWN. - The first of December, in company with Brother Joseph Crary, and his wife, and Brother John Hickey, and his wife, I started on my work among the churches. As a rule, we found the churches in a cold, backslidden condition, and in many places much divided and torn and scattered by the enemy; but generally they were dissatisfied with their condition, and desired a better experience. The Lord laid it on my heart to preach the Laodicean message. He gave power to the word, and I never before saw such manifestations of the power of God in repentance as I have been permitted to witness in the places mentioned above. In all these places shouts of victory made the churches ring. Perfect union and love prevail. Sixty-seven persons were added to the believers. Praise the Lord for His goodness to the children of men. 17

During this time a worker's meeting was held in the church at Indianapolis. The Revival Team proclaimed "vigorously" their message of holiness to the assembled workers. Elder Donnell opposed the presentation in a public service, outlining what he considered to be the truth on holiness and sanctification. The doctrinal division, and the emotional extravaganza accompanying the presentations by the Revival Team caused a division among the workers, and perplexity among the laity of the local church who attended and took part in the meetings. As a result, Donnell is quoted as saying - "I am not

going to have any such gang as Davis's, Hickeys and Crarys going over this conference preaching any such doctrine." 18 Comenting further on this experience the same source has written:

p 10 -- R. S. Donnell at first was bitterly opposed to the Holy Flesh Movement, which originated with three laymen - Davis; Hickey; Crary. However, he called them to his office to straighten them out. At the conclusion of their conference, he made a complete about face and became practically the leader of the movement. 19

With this turn of events, the Holy Flesh Movement moved toward its zenith. The camp meetings of 1900 would be a revelation of the workings and the teachings of the men who were weaving "the fabric" of the doctrine of holy flesh.

At the 1899 Session of the Conference, it was voted to hold several camp meetings in the State during 1900, making them evangelistic in nature. A conference session was to be held the following winter in Indianapolis. 20 However, in counsel with the General Conference President and the District Superintendent, it was thought best to alter this arrangement, and have the conference session in connection with the last camp meeting during 1900. Three meetings were scheduled - Sullivan, from July 19 - 29; La Fayette, from August 16 - 26; and Muncie, from September 13 -23. 21 Another four day meeting on the fairgrounds at Kendallville, made four in all for the year, 1900. 20

In sending out a notice of these camp meetings, Elder Donnell wrote an article stressing the purpose and need for these meetings. He stated: These meetings are all announced as local meetings, and it is the desire of the committee to conduct them in harmony with the instruction given in a Special Testimony dated Feb. 26, 1900; that is, to present our faith and its reasons to the people, and to carry on revival work from the beginning to the end of the meeting. This will make these camp-meetings of special interest to our own people, and also to those not of our faith; for while doctrinal subjects will be presented with earnestness, the real object to be attained is the conversion of every soul.

In the first-page article of the Review of February 27, 1900, we read this pointed statement: "The Lord calls upon His people in 1900 to be converted. The Lord can not purify the soul until the entire being is surrendered to the working of the Holy Spirit." 21

p 11 -- In a summary of the camp meetings held during 1900, Elder R. S. Donnell wrote about the meetings in Sullivan, Muncie, and Kendallville, but omitted any direct reference to the meeting in La

Fayette. Of these meetings, he stated, "The manifestation of the Spirit of God was marked at all these meetings, but not so fully at Muncie as at the others." Follow-up work was being continued at both Sullivan and Muncie. Donnell concluded his report by declaring - "The Laodicean message, which is the message for the church to-day,... is being preached in the Conference, in connection with other points of the faith." 20

The influence of S. S. Davis was strong in the conference. Not only was he made a member of the conference committee at the Session in 1900, but one of his associates - J. A. Crary - became a trustee of the legal Association. J. H. Hickey, the other associate was licensed to preach, and Hickey's wife, Julia received a missionary license. 22

These last two members of Davis' revival team remained in Muncie after the camp meeting, along with U. S. Anderson another licentiate, to care for the interest created. The follow-up work was under the direction of Elder P. G. Stanley, who himself was a member of the conference committee. Of this work, he had written to Donnell "that the power of God is wonderously manifest in the presentation of truth, and in the acceptance of it by the people." A Sabbath school of fifty members had been organized, and several had accepted the faith. 20

Certain key expressions were used by the leadership in Indiana: - "the Laodicean message," "the reception of the Holy Spirit". They also referred to the message they were preaching as the "cleansing message" 23 borrowed from the emphasis that Ballenger placed on the necessity of a cleansed church before the Holy Spirit could be received. 2 These concepts in themselves were based in the Bible, and the Inspired Testimonies. In fact, Donnell refers to one specific

p 12 -- reference 20 " from the very year - 1900 - where the servant of the Lord stated:"The Laodicean message must be proclaimed with power; for now it is especially applicable." 24 The error resulted from men taking truth, perverting it, and mingling with it their own theories and interpretations, thus weaving a "fabric" to borrow Sister White's figure of speech - in which there was "not a thread of truth." 18

1 A. F. Ballenger, "Camp Meeting Notes," Review and Herald, October 18, 1898, p. 671. Emphasis his.

- 2 Ibid., November 8, 1898, p. 720
- 3 Review and Herald, September 3, 1893, p. 573
- 4 Ibid., August 20, 1895, p. 53600
- 5 Ibid., April 26, 1898, p. 272
- 6 Ibid., August 23, 1898, p. 543
- 7 Viola Davis Hopper, An undated statement recalling events in the life of her father, S. S. Davis. Emphasis hers.
- 8 Jesse E. Dunn, Signed statement recalling events that took place in connection with the "Holy Flesh" Movement. The statement is in the files of the writer.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Davis accepted the Advent message in 1886. He colporteurd in Western Nebraska from 1887 to 1892. Davis' daughter, Mrs Viola Hopper, states that her father attended the 1888 General Conference Session. See Footnote #7
- 11 Ellen G. White, Review and Herald, November 22, 1892
- 12 L. H. Christian, The Fruitage of Spiritual Gifts, p. 241
- 13 E. A. Sutherland, "Illinois and Indiana Camp Meetings," Review and Herald, September 27, 1898, p. 622
- 14 Review and Herald, April 19, 1898, p. 255
- 15 Ibid., April 26, 1898, p. 274
- 16 A. J. Breed, "The Indiana Camp-Meeting", Review and Herald, August 29, 1899, p. 561
- 17 Review and Herald, April 10, 1900, p. 237
- 18 G. A. Roberts, Statement dated, June 11, 1923, White Estate D. F. #190
- 19 G. A. Roberts, Letter to Wm. H. Grotheer dated at Covina, Calif., January 23, 1973.
- 20 R. S. Donnell, "Indiana", Review and Herald, October 23, 1900, p. 686-687.
- 21 Ibid., July 10, 1900, p. 446
- 22 General Conference Bulletin, 4th Quarter, 1900, p. 207
- 23 S. N. Haskell, Letter to Ellen G. White dated at Battle Creek, Michigan, September 25, 1900

p 13 -- Chapter 2 -- EMOTIONAL EXTRAVAGANZA-- From the very first report signed by S. S. Davis, telling of his work in Evansville, there was the overtone of religious excitement. He wrote that in presenting the subject - "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit" - "the Spirit was poured out in a large measure" and that they were "actually having pentecostal times and apostolic experiences." 1 In telling of the work of the Revival team which he led, Davis stated that in all the places where they had been, "shouts of victory made the churches ring." 2

How these meetings were conducted is given in an eyewitness account to be found in the document file of the Ellen G. White Estate. It reads: The followers of this doctrine would gather in the cleared basement of the church, and a large number of them would dance in a large circle, shouting and lifting up their hands. The children would be placed upon boxes or barrels, and they too would shout and lift up their hands. In their church services, they would preach and shout and pray until someone in the congregation would fall unconscious from his seat. One or two men would be walking up and down the aisles watching for just this demonstration, and would lay hold of the person who had fallen, literally dragging him up the aisle and placing him on the rostrum. Then a number, perhaps a dozen, would gather about the prostrate form, some shouting, some singing, and some praying, all at the same time. Finally the individual would revive, and he was then counted among the faithful who had passed through the Garden. 3

After the conference president, R. S. Donnell, embraced the teachings of S. S. Davis, he called the workers together in Indianapolis and announced that they would remain in study and prayer until the Holy Spirit came upon them as it did on the disciples at Pentecost. How long they remained together could not be recalled, but it must have been for a period of time, for Jesse E. Dunn tells how relieved and delighted he was, when a day was finally set for the

p 14 -- meeting to be concluded. 4

The camp meetings during the year 1900 were marked in a decided manner with the emotional extravaganza that gripped the movement. At the Sullivan meeting (July 19 - 29), Donnell's step-daughter, Nellie, who was married to a Salvation Army Captain, named Fuller, was present. She was accomplished in the use of the tambourine. During this meeting she was asked by her father to lead the music by the use of her tambourine. In commenting on the musical instruments and type of music used at the camp meetings, Haskell wrote - "They are as much trained in their musical line as any Salvation

Army Choir that you ever heard. In fact, their revival effort is simply a complete copy of the Salvation Army method." 5

Dunn has testified to the advertising techniques connected with the second camping held near La Fayette (August 16 - 26). To advertise these meetings, trams of the city's Electric Lines were chartered. The musicians filled the cars and played their instruments loudly while they traversed the entire trolley system. A lad, only eleven years of age, attended this camp meeting with his parents. Years later he recalled some things about this camp meeting that remained as vivid memories of the experience. He wrote: The first thing I noticed that seemed strange to me was a lady leading the music playing a tambourine. They also had a band helping with the music. Then the altar calls, people would get so enthused over these calls that some would collapse at the altar. These affairs just about took all the ideas I ever had of becoming an Adventist out of me. In fact, I did not become an Adventist until about ten years later. One thing that was done for advertising was to load several street cars with the band, choir, and workers, and tour the city. The cars [were] all decorated with banners and emblems. 6

The Muncie camp meeting (September 13 - 23) was attended by Elder A. J. Breed and Elder and Sister S. N. Haskell. During the meeting, Sister Haskell

p 15 -- wrote two letters describing what was taking place. One was sent to Miss Sara McInterfer, and the other was addressed to Sister White. In the first letter, Hetty Haskell stated: They have a big drum, two tambourines, a big bass fiddle, two small fiddles, a flute and two cornets, and an organ and a few voices. They have "Garden of Spices" as a song book and play dance tunes to sacred words. They have never used our own hymn books except when Elders Breed, or Haskell speak, then they open and close with a hymn from our book, but all the other songs are from the other book. They shout "Amen" and "Praise the Lord," "Glory to God", just like a Salvation Army service. It is distressing to one's soul. The doctrines preached correspond to the rest. The poor sheep are truly confused. 7

In the second letter, Sister Haskell described the Sabbath service. Of this she wrote: Last Sabbath they (Indiana ministers) took the early meeting also the 11:00 o'clock hour, and called them front to the altar as they call the little fence they have around the pulpit. The poor sheep came flocking up until they were on the ground three rows deep. The ministers kept up their shouting and, shall I call it yelling. They invited Elder H. and Elder Breed to come down to the altar and help. They went down, and Elder Breed got down and tried to talk to some, but he felt so out of place he got up on his feet and stood and looked on. Elder H. left the tent and went to our own tent. Finally they had a season of prayer, then they got up and began shouting, "Praise the Lord," "Glory" etc., falling on one another's neck and kissing and shaking hands, keeping their music going with the noise, until many of them looked almost crazy. 8

Burton Wade, a laymember from Denver, Indiana, was present at this camp meeting. He has also recalled the nature of the services conducted. In a letter, he wrote: They worked themselves up to a high pitch of excitement by the use of musical instruments, such as: trumpets, flutes, stringed instruments, tambourines, and organ, and a big bass drum. They shouted and sang their lively songs with the aid of musical instruments until they became really hysterical. many times I saw them, after these morning meetings, as they came to the dining tent fairly shaking as though they had the palsy. 9

The conference president testified to an unwonted power which accompanied

p 16 -- his preaching during these various meetings. G. A. Roberts told of an occasion when R. S. Donnell, while preaching, held out his hands over the congregation and his arms became fixed and rigid. After the meeting, Donnell told Roberts that "he could feel great power course down his arms passing through his fingers to the congregation." 3

During the development of the "Holy Flesh" Movement, Ellen G. White was in Australia. She did not return to America until the month that the climatic camp meeting was held in Muncie. Upon her return, she received three letters telling of this camp meeting. Hetty Haskell wrote one from the camp grounds, as noted above, and Elder Haskell wrote two after returning to Battle Creek.

At the end of one of his letters, Haskell expressed his faith by stating - "I have no doubt, however, that the Lord will open up the whole scene before you; and for the sake of the poor sheep in Indiana, I pray God that you may have a Testimony to send to them." 5

To these letters, Sister White replied on October 10, 1900 from St. Helena, California, and stated that in January of that year she had received a revelation from the Lord that "erroneous theories and methods would be brought into our campmeetings, and that the history of the past would be repeated." 10 In this letter a clear line of demarcation is drawn between the evidences of the work of the Holy Spirit and the Satanic delusion which "works amid the din and confusion" of music which is perverted into a "carnival". Its effect is "like the poison sting of the serpent." 10 She charged that the motivation of this emotional extravaganza was "the itching desire to originate something new" which results in "strange doctrines and largely destroys the influence of those who would be a power for good if they held firm the beginning of their confidence

p 17 -- in the truth the Lord had given them." 11 In fact, those who became involved in this movement "were carried away by a spiritualistic delusion." 12

- 1 See page 6, Footnote #6
- 2 See page 9, Footnote #17
- 3 G. A. Roberts, Statement dated, June 11, 1923, White Estate D. F. #190
- 4 Jesse E. Dunn, Signed statement recalling events that took place in connection with the "Holy Flesh" Movement. The statement is in the files of the writer.
- 5 S. N. Haskell, Letter to Ellen G. White dated at Battle Creek, Michigan, September 25, 1900 (1)
- 6 Irvin Metzger, Signed statement dated August 4, 1965 in regard to events he recalled from the La Fayette, Indiana Campmeeting. The statement is in the files of the writer.
- 7 Hetty H. Haskell, Letter to Miss Sara McInterfer dated at Muncie, Indiana, September 17, 1900
- 8 Hetty H. Haskell, Letter to Ellen G. White dated At Muncie, Indiana, September 22, 1900
- 9 Burton Wade, Letter to Arthur White dated at Berrien Springs, Michigan, Januar 12, 1962
- 10 Ellen G. White, Selected Messages, bk. ii, p. 37
- 11 Ibid., p. 38
- 12 Ellen G. White, Evangelism, p. 595

p 18 -- Chapter 3 -- THE CONFRONTATION-- Six months following the exchange of correspondence between the Haskells and Sister White, the epochal 1901 General Conference convened in Battle Creek, Michigan, from April 2nd to the 23rd. Ellen G. White crossed the continent to bear her testimony to the assembled brethren urging them todo what the Lord had indicated should have been done ten years earlier. 1 She called for "a reorganization," declaring, "We want to begin at the foundation, and to build upon a different principle." 2 The business resulting from this call for re-organization became the dominant issue before the delegates.

Other issues - doctrinal issues - were being discussed among the workers. What had , happened and what was happening in Indiana could not be contained among just the workers in that conference. Indiana was too close to Battle Creek.Elder A. J. Breed had given a full report to Elder G. A. Irwin, the

president of the General Conference. 3 The leadership in Indiana had become defensive in their attitude at the Muncie camp meeting. They indicated that Elders Breed and Haskell had come to stir up controversy, and this Muncie camp meeting had become "the Minn. [Minneapolis] Conference over again, and it would have to be discussed." 4 This discussion reached into the 1901 General Conference Session.

The evening of April 16, Dr. E. J. Waggoner was scheduled to preach at 7 p. m. He chose as his text - a key text of the advocates of the Holy Flesh doctrine, - Hebrews 10:4-10 - "A body hast thou prepared me." 5 After reading the Scripture, Waggoner indicated that a question had been given him to answer. It read: "Was that holy thing which was born of the virgin Mary born in sinful

p 19 -- flesh, and did that flesh have the same evil tendencies to contend with that ours does?" 6

Dr. Waggoner told the delegates that in the very question itself was the idea of the Catholic dogma of the Immaculate Conception. Then he stated: We need to settle, every one of us, whether we are out of the church of Rome or not. There are a great many that have got the marks yet...

Do you not see that the idea that the flesh of Jesus was not like ours (because we know ours is sinful) necessarily involves the idea of the immaculate conception of the virgin Mary? Mind you, in Him was no sin, but the mystery of God manifest in the flesh,... is the perfect manifestation of the life of God in its spotless purity in the midst of sinful flesh. 7

That there would be no question as to what he was talking about, and speaking concerning, he plainly stated - "the idea of sinless flesh [in] mankind is the deification of the devil." 8 Then he commented: The flesh will be opposed to the Spirit of God so long as we have it, but when the time comes that mortality is swallowed up of life, then the conflict will cease. Then we shall no longer have to fight against the flesh, but that sinless life which we laid hold of by faith and which was manifest in our sinful bodies, will then by simple faith be continued throughout all eternity in a sinless body. That is to say, when God has given this witness to the world of His power to save to the uttermost, to save sinful beings, and to live a perfect life in sinful flesh, then He will remove the disabilities and give us better circumstances in which to live. 9

Dr. Waggoner concluded his sermon by warning - "We must not be presumptuous. We can never get so much of the life of God that we can dispense with it, and live by ourselves alone. Now and in all eternity we do live only by the faith of the Son of God." 10

The next day - Wednesday, April 17 at the early morning meeting, Dr. J. Harvey Kellogg took considerable time explaining the health reform message and the medical missionary work. Criticisms about the sanitarium and its work were answered. This matter was discussed "among fully three hundred of the brethren"

p 20 -- who were present. 11

At the close of this service, Ellen G. White arose and presented her testimony concerning the Movement in Indiana. She said:

Instruction has been given me in regard to the late experience of brethren in Indiana and the teaching they have given to the churches. Through this experience and teaching the enemy has been working to lead souls astray.

The teaching given in regard to what is termed "holy flesh" is an error. All may now obtain holy hearts, but it is not correct to claim in this life to have holy flesh. The apostle Paul declares, "I know that in me [that is, in my flesh] dwelleth no good thing." Rom. 7:17. To those who have tried so hard to obtain by faith so-called holy flesh, I would say, You cannot obtain it. Not a soul of you has holy flesh now. No human being on the earth has holy flesh. It is an impossibility....

The Scriptures teach us to seek for the sanctification to God of body, soul, and spirit. In this work we are to be laborers together with God. Much may be done to restore the moral image of God in man, to improve the physical, mental, and moral capabilities. Great changes can be made in the physical system by obeying the laws of God and bringing into the body nothing that defiles. And while we can not claim perfection of the flesh, we may have Christian perfection of the soul. Through the sacrifice made in our behalf, sins may be perfectly forgiven. Our dependence is not in what man can do; it is in what God can do for man through Christ. When we surrender ourselves wholly to God, and fully believe, the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. The conscience can be freed from condemnation. Through faith in His blood, all may be made perfect in Christ Jesus. Thank God we are not dealing with impossibilities. We may claim sanctification. We may enjoy the favor of God. We are not to be anxious about what Christ and

God think of us, but what God thinks of Christ, our Substitute. Ye are accepted in the Beloved. The Lord shows, to the repenting, believing one, that Christ accepts the surrender of the soul, to be moulded and fashioned after His own likeness...

When human beings receive holy flesh, they will not remain on the earth, but will be taken to heaven. While sin is perfectly forgiven in this life, its results are not wholly removed. It is at His coming that Christ is to "change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." Phil. 3:21. When Christ shall come with a great sound of a trumpet, and shall call the dead from their prison house, then the saints will receive holy flesh...

Those who meet Christ in peace at His coming must in this life walk before Him in humility, meekness, and lowliness of mind. It becomes

p 21 -- every human being to walk modestly and circumspectly before God, in harmony with the great testing truths He has given to the world. But the late experience of brethren in Indiana has not been in accordance with the Lord's instruction. I have not during this Conference held conversation with any one in regard to this matter, but the Lord has given me a definite testimony that a strange work is being done in Indiana, the results of which are not after His order. This phase of religious enthusiasm is a dangerous delusion. The sentiments and exercises are not prompted by the Holy Spirit. They have led to very sad results....

Brethren from Indiana, the word of the Lord to you and to all who are misled by your influence is: "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace."

When Christ is enshrined in our hearts, we have reached the position which God desires us to occupy. The example and lessons of Christ are to be our study: for in Christ dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith, we are to move onward and upward. And who can describe the benefits of appreciating Him who is invisible? "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, - from character to character, - even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. 3:18.

We need to contemplate Christ and become assimilated to His image through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. This is our only safeguard against being entangled in Satan's delusive snares. 12

Reaction followed swiftly. The next day, April 18, Elder R. S. Donnell, the Indiana Conference President, gave his confession concerning his involvement in the Movement. He confessed: I feel unworthy to stand before this large assembly of my brethren this morning. Very early in life I was taught to reverence and to love the word of God; and when reading in it how God used to talk to His people, correcting their wrongs, and guiding them in all their ways, when a mere boy I used to say: "Why don't we have a prophet? Why doesn't God talk to us now as He used to do?"

When I found this people, I was more than glad to know that there was a prophet among them, and from the first I have been a firm believer in, and a warm advocate of, the Testimonies and the Spirit of prophecy. It has been suggested to me at times in the past, that the test on this point of faith comes when the Testimony comes directly to us. As nearly all of you know, in the Testimony of yesterday

p 22 -- morning the test came to me. But, brethren, I can thank God this morning that my faith in the Spirit of prophecy remains unshaken. God has spoken. He says I was wrong, and I answer, God is right, and I am wrong. Yea, let God be true, and every man a liar. I am very, very sorry that I have done that which would mar the cause of God, and lead anyone in the wrong way. I have asked God to forgive me, and I know that He has done it. As delegates and representatives of the cause of God in the earth, I now ask you to forgive me for my sins, and I ask your prayers for strength and wisdom to walk aright in the future. It is my determination by the help of God, to join glad hands with you in the kingdom of God. 13

Just before the adjournment of the 22nd Meeting of the Conference the same day, Elder S. S. Davis asked to speak to the delegates before returning to Indiana that afternoon. 14 He stated: On account of some matters at home, I shall be compelled to go to my home this afternoon. Perhaps most of you know, if not all, heard what the Testimony had to say about the work in Indiana; and with shamefacedness I have to face this congregation and say today that I had a part in that work, and, in fact, I was among the first in it. I thought for a while that I would be the last out of it. But I praise God now that the victory is won, and inasmuch as the Lord has spoken and said that the work was wrong, I agree with the Lord today. The work was wrong. Inasmuch as the Lord has said that the men who were at the head of that work were led in the wrong direction, I agree with the Lord that something led me in the wrong direction.

Brethren, while there are a great many things connected with this that I do not know how much I am guilty of, I do not want to excuse myself at all. I am just willing that this congregation and this people can just charge me with all the blame of what was done in Indiana; and when we get up in the Judgment, God will settle it all; and when the work of the third angel's message triumphs, I expect by the grace of God to triumph with it. When you stand on the sea of glass, I hope to stand there and help you in singing the songs of Moses. 15

On April 19, at the 24th Meeting of the Session, the chairman, G. A. Irwin announced that Brethren Miller, Chew and Stanley felt that they would like to make a statement before the delegates of the Conference. The first to speak was A. L. Miller, who said:

p 23 -- I would like to state before the brethren and sisters assembled that what I have to say is in reference to the Testimony that was given concerning Indiana. As I for one have been connected with the work there, I felt that I should state to you how I have received the message from God. I am a firm believer in the Testimonies, and when the Lord speaks, I say, "Amen." I heartily receive the reproof given, and in the fear of God will endeavor to walk in harmony with His will, and meet you all in the kingdom of heaven. 16

Following this testimony, P. G. Stanley confessed: One of the most honorable things that a man can do when he is over taken in a fault or has sinned, is to confess it. Confess it to Jesus, and let Him bury it in the depths of the sea. This is God's plan and God's way of getting out of sin. It is the right way, it is a legitimate and Biblical way, and this is the way that I propose to adopt. I praise the Lord for the Testimony that He gave us. The happiest days of my life at this meeting have been since the Testimony came. The Lord has spoken, and I have heard, and I believe every word of it, and I assure you, brethren and sisters, that while Satan caught me in his trap this time, by the help of the Lord I will never be caught in it again, and so I take my stand with you today upon the principles of truth as taught by this people. 17

Brother A. L. Chew joined his brethren by stating: I, too am glad for this opportunity to express myself in regard to the reproof that has been given us, as I am one that had a very prominent part in this movement, and when the Testimony was given, I do not think there was any one who was more ready to receive it than myself, because I could see that God was in it; and that God was taking away nothing but that which was error, and was leaving me all the truth. While my heart was sad to think that I had been doing things that the Lord did not want me to do, yet I do thank the Lord that He came and corrected me and let me know it. I can say to my brethren that I heartily accept the Testimony, and by

the Grace of God I expect to profit by it, and in the future try to stand in the principles of God's truth, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. 18

When these brethren had completed their testimonies, Elder F. M. Roberts, who was not a member of the committee, yet who was convicted of the part he had played in the Movement, came forward and joined the members of the conference committee in their confessions. He said: I belong to this same company that has been speaking to you, and I

p 24-- want to add my testimony along this line with them. While I did not belong to the Conference Committee, I stood by the Committee, and believed what we were teaching was the truth. When I do anything, I do it with all my might. That has been my way of doing ever since I can remember anything of myself. When I quit anything, I quit it just as hard. When the Lord spoke to me the other morning, I prayed to Him that I might hear His voice, and I thank the Lord that I did. I love my Heavenly Father because He loves me; and the fact that He chastens me proves that He still loves me. I am glad that we are not called upon to forsake truth, but to forsake error, and I feel like saying, as did Samuel, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth." I am a firm believer in the Testimonies. I have studied them for years and years, and no small thing will shake me loose from them. The Spirit of prophecy has been the salvation of this people. It has kept us together all these years, and our adherence to the principles taught in them will keep us together to the end. I have confessed my sin to God and the aged men whose counsel I once refused, and now I ask any before me, today whom I have injured in any way to forgive me. I am going through with you to the Kingdom of God. 19

At the General Conference Session, all the officers and members of the Indiana Conference committee tendered their resignations. Since this was a local matter, rather than a General Conference problem, word was conveyed to the constituency of Indiana and a conference session was convened in Indianapolis, May 3-5, for the purpose of electing new officers. Elders A. G. Daniells, W. W. Prescott, A. T. Jones, P. T. Magan, and W. C. White attended this conference business meeting. Also Ellen G. White who was returning to the West Coast joined the brethren in Indianapolis, and remained with them till Sunday noon. 20 In reporting this meeting, A. T. Jones wrote: The principles and spirit that had characterized the course of the General Conference just closed were continued in this general meeting and conference in Indiana. Everything was done openly, with all the people present. Everything was stated candidly, and made plain to all, that all the people might know all that was done, and should themselves be the principals in the doing of it. Since they, the people of the Indiana Conference, are the Indiana Conference, what was to be done in this conference, as of the Indiana Conference, must be done by the people. Therefore, it was essential that everything should be plainly stated and thoroughly known by the people who were to do what must be done. 21

p 25 -- On Sunday afternoon the final business meeting was held and the report of the nominating committee was accepted. Ira J. Hankins was elected president, and P. G. Stanley, Enoch Swartz, J. H. Crandall, and R. O. Ross, M. D., were designated as members of the Executive Committee. 22 It will be noted that only Elder P. G. Stanley was carried over from the previous administration. 23

One of the first acts of the new committee was to care for the pastorate of the Indianapolis church since this headquarters church had been deeply involved in the "Holy Flesh" exercises. 5 Elder Arthur W. Bartlett was invited to serve in this capacity. An interesting feature of this decision was the fact that Bartlett himself "was recovered from a heresy very akin to the holy flesh idea in 1878-79 due to the ministrations of the Whites on the Indiana camp grounds at that time. In short, Bartlett had been reclaimed from this kind of view by the Whites and now apparently was considered to be the most appropriate worker in the conference to handle the delicate situation following 1901." 24

Both Davis and Donnell were relieved of their ministerial responsibilities. Davis retired to his home in Elnora, Indiana, and Donnell also went there to live for a few years. In 1905, Elder Donnell was called to serve the church in Raleigh, Tennessee, near Memphis. Of all the men involved in the "Holy Flesh" Movement, only S. S. Davis never returned to the ministry of the church.

1 Ellen G. White, General Conference Bulletin, 1901, p. 23

2 Ibid., p. 25

3 S. N. Haskell, Letter to Ellen G. White dated at Battle Creek, Michigan, September 25, 1900 (1), p. 5

p 26 --

4 Hetty H. Haskell, Letter to Ellen G. White dated at Muncie, Indiana, September 22, 1900.

5 G. A. Roberts, "The Holy Flesh Fanaticism", Ellen G. White Estate, Document File #190.

6 E. J. Waggoner, Sermon, April 16, 1901, 7 P. M., General Conference Bulletin, p. 403.

7 Ibid., p. 404

8 Ibid., p. 405

- 9 Ibid., pp. 405-406
- 10 Ibid., p. 408
- 11 General Conference Bulletin, 1901, p. 306
- 12 Ellen G. White, "Regarding the Late Movement in Indiana", General Conference Bulletin, 1901, pp. 419-422. See also Selected Messages, bk. ii, pp. 31-36.
- 13 General Conference Bulletin, 1901, p. 422
- 14 The reason for Davis' early return to Indiana was the death of his father-in-law, and he was desirous of being at his wife's side during her sorrow. This was affirmed in a letter by Joseph M. Davis to the writer dated at Portland, Oregon, June 19, 1965.
- 15 General Conference Bulletin, 1901, p. 330
- 16 Ibid., p. 358
- 17 Ibid.,
- 18 Ibid.,
- 19 Ibid.,
- 20 A. T. Jones, "General Meeting in Indiana", Review and Herald, May 14, 1901, pp. 316-317
- 21 Ibid.,
- 22 Ibid.,
- 23 A comparison of the confessions might suggest a reason.
- 24 Dr. E. K. Vandevere, Letter to William H. Grotheer dated at Berrien Springs, Michigan, April 8, 1963. See also "Bogus Sanctification", Review and Herald, June 6, 1878.

p 27 -- Chapter 4 -- THREADS OF THE FABRIC -- During the special session in Indianapolis, Ellen G. White bore a decided testimony to the delegates of the conference concerning the experience through which they had just passed. At the close of her discourse she said "When I am gone from here, none are to pick up any points of this doctrine and call it truth. There is not a thread of truth in the whole fabric." 1

Before considering some of the threads of the fabric, we need to look first at the fabric as a whole. The objective of the message as given by the ministers of Indiana was to get "the people ready for translation." The advocates of this message called it the "cleansing message." 2 One minister of the

conference who opposed the leadership, referred to the teachings as "the theory of sinless flesh", or "the sinless flesh doctrine." 3 It was finally dubbed the "Holy Flesh" Movement, which term was used by the servant of the Lord in her testimony regarding this Movement at the 1901 General Conference Session.

It must be clearly understood before analyzing the threads of the fabric, that those who advocated this teaching were not referring to the physical nature of man, when the term, "sinless flesh," was used. Donnell in an essay on "The Nature of Christ and Man" stated that' "man's fallen Physical [sic] nature is not redeemed in this life. Provision has been made for its health, and cleansing from sin, but deterioration in size, and in strength, is not to be restored until in the earth made new, when the redeemed will go forth and grow up as calves of the stall." 4 To these men of Indiana, "mind" and "nature" were synonyms and represented the fallen inheritance of man received as the result of the Fall. In the same essay, Donnell wrote: "The work in this life is the

p 28 -- restoring to man his spiritual nature, which is the cleansing from sin. And what is comprehended in that work? It is taking the mind or nature which Adam received in the fall, which is the mind of Satan, out of humanity, and the restoring back to man that nature which Adam had before he fell, with added power to do right." 5 To these men, "sinful flesh" meant the nature of Adam since the fall, while "sinless flesh", or "holy flesh" meant the nature of Adam before he fell. In teaching this doctrine, they went a step further and stated that if an individual sinned through yielding from within, it was evidence that his fallen nature had not been eradicated. Donnell wrote: When Adam and Eve sinned, they were conformed to the nature of Satan. That nature was begotten to every son and daughter of Adam, and they don't have to be tempted in order to cause them to sin. They are born sinners, and they sin by nature. It is those who have accepted the plan of salvation, by repentance toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that they might once more become sons of God, who are tempted to sin. Satan is striving to get them to fall as he did Adam.

Temptation is that by which we are tested as to whether there is still lust in our hearts, for the 14th verse [James 1] says: "But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." That is when we yield to temptation there is still lust in our hearts. 6

To the advocates of this doctrine, a truly converted man - a cleansed man no longer had the fallen nature of Adam. This experience - a prerequisite for translation - was obtained by coming to the "altar" and going through "Gethsemane" with their Lord. When this experience was realized, it meant they had received "translation faith" and would never die. 7

Elder S. G. Huntington who opposed this movement wrote in reply: Accompanying the sinless flesh doctrine is another we will now consider, viz., that at conversion the desires, inclinations, and propensities of the flesh, and the hereditary tendencies are all taken away; that the warfare with the flesh ceases and that

p 29 -- from thenceforth our temptations are all from without - none coming from within. The work that is accredited to cleansing and conversion is the work of sanctification, which is a progressive work, the work of a lifetime. At conversion our sins are forgiven, we are freed from the curse of the law, the righteousness of Christ is imparted to us and we stand justified before God. But the work of redemption in us is then only fairly begun; we are only babes in Christ, and need to be purged and tried, and to grow up to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. 8

In support of his position, Huntington quoted from a tract issued in 1894, which stated: The Christian is to realize that he is not his own, but that he has been bought with a price. His strongest temptations will come from within; for he must battle against the inclinations of the natural heart. 9

Underlying this doctrine of "sinless flesh", there was a basic-thread of error, and it concerned the doctrine of the Incarnation of Christ - the nature of that humanity Christ assumed when He became the Son of man. Immediately following the 1888 General Conference Session, letters came to Sister White "affirming that Christ could not have had the same nature as man, for if He had, He would have fallen under similar temptations." 10 On this point Sister White wrote in 1892, these words: Christ's overcoming and obedience is that of a true human being. In our conclusions we make many mistakes because of our erroneous views of the human nature of our Lord. When we give to His human nature a power that it is not possible for man to have in his conflicts with Satan, we destroy the completeness of His humanity. 11

This was the mistake that the leadership of the Holy Flesh Movement made they held erroneous views of the human nature Christ assumed in becoming a man. Donnell wrote, after quoting James 1:13: Now we know why Christ did not sin while He was here on earth. It was because He was God, and James has told us that God cannot be tempted with evil. Then He was not in sinful flesh, neither did He have sinful tendencies in Him. 12

p 30 -- This position, he then applied to the experience of those who would be translated by stating: Christ, according to the Apostle James, could not be tempted, or persuaded to sin, because being the Son of

God He had no lust in Him, and God the Father said, "In Him I am well pleased." Then you ask: Does God want to make God's [sic] out of us? Yes that

is just what He wants to do. He wants us to become God's [sic] so that we cannot be tempted to sin. In the 82nd Psalm, and the 6th verse, He says, "I have said, ye are God's, and all you are the children, of the Most High" [sic]. The next verse says; "But ye shall die like men." And why? Because they will not become God's [sic] so that they can quit sinning. "Whoever is born of God, doth not commit sin." I John 3:9. The 144,000 must attain in this life unto this high estate of perfection in character, as the sons of God, and the daughters of the Almighty, for they do not go through the grave, to leave their imperfections there. Like Christ they must become so related to God that they cannot be even tempted to sin. 13

Donnell explained just what he understood this "Godlike experience" to mean. He stated in the same essay: By His life on earth, He [Jesus] showed what humanity will do when filled with the divine mind. Then every member of the human race, who will renounce Satan, and his works, and will permit Christ to clothe Himself with his humanity, in that act, becomes a member of the family of heaven. That is just what it will be, if we will let the divine mind come into us. It will be divinity clothed with humanity, and that is just what Christ was. And thus clothed He did no sin. 14

What did the advocates of the "Holy Flesh" doctrine actually believe in regard to the humanity of the Son of God? Haskell in a letter to Ellen G. White told of his contention with them over this point of doctrine. He wrote - when we stated that we believed that Christ was born in fallen humanity, they would represent us as believing that Christ sinned, notwithstanding the fact that we would state our position so clearly that it would seem as though no one could misunderstand us.

Their point of theology in this particular respect seems to be this: They believe that Christ took Adam's nature before he fell; so He took humanity as it was in the garden of Eden, and thus humanity was holy, and this is the humanity which Christ had; and now, they say, the particular time has come for us to become holy in that sense, and then we will have "translation faith" and never die. 15

p 31 -- The advocates of the sinless flesh doctrine were careful to emphasize that in His humanity Christ bore the physical likeness of a man; but that the body He accepted had been redeemed from its fallen spiritual nature. Donnell stated: He took a body which showed by its deteriorated condition, that the effects of sin was shown by it, but His life proved that there was no sin in it. It was a body which the Father had prepared for Him. Heb. 10:5. Christ's body represented a body redeemed from its fallen spiritual nature, but not from its fallen, or deteriorated physical nature. It was a body redeemed from sin, and with that body Christ clothed His divinity. 16

Along with the text in Hebrews 10:5 - "A body hast thou prepared me" - the Scripture, "Hebrews 2: 7-14, was used to prove that Christ was born with flesh like 'my brethren' and 'the church' would have after they passed through the garden experience," in other words, converted and cleansed. 1 This was a point strongly emphasized. Huntington in replying to this point quoted Desire of Ages, page 638, that Christ "is the Son of man, and thus a brother to every son and daughter of Adam." Then he commented: Notice, His brethren are every child of Adam - sinners, men and woman under the law, and not simply the spiritual seed of Abraham alone. Now if the spiritual seed of Abraham and the sanctified ones only are those referred to, and they being redeemed and no longer under the law, and Jesus was made like unto them, then it would become evident that Jesus was not made under the law at all. 17

This is exactly what the men leading the Movement in Indiana believed, that Christ was exempt from the law of heredity that effects every other child of Adam. In 1903, the president who succeeded Donnell, Elder Ira J. Hankins, wrote to S. S. Davis in Elnora, asking him some questions concerning his beliefs. One question asked - "Is every child born into this world naturally inclined to evil even before it is old enough to discern between good and evil? To this question, Davis replied - "Yes, unless preserved from the law of heredity in conception

p 32 -- by the power of the Holy Ghost." 18

Huntington also warned the Indiana leadership that in advocating the doctrine of "sinless flesh", they were following papal error. He wrote: In adopting the theory of sinless flesh, though its advocates have ever been loathe to admit it, they are nevertheless, unconsciously led into the papal error of the Immaculate Conception and other heresies of the Catholic church. The theory of sinless flesh is pre-eminently papal - the foundation upon which the Catholic church stands. Remove this, and the whole structure of the Papacy, as a religion, falls to the ground. The expression, "sinless flesh", is nowhere found in the Bible: then why adopt such an expression... The record says that Christ was "made in the likeness of sinful flesh," (Rom. 8:3) "Of the seed of David," (Rom. 1:3) "Of the seed of Abraham" (Heb. 2:16). Then let us believe that it was just that way without trying to spiritualize these plain declarations to suit a perverted fancy, and by so doing entangle ourselves in an inextricable web of inconsistencies. 19

Sister White had declared plainly that no one was to pick up any of the points of this doctrine and call it truth, for there was not a thread of truth in the whole fabric. But sadly - the underlying doctrine of the "Holy Flesh" Movement - their teaching in regard to the Incarnation of Christ has been taken up again

and preached as truth by various leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist church. Note carefully the three questionable concepts in regard to the Incarnation held by the "Holy Flesh" advocates in Indiana:

1) "Christ took Adam's nature before he fell." 15

2) "Christ's body represented a body redeemed from its fallen spiritual nature, but not from its fallen, or deteriorated physical nature." 16

3) Christ was "Preserved from the law of heredity in conception by the power of the Holy Ghost." 18

In 1952, F. D. Nichol, then editor of the Review & Herald, wrote: Adventists believe that Christ, the "last Adam," possessed, on His human side, a nature like that of the "first man Adam," a nature free of any defiling taint of sin, but capable of responding to sin, and that that nature was handicapped by the debilitating effects of four thousand years of sin's inroads on man's body and nervous system and environment. 20

p 33 -- In 1956, R. Allan Anderson, editor of the Ministry magazine, and Secretary of the Ministerial Department of the General Conference declared: Christ did indeed partake of our nature, our human nature with all its physical limitations, but not of our carnal nature with all its lustful corruptions. When He entered the human family it was after the race had been greatly weakened by degeneracy. For thousands of years mankind had been physically deteriorating. Compared with Adam and his immediate posterity, humanity, when God appeared in human flesh, was stunted in stature, longevity, and vitality. 21

In 1957, the same minister of the church wrote again in his official capacity these words: When the incarnate God broke into human history and became one with the race, it is our understanding that He possessed the sinlessness of the nature with which Adam was created in Eden. 22

In the same year, the book - Questions on Doctrine - was released which stated: Although born in the flesh, He was nevertheless God, and was exempt from the inherited passions and pollutions that corrupt the natural descendants of Adam. He was "without sin," not only in His outward conduct, but in His very nature. 23

In 1971, Dr. Leroy Edwin Froom in his book, *Movement of Destiny*, which was approved officially by Elders Robert H. Pierson, and Neal C. Wilson, wrote that in an interchange of correspondence with a Dr. E. Schuyler English, editor of *Our Hope*, an Evangelical publication, English had contended: He [Christ] was perfect in His humanity, but He was none the less God, and His conception in His incarnation was overshadowed by the Holy Spirit so that He did not partake of the fallen sinful nature of other men. 24 To this, Froom placed the postscript - "That, we in turn assured him, is precisely what we [the Seventh-day Adventist Church] likewise believe." 25

If the E. J. Waggoner of 1901 could this day pick up the book, *Movement of Destiny*, and read what Froom has written, would he not again say - "We need

p 34 -- to settle, every one of us, whether we are out of the church of Rome or not. There are a great many that have got the marks yet." 26.

1. G. A. Roberts, "The Holy Fanaticism",. Ellen G. White Estate, Document File #190
2. S. N. Haskell, Letter to Ellen G. White dated at Battle Creek, Michigan, September 25, 1900 (1), p. 1
3. S. G. Huntington, "The Son of Man", pp. 12, 13. (A tract published by the "Mission Press, La Fayette", Indiana, circa 1900.)
4. R. S. Donnell, "The Nature of Christ and Man", p. 1. (An essay written from 619 Pearee St., Memphis, Tennessee, and sent to S. S. Davis. The Davis copy in the files of the writer.)
5. Ibid., pp. 1-2
6. Ibid., p. 2
7. Roberts, loc. cit.; & Footnote #15
8. Huntington, op. cit., p. 13
9. Ellen G. White, *Christ Tempted As We Are*, p. 11. (No. 118 of the Bible Student Library Series, February, 1894.
10. Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, bk. i, p. 408
11. Ellen G. White, *Our High Calling*, p. 48

12. Donnell, op. cit., p. 3
13. Ibid., pp. 4-5
14. Ibid., p. 4
15. S. N. Haskell, Letter to Ellen G. White dated at Battle Creek, Michigan, September 25, 1900 (2), pp. 1-2.
16. Donnell, loc. cit.
17. Huntington, op. cit., p. 3
18. S. S. Davis, Letter to Ira J. Hankins dated at Elnora, Indiana, March 15, 1903. (Copy in file of the writer.)
19. Huntington, op. cit., p. 12
20. F. D. Nichol, Answers to Objections, p. 393
21. R. Allan Anderson, "Human, Not Carnal", Editorial, Ministry, September, 1956, p. 13.
22. R. Allan Anderson, "'God With Us'", Editorial, Ministry, April, 1957, p. 34
23. Questions on Doctrine, p. 383
24. L. E. Froom, Movement of Destiny, p. 469
25. Ibid., p. 470
26. E. J. Waggoner, Sermon, April 16, 1901, 7 p. m., General Conference Bulletin, p. 404

p 35 -- Chapter 5 -- THE BY-PATHS -- Christ came to this world to be the "pattern-man," 1 "the great Exemplar," 2 "He came not to our world to give the obedience of a lesser God to a greater, but as a man to obey God's Holy Law, and in this way He is our example." 3 To follow this example is "the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." 4 "Higher than the highest human thought can reach is God's ideal for His children. Godliness - godlikeness - is the goal to be reached." 5 The attainment of this goal is to realize perfection.

In the beginning, man was created in the image of God. "The moral faculties and the physical powers possessed by man" were received from his Creator. "All was a sinless transcript of Himself. God endowed man with holy attributes and placed him in a garden made expressly for him." 6 Man's nature had no "bias toward evil," 7 neither did it possess an "enmity" against sin. 8 Adam and Eve were created free moral agents in the strictest sense. It was theirs to choose.

While God "did not see fit to place them beyond the power of disobedience," 9 He limited by the very nature which they possessed through creation the means by which temptation could come to them. Adam could be tempted only from without, not from within. "He stood in the strength of his perfection before God. All the organs and faculties of his being were equally developed, and harmoniously balanced." 10 But in the decision to sin, all was changed. This change has become the inheritance of all the sons and daughters of Adam.

"The results of eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is manifest in every man's experience. There is in his nature a bent to evil, a force which, unaided, he cannot resist." 11 But "the plan of redemption contemplates our complete

p 36 -- recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning." 12 This is the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This is perfection.

The question between the men of Indiana was not the matter of whether the gospel could preserve men from sin, or whether the power of the Holy Spirit was sufficient to keep a human being from sinning. The question that separated them was the nature of the humanity which Christ assumed in becoming the Son of man, and its application to the life of a believer.

The leaders of the "Holy Flesh" Movement taught that Christ took the nature of Adam before the Fall; that Christ was a stranger to the fallen nature of man, except in its physical characteristics. He appeared as a man, yet was fully God, and therefore, Satan did not overcome Him by temptations from without, and not having assumed man's sinful nature, He could not be tempted from within. How was such a life to be related to the present Christian experience?

To this question the men of Indiana addressed themselves by reasoning that since man had received because of the Fall a sinful nature with inclinations and weaknesses, the only way, was for these to be eradicated. So they taught that a man must pass through "the Gethsemane" experience, and by so doing he would receive a nature like Christ had in His humanity - the unfallen nature of Adam. This was the by-path to the right from the narrow way walked by Christ.

This same by-path was followed with variations by Brinsmead in his doctrine of perfection. In one of his first publications, he wrote: While it is true that the Christian is married to Christ at conversion, the union is not fully accomplished until the judgment. When

p 37 -- his faith reaches to the last supreme act of the atonement, he will be fully united ("married") to divinity for eternity. Then he will be as sinless in the flesh as Christ was sinless in the flesh. 13 In a diagram he presented an equation: Christ's Divine Nature + Fallen Nature received at birth = Perfect, sinless life without bent to sin. As for man the equation read: Man's Fallen Nature + Divine Nature received by complete rebirth at final atonement = Perfect, sinless life without bent to sin. 13

It must be noted, in order for the record to be kept straight, that at this time (1959), Brinsmead taught the historic Adventist position on the Incarnation. He wrote in the same book: Man could not keep the law (cease sinning) because of his fallen nature. God answered the need by sending His own son to live in the same nature as fallen humanity. For this reason Christ partook of human nature as it was since sin entered. 14

Again: Notwithstanding the fact that Christ appeared on earth possessing the fallen nature of man, He lived a victorious life, and offered to God on our behalf the sacrifice of the spotless life. Divinity came to dwell in humanity, yet did not in the least particular participate in its sin. This is the mystery of the incarnation. It was our fallen flesh that was lost through its utter impotency to keep the law of God. It was our fallen flesh that was in need of power to live in harmony with the divine will. But Christ, coming to dwell in our fallen flesh, kept perfectly the law of God. Thus Jesus condemned sin in the flesh - in our flesh. 15

This position on the Incarnation is incompatible with the doctrine of perfection which he had set forth, which was a replay of the "holy flesh" teaching - the eradication of the fallen nature of man. Instead of changing his teaching in regard to perfection to conform with the historic Adventist teaching on the Incarnation, he changed the base to fit the superstructure. By 1968, Brinsmead was teaching in regard to the incarnation this concept: "Christ became one flesh with us, ..."

p 38 -- Yet Christ was not born in sin. His human nature was not sinful at birth as is that of other infants. His birth was decidedly different than that of any other children, for He was born of the Holy Spirit. Therefore His human nature was not severed from God; neither did Satan implant in His mind the spirit of disobedience. When the divine Spirit came to dwell in a temple of human flesh, a new human spirit

was created. Through His supernatural birth He escaped from participation in man's Satanic inheritance. There was no trace of sin in His human nature.

One point about the humanity of Christ should be made clear. It was the Holy Spirit, and only the Holy Spirit, that created the unique sinlessness of the human nature of Christ. 16 a

With this change, Brinsmead's original equation in regard to Christ would now read: Christ's Divine Nature + Human Nature free from the fallen inheritance = Perfect, sinless life without bent to sin. Thus for man to obtain such a nature, there would have to be the eradication of the fallen inheritance. The Holy Flesh advocates said this could be done by going through what they termed "the Gethsemane" experience. Brinsmead taught that it was by being "married" to divinity at the final atonement. This teaching, held for ten years, Brinsmead now admits was error. b

With the admission of error in the area of "perfection" Brinsmead has not altered the change he made in his position on the Incarnation. A "Confidential Preliminary Draft for Restricted Group" written by "R.D.B." states:

a -- Compare this with the "Holy Flesh" teaching in regard to the humanity of our Lord: "When Adam and Eve sinned, they were conformed to the nature of Satan. That nature was begotten to every son and daughter of Adam...." (p. 28, Footnote #6) "He [Christ] took a body which showed by its deteriorated condition, that the effects of sin was shown by it, but His life proved that there was no sin in it. It was a body which the Father had prepared for Him. Heb. 10:5. Christ's body represented a body redeemed from its fallen spiritual nature, but not from its fallen, or deteriorated physical nature. It was a body redeemed from sin, and with that body Christ clothed His divinity." (p. 31, Footnote #16)

b -- "Many of the arguments surrounding the Awakening finally settled around the matter of the perfecting of the saints. Our critics felt that this was our most vulnerable point. The more vigorously this area was attacked, the more vigorously we defended it. Consequently, not only those opposed to the Awakening, but even those who espoused it, inevitably gravitated to regard this matter of the how, what and when of perfection as the summon bonum of the Awakening. Be that as it may, this writer is persuaded that our understanding of the perfecting of the saints through the final atonement has not been altogether sound." (R. D. Brinsmead, A Review of the Awakening Message, Part I, p. 2, May, 1972)

p 39 -- Consider the vast difference of being conceived in sin by natural human generation and being conceived by the Holy Ghost in a supernatural generation. Our humanity was generated from a sinful source: His was from a sinless source.

Some may reason: The Holy Spirit created Christ's divine nature and Mary created Christ's human nature. But this is fallacious reasoning. Christ's divine nature was not, could not be created. He was Himself the uncreated, eternal Word, One in substance and essence with God the Father. Look carefully at the Scriptural declarations and it will be seen that the Holy Spirit generated Christ's human nature in the womb of the Virgin Mary. We grant that Mary was a sinner by nature, and that a sinful nature could be transmitted by one human parent as by two. But the other fact to consider is that the human nature of Christ was divinely conceived and overshadowed by the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary. The Holy Spirit is holiness personified. He "prepared" (Heb. 10:5) and sanctified the human nature which was taken in union with divinity in the person of Christ. So the angel referred to Christ's humanity as "that holy thing" something that could never be said of our human nature. 17 y

There is another by-path to the left, based on the same doctrine of the

y -- Compare the thoughts herein expressed with Appendix D of An Interpretive History of the Doctrine of the Incarnation as Taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which quotes from unpublished manuscripts by Dr. Leroy Froom. Note the following sentences on pp. 104-105: "Jesus' human nature originated miraculously in the humanity of His virgin mother by the creative power of the Holy Spirit." "It is contended by some, being herself sinful, [Mary] would inevitably convey the taint of her corruption to Jesus - for sinful tendencies could as verily be conveyed by one parent as definitely as from two." "We press the point: It is a mistaken notion to think that Christ received His Deity from a Divine Parent and His humanity from a human parent." "Christ was Himself Eternal Deity - the Eternal Word and Son." "The body of Jesus was 'prepared' (Heb. 10:5) by the Third Person of the Godhead, Who brought to pass the 'mystery' of God 'manifest in the flesh' (I Tim. 3:16)." "And the Third Person of the Godhead is, of course, Holiness personified." (The common source of this teaching is Dr. William G. T. Shedd's Dogmatic Theology. See Ministry, December, 1957 - "The Theanthropic Nature of Christ", p. 11 ff.)

p 40 -- incarnation as taught by the "Holy Flesh" men of Indiana. Since it is taught that Christ took the nature of Adam prior to the Fall, those who reject the by-path to the right taken by the "Holy Flesh" advocates, now teach that man can never reach the example set by Christ until the change which takes place at the Second Coming of Christ removes from man the fallen nature received through Adam. d Thus the gospel is made to center in what has been done by God in Christ. We are told that all we have to do is acknowledge it, and by an assent called faith, resign ourselves to live under the "indulgence" of

God, with no hope of "stopping the history of sin" in our present life's conduct. In other words, when this vile body with its inherited tendencies toward sin, and the cultivated sins of our experience is changed at the Second Advent, then we shall demonstrate before the universe that the Law of God can be kept.

The true gospel is not to be found in a by-path to the right, nor in a by-path to the left, but is to be found "in the middle of the right side of the road." The deviations to the right and to the left challenges the basis upon which Adventism rests. The very objective of the Third Angel's Message is called into question - "the manifestation of the sons of God," 18 those steadfast saints

d -- For a full explanation of this position see tract - "Is Perfection Possible?" by Dr. Edward Heppenstall, or the same presentation in Signs of the Times, Dec., 1963. This position is now declared to be "correct" by Brinsmead. See A Review of the Awakening Message, Part I, p. 5, May, 1972. Compare with brochure, Is Perfection Possible? versus How Is Perfection Possible?, published by Dr. Fred Metz, January, 1964. A paragraph of explanation in the introductory letter by

Dr. Metz, clearly presents the two-paths. It reads:

"Dr Heppenstall's basic contention seems to be this: Since man has an evil nature, full of propensities and inclinations to sin, and since as he contends, the gospel does not make provision for the eradication of this evil nature, complete perfection of character is not possible in this life. Mr. Brinsmead's basic contention seems to be this: Since, as he contends, the gospel does make provision for the eradication of all man's sinful propensities and inclinations, complete perfection of character in this life is not just a possibility, but a positive necessity for the remnant church" (p. 2)

p 41 -- "that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." 19

It is truth thalt the "gospel of God" is what God has done for us in Jesus, "which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." 20 If this were clearly understood - His incarnation - then the life which He laid down in the flesh, but now takes up again to give to all who believe, would be better comprehended. For in the resurrection, He became "the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness," to give grace "unto the obedience of faith." (eiV upakohn pistewV). 21 This then is the "gospel of Christ" - "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.... For therein [in the lives of those that believe] is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." 22 What does it mean - "from faith to faith?" "The righteousness of Christ is revealed from faith to faith; that is from your present faith to an increased understanding of faith which works by love and purifies the soul." 23

Because we are unwilling to come face to face with the facts of the Incarnation, [It will ever be true that we shall not be able to understand the how of its mystery] we invent devious by-paths in regard to the victory over sin which it is God's purpose for us to experience. "The Lord Jesus came to our world, not to reveal what a God could do, but what a man could do, through faith in God's power to help in every emergency." Because of this - "The Lord now demands that every son and daughter of Adam, through faith in Jesus Christ, serve Him in human nature we now have... Jesus, the world's Redeemer, could only keep the commandments of God in the same way that humanity can keep them." 3

Paul stated the pure gospel of Christ in these words - "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." 24 "Christ came to be our example, and to

p 42 -- make known to us that we may be partakers of the divine nature... Christ, by His own example, made it evident that man may stand in integrity. Men may have power to resist evil - a power that neither earth, nor death, nor hell can master; a power that will place them where they may overcome as Christ overcame. Divinity and humanity may be combined in them." 25

- 1 Ellen G. White, Ms. 76, 1903 (7BC:904)
- 2 Ellen G. White, *Our High Calling*, p. 57
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 48
- 4 Philippians 3:14
- 5 Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 18
- 6 Ellen G. White, Ms. 29, 1899
- 7 Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 49
- 8 Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies Series B, #2*, p. 6
- 9 Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. I*, p. 24
- 10 Ellen G. White, "The Temptation of Christ", *Review and Herald*, July 28, 1874

- 11 Ellen G. White, Education, p. 29
- 12 Ellen G. white, The Desire of Ages, p. 311
- 13 Robert D. Brinsmead, God's Eternal Purpose, p. 199
- 14 Ibid., p. 96, (Emphasis his)
- 15 Ibid., p. 101, (Emphasis his)
- 16 "Robert D. Brinsmead, "The Atonement in the Light of the Nature of Man,"Present Truth, No. 2, 1968, p. 13
- 17 "Robert D. Brinsmead, A Review.of the Awakening Message, Part II, p. 5, Preliminary Draft.
- 18 Romans 8:19
- 19 Revelation 14:12
- 20 Romans 1: 1, 3
- 21 Romans 1:4-5
- 22 Romans 1:16-17
- 23 Ellen G. White, Review & Herald, September 18, 1908 (6BC:1067)
- 24 Galatians 2:20
- 25 Ellen G. White, Selected Messages, bk. i, p. 409

p 43 -- Chapter 6 -- LESSONS AND SIDELIGHTS -- The "Holy Flesh" Movement did not take place in a corner as far as the Indiana Conference was concerned. The entire conference committee and the majority of the working staff became involved. Jesse Dunn, State Agent at the time, recalled that by the time of the Muncie Camp Meeting in 1900, the Conference President, the Executive Committee, and the entire ministerial staff except five, two ordained ministers, and three licentiates, were involved. 1 This is no insignificant fact, when one realizes that even in 1900, the conference had a working staff of thirteen ordained ministers and fifteen licentiates. 2

Here is a lesson that should speak volumes to us today. A whole conference - its leadership and committee - can be wrong, deadly wrong! But more than that, the leadership of the whole church can depart from God, and place their approval on error and heresy. "God and heaven alone are infallible." 3 Christ never placed an infallible pope or committee at the head of His church. He, alone, was to be its head, and the Holy Spirit, His vicegerent. Neither is the church as a corporate body infallible. That which

involves humanity is prone to error and apostasy. Therefore, the Scriptures warn - "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no salvation." 4

To place our spiritual welfare in the hands of men results in a false experience. The servant of the Lord warned: This message is spoken to our churches in every place. In the false experience that has been coming in, a decided influence is at work to exalt human agencies, and to lead some to depend on human judgment, and to follow the control of human minds. This influence is diverting the mind from God. God forbid that any such experience should deepen and grow in our ranks as seventh-day Adventists. Our petitions are to reach higher than erring

p 44 -- man - to God. 5

Another interesting sidelight of this Indiana movement, and closely connected with the previous lesson cited is revealed in the confession of Elder F. M. Roberts. He stated before the delegates at the 1901 General Conference Session: "While I did not belong to the Conference Committee, I stood with the committee, and believed that what we were teaching was the truth." 6 This is blind loyalty. This is misplaced loyalty. This is a violation of the first commandment which declares - "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." 7 What a different picture might have been painted in Indiana if the counsel of the servant of the Lord in 1896 had been followed. She wrote: We are living in times full of importance to each one. Light is shining in clear, steady rays around us. If this light is rightly received and appreciated, it will be a blessing to us and to others; but if we trust in our wisdom and strength, or in the wisdom and strength of our fellow men, it will be turned into a poison. In the struggle for eternal life, we can not lean upon one another. The bread of life must be eaten by each one. Individually we must partake of it, that soul, body, and mind may be revived and strengthened by its transforming power, thus becoming assimilated to the mind and character of Jesus Christ. God must be made first and last and best in everything. 8

For men, ministers of the gospel, called of God to be His mouthpieces, to surrender their responsibility to know for themselves what is truth, and to go along with a committee is treasonable. But today the leadership of the church demands of every man on the payroll, one thing above all else - "loyalty to the hierarchy." Every worker is considered a member of "the team" with the conference president and/or the committee calling "the play". One writer has stated it well, when she wrote: As totalitarianism increases - in a school, or a country, or a church - the use of the word, loyalty, increases. A strange and frightening word. The mob's word. The gang's word. A word people shout in unison - while honor and responsibility and integrity are

p 45 -- words an individual can speak, and act out.

How does one measure the quality of a man's relationship with a large entity such as a church or school or government? It is an interesting fact, and one many of us have observed all our lives, that people demand loyalty of us only when they are doing something to us (or somebody else) of which we don't approve and cannot wholeheartedly participate in, and which weakens our love and admiration. Let's admit it: loyalty is a verbal switch-blade used by little and big bosses to force us quickly to accept a question-able situation which our intelligence and conscience should reject. 9

Over and beyond Robert's confession of blindly following the conference committee was a more tragic confession. He declared - "I am a firm believer in the Testimonies. I have studied them for years..." 5 Yet he failed to discern between truth and error. We may give mental assent to what the Lord has said, and even read widely in the inspired Testimonies, yet in Laodicean blindness to organization, we may not only commit error ourselves but lead the church of God into grievous mistakes in doctrine and practice. This tragic situation results because we have failed in two vital sectors of our personal experience. One, that which we have read and studied does not become sufficiently a part of our lives so that we can detect error even in high places. Two, we are not willing to accept "the cross", and stand up and be counted in opposition to that which is clearly proven to be the basest apostasy and heresy. Many of the ministers of the church, from the General Conference President on down, are willing to let other men do their thinking for them, excusing themselves that they are insufficiently schooled to understand some of the very basic principles involved in theological questions. Yet in the pious platitudes they write and utter, it is evident that they have read the Testimonies for years.

How appropos is the counsel of the Lord's servant. She wrote: Would that every minister might realize the sacredness of his office and the holiness of his work, and show the courage that

p 46 -- Elijah showed! As divinely appointed messengers, ministers are in a position of awful responsibility. They are to "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering." In Christ's stead they are to labor as stewards of the mysteries of heaven, encouraging the obedient and warning the disobedient. With them worldly policy is to have no weight. Never are they to swerve from the path in which Jesus has bidden them walk. They are to go forward in faith, remembering that they are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses. They are not to speak their own words, but words which One greater than the potentates of earth has bidden them speak. Their message is to be, "Thus saith the Lord." God calls for men like Elijah, Nathan, and John the Baptist, - men who will bear His message with faithfulness, regardless of the consequences; men who will speak the truth bravely, though it call for the sacrifice of all they have. 10

In Indiana, in the time of the "Holy Flesh" crisis, there were men, a few, who did sacrifice all that they had. One such was Elder O. S. Hadley. In a report of the Indiana Conference, he is listed as a member of the Executive Committee. 11 At the time of the 1899 conference session, he was removed from the Executive Committee and made a "trustee" of the Conference Association. From the report, it would appear that he was serving as pastor of the Indianapolis church at the time. 12 But in the 1900 conference session report, he is not only removed as a trustee of the association, but he is replaced by one of the members of the Davis' revival team - J. A. Crary. Further, he is no longer listed among the ministers of the conference, and another minister who openly advocated the "holy flesh" doctrine - A. L. Miller - is listed at the Indianapolis address, which was Hadley's in the 1899 report. 13 We are told by an eyewitness of the scenes in Indianapolis, what happened to Elder O. S. Hadley. This observer wrote - "Elder O. S. Hadley opposed this doctrine openly, and taught that it was fanaticism. Because of his attitude, his credentials were taken from him." 14

Such tactics reveal the power behind a cause or a movement. "Compelling power is found only under Satan's government. The Lord's principles are not of this order." 15 "Any man, be he minister or laymen, who seeks to compel or control

p 47 -- the reason of any other man, becomes an agent of Satan, to do his work, and in the sight of the heavenly universe bears the mark of Cain." 16

What a revelation this should be to our own insights as to what is taking place today. To what extent this same procedure which was used in the Holy Flesh Movement has been used today to force acceptance of the publications of the books, Questions on Doctrine, and Movement of Destiny, only eternity will reveal. That it has been done can be documented; and in these actions it has been revealed to all who are willing to read and see, what power now possesses men in high places of church responsibility. When the "power and presence" of God are lacking in the church, it is supplied by human enactments, programs and projects. 17 Not being motivated by the Holy Spirit, human rule and control are substituted. This warning was specifically given: Organizations, institutions, unless kept by the power of God, will work under Satan's dictation to bring men under the control of men; and fraud and guile will bear the semblance of zeal for truth and the advancement of the kingdom of God. Whatever in our practice is not as open as day, belongs to the methods of the prince of evil. His methods are practiced even among Seventh-day Adventists, who claim to have advanced truth. 18

The leadership of the Indiana Conference were not without warning as to the course they were following. At the Camp Meeting in 1899 at Alexandria, just as the "Holy Flesh" Movement was getting

under way, Elder A. J. Breed reported some features that he did not consider proper, but commented that these "were overcome." 19 Then at the Muncie Camp Meeting, both Elders Haskell and Breed endeavored to show the error in the teaching and conduct of the ministers and leaders involved. But the leadership of Indiana retaliated and took the position that Elders Haskell and Breed had come down from Battle Creek to stir up controversy. Elder Donnell claimed that "it was the Minnesota Conference over again," 20 inferring that the men of Indiana were preaching the genuine message

p 48 -- of righteousness by faith, and the brethren from Battle Creek were in opposition as had occurred at Minneapolis in 1888. It was at the Muncie Camp Meeting that the conference session was held, and from the report, Elder Hadley was replaced on the Conference Association, and removed from his responsibilities in the conference. When warnings are received by men in authority, and rejected, they start down the track toward Romanism, which not only imperils their own souls, but which also introduces false principles into the work, thus corrupting the church. How carefully we have been warned on this point. It is written: If men resist the warnings the Lord sends them, they become even leaders in evil practices; such men assume to exercise the prerogatives of God, - they presume to do that which God Himself will not do in seeking to control the minds of men. Thus they follow in the track of Romanism. They introduce their own methods and plans, and through their misconceptions of God they weaken the faith of others in the truth, and bring in false principles that work like leaven to taint and corrupt institutions and churches.

Anything that lowers man's conception of righteousness and equity and impartial judgment, any device or precept that brings God's human agents under the control of human minds, impairs their faith in God, and separates the soul from Him.

God will not vindicate any device whereby man shall in the slightest degree rule or oppress his fellow-man. As soon as a man begins to make an iron rule for other men, he dishonors God and imperils his own soul and the souls of his brethren. 21

When one surveys some of the lessons to be learned from the sidelights of the "Holy Flesh" Movement, he is led to exclaim, "How true that '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.'" 22

1 Jesse E. Dunn, Signed statement recalling events that took place in connection with the "Holy Flesh" Movement. The statement is in the files of the writer.

2 General Conference Bulletin, 4th Quarter, 1900, p. 207

p 49 --

3 Ellen G. White, Testimonies to Ministers, p. 30

4 Psalm 146:3 margin

5 White, loc. cit., pp. 483-484 (Emphasis mine)

6 See page 24, Footnote #19

7 Exodus 20:3

8 White, loc cit., p. 385 (Emphasis mine)

9 Lillian Smith, The Journey, pp. 223, 224

10 Ellen G. White, Prophets and Kings, p. 142 (Emphasis mine)

11 General Conference Bulletin, 1898, p. 246

12 1899, p. 132

13 See Footnote #2

14 G. A. Roberts, "The Holy Flesh Fanaticism", June 11, 1923, p. 4 (Ellen G. White Estate Document File #190)

15 Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages,, p. 759

16 Ellen G. White, Ms. 29, 1911, (IBC:1087)

17 See Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5, p. 210; Vol. 8, p. 250; Review, August 7, 1894. Last reference quoted in The Church by J. N. Loughborough. (p. 143)

18 Ellen G. White, Testimonies to Ministers, p. 366

19 See page 9, Footnote #16

20 Hetty H. Haskell, Letter to Ellen G. White dated at Muncie, Indiana, September 22, 1900, p. 3.

21 Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 7, p. 181

22 Ellen G. White, Life sketches, p. 196

S. S. Davis

S. S. Davis was born in 1855 in Bartholomew County, near Columbus, Indiana. His mother was an "old time" Methodist, while his father was a Baptist. His father served in the Civil War and was incarcerated in the infamous Andersonville prison. Soon after his release due to the ravages of prison life, he died leaving the care of his wife and four younger children to his eldest son, S. S., who was at the time only thirteen. This experience cut short Davis' formal education. Making use of the opportunities available and wisely applying himself, he became "a self educated man." He was early active in religious affairs serving as a teacher and Sunday school superintendent in a near-by community church.

Soon after his marriage, he and his bride attended a tent meeting held near Duggar, Indiana in 1886. As a result of these meetings, they accepted the Truth. From 1887 - 1892, Davis colporteurd in western Nebraska, while staking out a claim to one hundred and sixty acres of land. He sold *The Great Controversy* and *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*. He also studied these books for himself during these years. Due to drouth and his mother's final illness, he returned to Indiana in 1893. 1

At the 21st Annual Session of the Indiana Conference held in Indianapolis, August 8-13, 1893, Davis was granted a license to preach. 2 Part of his work during this time was in Perry County, where he pioneered the preaching of the Third Angel's Message. 3 At the 1895 Camp-Meeting held in Anderson, Indiana, he was ordained. 4 Following his ordination, he was sent to Evansville to establish the work there. This he did. In 1899, he was asked to head up a team of workers

p 51 -- for revivalism in the Conference. His influence grew until in 1900 at the Muncie Camp Meeting, he was made a member of the Executive Committee. 5

In 1901 at the General Conference Session held in Battle Creek, Michigan, Ellen G. White read the Testimony regarding the work in Indiana. As a result the entire conference staff and committee tendered their resignations. On May 3-5, a special constituency meeting was held in Indianapolis which altered the entire face of the conference administration. 6 After the change-over, Davis retired to his

home in Elnora, Indiana. He engaged in farming on rented land near the town till 1910, when he moved to Lyons, Indiana, where he continued to farm.

The beginning of the end of the association of S. S. Davis with the Seventh-day Adventist church came during the final months of his stay in Elnora. Two ministers, one of whom had been ordained with him in 1895, held some meetings in the church and stayed in the Davis home. Sometime following the meetings, a general church meeting was called, and the church was disbanded. When it was reorganized, S. S. Davis' name was omitted from the record. Sister Davis, and the oldest son, Arlie, elected to join their husband and father. 7

In 1920, the Davis family moved to Nebraska, where on September 26, 1926, S. S. Davis was ordained a minister of the General Baptist church. 8 He died two years later in 1928, at the age of 73, and is buried in Gordon, Nebraska.

R. S. Donnell

Robert Sloan Donnell was born in Belfast, Ireland, February 7, 1844. His parents moved to St. Louis, Missouri, where they both died of cholera when he was still an infant. Placed in an orphan's home, he later was adopted by a Presbyterian family by the name of Donnell. 9 No knowledge is available as to

p 52 -- when he became a Seventh-day Adventist. He was, however, in charge of the Upper Columbia Conference prior to his coming to Indiana as president. 10 Following the events of 1901 in Indiana, he went to Elnora and lived for several years with the Davis family.-

In 1905, Elder Donnell returned to the ministry of the church and accepted the pastorate of the Raleigh, Tennessee church near Memphis. Both his wife and step daughter, Nellie, preceded him in death, and were buried in a cemetery near Memphis. In 1928, a group of self-supporting workers from Madison felt impressed to start a Health Food program in Memphis, and went there on faith alone, without means. A contact was made with Elder Donnell who was retired and subsisting on sustentation. He had just sold his home reserving only two rooms and a kitchenette. The funds that he had placed in savings were drawn from the bank and placed at the disposal of the group of self-supporting workers.

Later when because of failing health, he was unable to care for himself, one couple of the group who went to Memphis to establish the Health Food work, Brother and Sister Paul C. Dysinger, took him into their home till his death. 11 He died th 1937, and was buried in a little cemetery near Old Fountain Head school, now Highland Academy.

1 The facts in the foregoing paragraphs were gleaned from brief life sketches provided for the writer by the daughter, Viola, and a son, Joseph M. Davis.

2 Review and Herald, September 5, 1893, p. 573

3 Ibid., August 27, 1895, p. 556

4 Ibid., August 20, 1895, p. 536

5 General Conference Bulletin, 4th Quarter, 1900, p. 207

6 See page 25, Footnote #22

7 W. A. Davis, Letter to Jesse E. Dunn dated at Carthage, Mo., December 6, 1958. The letter is in the files of the writer.

8 Photo-copy of this ordination certificate in the files of the writer.

p 53 --

9 Review and Herald, December 30, 1937, "Appointments and Notices".

10 Ibid., April 19, 1898, p. 255

11 Paul C. Dysinger, Letter to William H. Grotheer dated at Pewee Valley, Kentucky, February 22, 1965

APPENDIX - B -- Was the Doctrine of the Incarnation a Real Issue in the "Holy Flesh" Movement? -- In studying the Testimony that Sister White read at the General Conference Session in 1901 concerning the Movement in Indiana, 1 the absence of any mention of the doctrine of the Incarnation is noted. The question is raised that if she made no mention of it, why should the doctrine even be considered in a research study of this particular experience in our church's history? The answer is simply that contemporary data indicates that this doctrine was a major point of conflict between the men who advocated the doctrine of "holy flesh", and those who opposed it.

In 1903, Elder 1. J. Hankins, then president of the Indiana Conference, wrote to S. S. Davis at Elnora asking him eight questions in regard to his belief. Four of the eight questions concerned the doctrine of the Incarnation. The questions and answers are as follows:

QUESTION NUMBER FOUR -- "Please state in a few words your views on the nature of Christ?" ANSWER. - Luke 1:35 "that holy thing."

QUESTION NUMBER FIVE -- "Did Christ's flesh have in it any weakness or natural tendency to sin as the result of the fall?" ANSWER. - Testimony No. 2 the last three words on page 201, and continued on page 202 says, "was our brother in infirmities, but not possessing like passions." That is all on that point that I care to say.

p 54 -- QUESTION NUMBER SIX -- "Was Mary the mother of Jesus like all other women, sinful?" ANSWER. - I could not say how full of sin she was but I suppose that she had her share, perhaps not as bad as some, and maybe more than some as there are degrees in heredity and depravity, and there is no evidence that she had an immaculate conception.

QUESTION NUMBER SEVEN -- "Is every child born into the world naturally inclined to evil, even before it is old enough to discern between good and evil?" ANSWER. - Yes, unless preserved from the law of heredity in conception by the power of the Holy Ghost. See Ps. 51:5 Shapen in sin, also Eph. 2:3 "by nature children of wrath." 2

The only extant material written by a minister of the Indiana Conference against the "Holy Flesh" Movement is a tract primarily on the subject of the Incarnation and its application to the life of a Christian. Elder S. G. Huntington's conclusion indicated the emphasis of the whole tract. It reads: Now, since we have been studying the humanity of Christ, let none think that we would detract from or forget His divinity. Although Jesus "the sinbearer endured the wrath of divine justice, and for our sakes became SIN ITSELF," [D. of A. p. 907,] yet, through His implicit faith in His Father, He was fortified so that His divine nature overwhelmingly triumphed over His sinful nature and hereditary tendencies. Thus from the cradle to Calvary, His days of trial and probation, He lived a pure, holy, and sinless life. Thus He met the demands of a broken law, and became "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

Now just as God in Christ, 4,000 years this side of Creation, lived a perfect, spotless life in sinful flesh, so through faith in Him, He will cleanse us from all our unrighteousness, impart to us His own righteousness, take up His abode in our hearts, and live the same kind of a life in our sinful flesh six thousand years this side of Creation. Then we can truly say, "as He is [in character] so are we in this world." I John 4:17. 3

Another primary source is an essay written by R. S. Donnell at Memphis following the experience in Indiana, entitled, "The Nature of Christ and Man." This document has been quoted at length in the manuscript itself. 4

Due consideration should be given to the fact that three of the strongest statements from the pen of Ellen G. White on the nature of the humanity that Christ assumed in the Incarnation are dated in 1900, and in 1901. Just at the

p 55 -- time of the Indiana camp meetings in 1900, there appeared in the Review and Herald this statement: Christ did in reality unite the offending nature of man with His own sinless nature, because by this act of condescension He would be enabled to pour out His blessings in behalf of the fallen race. Thus He has made it possible for us to partake of His nature. 5

Then in the Youth's Instructor of the same year is the strongest statement ever made by the servant of the Lord on the subject. It read: Think of Christ's humiliation. He took upon Himself fallen, suffering human nature, degraded and defiled by sin. He took our sorrows, bearing our grief and shame. He endured all the temptations wherewith man is beset. He united humanity with divinity: a divine spirit dwelt in a temple of flesh. He united Himself with the temple. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," because by so doing He could associate with the sinful, sorrowing sons and daughters of Adam. 6

The following year, 1901, a manuscript bearing the number 141 stated: In Christ were united the divine and the human - the Creator and the creature. The nature of God, whose law had been transgressed, and the nature of Adam, the transgressor, meet in Jesus - the Son of God, and the Son of man. 7

This particular statement was taken from a manuscript written previously, dated as Ms. 16, October 1, 1890, which was evidently a sermon delivered at Lynn, Massachusetts. It has not been determined to

whom or under what circumstances the 1901 manuscript was written. It is interesting to note, however, that this strong statement in regard to Christ's incarnation was introduced again at this particular date - 1901.

From my own experience there is an interesting episode which took place in 1958. When I was talking to Brother Jesse Dunn who had been State Agent in Indiana during the period of the "Holy Flesh" agitation, we discussed the subject of the Incarnation as taught in the book, Questions on Doctrine. It was this that triggered Brother Dunn's memory in regard to a similar teaching

p 56 -- of the "Holy Flesh" advocates. Such an association would not have taken place had not the doctrine of the Incarnation been a major issue in the Indiana Movement. This experience led to the initial research which forms the basis of this manuscript.

Why then did Ellen G. White not mention this particular doctrine in her presentation in 1901 which ended the fanatical movement in Indiana? She did not need to do so. The presentation of the truth in regard to the humanity our Lord assumed in the incarnation and its relationship to the "holy flesh" doctrine had been presented the evening before by Elder E. J. Waggoner. 8 All she needed to say was - Brethren from Indiana, the word of the Lord to you and to all who are misled by your influence is: "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace." 9

In another manuscript, she recalls the experience in Indiana, and emphasizes the fact that more than one doctrine was involved. She wrote: During the General Conference of 1901, instruction was given me in regard to the experience of some of the brethren in Indiana, and regarding the doctrines they had been teaching in the churches. I was shown that through this experience and the doctrines taught, the enemy has been working to lead souls astray. 10

1 Ellen G. White, General Conference Bulletin, 1901, pp. 419-422

2 S. S. Davis, Letter to I. J. Hankins dated at Elnora, Indiana, March 15, 1903. Copy in file of writer.

3 S. G. Huntington, "The Son of Man", p. 16

4 See Chapter IV - "Threads of the Fabric"

- 5 Ellen G. White, Review and Herald, July 17, 1900
- 6 Ellen G. White, Youth's Instructor, December 20, 1900 (4BC:1147)
- 7 Ellen G. White, Ms. 141, 1901 (7BC:926)
- 8 See pages 18-19
- 9 See page 21, Footnote #12
- 10 Ellen G. White, Ms. 39, 1907 (Emphasis mine)

p 57 -- APPENDIX - C-- Compiler's Note in Selected Messages, bk. ii, p. 31 -- In January, 1968, the editor of the Review wrote a series of editorials on the subject, "The Church and Heresy". In the second editorial, he wrote: in 1900 a fanatical teaching was started in Indiana, termed the doctrine of holy flesh. Advocates of this heresy taught that during Christ's agony in Gethsemane He obtained holy flesh comparable to that possessed by Adam before his fall. They declared that followers of Christ must obtain this same kind of experience in order to be prepared for translation. 1

After reading this statement, I wrote a letter to the editor which said in part: It would appear that you gathered your concept from a paper written by Elder G. A. Roberts dated June 11, 1923 (D F 190). But if you read carefully what he wrote, he didn't say what you wrote...

Since beginning this letter, I have puzzled over how you could read the material by Elder G. A. Roberts as you did. So I decided to look one more place to see where you might have obtained the concept you stated. And so I found in Selected Messages, bk. ii, p. 31, the source of your statement. It is in the note by the compilers. I am sorry that they are wrong, and I am sorry that as an editor you did not do more original research than you seem to have done. This does leave a shadow over other things written also. In positions of responsibility we must double check our material. I also know that in the press of the work load, our human weakness gets the best of us at times. 2

In his reply, he defended the White Estate, and questioned my scholarship in the matter. 3 So on February 18, 1968, I wrote: Your letter of the 14th in before me. Inasmuch as you infer that my scholarship in regard to the Holy Flesh Movement is open to question rather than your source, please give me the authority for your statement in the Review, January 25, 1968... If you say, The Compiler's Note, then since you are a trustee of the White Estate, will you give me the primary source of this reference that you rely upon. 4

In answering this request, the editor wrote: As support for my statement, I might present a letter written by Burton Wade who attended the camp meeting held in Muncie, Indiana,

p 58 -- in September of 1900. At this camp meeting he witnessed first hand the fanatical excitement and activities of the holy flesh group. In a letter dated January 12, 1962, addressed to Elder Arthur White he says that those who espoused this heresy "believed that, when Christ suffered in Gethsemane, he obtained 'Holy Flesh' such as Adam had in the beginning before the fall, and they maintained that everyone who hoped to be translated would also have to obtain 'Holy Flesh'."

This position is a bit at variance with those of G. A. Roberts and S. N. Haskell, but how do we know which of these men was capable of making a definitive theological statement? 5

This reply raises two very important questions. The Burton Wade letter, and the relative weight to assign sources on the teaching of the "Holy Flesh" Movement relative to the doctrine of the Incarnation. Before considering the Burton Wade letter as a source for either the editor's statement in the Review, or the Compiler's Note in Selected Messages, bk. ii, let us note the relative theological background of each of the men who have made a statement in regard to the teaching of the Incarnation by the "Holy Flesh" advocates.

Elder S. N. Haskell was a well known writer and scholar in the Adventist church. He was cited as an example by Sister White as among those who were capable of making pronouncements of truth in 1888. 6 He was also a participant in the 1900 Muncie, Indiana camp meeting. He had discussed face to face with the leading men of the "Holy Flesh" Movement their doctrinal concepts. Within two days following his return to Battle Creek, he wrote Sister White this analysis: When we stated that we believed that Christ was born in fallen humanity, they would represent us as believing that Christ sinned, notwithstanding the fact that we would state our position so clearly that it would seem as though no one could misunderstand us.

Their point of theology in this particular respect seems to be this: They believe that Christ took Adam's nature before he fell; so He took humanity as it was in the garden of Eden, and thus humanity was holy, and this was the humanity which Christ had; ... 7

p 59 -- Elder G. A. Roberts, who later served as President of the Inter-American Division (1936 - 1941), was an eyewitness of the events that took place during the time, especially at Indianapolis. He was also

a close friend of R. S. Donnell. In June, 1923, - a lapse of twenty three years from the events, he wrote his observations. On the doctrine in question, he stated: It was taught that Jesus had holy flesh, and that those who followed Him through this garden experience would likewise have holy flesh; that the text, "A body hast thou prepared Me," showed that Christ had a specially prepared holy body. The Scripture, Hebrews 2:7-14, was used to prove that Christ was born with flesh like "my brethren" and "the church" would have after they had passed through the garden experience. 8

Burton Wade was a laymember from Denver, Indiana [Jesse Dunn, State Agent at the time, also resided there, and Dunn understood the doctrine as taught by the "Holy Flesh" advocates in harmony with Haskell and Roberts.] and who in 1900 attended the Muncie camp meeting. He was 24 years of age at that time. When he wrote the letter in 1962, he was a man of 86 years, looking back 62 years upon the experience. It should not be hard to answer the question as to which of these men was capable of making "a definitive theological question." and what weight should be assigned to the statements of each.

Next a far more important question - the relationship of the Burton Wade letter to the Compiler's Note in Selected Messages, bk. ii, p. 31. When I replied to Elder Wood's letter dated March 13, 1 stated: There is no doubt from your correspondence that you obtained your editorial comment from the Compiler's Note in Selected Messages, bk., ii, p. 31. By now appealing to Wade's letter for your support you raise a far more serious question. The book was copyrighted in 1958; the Wade letter was dated 1962. It was written because of meetings "recently" hold by Elder Arthur White at EMC. This word could not be construed to antedate the publishing date of the book. What then in the source of the Compiler's Note? Or worse yet, perish the thought, were the first two paragraphs of the Wade letter, "planted" to give substantiation to the basic error in the Compiler's Note? Unless other proof can be offered to the source

p 60 -- -of the note, this last idea needs to be investigated further, for it would then have validity. 9

Ten days later I wrote directly to Elder Arthur White for an explanation of the note. Then on April 14, 1968, 1 wrote about another matter, and reminded him that the letter written March 25, had not been answered, and that I wished verification of the note in Selected Messages, bk. ii. To these two letters, Elder D. A. Delafield, Associate Secretary of the Ellen G. White Estate, replied: I am sure that in his exceedingly busy program Elder White means to get around to provide for you a satisfactory response to your question concerning the origin of the idea that "the teachers of the Holy Flesh taught that Christ as a result of the Gethsemane experience received holy flesh." Perhaps Brother White can put his fingers upon the primary source on which this observation was based.

Knowing Elder White the way I do, I am sure that he has sound basis for the ideas as he expressed them in the Compiler's Note. The statement made by G. A. Roberts, "The Holy Flesh Fanaticism," on June 11, 1923, is I think interesting. Roberts was an eyewitness observer of the Indiana fanaticism in 1900, and knew Pastor Donnell personally and conversed with him about this whole situation. It would be inconceivable that Roberts did not learn from Donnell what Davis and others were teaching, which Donnell himself later accepted.

Roberts observes that "the essential feature of the doctrine was that when Jesus passed through the Garden of Gethsemane, He had an experience which all must have who follow Him. It was taught that Jesus had holy flesh, and that those who followed Him through this garden experience would likewise have holy flesh; that the text, 'A body hast thou prepared Me,' showed that Christ had a specially prepared holy body."

While it may seem that the above quotation would support the view that Christ had holy flesh throughout life, it could also be construed to mean "that when Jesus passed through the Garden of Gethsemane, He had an experience which all must have who follow Him. It was taught that Jesus had holy flesh, and that those who followed Him through this garden experience would likewise have holy flesh." 10

To this letter, I replied: Thank you for your letter of April 17, and the reference to the testimony of G. A. Roberts.

p 61 -- You quote for me a section of his observation of the teachings of the Holy Flesh advocates in relationship to the Gethsemane experience, and conclude that this could be interpreted to mean what Elder White wrote in the Compiler's Note as found in Selected Messages, bk. ii, p. 31.

I would grant this, except that in not all that G. A. Roberts wrote. The very next sentence following the ones quoted make the suggested conclusion an absolute impossibility. I shall requote for you, your quotes, and place the next sentence in italics. Here are the G. A. Roberts comments in full: The essential feature of the doctrine was that when Jesus passed through the Garden of Gethsemane, He had an experience which all must have who follow Him. It was taught that Jesus had holy flesh, and that those who followed Him through the garden experience would likewise have holy flesh; that the text, "A body hast thou prepared Me," showed that Christ had a specially prepared holy body. The Scripture,

Hebrews 2:7-14, was used to prove that Christ was born with flesh like "my brethren" and "the church" would have after they had passed through the garden experience.

The full context of the Roberts statement coincides perfectly with the Haskell report of the Indiana experience which indicates that the Holy Flesh men taught that Jesus accepted the nature of Adam before the fall. 11

Finally, after receiving no further reply, I decided to write up the whole incident in a thought paper for "Watchman, What of the Night?", and title it "A Credibility Gap". Before publishing the same, I sent a copy to Elder Arthur White, and asked for his comments. To this, I received a five page reply. He said in part: I wrote the note. At the time I wrote it I believed that it correctly represented the facts. As it was submitted to the Board of Trustees of the Ellen G. White Estate for their consideration it was assumed by the Board that the facts had been correctly presented. Busy as the men are they could hardly be expected to do research on this point in a little known and seemingly not too important area. When the editor of the Review and Herald ten years later had occasion to just mention the Holy Flesh Movement, he referred to this note and assumed that it correctly presented the facts in the case.

If the facts are not correctly presented, I am responsible, and if I erred, I did so ignorantly. Taking into account the use to which the information was to be put it was a matter of little importance...

p 62 -- Except as there may be lessons in the experience for us today, it is not a matter of great interest or consequence to the church now...

As I prepared this note, I turned to the G. A. Roberts statement in our document files, and accepted my understanding of his explanation of the basis for the movement...

Now as I prepared the note it seemed clear to me that the Roberts' statement taught that Jesus, when He passed through the garden "had an experience." This experience is not defined. It was taught that "those who followed Him through this garden experience would likewise have holy flesh." Without thorough, painstaking research (which seemed uncalled for in this case) in an attempt to prepare a brief historical note, I concluded from the Roberts presentation that if the followers of Jesus gained holy flesh by passing through the garden experience, and Jesus Himself "had an experience in the garden all must

have, who follow Him," did not the garden experience give Jesus the type of holy flesh that was being discussed? If this was not so, what was the "experience" Jesus had in the Garden? At the time I prepared the note, that which followed in the Roberts statement appeared to be confusing and irrelevant. I did not have before me in a way to make any impression, the Haskell statement in our letter file which you later studied very carefully and which is now in our Document File.

I can almost see you lifting your pen to write: "If the secretary of the White Estate exercises so little care in assembling data as this present situation seems to illustrate, how are we to know that in which we can place dependence?"...

Now back to the matter in question. From the full Roberts statement which I have just reread I am not sure just what he attempted to convey as to what the garden experience did for Christ. Elder Haskell saw it differently than I have reported, and from your research you feel that the Haskell position is the more accurate one. The Wade testimony is interesting. I felt it was corroborative. It is not conclusive because of the time lapse, yet he is not too far from what the Roberts statement seemed on the surface to say. one is led to say, "So what?"

As far as I am concerned, I shall restudy the whole matter, as I can find time to do so, and if I am convinced that the note does not correctly represent the facts, I shall request the Board of Trustees of the Ellen G. White Estate to approve a rewording which we will ask the publishers to place in the next printing of the book. 12

So what? The explanatory paragraph remains unchanged though Selected Messages, bk. ii, has been reprinted since this letter was written by Elder White.

p 63 -- There can be no doubt that the Compiler's Note was based primarily on a misreading of the Roberts statement. But this leaves the Wade letter still unexplained. A comparison between the Note in Selected Messages, bk. ii, and the Wade letter is most interesting: Compiler's Note

Wade Letter

Claiming that when Christ passed through the agony of Gethsemane He obtained holy flesh such as Adam possessed before his fall, this theory alleged that those who follow the Saviour must also acquire the same state of physical sinlessness as an essential preparation for translation. (1957) They believed

that, when Christ suffered in Gethsemane, He obtained "Holy Flesh" such as Adam had in the beginning before the fall, and they maintained that everyone who hoped to be translated would also have to obtain "Holy Flesh" (1962)

The question still remains - Did Brother Wade copy the Compiler's Note with variations of sentence structure and wording, or was the Wade letter dictated to substantiate the Compiler's Note? Why is the matter of any importance anyway? Why can't we say - "So what?" - and forget the whole affair? Because of what was taking place in our ranks at the time the first edition of Selected Messages, bk. ii, was published. We can only conjecture what might have been if the Compiler's Note had been written in harmony with the testimony of S. N. Haskell and G. A. Roberts rightly read. It was in 1956-1957, that the editor of the Ministry, R. Allan Anderson, wrote his editorials on the humanity of Christ which stated the same position that Haskell and Roberts said the "Holy Flesh" men taught. 13 Then in 1957, the same basic doctrine was similarly stated in the book, Questions on Doctrine. If the Compiler's Note had been in accord with the source material - even the Roberts letter correctly read - would this not have dealt a severe blow to the deviation from basic Adventist doctrine that was developing in the church which finally culminated in the book, Movement

p 64 -- of Destiny? But now it is only what might have been! "So what?"

- 1 Kenneth H. Wood, Review and Herald, January 25, 1968, p. 12
- 2 William H. Grotheer, Letter to Kenneth H. Wood dated at Florence, Mississippi, January 29, 1968.
- 3 Kenneth H. Wood, Letter to William H. Grotheer dated at Takoma Park Washington D. C., February 14, 1968.
- 4 William H. Grotheer, Letter to Kenneth H. Wood dated at Florence, Mississippi, February 18, 1968.
- 5 Kenneth H. Wood, Letter to William H. Grotheer dated at Takoma Park Washington D. C., March 13, 1968.
- 6 Ellen G. White, Ms. 15, 1888 See Through Crisis To Victory, p. 301.
- 7 S. N. Haskell, Letter to Ellen G. White dated at Battle Creek, Michigan, September 25, 1900 (2), pp. 1-2.
- 8 G. A. Roberts, "The Holy Flesh Fanaticism", Document File #190.

- 9 William H. Grotheer, Letter to Kenneth H. Wood dated at Florence, Mississippi, March 15, 1968.
- 10 D. A. Delafield, Letter to William H. Grotheer dated at Takoma Park, Washington D. C., April 17, 1968.
- 11 William H. Grotheer, Letter to D. A. Delafield dated at Florence, Mississippi, April 23, 1968.
- 12 Arthur L. White, Letter to William H. Grotheer dated at Takoma Park, Washington D. C., December 13, 1968.
- 13 See page 33.

p 65 -- APPENDIX - D-- The Letter In Question --

C O P Y

515 College Avenue

Berrien Springs, Michigan

January 12, 1962

Elder Arthur White

General Conference of S. D. A.

Takoma Park, Washington 12, D. C.

Dear Brother White:

While you were here at Emmanuel Missionary College recently, giving your talks on the Spirit of Prophecy, you referred to the fanatical movement which took place in Indiana, known as the "Doctrine of Holy Flesh." This movement reached its height in 1900 when the conference president and most of the workers were carried away by this fanatical teaching.

They believed that, when Christ suffered in Gethsemane, he obtained "Holy Flesh" such as Adam had in the beginning before the fall, and they maintained that everyone who hoped to be translated would also have to obtain "Holy Flesh. "

I thought you would be interested to know that I attended the camp meeting in September of 1900, which was held at Muncie, where I witnessed first-hand the fanatical excitement and activities of these people. There were numerous groups of people scattered all over the campground engaged in arguing and, when these fanatics conducted the services in the large pavilion, they worked themselves up to a high pitch of excitement by the use of musical instruments, such as: trumpets, flutes, stringed instruments, tambourines, an organ, and a big bass drum. They shouted and sang their lively songs with the aid of musical instruments until they became really hysterical. Many times I saw them, after these morning meetings, as they came to the dining tent fairly shaking as though they had palsy.

Elders S. N. Haskell and A. J. Breed were at the camp meeting to meet this fanaticism, and when they went onto the platform to conduct services, they announced the songs from Hymns and Tunes, and they preached the real Adventist message. Members of the fanatical group who were present at these services plainly showed their disapproval and almost sneared at times.

This fanaticism spread throughout the conference and caused division in many of the churches, but there were some who stood firm and were not carried away with the false doctrine. Our little home church at Denver stood firm and not one of its members was carried away with this deception.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed)

Burton Wade

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