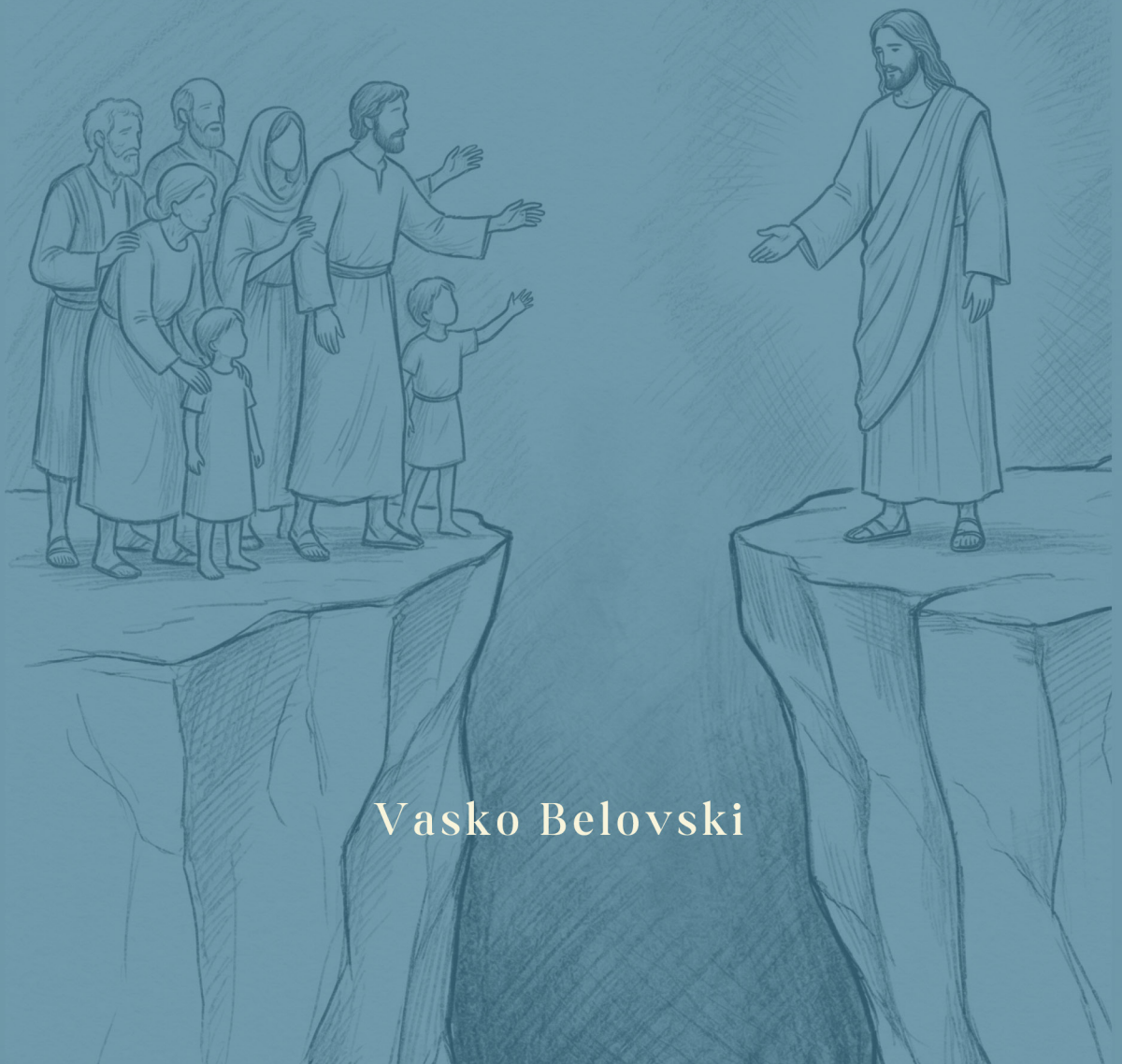
HOLY FLESH

The Christological Error That Shook Adventism



Vasko Belovski

PREFACE

We are living in the closing scenes of *The Great Controversy*. In recent years, my focus has been an exhaustive study of the "Third Angel's Message in Verity"—the message of righteousness by faith as revealed in the life and humanity of Jesus Christ. My journey did not begin with historical research, but with the plain testimony of the Word of God. I became deeply convicted that Scripture presents a Saviour who truly took our fallen inheritance—One who was made "in all things" like His brethren to conquer sin in the very territory where we must overcome.

It was after this biblical conviction took hold that I revisited our movement's history and discovered that the very battle over Christ's humanity I was seeing in modern theology had already been fiercely contested over a century ago in what was known as the Holy Flesh movement. As I compared modern trends with the arguments advanced in Indiana between 1898 and 1901, I saw the identical arguments, the same misapplied verses, and the same "logic of separation" that nearly derailed our church over a century ago. It became clear to me that the enemy has no new tricks; he is simply recycling the same masterpiece of deception that Ellen White warned would reappear just before the close of probation. He desires to create a chasm between the Saviour and the race He came to redeem.

In these pages, I present the writings of R. S. Donnell alongside the decisive biblical responses of Stephen Haskell, W. C. Wilcox, E. J. Waggoner, and A. T. Jones. These men are not presented as authorities to replace Scripture, but as historical witnesses who defended what the Bible plainly teaches. Their testimony proves that this issue is not new—and that heaven has already provided clear light to expose the danger. We have a Saviour, a personal Saviour who understands every struggle of our soul, every temptation, every trial.

This work is more than a historical curiosity; it is a call to return to the Word. Many sincere believers today are unknowingly being led toward a framework that separates Christ from our inheritance. If Christ did not truly enter our condition, then the practical power of His victory becomes theoretical rather than transformative.

Why should you read this book? Because your understanding of Christ's humanity shapes your understanding of salvation itself. If we accept a Saviour "shielded" from our inheritance, we weaken the foundation of overcoming faith but if we behold Him as Scripture reveals Him—made of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh—then His victory becomes our absolute assurance.

We are nearing the close of human probation. My prayer is that this study helps remove every subtle distortion and allows the real Jesus—the One who conquered sin in our very nature—to be formed within you, the hope of glory.

— Vasko Belovski

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SECTION 1

When Indiana Shook: The Rise of the Holy Flesh Movement (1898–1901)

The year 1900 marked a spiritual crossroads for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In the wake of the 1888 Minneapolis Conference, a deep, collective hunger for the "Loud Cry" and the "Latter Rain" pervaded the ranks. Believers were waiting for a message that would finally finish the work and bring Jesus back. It was into this atmosphere of intense expectancy that a fire began to spread through the state of Indiana—a movement claiming to hold the key to total victory over sin for the final generation. This movement did not begin as an overt rejection of Adventism but as an intense, seemingly righteous call to total holiness. It found its first major voice in A. F. Ballenger, who preached with a fervor that gripped his listeners, insisting that the time for the sealing of God had arrived. During an 1898 camp meeting, Ballenger declared:

> "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." (A. F. Ballenger, "Camp Meeting Notes," *RH*, October 18, 1898, p. 671).

This call to put an end to sin in thought, word, and action sounded like the very essence of the Third Angel's Message. However, as this message moved into Indiana, it was picked up and amplified by an evangelist named S. S. Davis, who began referring to it as the "cleansing message." The movement quickly moved from the pews to the highest levels of local leadership. Robert S. Donnell, the President of the Indiana Conference, was initially suspicious of the excitement Davis was stirring up and summoned him to his office to bring him back into line with established Bible doctrine. But the meeting did not go as planned; by the time it ended, the President himself had been "converted" to the new teaching. Instead of quenching the fire, he became its chief promoter. Within a short time, nearly every minister in the Indiana Conference had embraced the "Holy Flesh" doctrine, believing they were the vanguard of the final generation who had finally discovered how to receive the unfallen nature of Adam.

The theology of the movement was built upon a fundamental separation between the nature of Christ and the nature of those He came to save. This departure from the 1888 message of Christ in fallen humanity was

noted by Stephen Haskell during his investigation of the movement. In a letter to Ellen White, Haskell captured the essence of this theological divide:

> "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 this humanity was holy, and this was 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." (S. N. Haskell, letter to Ellen White, Sept. 25, 1900).

This theological shift was accompanied by a frantic, emotional character that mirrored the methods of the Salvation Army rather than the solemnity of the Advent message. The "Holy Flesh" experience was sought through what they termed the "Garden Experience"—an ordeal involving shouting, dancing, and the use of musical instruments like big drums, tambourines, and fiddles. In these services, proponents would preach and shout until individuals fell unconscious from their seats. These prostrate forms were then dragged to the rostrum where others would pray and sing over them until they revived, at which point they were counted among the faithful who had "passed through the Garden" and received holy flesh.

When news of these developments reached Ellen White and the General Conference leadership, the response was swift and uncompromising. Stephen Haskell's report confirmed that this was a "different Gospel." Ellen White received instruction that the movement was a masterpiece of deception designed to lead souls astray. In a letter to the brethren in Indiana, she provided a definitive rebuke:

> "I was shown that through this experience and the doctrines taught, the enemy has been working to lead souls astray." (Ms. 39, 1907).

She further emphasized the total lack of truth in the movement's theology, stating:

> "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." (G. A. Roberts, *The Holy Fanaticism*, EGW Estate, Document File #190).

The timing of this apostasy was perhaps its most significant feature. Ellen White revealed that the events in Indiana were a sign of the times, stating that the Lord had shown her these things would take place "just before the close of probation." By creating a version of Jesus that was fundamentally separated from the fallen race, the movement was being led by the spirit of antichrist. The tragedy of the Holy Flesh movement was that it replaced the Savior who can actually help humanity overcome sin with a mythological figure who cannot, creating a "gulf" between the sinner and the Redeemer.

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SECTION 2

What Was "Holy Flesh"? The Doctrine Defined

To grasp the gravity of the crisis that shook the Indiana Conference, we must define the specific theological "fabric" that Ellen White declared did not contain a single thread of truth. The movement was not merely a local outburst of emotionalism; it was built upon a precise, alternative definition of human nature and a specific theory of how a person becomes ready for translation.

At the center of their message was the claim that before the close of probation, a believer must undergo a spiritual transformation resulting in "holy flesh." This was not the biblical promise of a clean heart or a surrendered will, but a metaphysical change where the fallen nature of Adam was believed to be entirely eradicated. Proponents alleged that this state of physical sinlessness was an essential preparation for translation, enabling the believer to stand without a mediator. They taught that once his "cleansing" occurred, the individual would possess the same nature Adam had before his fall, meaning they would no longer face any internal pull or tendency toward sin.

This claim to "holy flesh" was inextricably linked to their understanding of Christ's humanity. If having a fallen nature with sinful tendencies made a person a "sinner" by birth—as the Indiana brethren believed—then it followed that Jesus, to be a sinless Savior, could not have partaken of that same nature. They argued that Christ took human nature only in its physical deterioration—such as hunger and weariness—but that He was entirely exempt from the spiritual and moral inheritance of the fallen race. As R. S. Donnell explained:

> "The body of Christ was a body in which God was incarnate, and as God and Satan cannot dwell together, the body of Christ must have been a body from which even every tendency to sin must have been wholly eradicated." (R. S. Donnell, *What I Taught in Indiana,* Article 2)

By removing these inherited tendencies from Christ, the Holy Flesh movement effectively placed the Savior in a different category of existence than the people He came to save. They taught that Jesus was born "sanctified"—or born in a "born again" state—which meant He did not have the same battle against the flesh that common humanity faces.

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This led to their third major pillar: the teaching that Christ was born exactly where Adam stood before the fall. They used Hebrews 10:5—"A body hast Thou prepared Me"—to argue that God had "manufactured" a special, biological exception for Jesus that bypassed the law of heredity. In their view, Jesus did not possess the "sarx" (sinful flesh) of the seed of Abraham, but rather a specially prepared, holy body that was free from any "taint of sin." R. S. Donnell summarized this position clearly:

> "Now, Christ stood where Adam stood, and Adam stood there without a taint of sin. So Christ must have stood where Adam stood before his fall—that is, without a taint of sin." (R. S. Donnell, *What I Taught in Indiana*, Article 1).

By claiming Jesus took the unfallen nature of Adam, the Indiana brethren were creating a "gulf" between the Savior and the sinner. If Christ's victory was won in a nature that lacked the pulls and liabilities of our fallen inheritance, then His victory was won in a controlled environment and could not serve as a practical example for those struggling in the trenches of sinful flesh.

This specific view of a "prepared body" led the Indiana brethren to their next logical conclusion: a total denial of inherited sinful tendencies within Christ. To them, the "likeness of sinful flesh" was merely a physical mask—a deteriorated outer shell that did not include the internal, hereditary leanings toward evil that characterize the rest of the human race. They argued that for Christ to be a perfect offering, He had to be shielded from the very "blaze" of inherited passions that every other child of Adam feels. Donnell expressed this conviction by stating:

> "I don't think anyone would say that He has taken sin and its tendencies there. No; he took human nature in that body that was prepared for Him (and He will take the same in each one of our bodies, if we will allow them to become prepared for His habitation), and in that body, the `likeness of sinful flesh,' He endured all the sufferings of humanity, met and overcame every temptation that we have to meet, and so condemned sin in the flesh." (R. S. Donnell, *What I Taught in Indiana*, Article 3).

This denial of internal tendencies was not just about Christ; it was the blueprint for what they believed must happen to every believer. They claimed that through their "cleansing message," a person's nature would

be miraculously transformed so that the "warfare with the flesh" would essentially cease. They taught that once a believer received "holy flesh," their temptations would shift from being internal struggles to being exclusively external. In their view, if a person still felt a pull toward evil from within, it was proof that their nature had not yet been "eradicated" or "cleansed."

Donnell further argued that this state of being was necessary because a person can only do righteous acts if "every tendency to sin" is gone. He believed that the 144,000 must reach a point where they are so fundamentally changed that, like their version of Christ, they cannot even be "tempted to sin" from within. He reasoned:

> "The fact that Christ was tempted upon all points as we are tempted, and yet without sin, should be sufficient evidence in itself to prove that there was not even the tendency to sin in Him." (R. S. Donnell, *What I Taught in Indiana,* Article 3).

By teaching that victory required the eradication of the fallen nature rather than the subduing of that nature through faith, the Holy Flesh movement promised a state where the struggle against the "carnal mind" was effectively over. They were looking for a shortcut to perfection that bypassed the lifelong work of sanctification. In doing so, they created a "Category Shift" in theology: holiness was no longer seen as a character formed through choice and the consent of the will, but as a metaphysical status achieved through a mysterious "flesh transplant."

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SECTION 3

A Familiar Echo: Parallels With the Immaculate Conception

When E. J. Waggoner stood before the General Conference in 1901 to address the crisis in Indiana, he did not merely call it "fanaticism." Instead, he leveled a staggering charge, identifying the theological foundation of the Holy Flesh movement as a "bridge" back to Rome. Waggoner pointed out that the idea of Christ possessing a nature different from ours—a "sinless flesh" preserved from inherited tendencies—necessarily involved the Roman Catholic dogma of the Immaculate Conception. He warned the delegates:

> "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?... Suppose we start with the idea for a moment that Jesus was so separate from us, that is, so different from us that he did not have in his flesh anything to contend with. It was sinless flesh. Then, of course, you see how the Roman Catholic dogma of the immaculate conception necessarily follows." (E. J. Waggoner, *GCB* April 22, 1901, page 404.8).

The parallel is not merely superficial; it is a shared logical necessity based on a specific, non-biblical view of sin. In Roman Catholic theology, sin is viewed through the lens of Augustine of Hippo as a biological inheritance—a "stain" passed down through the very nature of humanity. Because Rome teaches that our human nature ***is*** sin, a massive theological problem arises: if Jesus is born of a human mother, how can He be a sinless Savior?

This creates a dangerous partial truth. While it is biblically accurate that we receive a biological inheritance of sinful flesh—the ***sarx***—with all its natural predispositions and liabilities toward wrongdoing, this inheritance is not in and of itself sin. Sin is not a substance found in the blood or a genetic "stain" passed down through the generations; rather, it is a choice. The Roman Catholic framework, however, mislabels our fallen ***condition*** as ***guilt***.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines this "Original Sin" as a state that involves the entire human race:

> "How did the sin of Adam become the sin of all his descendants? The whole human race is in Adam 'as one body of one man'. By this 'unity of the human race' all men are implicated in Adam's sin, as all

> are implicated in Christ's justice. Still, the transmission of original sin is a mystery that we cannot fully understand. But we do know by Revelation that Adam had received original holiness and justice not for himself alone, but for all human nature. By yielding to the tempter, Adam and Eve committed a personal sin, but this sin affected the human nature that they would then transmit in a fallen state. It is a sin which will be transmitted by propagation to all mankind, that is, by the transmission of a human nature deprived of original holiness and justice. And that is why original sin is called 'sin' only in an analogical sense: it is a sin 'contracted' and not 'committed' - **a state and not an act**." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 404).

According to this Papal theology, sin is twofold: it is both the individual act of transgression and a state of being inherited at birth. Yet, when we search the Scriptures, we find not a single verse stating that sin is a "state." The Bible's only definition is clear: "Sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). By redefining the commandments, the Papacy—rightly called the "Man of Sin"—has redefined what sin is, substituting God's standard with a mystery that justifies the separation of Christ from humanity.

The 1888 messengers were uncompromising on this point. They understood that if sin is a state of being inherited through the flesh, then Christ must have been born with different flesh to remain holy. But if He was born with different flesh, He could not be our Example or our near-of-kin Redeemer. Ellen White repeatedly affirmed the biblical definition:

> "What is sin? The only definition of sin is that it is the transgression of the law." (Ellen White, 1888 128.3).

> "Sin is an intruder... It is mysterious, unaccountable... Our only definition of sin is that given in the Word of God; it is 'the transgression of the law;'" (Ellen White, *GC88* 492.2).

She further corrected the idea that sin is an inescapable state of nature by placing the responsibility on the individual's will:

> "It is not in the power of Satan to force anyone to sin. Sin is the sinner's individual act. Before sin exists in the heart, the consent of the will must be given, and as soon as it is given, sin is triumphant, and hell rejoices." (Ellen White, *ST* December 18, 1893, par. 10).

E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones stood firmly on this ground, teaching that the

Gospel is the power of God to save us ***from*** the transgression of the law. They argued that if the law could be updated or if sin were merely a state of nature that Christ avoided through a "special birth," then the death of Christ was unnecessary. A. T. Jones emphasized that while we are in "subjection to sin," this sin is itself defined as "lawlessness" or transgression—an act of the mind and life.

The Papacy's solution to the problem of a "sinful state" was the decree ***Ineffabilis Deus***, issued by Pope Pius IX in 1854, which declared:

> "The most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instance of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin." *(Ineffabilis Deus,* 1854).

The Holy Flesh movement adopted this identical principle. While they did not use the phrase "Immaculate Conception," they argued that for Christ to be an "acceptable sacrifice," He could not possess the "tainted" body of humanity already on earth. They claimed that a special "body had to be made for the occasion" where the carnal mind and enmity were "left out." S. S. Davis, one of the movement's instigators, even admitted that children are born inclined to evil "unless preserved from the law of heredity in conception by the power of the Holy Ghost" (S. S. Davis, letter to Ira J. Hankins, March 15, 1903).

Both systems—the theology of Indiana and the theology of the Vatican—attempt to protect Christ's purity by distancing Him from human heritage. They both view fallen nature as sin itself, and therefore must remove Christ from that nature to keep Him sinless. But the true Gospel offers a much more powerful hope: it teaches that Christ condemned sin ***in*** our territory, in our very flesh, proving that the power of the Father is stronger than the inheritance of thousands of years of sin.

We must settle whether we are out of Rome or not. To accept a definition of sin as a "state of nature" is to accept the logic that necessitates a "separated Christ." But the Bible tells us that Christ "himself likewise took part of the same" flesh and blood as the children, so that He could truly be our Brother and our Savior.

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SECTION 4

Hebrews 2: Who Are His Brethren?

In the study of the Incarnation, no passage of Scripture provides a more intimate look at the nearness of the Savior than Hebrews chapter 2. It is here that the Apostle Paul declares the staggering truth that Jesus "is not ashamed to call them brethren." Yet, during the Holy Flesh crisis, this very bridge of connection was turned into a wall of separation. The leaders in Indiana did not see Hebrews 2 as proof that Christ had entered the common, fallen experience of the human race; instead, they argued that Christ's "brethren" belonged to an exclusive, sinless category of existence.

The Holy Flesh movement built its case on a restrictive reading of Hebrews 2:11, which says, "For both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one." To R. S. Donnell and his associates, this "oneness" was not a oneness of nature with a fallen race, but a oneness of status between a holy Savior and a "cleansed" people. They argued that Jesus was only a brother to those who had already achieved a state of physical perfection. R. S. Donnell explained:

> "Now, Christ stood where Adam stood, and Adam stood there without a taint of sin. So Christ must have stood where Adam stood before his fall—that is, without a taint of sin. This must be so, for Paul continues the subject, and in verse 11 he says: 'For both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified (not those He is going to sanctify, but they who are sanctified) are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.'" (R. S. Donnell, *What I Taught in Indiana,* Article 1).

By this logic, the Holy Flesh proponents claimed that the "flesh and blood" mentioned in Hebrews 2:14 was not the common inheritance of the sons of Adam, but a special, "sanctified" flesh possessed only by those who had "passed through the Garden." They believed that to be "one" with Christ, a person had to first be born again into a different biological state. Donnell continued this line of reasoning:

> "Notice that it is the sanctified ones who He is not ashamed to call brethren. Further, it is the sanctified ones of whose flesh He partakes. 'Forasmuch, then, as the children (or brethren, sanctified ones) are partakers of flesh and blood. He also Himself likewise (just as the sanctified ones are partakers) took part of the same; that through

> death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.' Heb. 2:14." (R. S. Donnell, *What I Taught in Indiana*, Article 1).
>
> "In taking up this subject we will begin just where we left off in our last article. In that, when we closed we were considering the fact that Christ Himself took part of flesh and blood, just as the children did. That is, He took part of the same flesh that the children possessed. We found, also, that the children are the sanctified ones. Now, the sanctified ones are surely those upon whom the truth of God and the power of His Holy Spirit has wrought—the ones who are new creatures in Christ Jesus, those who have been created unto good works the same which God hath before ordained that they should walk in. (See Eph. 2:10.)" (R. S. Donnell, *What I Taught in Indiana*, Art. 2).

This interpretation effectively removed Jesus from the family of Adam and placed Him in a different category altogether. To the Indiana brethren, Jesus was born "sanctified"—an exception to the human race who did not possess the "sarx" or the hereditary tendencies toward sin that define fallen humanity. They taught that His nearness was restricted only to those who had undergone a metaphysical "flesh transplant."

The 1888 messengers, however, saw this as the ultimate denial of the Gospel. They understood that if Jesus were only the brother of the "perfect," He could not be the Savior of the "lost." E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones insisted that Hebrews 2 be allowed to speak in its plain, universal force. Waggoner argued that Christ's nearness extended to the entire human web, stating:

> "Jesus Christ is not ashamed of His poor relations. "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of One; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." Someone says, "Ah, but He doesn't call any people brethren, except those who are sanctified." Stop and consider the text. The proof that He is not ashamed to call them brethren is found in His declaration: "I will declare Thy name unto My brethren." Now it is evident that there would be no need to declare the name of God to those who knew it; but those who do not know it are heathen. Thus the heathen are regarded by Christ as His brethren. Again, think of the time when the Son must first have made this declaration. It must have been when He was yet "in the form of God;" for He came to earth for no other purpose than to declare God to men. So Jesus in heaven, the brightness of the

> Father's glory, and receiving the adoration of the angels, looked down to earth and saw the children of men doomed to death in their ignorance of God, and said to the Father, "I will declare Thy name unto My brethren." Thus He set the pattern for all missionary work. "Not to any class is Christ's love restricted. **He identifies Himself with every child of humanity**. That we might become members of the heavenly family, He became a member of the earthly family. He is the Son of man, and thus **a Brother to every son and daughter of Adam**. His followers are not to feel themselves detached from the perishing world around them. They are a part of the great web of humanity, and heaven looks upon them as brothers to sinners as well as to saints." The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is the One "of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Eph. iii. 14, 15. (E. J. Waggoner, *PTUK* 101.6, February 12, 1903)

A. T. Jones went further, showing that Christ's complete identification with the human family was so total that no "gulf" of nature could exist between Him and the sinner. He wrote:

> "He is so near to us that he is actually one of us. For so it is written: "Both he which sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one." Hebrews 2:11. And he and we being one, he being one with mankind, it is impossible to have a mediator between him and men, because he and mankind are one and "a mediator is not a mediator of one." Galatians 3:20. And as certainly as Jesus Christ is one with mankind and "a mediator is not a mediator of one," so certainly this truth at once annihilates the "intercessions" of all the Catholic saints in the calendar, even though they were all alive and in heaven instead of being all dead. He is so near to us that there is no room for anybody and much less for from one to eleven hundred and fifty people to come between him and us." (A. T. Jones, *The Immaculate Conception* ICM 1.3, 1894)

The theological tension was clear: Was Christ made like Adam ***before*** the fall, as the Holy Flesh movement claimed, or was He made like the "seed of Abraham" ***after*** 4,000 years of both physical and moral degeneration? The 1888 message loudly proclaimed that Jesus did not stand adjacent to our condition but within it. M. C. Wilcox, writing in the midst of the Indiana crisis, provided a definitive answer to this question:

> "God prepared Him that body in which He would 'in all things' be 'like unto His brethren,' of 'the seed of Abraham,' partaker 'of flesh and blood.' Heb. 2:14-17. Have others inherited corrupt tendencies in the flesh?—So did He. Were the ancestors of others covetous, grasping, adulterous, given to pleasure?—So were His. He was made like us, that He might make us like Himself." (M. C. Wilcox, *Signs of the Times*, January 3, 1900).

Ellen White's testimony harmonized perfectly with this view, emphasizing that Christ's victory was won on our ground, in our very nature. She rejected the idea of a "shielded" or "prepared" mind that was immune to the pulls of the flesh, stating:

> "He was made like unto his brethren, with the same susceptibilities, mental and physical. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin; and he knows how to succor those who are tempted." (Ellen White, *RH*, February 10, 1885 par. 7).

The use of the word **susceptibilities** is profound, as it signifies a **natural capacity to be** reachable or open to influence. In the language of the 1888 messengers and the common thesaurus of that era, the term is synonymous with **predispositions, liabilities, propensities,** and **inclinations**. By stating that Christ possessed the same susceptibilities, both "**mental and physical**," Ellen White was stripping away the Holy Flesh idea that Jesus had a "shielded" mind or a specially "manufactured" nature. To have a ***physical*** susceptibility meant He was liable to hunger, weariness, and pain; but to have a ***mental*** susceptibility meant He was born with a nature that could feel the actual "pull" of the flesh from within. This demonstrates that Christ did not merely put on a deteriorated physical "mask" while keeping a pre-fall mind; rather, He took upon Himself the total biological and mental inheritance of the fallen race—including those internal tendencies toward sin that every other child of Adam must contend with. He was not merely a spectator to our struggles; He was a participant in them, possessing the same "liabilities" so that His victory could be a genuine victory for us.

The Holy Flesh movement promised victory by changing human ***nature***. The 1888 message promised victory by changing the ***character*** through the subduing of that nature by faith. By claiming Christ was only the brother of the "sanctified," the Indiana brethren left the sinner without a Leader

who understood the struggle from the inside. But the true Gospel offers a "Brother" who took our very inheritance of fallen flesh, yet through constant dependence on the Father, proved that even the weakest member of the human family can overcome as Christ overcame.

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SECTION 5

A Body Prepared: What Did God Prepare?

The Holy Flesh movement did not merely seek a "clean heart"; it sought a "different nature," and to justify this, its leaders turned to the sanctuary of the mind and the mystery of the Incarnation. Their solution to the "problem" of a sinless Savior in a fallen world was to retreat from the physical body into a theory that separated Christ's mental mechanism from our own. At the heart of this deception was a radical misinterpretation of Hebrews 10:5: "A body hast Thou prepared Me." To R. S. Donnell and S. S. Davis, these words were not a prophecy of Christ's humble identification with humanity, but a description of a divine "manufacturing" process where God created a biological exception for Jesus. They argued that because all human bodies are "unfitted" by sin and guilt, Christ could not have entered a body already on earth; instead, He required a specially prepared vessel where the carnal mind—the very enmity against God—was simply left out.

R. S. Donnell explicitly detailed this position, claiming that while Christ's body might have looked deteriorated on the outside, its internal spiritual nature was a specially created "holy thing." He wrote:

> "In making this body, that which unfitted all other bodies (enmity against God, the carnal mind) was left out." (R. S. Donnell, *What I Taught in Indiana*, Article 3).
>
> "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... 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." (R. S. Donnell, "*The Nature of Christ and Man*").

By teaching that the "carnal mind" was a biological defect that God surgically removed from Jesus, the Indiana brethren were creating a Savior who was fundamentally shielded from the inherited liabilities of the fallen race. They essentially claimed that Jesus was an exception to the human family, possessed of a nature that lacked the "pull" of the flesh from within. If Jesus did not possess the same mental and spiritual inheritance as the "seed of Abraham," then His victory was won in a controlled environment where the "enemy" inside had been silenced before

the struggle began.

This fallacy collapses when compared to the 1888 message and the true biblical meaning of the word ***sarx*** (flesh). In Romans 8, Paul reveals that while we are all born with the ***sarx***—the fallen nature with its natural predispositions—condemnation does not come from ***possessing*** that nature, but from ***minding*** it. The "carnal mind" is not a biological inheritance one is born with; it is a choice made when the will consents to the flesh. Jesus was born with the same sinful ***sarx*** as we are, yet He never once "minded" the things of the flesh. M. C. Wilcox, writing in 1900 to expose this very error, provided a definitive correction:

> "That body was His body of sinful flesh, taken in the womb of His virgin mother, and having within itself all the propensities to sin that the flesh of all the sons of Adam have. He was not only made 'in the likeness of sinful flesh' (Rom. 8:3), but He bore the sinful flesh... God prepared Him that body in which He would 'in all things' be 'like unto His brethren,' of 'the seed of Abraham,' partaker 'of flesh and blood.'" (M. C. Wilcox, *Signs of the Times*, January 3, 1900).

The true "prepared body" was not a sinless exception; it was the "likeness of sinful flesh" (Romans 8:3)—a nature that partook of the great law of heredity and every liability we face. Galatians 4:4 emphasizes this by stating He was "made of a woman," which, as the messengers of 1888 taught, meant He was subject to all the conditions to which other children are subject. By claiming that the sinful flesh was "left out" of Jesus, the Indiana brethren were unknowingly teaching a form of Docetism, creating a mythological demigod who could not truly serve as our Example or succor us in our temptations.

The contrast between the Holy Flesh position and the 1888 Message can be summarized as follows:

The Holy Flesh Position	The 1888 Message Position
• **Inherited Nature:** Christ had no inherited sinful tendencies.	• **Inherited Nature:** Christ took our fallen nature with all its liabilities, yet remained sinless.
• **Nature of Temptation:** Temptation was exclusively external; the inner "pull" was eradicated.	• **Nature of Temptation:** Temptation was real and an internal struggle; He felt the "blaze" of the flesh.

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• Inherited Propensities:	• Inherited Propensities:
No inherited propensities; born with an unfallen mind.	Assumed fallen flesh with its inherited tendencies, subduing them by faith.

By separating the "mind" of Christ from the "mind" of man, the Holy Flesh movement was telling the struggling sinner, "Jesus could do it because He had a holy mind by birth. You can't do it until your nature is changed." This is the ultimate "gulf." But the Gospel of the "Complete Savior" tells us that we do not need a flesh transplant to be holy. We need a will surrender to the Christ who already conquered sin in our very territory, proving that the power of God can maintain spotless purity even in the midst of sinful flesh.

In the original Greek of Romans 8, the concept of being "carnally minded" ***(phronēma tēs sarkos)*** refers not to a biological organ we are born with, but to the ***direction*** and ***setting*** of the mind. It is a choice before it is a condition. E. J. Waggoner, in his work *Waggoner on Romans*, clarified this distinction:

> "The flesh serves the law of sin... But Christ came in the same flesh, to show the power of the Spirit over the flesh... "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." The flesh never becomes converted. It is enmity against God; and that enmity consists in opposition to his law. Therefore, whoever opposes the law of God is fighting against him. But Christ is our Peace, and he came preaching peace... In his own flesh he abolishes the enmity, so that all who are crucified with him are at peace with God; that is, they are subject to his law, which is in their hearts." (E. J. Waggoner, *Waggoner on Romans,* p.127)

Waggoner explains that the "enmity" belongs to the flesh itself, but it only becomes a active or carnally minded when the individual allows the flesh to rule. Christ took the same flesh in which this enmity resides, yet because He never allowed that flesh to rule, the enmity was "abolished" in His life through victory, not by a special biological "surgery" at birth.

It is only because of that victory, that we ourselves can attain to victory over our flesh as well.

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SECTION 6

Born Condemned and Separated From God? A Catholic Framework

We now come to the pivotal question: Are we born condemned because of Adam's sin, or do we merely inherit the weakened condition of his fall? The Holy Flesh movement, mimicking Roman Catholic theology, argued that humanity is born "separated from God" and under the control of Satan. They claimed that the nature we receive at birth ***is*** sin, making even infants "sinners" in need of a Savior because of their state.

The true biblical position, upheld by the 1888 messengers, distinguishes between **inherited weakness** and **personal transgression**. Waggoner explicitly rejected the idea of being born condemned:

> "Not that men are born into the world directly condemned by the law, for in infancy they have no knowledge of right and wrong, and are incapable of doing either, but they are born with sinful tendencies, owing to the sins of their ancestors." (E. J. Waggoner, *SITI*, October 21, 1889).

We are born with "sinful tendencies" and "corrupt hereditary tendencies," but these are the ***consequences*** of sin, not the ***guilt*** of sin. Condemnation is only incurred when the "consent of the will" is given. As Ellen White firmly stated:

> "Sin is the sinner's individual act. Before sin exists in the heart, the consent of the will must be given, and as soon as it is given, sin is triumphant, and hell rejoices." (Ellen White, *ST*, December 18, 1893, par. 10).

The Holy Flesh movement unknowingly adopted the **Catholic original guilt** framework—the idea that the human nature transmitted by Adam is "sin" in an analogical sense, a "state and not an act." This framework demands a "separated Christ" who does not take our nature, lest He be a sinner.

In contrast, the Adventist understanding—as proclaimed by Jones, Waggoner, and Ellen White—views fallen nature as the **battleground**. We inherit the physical and mental "liabilities" of our ancestors, but we are not born "shut out from heaven" or "separated from God." Through the faith of a praying parent, even a babe may dwell "under the shadow

of the Almighty."

True victory, therefore, is not found in the "eradication" of our fallen nature before translation, but in the **transformation of character** through the will. We don't need "holy flesh" to stop sinning; we need the Spirit of Christ to rule our "sinful flesh" so that we can say with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

The Holy Flesh movement did not merely offer a new set of emotional exercises; it introduced a profound shift in how a believer views their very existence from the moment of birth. At the heart of their "cleansing message" was the startling claim that every human being is born separated from God, possessing a nature that is "satanic" and "full of sin." They taught that until a person reaches the age of accountability and chooses Christ, they are "Satan's property," born with the spirit of the enemy already "incarnate" within them.

This idea that humanity is born in a state of active alienation from God is not a biblical concept, but a cornerstone of Roman Catholic theology.

Augustine stands as one of the so called most significant Christian thinkers of all time. His synthesis of Christian theology with elements of Platonic philosophy profoundly shaped Latin Christendom. Both Roman Catholicism and large sectors of Protestantism inherited major portions of his theological framework.

Born to a pagan father and a Christian mother in North Africa, Augustine described his intellectual and spiritual journey in his *Confessions*. Of Cicero's philosophical work *Hortensius*, he wrote:

> "This book, in truth, changed my affections, and turned my prayers to Thyself, O Lord... Worthless suddenly became every vain hope to me; and, with an incredible warmth of heart, I yearned for an immortality of wisdom."

Before his full conversion to Christianity, Augustine spent nearly nine years as a devoted adherent of Manichaeism, a system founded by Mani (A.D. 215–275), which taught that matter itself is inherently corrupt and that evil is woven into the very fabric of physical existence. Though Augustine later rejected Manichaeism, its influence lingered. When he developed his doctrine of original sin, the imprint of that earlier worldview is difficult to ignore.

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In Augustine's formulation, sin, as mentioned earlier, is not merely an act of willful transgression. It is a condition inherited at birth. Humanity does not become sinful by choosing evil; rather, we choose evil because we are already sinful by nature. Adam's fall transmitted both guilt and corruption to all his descendants. Thus, every newborn enters the world already condemned.

This concept was later embraced by Protestant reformers such as Luther and Calvin, and it continues to shape much of evangelical theology today. As one modern Protestant writer summarizes:

> "We are not sinners because we sin; rather, we sin because we are sinners. We are all born totally imprisoned in original sin. There is no island of goodness left in us... original sin is something inherent in us — it is a morally ruined character."

Here we see the core of the Augustinian legacy: sin as an inherited moral ruin.

If humanity is born morally ruined and incapable of choosing righteousness, another question naturally arises: Who, then, can be saved? Augustine's answer led to the doctrine of predestination. If fallen humanity cannot will the good, then salvation must be entirely unilateral — God chooses whom He will save. Those chosen are irresistibly drawn to grace; the rest remain in their inherited corruption. In this system, human freedom is severely diminished. Salvation and loss are determined not by personal moral choice, but by divine decree. While Protestant traditions have modified or debated aspects of this doctrine, many still retain the foundational premise: humanity is born morally ruined.

Scripture, however, speaks with clarity regarding personal responsibility:

> "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." (Ezekiel 18:20)

Here the prophet dismantles the notion of transmitted guilt. Each individual stands accountable for his own choices.

The prophecy of Isaiah further illuminates this principle in connection with Christ Himself:

> "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel... For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good..." (Isaiah *7*:14–16)

The child must learn to refuse evil and choose good. Moral knowledge develops. Choice presupposes freedom.

Christ entered the human family as a child. He did not emerge from the womb exercising moral rebellion. He grew, learned, and chose righteousness. The passage plainly assumes a period before moral accountability — a reality incompatible with the idea that newborn infants enter the world already condemned for Adam's sin.

Children cannot exercise mature moral choice in infancy because the faculties of reason are not yet developed. This is why Scripture places such solemn responsibility upon parents. Character formation begins early, but accountability rests upon the individual once moral understanding is awakened. The apostle Paul affirms this personal dimension:

> "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." (Romans 14:12)

If guilt were genetically transmitted in a condemnatory sense, accountability would be meaningless. We do not imprison a newborn because his father was a thief. Moral character is not mechanically inherited. While humanity does inherit weakened tendencies and predispositions, condemnation arises from personal consent to sin—not from birth itself.

One of the foundational teachings recovered and emphasized by the Adventist pioneers — particularly the messengers of 1888, E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones — was the biblical concept of probation.

According to Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary, probation is defined as "Moral trial; the state of man in the present life, in which he has the opportunity of proving his character and being qualified for a happier state." This harmonizes perfectly with the inspired testimony:

> "The period of probation is the time granted to all to prepare for the day of God." (*Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 124)

> "The present world is designed as a scene of probation for man. He

> is here to form a character which will pass with him into the eternal world. Good and evil are placed before him, and his future state depends upon the choice he makes." (*4bSG* 37.3)
>
> "Adam's sin plunged the race into hopeless misery; but by the sacrifice of the Son of God, **a second probation** was granted to man. In the plan of redemption a way of escape is provided for all who will avail themselves of it. God knew that it was impossible for man to overcome in his own strength, and he has provided help for him. How thankful we should be that a way is open for us, by which we can have access to the Father; that the gates are left ajar, so that beams of light from the glory within may shine upon those who will receive them!" (*CTBH* 15.3)

Probation presupposes freedom. A test has meaning only where choice exists. God does not place condemned beings on probation; He places morally responsible agents in a setting where character is formed through decision. A. T. Jones wrote with clarity:

> "This is the origin of the philosophy of the immortality of the soul, in this world. And the only reason why that man did not die that day, even in the very hour when he sinned, is that there, at that moment, Jesus Christ offered himself in behalf of man, and took upon himself the death that would then have fallen upon the man; and thus gave to man **another chance**, **a probation**, a breathing-space, that he might choose life. This is why God could immediately say to the deceiver: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." And so it is written: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." He came that they might first have life; and, without His then offering himself, man never would have had life after he sinned." (A. T. Jones, *ECE* 110.1)

The contrast could not be clearer. Augustine's framework begins with inherited moral ruin and logically advances toward predestined salvation, where the decisive factor rests not in personal response but in divine decree. By contrast, the biblical and pioneer understanding begins not with condemnation, but with probation — a merciful and universal opportunity granted to every soul. In this view, each individual stands in the arena of moral freedom, invited to choose allegiance either to the prince

of this world or to Christ, our living Mediator. Destiny is not mechanically imposed at birth; it is formed through the exercise of the will in response to light and grace.

It is precisely because probation precedes condemnation — because destiny is shaped by response to light rather than fixed at birth — that we must reject the notion that children enter this world already condemned and alienated from God. If moral accountability depends upon conscious choice, then those who have not yet exercised that choice cannot be reckoned guilty. Scripture presents a far more hopeful and consistent picture: children are not born sealed under wrath, but can be placed within the sphere of divine mercy. From their earliest moments they may be under the gentle influence of the Holy Spirit, who strives with every human heart. Rather than beginning life separated from God by an inherited sentence, they begin life within reach of grace, surrounded by heavenly agencies working to draw them toward righteousness as understanding awakens.

While we have established that infants are not born under the legal condemnation of "original sin," we must not fall into the opposite error of believing that they are born automatically righteous. The home is the first and most vital battlefield of the human soul. Because children are born with a fallen nature and "sinful tendencies" inherited from their ancestors, they are particularly vulnerable to the suggestions of the enemy. Ellen White candidly addressed this reality:

> "Children are the lawful prey of the enemy, because they are not subjects of grace, have not experienced the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus, and the evil angels have access to these children; and some parents are careless and suffer them to work with but little restraint. Parents have a great work to do in this matter, by correcting and subduing their children and then by bringing them to God and claiming his blessing upon them. By the faithful and untiring efforts of the parents, and the blessing and grace entreated of God upon the children, the power of the evil angels will be broken, a sanctifying influence is shed upon the children, and the powers of darkness must give back." (Ellen White, *RH* September 19, 1854, par. 11).

This "lawful prey" status is not a declaration of inherent guilt, but a warning of strategic vulnerability. In this cosmic conflict, parents serve as the primary ministers for Christ or, through neglect, as unwitting agents for

the adversary. The shaping of a child's character—the only thing that will eventually pass with them into eternity—depends heavily on the spiritual atmosphere and discipline established in their earliest years. When parents fail to teach their children the way of the Lord, they essentially leave the gates of the soul unguarded.

> "When parents have the Word of God before them, defining what he approves and what he disapproves, they have no excuse for following a wrong course. But, notwithstanding this, there is a neglect to teach children in the way of the Lord,—a fearful, terrible neglect; and many children are lost to Jesus for want of careful training. Parents have neglected their God-given responsibilities and Satan has taken possession of their children. Under his direction, by their evil communication they corrupt other children. Thus Satan has the children, even of professed Christians, under his control." (Ellen White, *ST* February 18, 1897, par. 10).

One of the most effective ways Satan gains control is through the "fearful neglect" of indulgence. A child who is never taught to surrender their will to their parents will find it nearly impossible to surrender their will to God in adulthood. Indulgence creates a character warped by selfishness and an exacting spirit—traits that mirror the enemy rather than the Savior.

> "Children that are much noticed and indulged, become selfish, exacting, and over-bearing. They expect to be favored, and to receive much from others, while they give nothing in return. Children with characters that are formed with these serious defects, cannot be happy. They carry from childhood to youth their characters warped by wrong discipline, and their religious experience is affected by their education and discipline in childhood." (Ellen White, *YI* March 1, 1873, par. 4).

Conversely, when a mother provides a loving, disciplined environment, she acts as a living parable of the Gospel. By teaching her children to obey her out of love, she is laying the foundation for their future relationship with the Redeemer.

> "As the mother teaches her children to obey her because they love her, she is teaching them the first lessons in the Christian life. The mother's love represents to the child the love of Christ, and the little ones who trust and obey their mother are learning to trust and obey the Saviour."

(Ellen White, *DA* 515.4).

The tragedy of the Holy Flesh movement was its assertion that children are born "separated from God" and are "Satan's property" by the mere fact of their natural birth. This doctrine removes the Savior from the nursery and denies the efficacy of a parent's faith. But the true Gospel offers a magnificent promise: through the faith of a praying mother, an infant can dwell under the direct protection of the Almighty and be molded by the Holy Spirit from their very first breath.

> "Let mothers come to Jesus with their perplexities. They will find grace sufficient to aid them in the management of their children...He who said, 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me,and forbid them not,' still invites the mothers to lead up their little ones to be blessed by Him. Even the babe in its mother's arms may dwell as under the shadow of the Almighty through the faith of the praying mother. John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit from his birth. If we will live in communion with God, we too may expect the divine Spirit to mold our little ones, even from their earliest moments." (Ellen White, *DA* 512.3).

We must reject the Roman Catholic and Holy Flesh notion that our children are born under divine wrath or alienation. God does not condemn them for the inheritance they received from Adam; He offers them a Savior who has already claimed them as His "purchased possession." Our duty as parents is not to seek a metaphysical "nature transplant," but to be the instruments through which the Holy Spirit subdues their inherited tendencies and molds a character after the divine likeness.

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SECTION 7

The 1888 Message: Christ in Fallen Flesh Yet Without Sin

To the messengers of 1888, the Holy Flesh movement was not just a local fanatical distraction; it was a lethal strike against the very heart of the Gospel. If Christ did not take our fallen humanity, then the bridge between heaven and earth—the ladder Jacob saw—remained unbuilt. A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner understood that the power of righteousness by faith depends entirely on a Savior who conquered sin within the very territory where humanity had failed—in our fallen, sinful flesh.

E. J. Waggoner was uncompromising in his assertion that Christ entered the human race at its lowest point of physical and moral heritage. He argued that the miracle of the Incarnation was not that God took the nature of an unfallen Adam, but that He took our nature. Waggoner wrote:

> "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... 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." (E. J. Waggoner, *God's Eternal Purpose,* pp. 96, 101).

A. T. Jones expanded on this by emphasizing Christ's subjection to the law of heredity. In his work *The Consecrated Way*, Jones explained that Christ could only reach the root of the human problem by submitting Himself to the same biological and spiritual liabilities we face.

> "Only by His subjecting Himself to the law of heredity could He reach sin in full and true measure as sin truly is... Beyond this there is in each person, in many ways, the liability to sin inherited from generations back which has not yet culminated in the act of sinning but which is ever ready... to blaze forth in the actual committing of sins... thus He met sin in the flesh which He took and triumphed over it." (A. T. Jones, *The Consecrated Way to Christian Perfection,* pp. 40-41).

Jones defined this as the **Complete Saviour**: "He saves from all the sins

that we have actually committed and saves equally from all the sins that we might commit dwelling apart from Him" (A. T. Jones, *The Consecrated Way to Christian Perfection*, p. 42).

S. N. Haskell, who personally confronted the Indiana leadership, wrote a powerful rebuttal that cut through the movement's terminology. He pointed out that the Savior did not need "holy flesh" to be a holy person; rather, His presence in our flesh is what brings holiness to us.

> "It did not simply reach Adam as he was before he fell, bearing the image of God; but Christ took humanity in its lowest condition, all seared and marred by sin... Our Saviour, then, is a holy Christ in sinful human nature, who by his presence in sinful nature sanctifies fallen humanity, so that humanity, by the presence and holiness of the sinless Saviour, can be saved to the uttermost." (S. N. Haskell, *Christ in Holy Flesh, or a Holy Christ in Sinful Flesh*, pp. 1, 3).

The testimony of Ellen White served as the prophetic seal upon this understanding. In the very months that the Holy Flesh movement was claiming Jesus took an unfallen nature, she published some of her strongest statements to the contrary, describing Christ's humiliation as taking a nature that was "degraded and defiled by sin."

> "Think of Christ's humiliation. He took upon himself fallen, suffering human nature, degraded and defiled by sin... He was made like unto his brethren, with the same susceptibilities, mental and physical." (Ellen White, *YI* December 20, 1900; *RH* February 10, 1885).

The central point of the 1888 message is that Christ's nature determines the reach of His salvation. If Christ did not take our nature, He could not be our Example, He could not condemn sin ***in our flesh***, and He could not succor the tempted because He would not know the "pull" of the flesh from the inside. The 1888 message offers a Savior who is near—One who took our very inheritance of fallen flesh and, through constant surrender to the Father, proved that even the weakest member of the human family can "overcome as Christ overcame."

Furthermore, victory in the biblical sense is not a change of nature, but a transformation of character through the surrender of the will. It is the power of the Spirit over the flesh. As E. J. Waggoner clarified, the flesh never becomes "converted" or "holy" in this life; it remains "enmity against God" until the very end. Victory occurs when Christ, dwelling in our fallen

flesh by faith, "abolishes the enmity" by never allowing that flesh to rule.

> "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." (*RH* February 18, 1890, par. 8)

This means we do not need to wait for a "Gethsemane experience" to change our biology before we can stop sinning. We have a Savior who already conquered sin in our territory, and He stands ready to manifest that same victory in our members today.

A primary "thread" of the Holy Flesh error was the confusion between sanctification and glorification. Sanctification is the work of a lifetime—a progressive process of character development where we "die to self daily." Glorification, on the other hand, is a momentary act of God at the Second Coming when our "vile bodies" are finally changed. The Indiana brethren tried to pull the physical perfection of the future into the present, leading to a "presumptuous" claim of sinlessness, but Ellen White provided the necessary correction:

> "All may now obtain holy hearts, but it is not correct to claim in this life to have holy flesh... 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.'" (Ellen White, *General Conference Bulletin*, 1901, pp. 419-422).

The bridge between our fallen nature and Christ's holy character is **faith**. It is not a faith that asks God to change our "genetics," but a faith that lays hold of the "Faith of Jesus"—the constant dependence on the Father that Jesus utilized while in our flesh. This faith makes the Spirit dominant over every inherited and cultivated tendency.

> "Living faith made dominant the Spirit of God over all fleshly tendencies. He fought the battle for every man, and conquered; for 'He did no sin.'...and all the children—and this includes the aged—may come to Him as a companion-helper all the way." (M. C. Wilcox, *Signs of the Times*, January 3, 1900)

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SECTION 8

Why This Still Matters Today

The history of the Holy Flesh movement is not merely a dusty relic of a bygone era; it is a prophetic mirror reflecting the theological landscape of our own time. The crisis in Indiana was a localized eruption of a virus that has since gone global. Ellen White made it clear that this specific deception was not a one-time event, but a sign of the end: "The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation." (Ellen White, Lt132-1900.22). If this warning is true, then we should expect to see the same "logic of Indiana"—the distancing of Christ from fallen humanity—reappearing in modern Christological debates.

Today, we find ourselves in the midst of a subtle yet pervasive "Category Shift" in how the nature of Christ is taught. The core error of the Holy Flesh movement—that Christ was exempt from the law of heredity—has been resurrected and promoted as the "new" orthodoxy. Various leaders and publications have adopted the very concepts that Ellen White said did not contain a "thread of truth."

This reappearance of the "Holy Flesh" logic is not a minor academic disagreement; it is a battle for the very soul of the Gospel. Currently, even within movements that claim to have "advanced light," every single argument and verse used by the Indiana brethren is being preached once again. We see modern commentaries on Hebrews 2 and Luke 1:35 that mirror the exact reasoning of R. S. Donnell, claiming that Jesus was born "sanctified" or "born born again" to separate Him from our inheritance. If we accept a Savior who is protected from our inheritance and shielded from our struggles, we are following what has been called a "Roman Christ"—one separated from us by a gulf of sinless flesh.

The practical implication of this controversy is staggering: What kind of Savior do we preach? If we preach a Savior who overcame in a nature fundamentally different from our own, then His victory is a beautiful but irrelevant performance. He cannot be our Example, and He cannot "succor them that are tempted" if He did not feel the actual "pull" of the flesh from the inside. To distance Christ from fallen humanity is to weaken the Gospel into a theory that lacks the power to save us ***from*** our sins.

We must settle whether we are truly "out of Rome" or not. Any doctrine

that separates the Savior from the inheritance of fallen humanity—no matter how "holy" it sounds—is the work of the enemy and carries the spirit of antichrist. The "Faith of Jesus" is the belief in a Christ who took our fallen, suffering nature and proved that through the power of the Father, the Spirit can reign supreme even in the midst of sinful flesh. The reason this matters today is because we are nearing the close of human probation, and only a "Complete Savior" can produce a people who reflect His character in the final conflict.

The Holy Flesh proponents looked for a single, ecstatic "Garden Experience" that would permanently alter their nature. But the 1888 message emphasizes the need to be "born from above" and to "die to self" daily. Sanctification is not a one-time fleshly upgrade; it is the progressive work of a lifetime.

> "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." (Ellen White, *Review & Herald*, Sept. 18, 1908).

Every day, the believer must give the "consent of the will" to Christ rather than to the "sarx" (sinful flesh). We serve God in the "human nature we now have," using the same faith that Jesus utilized to keep the commandments in our territory. True perfection is not the absence of internal struggle, but the constant, faithful triumph over it through the power of the Spirit.

We are living in a solemn hour of earth's history. The Lord has warned that the "Spirit of Antichrist"—which denies that Jesus has come in the flesh—would reappear with its deceptions "just before the close of probation." Today, the "logic of Rome" is once again spreading, urging us to distance our Savior from our heritage and to seek a perfection that bypasses the daily subduing of the flesh.

Will you choose the "Roman Christ"—the one protected from your inheritance and separated by a "gulf" of sinless flesh? Or will you choose the **True Christ**—the One who took your fallen, suffering nature, felt your liabilities, and conquered sin in your very territory?

The bridge has been built. The Savior has crossed over to our side. He stands ready to manifest His righteousness in your very members if you will but surrender your will to Him.

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May God help us to humble our hearts and fully surrender our will to His, that we may develop Christlike characters and faithfully represent Him to a perishing world.

Choose the Christ who is near. Choose our Complete Savior. Submit to Him, die to self daily, and allow Him to finish the work of sealing your character for eternity. The time is short; the probation of the world is closing. Let us stand with those who "keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

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HOLY FLESH RELATED MATERIALS

This section of the book gathers together a series of contemporaneous articles from leaders within the remnant movement who directly confronted the theological claims of the Holy Flesh agitation at the turn of the twentieth century. These responses were not written in hindsight, but in the very heat of the controversy, addressing the movement's teachings on the nature of Christ, perfection, and the supposed reception of "holy flesh." Alongside these corrective testimonies, we have also included selections from the original writings of R. S. Donnell, the principal advocate of the Holy Flesh Movement. By placing the primary sources side by side—the claims of Donnell and the documented rebuttals from faithful laborers—the reader is able to examine the issue historically and doctrinally, tracing how the error was articulated and how it was answered from Scripture and the established Adventist understanding of Christ's humanity.

Two additional works of great importance should also be noted in connection with this subject. *Christ and His Righteousness* by E. J. Waggoner and *The Consecrated Way to Christian Perfection* by A. T. Jones, drawn from the eight articles on the Fatih of Jesus he wrote at the end of 1900 to meet the crisis. Together, these works safeguard the original Adventist understanding of the incarnation and expose the danger of separating Christ from the fallen race He came to save.

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Christ in Holy Flesh, or a Holy Christ in Sinful Flesh

S. N. Haskell, RH, October 2, 1900

It is impossible for a finite mind to comprehend how the divine Son of God could come into a mortal body and be born of humanity, to "meet life's peril in common with every human soul, to fight the battle as every child of humanity must fight it, at the risk of failure and eternal loss." He came "a helpless babe, subject to the weakness of humanity."

This was "God manifest in the flesh;" for "in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." To deny this would be to deny our only means of salvation. To say that he did not take humanity as it was, and as it is, would be to deny that the base of the ladder that Jacob saw rested on the earth, while the topmost round reached to the throne of God. *Man could not raise himself one single iota, in order to reach the ladder.* It must reach man *where he* ***is***, that man may attain to the true standard of righteousness. It did not simply reach Adam as he was *before he fell*, bearing the image of God; but Christ took humanity in its lowest condition, all seared and marred by sin.

Human reason sees many contradictions in Christ; for human reason can not find out God. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what crust thou know? "Job 11:*7*, 8. "In the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knows not God... because the foolishness of God is wiser than men... God bath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things that are not, to bring to naught things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence." 1 Cor. 1:21-29.

It is by faith that we understand. A belief in God's testimony simply because God has spoken, is light to the soul. The divine Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, as of the only begotten of the Father. John 1:14. Most wonderful thought! How it could be, is only comprehended by infinite wisdom. He took humanity in its fallen condition. When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made *under the law* [For what purpose was he made under the law?] *to redeem* them that were UNDER THE LAW, that we might receive

the adoption of sons," Gal. 4:4, 5.

Had not Christ been made *under* the law, *as all mankind was by sin*, he could not have redeemed them, so as to call them sons. To be under the law is to be a transgressor of the law, and condemned by the law. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." Rom. 3:19. Again, the same apostle says: "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, *justified* in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." 1 Tim. 3:16. *What is justification?* Let the word of the Lord answer: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." To be justified is to be made free from condemnation.

"Sin is the transgression of the law." Mankind are condemned because they have broken the law of God. Christ was made under the law, to save those who are under the law. What did Christ have to do with sin? — "He hath made *him* TO BE SIN for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5:21. He bore the sins of the whole world. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." "Who his own self bear our sins in his OWN BODY on the tree." 1 Peter 2:24. He bore our sins in HIS BODY, and not in his *character*. He repented for the sinner. He was, baptized for the sinner. He was justified for the sinner. He died the sinner's substitute. The sinner must walk in his steps, if he would have the righteousness of Christ. The enmity that was abolished was "*in his flesh:*" "Having abolished *in his flesh* the *enmity;*... for to make *in himself* of twain *one new* man, so making peace." Eph. 2:15.

"He who stilled the angry waves and walked the foam-capped billows, who made devils tremble and disease flee, who opened blind eyes and called forth the dead to life, offers himself upon the cross as a sacrifice, and this from love to thee. He, the Sinbearer, endures the wrath of divine justice, and for thy sake *becomes* SIN ITSELF." —" *The Desire of Ages," trade edition, page 907*. Again, on pages 361, 362: "Christ is the ladder that Jacob saw, the base resting *on the earth*, and the topmost round reaching to the gate of heaven, to the very threshold of glory. *If that ladder had failed by a single step* of reaching *the earth*, we should have been *lost*. But Christ reaches us *where we are*. He took *our nature* and overcame, that we through taking *his nature* might overcome. Made in the likeness of sinful

flesh,' he lived a sinless life. Now by his divinity he lays hold upon the throne of heaven, while by *his humanity* he reaches us."

This is *fallen* humanity with all its hereditary inclinations. He who was as spotless while on earth as when in heaven took our nature, that he might lift man to the exaltation of himself by his righteousness. Again, on pages 119, 120, of the same book, we read: "Notwithstanding that the sins of a guilty world were laid upon Christ, notwithstanding the humiliation of taking upon himself our FALLEN NATURE, the voice from heaven declared him to be the Son of the Eternal." Once more, in speaking of the condition of Adam, the writer says, on pages 49, 50: "It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man's nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity *when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin*. Like every child of Adam, he accepted the *results* of the working of the great law of *heredity*. What these results were is shown in the history of his *earthly ancestors*. He came *with such a heredity* to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life."

The Bible is the only reliable history of his ancestors. In the Gospel by Matthew four women before Mary, the mother of Jesus, are mentioned by name: Thamar (Matt. 1:3), who acted the part of a harlot with her father-in-law (see Genesis 38); the harlot Rahab (see verse 5; also Joshua 2); Ruth, a Moabitess, a descendant of the daughter of Lot by her own father (see Gen. 19:30-38); and Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Bathsheba's course with David has been a reproach in the mouth of scoffers for thousands of years. This is not the way that *men* would naturally write a history of the ancestors of Christ: They would select the good women and the men of influence, whose birth and lives were exemplary. But it is God's way, and it presents hope to the fallen. Even if we have inherited tendencies and appetites of the worst kind, there is hope. It was Christ through David who said: "Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." This states plainly the nature of the humanity in which Christ was conceived. The same prophet, in Ps. 22:9, says: "But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly." This illustrates how it was with Christ, and how it is with every believer in Christ who has the righteousness of Christ.

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Christ was the Son of God, equal with his Father. Yet to save a lost race he stepped down from his exalted throne, and came to this world, all seared and marred with sin; he went lower, and still lower, until there was no lower depth to which he could go, to encircle the human race with his human arm, and through his righteousness take them back to his throne. Through the prophet Isaiah God said, "Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins; thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities." Isa. 43:24. He who has struggled against hereditary temptations for years, and often fallen beneath the tempter's - power, can appreciate a Saviour like this.

The words of the apostle are full of meaning: "Verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in *all things* it behoved him to be made *like unto his brethren*, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." "For we have not an high priest which can not be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in *all points* tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. 2:16-18; 4:15, 16.

Our Saviour, then, is a holy Christ in sinful human nature, who by his presence in sinful nature sanctifies fallen humanity, so that humanity, by the presence and holiness of the sinless Saviour, can be saved to the uttermost. And thus Jesus can save and does save to the uttermost all, however low they may have fallen, however held by hereditary traits, that will come to Him and be sanctified, body, soul, and spirit.

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The Saviour of All

M. C. Wilcox, ST, January 3, 1900

In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him [the Word]; and without Him was not anything made that was made." John 1:1-3. So the beloved apostle bears witness to the pre-existence of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The apostle Paul bears similar and equally positive testimony: "Who [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the first of every creature, for by ["in," R.V.] Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him; and He is before all things and by ["in," R.V.] Him all things consist." Col. 1:15-17.

Among other testimonies the prophet Micah presents the following prophecy, relative to the incarnation of the Son of God: "But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, tho thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity." Chapter 5:2, margin. Such was the Son of God before He emptied Himself.

But when He saw how His own creatures with the Father had sold themselves to sin, His infinite love would not permit Him to remain in His infinite glory. Tho in God's image, tho the only one in the universe who had inherently the right, He did not aspire to be like God, but "emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant." See Phil. 2:5-8, R.V. He was first a heavenly messenger, the chief of all the shining host, because the chief servant.

This was not all. The next step was "becoming in the likeness of men." Man had failed to do God's will, and was in himself hopelessly lost. Then man's Creator, the Son of God, said: "Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me... Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me), to do Thy will, O God." Heb. 10:5-7.

That body was His body of sinful flesh, taken in the womb of His virgin mother, and having within itself all the propensities to sin that the flesh of all the sons of Adam have. He was not only made "in the *likeness* of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3), but He bore the sinful flesh. The likeness was not merely

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outward. His flesh was the same as that of all humanity; for He "was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." Rom. 1:3. We know what the seed of David was. Every crime in the catalog was manifest among those through whom Jesus received His heritage of the flesh. God prepared Him that body in which He would "in all things" be "like unto His brethren," of "the seed of Abraham," partaker "of flesh and blood." Heb. 2:14-17. Have others inherited corrupt tendencies in the flesh?—So did He. Were the ancestors of others covetous, grasping, adulterous, given to pleasure?—So were His. He was made like us, that He might make us like Himself.

But, tho having the flesh, with all its sinful tendencies, He did not sin. Living faith made dominant the Spirit of God over all fleshly tendencies. He fought the battle for every man, and conquered; for "He did no sin."

But not alone for man—man grown—did He conquer; not alone with the adult does He sympathize. He had the "body" in His birth; He had the same flesh and the same tendencies as the little boy, the youth, the young man. Every human soul—great or small, young or old—may find in Jesus a Friend and Sympathizer, a Saviour and Helper. He felt what other children feel. He was tempted as other children are tempted. And all the children—and this includes the aged—may come to Him as a companion-helper all the way.

This is the lesson illustrated in our picture this week. It is the Boy Jesus among the doctors. Last week the scripture was given in Luke 2:40-52. It tells us how Jesus grew as a child. He "grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him." Verse 40. His mother taught Him all this from the Holy Scriptures. It was God's Word implanted in His own life which made Him strong in spirit, enabling Him to resist temptation, to mold others rather than be molded by them. It was from God's Word that He became filled with that wisdom that the learned scribes and doctors of the law did not possess. His heart was opened toward God, and God filled Him.

He was humble. Altho wiser than the doctors, knowing more of God even than His parents, He was not lifted up. Of course He was tempted to show His superiority. We know He was tempted to be impertinent, to do "smart" things (for He was *tempted in all points as we are*); but He resisted. He treated the ignorant considerately, the evil-disposed kindly, the poor charitably. He set an example to all children who should come after.

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When talking with the doctors, He did not assume to teach dictatorially. He listened, and asked questions. His questions were so remarkable that they then questioned Him. And He replied in the wisdom given of God.

But this does not exalt Him in His own mind. He returns with His parents to Nazareth, and "was subject unto them." In other words, He *minded* them, obeyed them, a dutiful son. And He "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." So He desires every boy to grow; so He will enable them to grow if they will follow Him.

O children, youth, young people, in Jesus Christ you have a Redeemer, Saviour, Companion, Example. Take Him now. Parents, you have in Jesus Christ the example of what God wants to make of your children. Will you not follow His instruction, as given in Deut. 6: 5-9, and elsewhere in His Word? Such instruction is worth all the worldly lore and erudition of the ages. It will give wisdom which "the weary schoolmen never knew." Lacking this knowledge of God, is eternal loss; knowing it will make men of your sons, women of your daughters. There are infinite possibilities in such a work. Do not limit God. Could parents or children begin a new year better than to take God's Word and the life and example of Jesus for their guide?

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What I Taught in Indiana

by R. S. Donnell (main proponent of the Holy Flesh Movement)

In the supplement to the Watchman of March 12th, 1907, a full account is given of the action taken against me by the president of the Southern Union Conference.

In a later issue of the Watchmen I am charged with teaching "Holy Flesh", and that I imbibed and taught the same thing while I was in Indiana.

Now, it so happens that I have a series of articles in my possession which I wrote while I was labouring in Indiana, and which were published in the Indiana Reporter. These articles all bear upon what I taught in Indiana, to which opposition was taken by a number of the General Conference Committee. This opposition was so strongly urged that I finally resigned my position as president of the conference.

The articles were headed "Did Christ come to This World in Sinful Flesh?" Why I was charged with teaching "Holy Flesh" I know not, unless it was that in my article, as well as in the pulpit, I took the negative side of the question.

I have decided to republish these articles in leaflet or tract form, and herewith submit them to the candid consideration of the people and let them decide for themselves what is taught in them, or how much I have said about "Holy Flesh" in humanity. The Laodicean message involves the nature of Christ, hence the articles.

In connection with these articles I also publish some questions asked me in writing by my successor in office in the Indiana Conference, together with my answers to the same. Please read this leaflet carefully and then decide as to how much justice there was in the move made on the 24th day of February, 1907, to deprive me of my credentials as a minister of the Gospel of Christ and turn me out of the church because I taught the same things in Memphis, Tennessee, that I taught in Indiana.

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Did Christ Come to this World in Sinful Flesh?

ARTICLE ONE

To those who are preparing for translation the question with which we introduce this article becomes, indeed, an important one. In speaking of their condition, and what they are to be when the Lord returns to the earth to gather up His people, 1 John 3:2 says: "But we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." And, further than this, it is evident that those who are prepared to meet Him when He comes, know what He is, and prior to that event set to work to become like Him; for the next verse says: "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

Then, in order to be ready to meet the Savior, and to be like Him, at His coming, all should understand the condescension of Christ, and whether or not in that condescension He took upon himself sinful flesh and retained it during his life's work here on earth. And, further, they should know the work that Christ came into this world to do, and just what was required of Him in life and character, in order that He might be able to accomplish that work. The Bible says that He "came into the world to save sinners." And the *Spirit of Prophecy* says: "The life of Jesus was one of laborious, self-denying effort to bring men back to his first estate." "He came to expel the demons that had controlled the will. He came to lift up from the dust, to reshape the marred character after the pattern of His divine character and to make it beautiful with His own glory." *Desire,* p. 42

Just here I might ask this question: In order to convert the people of some heathen land to Christianity, how would the church go about it? Would they select some man possessed of the sinful traits and propensities of the people to whom they send him, hoping thus to elevate them to the standard of true Christianity, or would they send one who had himself embraced all the doctrines of Christianity, and had by them been purified, ennobled, and like unto what they hoped to do for that people unto whom he sent? The answer is easy. All would say: "Don't send a man whose life would be unlike the faith intended to be taught, but send one in whom the power of the faith of Christianity is revealed, that in that man, and in his life, may be shown to them what the faith that he offers will do for them when they apply it unto their own lives." That is right. And so in redeeming a world, God must send one into the world with all the

characteristics in Him, not of the people in their fallen condition, to whom He has gone, but of a people lifted from their fallen condition and restored their first estate. And we believe this to be just what God did. "Say ye not of Him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest because I said I am the Son of God?" John 10:36. Here we are told that Christ was sanctified and sent into the world. That is, when he came into the world He stood as a representative, a perfect sample of what he proposed to do for all who would accept of and believe in Him.

We have already read that the work of Christ was to restore man back to his first estate. That estate is not possessed in our sinful condition, for it was through sin that man lost it. It may be necessary to notice for a moment in what that first estate consisted, that we may have before us that to which we are to be restored through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Referring back to man in his first estate at the time of the creation, the Psalmist says: "For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madst him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands, Thou hast put all things under his feet." Here, then, was man's first estate, and when Adam stood in it, we are told that he stood there in the image of Him over whose works he had dominion, even in the image of God. Genesis 1:27. And on page 88 of *Spirit of Prophecy* (old edition) we are told that Adam stood there "without a taint of sin."

In Hebrews 2:8, referring to the change wrought as the result of the fall, the apostle says: "But we see not yet all things put under Him." No; man fell and lost his estate and marred the image of God in him. He then needs a restorer, a Saviour. So the apostle continuing in verse 9, says: "But we see Jesus." In what way do we see Him? Ah, we see Him coming as the Restorer, as the Saviour of the fallen race. And now, how must He come? Must He come possessed of the inherited traits of the fallen race, or while He comes as a man, should He not come as a man redeemed, possessed of all the traits of character, all the inherent principles of a godly nature, and holding a title to the lost estate? Are not these what He offers to man? And surely He must be possessed of those attributes which He offers to those whom He comes to restore. It would be worse than foolishness for me to offer you a thousand dollars when I do not possess a penny. So with the Saviour of the world. He must possess that which he offers us. These attributes and titles must be in Him. Man must see in the Restorer Himself the results of the work that He proposes to accomplish for man. In short, if Christ proposes to restore man to his first estate, He must come

to man standing in that estate Himself. He must come standing where Adam, the first owner, stood before he fell. That is where the world must see Him. And, thank God, it is just at this point that the Bible presents Him to us. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels (exactly the record concerning Adam), for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour (just so with Adam); that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." (Heb. 2:9). The *Spirit of Prophecy*, in the *Signs of the Times* of June 13, 1900, says "Christ came to this earth and stood where Adam stood, overcoming where Adam failed to overcome." Now, Christ stood where Adam stood, and Adam stood there without a taint of sin. So Christ must have stood where Adam stood before his fall–that is, without a taint of sin.

This must be so, for Paul continues the subject, and in verse 11 he says: "For both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified (not those He is going to sanctify, but they who are sanctified) are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." Notice that it is the sanctified ones who He is not ashamed to call brethren. Furthermore, it is the sanctified ones of whose flesh He partakes. "Forasmuch, then, as the children (or brethren, sanctified ones) are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise (just as the sanctified ones are partakers) took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Heb. 2:14.

ARTICLE TWO

In taking up this subject we will begin just where we left off in our last article. In that, when we closed we were considering the fact that Christ Himself took part of flesh and blood, just as the children did. That is, He took part of the same flesh, the children possessed. We found, also, that the children are the sanctified ones. Now, the sanctified ones are surely those upon whom the truth of God and the power of His Holy Spirit has wrought - the ones who are new creatures in Christ Jesus, those who have been created unto good works, the same which God hath before ordained that they should walk in. (See Eph. 2:10). Men can continually do righteous acts only as God is incarnate in them; and it was God's purpose from the beginning to dwell in every created being, so that good works, or He Himself, might always appear in them. But in sinful men Satan is incarnate, and God and Satan cannot dwell together. The only reason why God does not dwell in man is because sin is there, and

in order for God to again dwell in man sin must be eradicated. The body of Christ was a body in which God was incarnate, and as God and Satan cannot dwell together, the body of Christ must have been a body from which even every tendency to sin must have been wholly eradicated.

In proof of the above statement I will quote from *Desire of Ages*, page 117 (small edition): "From eternal ages it was God's purpose that every created being, from the bright and holy seraph to man, should be a temple for the indwelling of the Creator. Because of sin, humanity ceased to be a temple for God. Darkened and defiled by evil, the heart of man no longer revealed the glory of the Divine One. But by the incarnation of the Son of God, the purpose of Heaven is fulfilled. God dwells in humanity, and through saving grace the heart of man becomes again His temple." This certainly proves that Christ dwelt in the same kind of flesh as do the brethren, the restored or sanctified ones. How clear it is from the statement that the cause for God's forsaking humanity as His temple must be removed before He can return and again occupy it as was His purpose from eternity. This removal was wrought when Christ becomes incarnate in human flesh, even in your and mine; for conversion is only incarnation going right on, God being manifest in the flesh. And of this Christ was a perfect sample, an exhibition of what the power of God, or Christ dwelling in us would do for us. How evident, then, that when Christ came into this world to save it, He must come possessed of that perfect restoration, at least so far as a sinless life is concerned, which He offers to man. He must manifest in Himself the good that He would do humanity, should they accept of His work.

Speaking of Christ, in the little tract entitled "*Christ Tempted as We Are*", it says: "He came to pass through the experiences of humanity, to pass over the same ground on which Adam had fallen, to redeem his failure, to meet and conquer the adversary of God and man, that through His grace man might be an overcomer, and finally have a place with Him on His throne." This plainly states that Christ came to pass over the same ground on which Adam had fallen. But notice for a moment: Where did Adam stand before his fall? We found in our last article that when Adam was assailed by the tempter, he was without the taint of sin. Then he was holy. Now, in order to pass over the same ground that Adam passed over, Christ would most assuredly have to begin just where Adam began! He would certainly have to stand just where Adam stood, and that would be without that taint of sin. And so we read in Luke 1:35, "Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." From an article from the

pen of Mrs. E. G. White, in *The Sign of the Times* of January 16, 1896, we read, "The humanity of Christ is called that holy thing." Now, we know that His divinity was holy, and if His humanity was holy, then we do know that that thing which was born of the Virgin Mary was in every sense a holy thing, and did not possess the tendency to sin. But you ask, Did not Christ take unto Himself the liability to sin? Most certainly he did, and He could have sinned. But we must understand that there is a difference between a tendency and a liability. Now, Christ, took upon Himself the liability to sin, but not the tendency. He took the liability to sin when he passed over the same ground that Adam passed over. When Adam came from the placid hand of his Creator, he had in himself no tendency to sin, but when he came to a certain point in his experience he underwent the liability to sin, and there he did sin, fell, and through that fall received sin in his flesh, and thus the tendency. Now, in order for Christ to get sin in His flesh, in passing over the same ground that Adam passed over, when He came to the same point of experience where the liability to sin was laid upon Him, He, too, must fall, He must sin.

But, no! Thanks be to God, He did not fall. He redeemed Adam's failure, He conquered the enemy and escaped, receiving no sin in the flesh, and as the same article in the *Signs of the Times* already referred to says, "He corrupted not his human nature, and though in the flesh, he transgressed not the law of God in any particular." In volume 2, *Spirit of Prophecy* (old edition), page 60, we are told that He had sinless humanity. And in volume 2, Bound *Testimonies*, page 201, 202, we read: "He is a brother in our infirmities, but not possessing like passions." And again in the same *Signs,* in reference to how He stood as Adam stood, it says: "Jesus humbled Himself, clothed His divinity with humanity in order that He might stand as the head and representative of the human family, and by both precept and example condemn sin in the flesh, and give the lie to Satan's charges. He was subject to the fiercest temptations that human nature can know, yet He sinned not; for sin is the transgression of the law. By faith He laid hold on divinity, even as humanity may lay hold upon Infinite Power through Him. Although tempted upon all points even as we are tempted, He sinned not. He did not surrender his allegiance to God, as did Adam."

ARTICLE THREE

The fact that Christ was tempted upon all points as we are tempted, and yet

without sin, should be sufficient evidence in itself to prove that there was not even the tendency to sin in Him. We hope that no one will become mixed on this point or misconstrue our meaning, for we have already stated that in coming to this world and passing over the same ground that Adam passed over, He underwent the liability to sin, for when he reached the point where Adam fell, there He laid Himself liable to do the same thing that Adam did. But, thank God, he passed safely over it and maintained His allegiance to God, thus proving that He had nothing in Him that responded to the temptation. He declared himself in John 14:30: "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me."

It would hardly seem necessary to give any further proof to sustain the point stated above, but I cannot forbear quoting from *Testimony 2,* page 178: "He was tempted in all points like as we are tempted. Satan stood ready to assail him at every step, hurling at Him his fiercest temptations! Yet He did not sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. 'He suffered being tempted' - suffered in proportion to the perfection of His holiness. But the prince of darkness found nothing in him; not a single thought or feeling responded to temptation."

When Christ came to this earth he came to make himself an offering for sin and, in order to make an offering that would be acceptable to the Father, he must at least be as free from sin in every particular as was Adam before he fell. It was because of this that He could not step into some human body already on earth, and purify it and go to the cross in that body and offer the sacrifice. No; that body had known sin in itself, and therefore was guilty of the same sins that all the rest of humanity had committed, and as a consequence needed a savior itself, and would not and could not be an acceptable sacrifice. There were plenty of bodies here on earth, but they were all in the same condition; they had all sinned and come short of the glory of God. But in order to save man, Christ must enter humanity, and because all were sinners, and not a body could be found that was suitable, what had to be done? A body had to be made for the occasion. And so we read in Hebrews 10:5: "A body hast Thou prepared Me." In making this body, that which unfitted all other bodies (enmity against God, the carnal mind) was left out. "Having abolished in His flesh the enmity" (Eph. 2:15). "That holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:33), and we have already proved that the humanity of Christ was that holy thing, so now we have a body that will be acceptable

as an offering for humanity, and it is of at least equal value as that of a man before he fell; and if you will notice the quotation that we now give, you will see that a higher estimate is placed upon it than was placed upon Adam before he fell. "Man could not atone for man. His sinful, fallen condition would constitute him an imperfect offering, an atoning sacrifice of less value than Adam before his fall. God made man perfect and upright, and after his transgression there could be no sacrifice acceptable to God for him, unless the offering made would in value be superior to man as he was in his state of perfection and innocence." (*Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 2, page 1, old edition) This statement is enough to show that Christ, when He took His place here in the earth as the head of the race, was at least as free from sin and all inclinations as was Adam when he came from the hand of his Creator. Otherwise we would have in Him an unavailing sacrifice.

This is certainly in harmony with the statement found in Hebrews 2, which places Christ, when He came to this earth, just where Adam stood before the fall. This would endow him with all the qualifications for righteousness that Adam possessed before the fall, and that man must possess when brought back into the grace of God. As we have before stated, in order to effectually accomplish the work of restoring man to unity with God, He must come possessed of just such a body and life as that which He offers to man as the results of His redeeming work. On this point I will now quote from an article from the pen of Mrs. E. G. White in the *Signs* of June 9, 1898:

> "After the fall of man, Satan declared that human beings were proved to be incapable of keeping the law of God, and he sought to carry the universe with him in this belief. Satan's words appeared to be true, and Christ came to unmask the deceiver. The Majesty of heaven undertook the cause of man, and **with the same faculties that man may obtain** (bold-face type mine), without the temptations of Satan as man must withstand them."

How did he unmask the deceiver? Simply by showing in His life what men could do when created a new creature in Christ Jesus. And to do that, He Himself must be just what that new creation is, and so possesses the same faculties that man was possessed of before the fall, and the above quotation proves this to be so. But let me quote further from the same article:

> "Christ came to the earth, taking humanity and standing as man's representative, to show in the controversy with Satan that man, as

> God created him, connected with the Father and the Son, could obey every divine requirement."

But how could man obey every divine requirement? As God created him. Now, if Christ came to show this, He must come to this world standing just where man stood at his creation, and that was in "the grace of God that was given us before the world began." That was when Adam stood without a taint of sin in him. That was before the fall. And in unmasking the arch deceiver, this same article says:

> "The purity and holiness of Christ, the spotless righteousness of Him who did no sin, was a perpetual reproach upon all sin in the world of sensuality and sin. In His life the light of truth was flashed amid the moral darkness with which Satan had enshrouded the world. Christ exposed Satan's falsehoods and deceiving character, and in many hearts destroyed his corrupting influence. It was this that stirred Satan with such intense hatred. With his hosts of fallen beings he determined to urge the warfare most vigorously; for there stood in the world One who was a perfect representative of the Father. One whose character and practices refuted Satan's misrepresentation of God. Satan had charged upon God the attribute he himself possessed. Now in Christ he saw God revealed in His true character."

But I ask: Could this have been so if Christ came to this earth in sinful flesh or possessed of sinful tendencies? I ask does God possess these? We have just read that Christ was a perfect representative of God. And we read that He Himself said: 'I and my Father are one.'"

ARTICLE FOUR

First of all, in this article, I must unsay some things that the printer made me say in my last article. In the third column of my quotation from the *Signs of the Times* of June 9th, 1898, where the word "faculties" is used it should be "facilities." I will repeat that part of the quotation in which the word occurs, and then the reader will better get the full sense of the paragraph:

> "The Majesty of Heaven undertook the cause of man, and with the same facilities that man may obtain, withstood the temptations of Satan as man must withstand them."

In the fall, or in redemption, a different set of faculties is not given to man. In

both cases he possesses the same faculties. In the fall man's faculties were only perverted, and in redemption they were restored. This perversion of the faculties is what causes in man the tendency to sin. Now, will any man take the position that Christ came into this world with the faculties even of his human nature perverted? I think not. We have already found proof in the *Signs of the Times* of January 16th, 1896, that "The humanity of Christ was that holy thing." And in the quotation given above we find that He came with the same faculties that man may obtain. Not those that He already possesses, but those that he may obtain. Now, what are these facilities that Christ possessed by which He was able to meet the temptations of Satan, and not commit sin. They are not the tendency to sin, but the tendency, or power, to do right.

These facilities are what man may obtain as a free gift from God through the Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostle Peter expresses it thus: "According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness," (2 Peter 1:3). And as a comment to show how complete the work is wrought for man through the possession of these facilities, I quote from first page article of the Review of April 24, 1900: "We must learn of Christ. We must know what he is to those he has ransomed. We must realize that through belief in Him it is our privilege to be partakers of the divine nature, and so escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. Then we are cleansed from all sin, all defects of character. We need not retain one sinful propensity." These are the facilities that man may obtain - the same that Christ possessed and with them He did no sin.

One correction further. In closing my last article, where it says, "But I ask," the printer has placed quotation marks, when it should not be. From there on down to where it says "I and My Father are one", are my own words, and should not be given as a quotation.

Let us now come directly to the examination of the question asked as a heading to these articles, Did Christ Come to This World in Sinful Flesh? I have been searching and asking for the Bible text that says He did, and the nearest to it is the one in Romans 8:3; let us read it: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Now, in the place of this text telling us that He did come in sinful flesh, it only says that He came in the likeness of it. Philippians 2:8 says, "And being found in fashion as a man." A man may have two coats, but in the way they are

cut, one differently from the other, so that while they are both recognized as coats, their fashion is unlike; one may be short, the other long, or there may be some peculiarity in the cut of one that does not appear in the other.

Now, the Bible presents before us two men - two Adams. It tells us that the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit: "The first man is of the earth, earthly; the second man is the Lord from heaven." Now, let us look at this first man awhile, and beside him stand one who has been deteriorated and degenerated by the effects of the infirmities of sin. The first one, Adam, was as tall again as men are today: majestic frame and a gigantic mind, called, in fact, the Son of God (Luke 3:18). But the likeness or fashion of his race has been changed. Men, by the time that Christ came to this world, through the infirmity and degeneracy of sin, had become so reduced that they had almost lost the divine image. This comparison is well expressed in *Great Controversy*, page 644, 645, where the race is presented as coming forth from the grave: "All come forth from their graves the same in stature as when they entered the tomb. Adam, who stands among the risen throng, is of lofty height and majestic form, in stature but little below the Son of God. He presents a marked contrast to the people of later generations: in this one respect is shown the great degeneracy of the race; but all arise with the freshness and vigor of eternal youth. In the beginning man was created in the likeness of God, not only in character, but in form and feature. Sin defaced and almost obliterated the divine image. But Christ came to restore that which had been lost. He will change our vile bodies and fashion them like unto His glorious body. The mortal corruptible form devoid of comeliness, once polluted with sin (mark the expression, once polluted) becomes perfect, beautiful and immortal. The last lingering traces of the curse of sin will be removed, and Christ's faithful ones will appear 'in the beauty of the Lord our God;' in mind and soul and body, reflecting the perfect image of their Lord."

When Christ came to this earth He did not take the likeness or fashion of Adam as he stood in his perfect manhood, but that of his race in later generations. Yes, He took it when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. "Like every child of Adam, he accepted the result (not the working, but the results) of the working of the great law of heredity." Yes, He came subject to the weakness of humanity. He had to meet its perils in common with every human soul. He took human nature upon Him, but does that imply that He took sinful human nature? If so,

then He takes sinful nature into heaven and carries it forever, for we read in *Desire of Ages*, trade edition, page 27, these words: "To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature." And again, same page: "God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heavens." I don't think anyone would say that He has taken sin and its tendencies there. No; he took human nature in that body that was prepared for Him (and He will take the same in each one of our bodies, if we will allow them to become prepared for His habitation), and in that body, the "likeness of sinful flesh," He endured all the sufferings of humanity, met and overcome every temptation that we have to meet, and so condemned sin in the flesh.

On this point I read in the *Signs of the Times* of June 9, 1898, this wonderful statement from the pen of Mrs. E. G. White: "We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ. Our faith must be an intelligent faith, looking unto Jesus in perfect confidence, in full and entire faith in the atoning sacrifice. This is essential that the soul may not be enshrouded in darkness. This holy substitute is able to save to the uttermost, for He presented to the wondering universe perfect and complete humility in His human character, and perfect obedience to the requirements of God."

We are to take Christ as our pattern. We are to be like Him, and it is by beholding that we become changed. Now, if we behold a Saviour with sin and its propensities in Him, we are not to be made better than He is, and so we would always retain the propensities that we see in Him. We can get out of Christ only just what we see in Him. Let us not lower the standard any longer, but let us elevate it by holding up the Saviour before the church and the world, so that they may see Him as He is, and by His saving power be cleansed from every evil propensity.

The Faith of Jesus

I suppose our people generally in Indiana have been reading the series of articles under the above caption now being published in the *Review and Herald*. From the last two articles it appears evident that the object of the writer is to refute the idea that when Christ came to this earth, He came in sinless flesh, and that he writes in support of his theory, which he began to advocate only about 10 years ago, viz; that Christ did actually come in

sinful flesh, and that He did actually possess man's sinful nature, for in his last article he says: "We see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death." Therefore, as a man is since he became subject to death, this is what we see Jesus, in His place as man." * * * "Jesus took His nature of man as He is since death entered; and not at all the nature of man as He was before He became subject to death." * * * "Thus, in becoming man, it became Him to become such as man is."

The above quotations are sufficient to place before our readers the real position of the writer of the articles referred to, and we only call attention to these articles in order to show the fallacy of such a position, and the signal failure of the writer, thus far in his articles, to maintain his position, and especially his failure to make the point that he attempts to make in his last article of December 25. In this article, after lowering the standard, as he has done by making Christ equal with man in his sinful state, then he proceeds to take the blood relationship of Christ to man, and refers to the law of redemption, as taught in the "gospel of Leviticus," and thinks to make Christ in His lower condition the one nearest of kin who is able to redeem man. I cannot imagine why one would take a position when exactly the opposite of this is intended to be taught by the law of redemption. What is it that is able to redeem the lost inheritance, and the man who has gone into bondage as set forth by this law? Certainly not the blood relation who has made himself not able by getting into a like condition of man who needs redemption. For, surely, if He actually takes the position, or condition, of the man needing redemption, and Himself falls into decay, loses His inheritance and Himself goes into bondage. He would have nothing with which to redeem the other men from bondage and purchase back His lost estate. All can certainly see that He is in as hard a case as the first man who is fallen into decay, and is as truly in need of someone who is able to redeem Him as is the first man. We can see by this law of redemption that it is clearly taught, that the One who redeems must Himself be able to redeem, because He retains His own estate, and has not Himself fallen into decay, as has the one in need of redemption. And because of this He is able to lift the needy man out of decay and restore him back into his first estate, in equality before the law with the One who has purchased for him his freedom.

Just so it must be with Christ, who comes to redeem man from the bondage of sin, and purchase back his first estate. He must be able, because He

was blood relation to the man before he fell into decay, sin, but (instead of losing his inheritance, as has the man who has gone into sin), He retains His former estate of holiness, and is able because of this to lift the man in need of redemption back to his first estate.

Christ was the blood relation of Adam as Adam stood in his first estate. Adam was the son of God - Luke 3:28. Christ, in his humanity, was also the Son of God. "Therefore, that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" -Luke 1:35; "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." - Matt. 3:17. Before Adam fell he stood in his first estate. "And God said, let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." -Gen. 1:26; "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor," -Ps. 8:5. And in that condition he was as pure as was the angels in heaven. "Adam was tempted by the enemy, and he fell. It was not indwelling sin which caused him to yield, for God made him pure and upright, in His own image. He was as faultless as the angels before the throne. There were in him no corrupt principles, no tendencies to evil." -*Signs of the Times*, November 17, 1900.

Christ came to this earth standing in purity just where Adam stood before he fell. As we read, remember that He comes to redeem this man Adam, because He is the nearest of kin to Him, both being sons of God: one fallen, the other unfallen. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death (mortal, that he might die), crowned with glory and honor (not sinful, but just like Adam)." -Heb. 2:9. "Christ came to this earth and stood where Adam stood, overcoming where Adam failed to overcome. He is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." -*Signs of the Times,* June 13, 1900. "Christ came to the earth, taking humanity and standing as man's representative, to show in the controversy with Satan that man, as God created him, connected with the Father and the Son, could obey every divine requirement." -*Signs of the Times*, June 9, 1898.

When Adam was made he was connected with the Father and the Son, but when he fell he lost that connection. "Because of sin, humanity ceased to be a temple of God." -*Desire of Ages*, page 177, trade edition. Christ was not man as he now is, separated from God, but man as he is restored

to his first estate, connected with the Father and the Son; for He came to show that man connected with the Father and the Son could obey every divine requirement. This, then, must have been what Christ was, even God and Christ united, which is God in the flesh. But this is not the condition of man in his sinful state, for we have already read from *Desire of Ages*, God cannot dwell in sinful humanity. We also read the same in the *Signs of the Times* of June 9, 1898: "It was sin that separated man from God, and it is sin that maintains that separation."

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when we shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see Him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." 1 John 3:2, 3. To be like Him as He is now is to be like Him as he was here on earth; for His life on earth is that which is to save us, for in our walk we are to walk as He walked, and that walk is what will make us like Him as He is now. 1 John 4:17. And to be like Him is to again be united with the Father and the Son, and this is the perfect blood relationship and thanks be to the Father of Lights, this is redemption. And, praise the Lord, this one of near kin to Adam, who, coming to this earth to redeem Adam and his posterity, standing where Adam did before he fell, humanity and divinity united, preserved His humanity unsullied, and so was able to redeem us.

Indiana Reporter, Jan. 2, 1901

No.1. Do you believe that the testimony given by Sr. White to the Indiana brethren at the last General Conference was of God?

Answer. Yes.

No. 2. Do you believe that this testimony condemned certain things which you and others taught in this State?

Answer. For myself, no. I speak not for others. I have taught, and do still teach, that through the efficacy of the blood of Christ a holy life can be lived; even such a life as was required of Adam before the fall. As to the doctrine of "Holy Flesh," no man has ever heard me preach it. I have maintained, and do still maintain, that in order to live a holy life we must eat and assimilate the flesh and the blood of Christ. On other words, we must be made new creatures in Him. In speaking of Christ as being prepared for His early life, the Word says: "A body hast Thou prepared me." And in His flesh the enmity (carnal mind, mind of Satan) was abolished. Eph. 2:15, Rom. 8:7. The body is the capital of the mind. Then it is the mind that uses the body. An impure mind, the mind of Satan, uses the body in impure or sinful actions. A pure mind, the mind of Christ, will use the body in performing pure actions or righteous deeds. The trouble with a sinful body is all in the mind, as it is actuated or controlled by the mind of Satan, which manifests itself in all manner of concupiscence. Rom. 7:8. Get the mind of Satan out and the mind of Christ in, and you have a body cleansed from sin, and a pure life is the result.

We are God's workmanship, and His Word declares that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. He has prepared this living habitation for the mind: it is "curiously wrought," a temple which the Lord Himself has fitted up for the indwelling of His Holy Spirit. The mind controls the whole man. All our actions, good or bad, have their source in the mind. It is the mind that worships God and allies us to heavenly beings. "*Testimonies on Education*, p. 33." The same thing is taught in Rom. 7:25.

No. 3. Have you changed your teaching accordingly, so that you do not teach the same things that you did on the points referred to in the testimony?

Answer. This question is answered in the answer to question No. 2.

No. 4. Please state in a few words your views on the nature of Christ.

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Answers. Christ was the second Adam. In the first Adam, all was lost, even the seed of righteousness. When Adam sinned, divinity left him, and the flesh or humanity stood alone. The Holy Seed was lost; and now that born of Adam, flesh and blood, could not inherit the Kingdom of God. In order to save humanity, the Holy Seed, divinity and humanity combined, must be restored. This seed was found in Christ, the second Adam.

"And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee."

Mark: a babe is to be born; the promised seed. But in this production man has nothing to do. He cannot connect with the woman and produce the required seed, the second Adam, as his offspring would be only flesh or humanity, and like every other child born since the fall could not be an heir of the kingdom of God. But humanity must be saved, and in order to save humanity divinity must come in touch with humanity. How this was to be done we are told in the Scripture just quoted. The woman who was led into transgression through deception is taken, but the seed is of God, and the result was a child in which divinity and humanity is united. "Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Luke 1:35. The first Adam was also called the Son of God before he fell. In an article from the pen of Sister White in the *Signs* of January 16, 1896, we read: "The humanity of Christ is called that holy thing." And why? Simply because that in His humanity there was divinity, and where divinity dwells that thing is holy. "Christ came to the earth, taking humanity and standing as man's representative, to show in the controversy with Satan that man, as God created him, connected with the Father and the Son, could obey every divine requirement." Mrs. White, in *Signs*, June 9, 1898. Now, in order for Christ to show this, as above stated, He must come into the world just as man was when he was finally created. And He did show it. In the *Signs* of June 16, 1896, as referred to above, we read: "He was subject to the fiercest temptations that human nature can know, yet He sinned not; for sin is the transgression of the law. By faith He laid hold on divinity, even as humanity may lay hold upon infinite power through Him. Although tempted upon all points even as men are tempted, He sinned not. He did not surrender His allegiance to God as did Adam."

Christ's nature was a divine human nature. A nature which, prior to the new birth, has not been possessed by a single son or daughter of Adam since the fall. Jesus said: "I and My Father are one." He speaks of Himself as well

as the Father when He speaks of omnipotent power, and claims for Himself perfect righteousness. In Christ dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily. This is why, although tempted in all points like we are, He stood before the world untainted by the corruptions that surrounded Him." Tract, "*Christ Tempted as We Are*," page 5.

Much more might be read both from the Bible and the *Testimonies* right to the same point, but for present use what I have written ought to suffice.

No. 5. Did Christ's flesh have in it any weakness or natural tendency to sin as a result of the fall of man?

Answer. In answer to this question I refer to give largely Christ's own words as found in the Bible and in the *Spirit of Prophecy*. On all these points, in fact, we had better lay at the feet of Jesus and learn of Him. On question No. 4 I have already referred to the birth of Christ, showing from the Bible that when He was born He was called "that holy thing," and the same word proves that throughout His life here on earth, He maintained that standard. I have also shown from the *Spirit of Prophecy* that the reason He could do this was because He was filled with the fullness of the Godhead bodily. I now further read, concerning His nature, from the "*Signs*" of June 9, 1898: "There stood One in the world who was a perfect representative of the Father." And, as to how He met the temptation of Satan in the wilderness, it says: "But Christ was unmoved." And, again: "We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ." And why? Because He was sanctified when He was sent into the world. John 10:36. In fashion He was like man, all men: man in his deteriorated condition. But in His nature and character He was like the brethren; like man saved from sin; like man born again: born from above. "For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." Heb. 2:11. Yes, even like God. "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not know Me, Philip?" And without controversy great was the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh. Where was He manifest? In the flesh. Did you hear it? God was manifest in the flesh. Where? In the flesh. The flesh made weak? Ah, no. The FLESH made strong.

Hear Him as He makes the contrast between Himself, born of the Spirit, born from above and those who know only the fleshly birth - I and My Father are one. Ye are from beneath; I am from above. "Ye are of your father,

the devil." John 8:44. "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me." John 14:30. "He was a brother in our infirmities, but not possessing like passions." *Testimonies*, Vol. 2, pp. 201, 202. He came in the likeness of sinful flesh. But the likeness of a thing is not the thing itself. Here are two men. One is a godly man, the other is not, and makes no pretensions to godliness (god-likeness), and yet as we behold them, in form, shape and general appearance we see no difference. They both look alike. They only differ in life. But why do they differ? Ah! Because the godly man has had a change of nature. He has become a partaker of the divine nature, and His attributes are controlled by the mind of Christ. Yet, while in this world this godly man must bear the image of likeness of sinful flesh, the likeness of the man full of sin. So Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh, but all must agree that He possessed a nature different from that of the man full of sin.

I find a beautiful comment on the words image and likeness on page 45 of *Patriarchs and Prophets,* which I give here as having a bearing on the point before us: "Man was to bear God's image, both outward resemblance and in character. Christ alone is the express image of the Father; but man was formed in the likeness of God. His nature was in harmony with the will of God. His mind was capable of comprehending divine things. His affections were pure; his appetites and passions were under the control of reason. He was holy and happy in bearing the image of God in perfect obedience to His will." Even in his innocence man only bore the image or likeness of God. Christ alone was the express image, the real thing. So when Christ came to this world He bore the image or likeness of sinful flesh, but He was not the express image, not the real thing. He was found in fashion as a man, in the fashion of the man He came to save, but as the quotation gives it concerning man in his innocence, so Christ came, bearing the attributes of divinity. When man is born again, born of the Spirit, he is to put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." Partaking of the attributes of divinity; his faculties conformed to the will of God, that he may bear the fruits of righteousness portrayed in the extract given.

As to the weakness of the flesh of Christ, I will add this: He came to condemn sin in the flesh (humanity): to strengthen the flesh that it might bear the image of God. In His life there was nothing appeared that manifested, even the weakness of Adam. At every step of the way He was assailed by Satan with stronger temptations, if possible, than were those with which

He met the Father of the race, but not in a single instance did Christ fail or show that humanity, connected with divinity, was weak. And that we may be overcomers, He invites us to lay hold of His strength. Isa. 27:5. To suppose a Saviour with the sinful tendencies of fallen humanity would be to make an image like unto ourselves, and we would have a Christ shorn of all power to elevate man above sin, for "It is a law of human mind that by beholding we become changed. Man will rise no higher than his conceptions of truth, purity and holiness. If the mind is never exalted above the level of humanity: if it is not uplifted by faith to contemplate infinite wisdom and love, the man will be constantly sinking lower and lower. The worshipers of false gods clothed their deities with human attributes and passions, and thus their standard of character was degraded to the likeness of sinful humanity; they were defiled in consequence." *P. & P.*, p. 91.

What has been the result of the lowering of the standard among us? Where is the love, the sacrifice, the zeal that marked the former days? Why this low ebb of spirituality among us? Elevate the standard; lift up the Saviour among the people. Let them behold a perfect Redeemer, that they may be changed into His likeness and prepared for His soon coming.

No. 6. Was Mary, the mother of Jesus like all other women, naturally sinful?

Answer. Yes. That which is born of the flesh (the natural birth) is flesh. And flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. In order to be saved, every individual must be born of the Spirit, and she among them. But what we are concerned about in this issue is not what Mary was, nor what Mary's mother was, but what Christ, born of Mary, was. And one text of Scripture should forever settle the question, here it is. "Therefore, also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." It makes no difference in the settling of this question whether Mary was righteous or wicked, or whether she would be saved or lost; the Word of God declares that her offspring was holy, and back of that declaration we need not go.

No. 7. Is every child born into this world naturally inclined to evil, even before it is old enough to discern between good and evil?

Answer. Yes. The first or natural birth is of the earth earthy, and produces only humanity, and humanity without divinity is full of sin and stands in need of a Saviour. If Christ had been born as are all other children, He, too, would have needed a Saviour.

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No. 8. Do you teach that conversion embraces both the mind and the body, so that the body in this life is fully cleansed and is brought back to the condition of man before the fall, or is this a work that begins now, and is completed at the resurrection of the just?

Answer. Yes. The mind surely, and also the body, so far as its life or actions are concerned. In the "*Signs*" of March 11, 1903, and article from the pen of Mrs. White says: "Those who are born again are to live for God, and all that they do and say is to represent His holiness. Constantly they must receive power from Him. This is necessary, in order that the new life in Christ may be lived. **No part of the diseased life of sin is to remain.**" Men are accountable only for the light of the age in which they live. With the resurrected every imperfection will be left in the grave. Thus they will be ready for the finishing touch of immortality when Jesus comes. The 144,000 must also be ready for that finishing touch, and the perfection necessary for its reception must be attained in this life. "It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple (the body) of every defilement." *Test. 31*, p.210. Concerning their perfection, I read further in *P. & P.*, pp. 88, 89: "The godly character of this prophet represents the state of holiness which must be attained by those who shall be redeemed from the earth. * * * Like Enoch, God's temple will seek for purity of heart until they shall reflect the likeness of Christ."

No. 9. Do you teach that those who fully appropriate the offering of Christ by faith will never pass under the dominion of death, and that the reason men have died and do die is because they have failed to grasp the fullness of the gospel?

Answer. Upon this question much might be said. Surely no one will be translated without translation faith. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death." But how many among us really even hope to live until the Lord comes? And how many can we expect to have faith in a thing that is seldom, if ever, preached? You know that faith comes by hearing. But how can they hear without a preacher?

We are told that Enoch is a type of the translated ones. Now, if it took faith to translate Enoch, we need not to be very uneasy that anyone will be translated who does not have the faith. I teach that those who fully appropriate the power of the Gospel of Christ need not to die. Here is some of the meat of the Word which is hard to be uttered, seeing so many are dull of

hearing, and are become such as have need of milk and not of strong meat. For everyone who useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. As to what men might have attained unto in the past, my burden does not rest. Now is the time for the Laodicean or cleansing message, and the gathering out of those who are to be translated, when Jesus comes. And there is no more time than is needed to do the work, and to get them ready.

But since you have suggested it, I would like to ask a question myself, and it is this: What was it that caused all others in Enoch's day to go into the grave instead of being translated as he was? Was it not because they failed to make the preparation that Enoch made? Then know that the same failure will cause men to miss translation in this generation. "In the midst of a world by its iniquity doomed to destruction, Enoch lived a life of such close communion with God that he was not permitted to fall under the power of death." *P. & P.*, p. 88. All that have put on the robe of Christ's righteousness will stand before Him as chosen and faithful and true. Satan has no power to pluck them out of the hand of Christ. Not one soul that in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy's power.

* * * Angels of God will walk on either side of them in this world, and they will stand at last among the angels that surround the throne of God." Testimonies 32, p. 227.

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Holy Flesh: The Christological Error That Shook Adventism

In 1900, a movement swept through Indiana promising a shortcut to perfection through "Holy Flesh"—a state where fallen nature was replaced with physical sinlessness. Ellen White decisively warned: "There is not a thread of truth in the whole fabric".

This was more than local fanaticism; it was a theological "bridge" back to Rome. By claiming Christ was born with an unfallen nature to protect His sinlessness, the movement adopted the logic of the Immaculate Conception—creating a "Great Gulf" that distances the Savior from those He came to save.

Today, this same "separated Christ" is spreading once again. This book exposes the Papal roots of the Holy Flesh error and points back to the 1888 message of a "Complete Saviour" who conquered sin in our very territory: the likeness of sinful flesh. We are nearing the close of probation; it is time to settle whether we are truly out of Rome.

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