

The Possible Influence of the Trinitarian  
View of William Henry Offiler on Certain  
Aspects of His Eschatology



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THE POSSIBLE INFLUENCE OF THE TRINITARIAN VIEW  
OF WILLIAM HENRY OFFILER ON CERTAIN ASPECTS  
OF HIS ESCHATOLOGY

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty  
Northwest Bible College, Kirkland, Washington

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

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by  
Calvin David Jones  
March, 1962





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APPROVED BY:

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Thesis Committee Chairman

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## PREFACE

Interest in this subject was first raised when the writer's attention was drawn to the deviatory teachings of William Henry Offiler during a series of mid-week Bible studies at the Brighton Assemblies of God Church, Seattle, Washington. The writer discovered that among the members of his congregation there were a number who had been influenced by the teachings of William Offiler while they were members and students at the Bethel Temple church and its Bible School. Preliminary research on this subject was done in connection with a graduate course in Special Problems in Eschatology at the Northwest Bible College during the spring of 1958.

Grateful acknowledgements are hereby made to Mrs. Hildah Offiler for her assistance in providing the writer with four of her husband's personal notebooks and much of the information presented in the biographical sketch and elsewhere as indicated throughout the paper; to Rev. and Mrs. C. Joe McKnight; Rev. and Mrs. Louis Johnson; Rev. and Mrs. Otto Jantz; Rev. W. W. Patterson, Sr.; and Mr. Harold Amundson for their kindness in providing information necessary to this paper in personal interviews; to Mr. Burton Gibson and Mrs. Grace Anderson for furnishing the writer with their notes taken while students at the Bethel

Temple Bible School; to Professor Robert Chandler Dalton, graduate program advisor and thesis counselor, for his many hours of patient assistance; to the thesis committee for their assistance and consideration; and to my wife Mary Elisabeth for her understanding and encouragement and for her invaluable assistance in the typing and preparation of this paper.

Calvin David Jones





## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Statement of the Problem . . . . .	2
Purpose of the thesis . . . . .	2
Importance of the study . . . . .	2
Limits of the study . . . . .	2
Definition of Terms Used . . . . .	3
Orthodox Protestant theology . . . . .	3
Dispensational fundamentalism . . . . .	3
Deviatory views . . . . .	4
Pentecostal movement . . . . .	4
Baptism in the Holy Spirit . . . . .	4
Methods of Procedure . . . . .	5
Organization of the investigation . . . . .	5
Sources used . . . . .	5
General comments on the use of sources . . . . .	6
II. THE TRINITARIAN VIEW OF WILLIAM HENRY OFFILER . . . . .	8
Offiler's Agreement with Orthodox Protestant Theology . . . . .	8
Offiler's Deviation from Orthodox Protestant Theology . . . . .	10
The celestial symbols of the Godhead . . . . .	10
The colors of the Trinity . . . . .	11
The Trinity and the triads of Scripture . . . . .	12



CHAPTER	PAGE
The name of the Trinity . . . . .	14
Offiler's Views on Water Baptism . . . . .	15
Offiler's baptismal formula . . . . .	16
The baptism in the Holy Spirit in relationship with water baptism . . . . .	17
Baptism and regeneration . . . . .	18
Summary . . . . .	20
III. THE ESCHATOLOGICAL VIEWS OF WILLIAM HENRY OFFILER	21
A Survey of Offiler's Deviatory Dispensational Views . . . . .	21
Offiler's dispensational system . . . . .	21
Offiler and the time of the Second Advent . . . . .	27
The dispensations and the symbols of the Trinity . . . . .	32
Daniel's Seventy Weeks . . . . .	34
The beginning of the seventy weeks . . . . .	34
The division of the seventy weeks . . . . .	35
The division of the seventieth week . . . . .	36
The abomination of desolation . . . . .	37
Daniel 11 . . . . .	38
The Great Mystery of the Church . . . . .	39
The identity of the Woman of Revelation 12 . . . . .	41
The identity of the 144,000 . . . . .	44
The identity of the Manchild . . . . .	45
The time of the marriage of the Lamb . . . . .	47

CHAPTER

PAGE

The Resurrections . . . . . 48

    The two resurrections . . . . . 49

    Five translations . . . . . 49

    The two witnesses . . . . . 49

The Millennium . . . . . 51

The Final Judgment . . . . . 52

Heaven . . . . . 52

    Heaven in the sun . . . . . 53

    Heaven seven minutes away . . . . . 54

    The sun inhabited . . . . . 55

    The New Jerusalem in the sun . . . . . 56

    Heaven not always in the sun . . . . . 56

    The problem of a flaming sun . . . . . 57

Summary . . . . . 58

IV. POSSIBLE DETERMINANTS OF OFFILER'S DEVIATORY VIEWS ON THE TRINITY AND ESCHATOLOGY . . . . .

Mystical Experiences . . . . . 62

    Offiler's vision and healing . . . . . 62

    Offiler's vision and call to the ministry . . . . . 64

    Offiler's vision and baptism in the Holy Spirit . . . . . 65

    Offiler's vision and fast in Los Angeles . . . . . 66

    Offiler's mystical experiences and his theology . . . . . 67

Literature . . . . . 68

	xi
CHAPTER	PAGE
<u>Gospel in the Stars</u> . . . . .	69
<u>A Remarkable Biblical Discovery</u> . . . . .	70
<u>Celestial Symbol Interpreted</u> . . . . .	71
Other Influences . . . . .	72
The New Issue . . . . .	72
Offiler's insistence upon a literal translation . . . . .	74
The death of Offiler's daughter Edith . . . . .	75
Summary . . . . .	76
V. THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OFFILER'S DEVIATORY TRINITARIAN VIEWS AND HIS DEVIATORY ESCHATOLOGY .	79
Conclusion . . . . .	85
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	87
APPENDIX A. A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF WILLIAM HENRY OFFILER . . . . .	93
APPENDIX B. THE DISPENSATIONAL CHARTS OF WILLIAM HENRY OFFILER . . . . .	107
APPENDIX C. DOCTRINAL STATEMENT OF BETHEL TEMPLE BIBLE SCHOOL . . . . .	110

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

ILLUSTRATION	PAGE
1. Picture of William Henry Offiler . . . . .	94
2. Series of Pictures of Bethel Temple . . . . .	105
3. Picture of Remodeling of Bethel Temple and News Paper Article . . . . .	106





## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The Pentecostal revival, with its emphasis on the imminent return of Christ, has contributed its part to the growing interest among Christians concerning the doctrines of eschatology. Among those who shared this special interest were some who did not have a formal theological training. It was almost inevitable that among them, there would be those who would arrive at conclusions which were at variance with the generally accepted views of orthodox Protestant theology and dispensational fundamentalism. William Henry Offiler, Pentecostal leader in the Pacific Northwest, and Pastor of Bethel Temple in Seattle, Washington was one of these men.

William Offiler claimed to base his views upon special revelations and prophetic insight. Within his doctrinal system he developed a unique and complex apocalyptic eschatology, which seems to have been influenced by his views on the Trinity. Offiler's views on the Trinity deviated from orthodox Protestant theology. His views on eschatology deviated from orthodox Protestant theology and dispensational fundamentalism.

## I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Purpose of the thesis. The purpose of this thesis is: (1) to examine the possible determinants of Offiler's deviatory views, and (2) to investigate his deviatory views on the Trinity in relation to their influence on his deviatory eschatological views.

Importance of the study. Due to Offiler's influence upon the Pentecostal movement in the Pacific Northwest and some areas of the foreign mission field, and because his teachings have certainly influenced some of his followers, through whom his teachings are being perpetuated, the subject of this paper has importance.<sup>1</sup>

Limits of the study. There will be no attempt to review all of Offiler's theology, but rather to confine the discussion to the areas where he deviated from the orthodox Protestant position on his views of the Trinity and from dispensational fundamentalism in the area of eschatology.<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this paper the discussion of Offiler's influence will be confined to his relationship within the

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix A, for a discussion of Offiler's life and influence upon the Pentecostal movement.

<sup>2</sup>See pp. 3, 4, for a definition of orthodox Protestant theology and dispensational fundamentalism.

Pentecostal movement.<sup>3</sup>

## II. DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

Orthodox Protestant theology. Orthodox Protestant theology in this paper represents the basic doctrines of the Church since New Testament times such as: belief in the divine inspiration of the Scriptures; the self-revelation of God eternally existing in three Persons--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; salvation by grace through faith in the redemptive work of Christ; the physical resurrection of Christ; the resurrections of the righteous unto everlasting life and the damned unto everlasting punishment; and the consummation of the age, with the appearing of the "new heavens and new earth."<sup>4</sup>

Dispensational fundamentalism. By dispensational fundamentalism is meant that school of Biblical interpretation which divides the economy of time into seven periods from eternity to eternity. This is a viewpoint held by

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<sup>3</sup>For a discussion of some of the eschatological views held by the Pentecostal movement, see Frank M. Boyd, Ages and Dispensations (Springfield, Mo.: Gospel Publishing House, n.d.). Cf., Bibliography for other Pentecostal writers: P. C. Nelson, Myer Pearlman, Ralph M. Riggs.

<sup>4</sup>For a presentation of the post-apostolic and reformation orthodox doctrines see the creeds of Nicea and Chalcedon, Luther's catechism, and the Augsburg and Westminster confessions.



many conservative Christians, and also by Pentecostal groups.<sup>5</sup>

Deviatory views. Those views which differ from the orthodox Protestant position and from dispensational fundamentalism will be considered as being deviatory.

Pentecostal movement. The Pentecostal movement, as referred to in this paper, is that twentieth century revival movement which is marked by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Christian believers as accompanied by charismatic manifestations (cf., Acts 2; I Corinthians 12, 14), especially that part of this revival movement known as the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit. The "baptism in the Holy Spirit" is the bestowal upon the Christian of a special anointing of the Holy Spirit for power and service accompanied by a glossolalia manifestation.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>For a discussion of the fundamentalist dispensational views on eschatology, see J. Dwight Pentecost, Things To Come (Findlay, Ohio: Dunham Publishing Company, 1958); cf., footnote 3, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup>For a discussion of the modern Pentecostal movement see Robert Chandler Dalton, Tongues Like as of Fire (Springfield, Mo.: Gospel Pub. House, 1942); cf., Carl Brumback, Suddenly . . . From Heaven (Springfield, Mo.: Gospel Pub. House, 1961).

### III. METHODS OF PROCEDURE

The presentation in this paper will be descriptive rather than polemic in nature. In discussing the doctrines of eschatology as held by Offiler, it is assumed that the generally accepted position is that held by the fundamentalist dispensational school of thought.

Organization of the investigation. In chapter two Offiler's deviatory views on the Trinity will be examined. Chapter three will be given to an examination of Offiler's deviatory eschatological views. In the fourth chapter the possible determinants of Offiler's deviatory views will be examined. The fifth chapter will be a discussion of the inter-relationship and counter-influence between Offiler's deviatory Trinitarian views, his deviatory eschatological views, and the determinants of those views. In addition to the main body of the thesis, a biographical sketch of William Henry Offiler will be presented in Appendix A. Offiler's dispensational charts will appear in Appendix B, and the Doctrinal Statement of the Bethel Temple Bible School will be set forth in Appendix C.

Sources used. The sources listed in the bibliography include 507 pages of printed text by Offiler, 224 pages of mimeographed, typewritten, and hand-written notes by Offiler,

and 294 pages of notes by Offiler's associates and some of his students. Of the above there were five main sources: Offiler's books (1) God and His Bible or the Harmonies of Divine Revelation; (2) God and His Name; (3) The Majesty of the Symbol or Bible Astronomy; and (4) The Seventy Weeks; and (5) Offiler's personal notes as copied by McKnight.<sup>7</sup>

Reference is made to, and quotations are taken from twenty-five books and three periodicals with articles by various authors other than Offiler. Seventeen other books were used as sources for background reading in connection with the research for this paper. In addition to the above mentioned sources, information was obtained through personal interviews with ten individuals who had been closely associated with Offiler.

General comments on the use of sources. Although Offiler published several books, pamphlets, a profusion of mimeographed notes, and a monthly magazine, there were areas of information necessary to this thesis which could be obtained only through personal interviews. For example, he

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<sup>7</sup>William Henry Offiler, God and His Bible or the Harmonies of Divine Revelation (Seattle: Bethel Temple, Inc., 1946); Offiler, God and His Name (Seattle: published by the author, 1932); Offiler, The Majesty of the Symbol or Bible Astronomy (Seattle: published by the author, 1933); Offiler, The Seventy Weeks (Seattle: published by the author, n.d.); C. Joe McKnight, "Offiler's Notes" (Seattle: Offiler's personal notes copied by McKnight, n.d.). (Typewritten.)



left no published autobiography, nor any written record of his mystical experiences, nor any history of his ministry. The scope of his influence could be pieced together only from information obtained through personal interviews. This never can be fully reported due to the fact that many who were influenced by his pulpit ministry, radio ministry, and missionary program were in other churches or moved away from the Seattle area. Furthermore, while his writings contained some indication as to his ideas concerning the "Manchild" of Revelation chapter twelve, his mystical experiences, the influence of the "New Issue" problem upon his Trinitarian views, and the influence of his daughter's death upon his views on heaven, it was left to personal interviews to provide confirmation concerning the findings reported in connection with his beliefs on these subjects.



## CHAPTER II

### THE TRINITARIAN VIEW OF WILLIAM HENRY OFFILER

It was in regard to the Trinity that the first of Offiler's deviations from orthodox Protestant theology occurred. As his deviant Trinitarian views are inter-related with his views on water baptism it is necessary to examine these views in this same chapter.

#### I. OFFILER'S AGREEMENT WITH ORTHODOX PROTESTANT THEOLOGY

William Offiler did not leave a personal statement of doctrinal beliefs, nor does Bethel Temple have a formal doctrinal statement. The only formal statement that exists which represents the doctrinal beliefs of Offiler is that which appears in the catalogue of Bethel Temple Bible School.<sup>1</sup> That doctrinal statement shows Offiler's agreement with orthodox Protestant theology in regard to the Trinity:

2. [We believe] In the One true Self-existent, Eternal, Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Immutable Triune God, Creator of heaven and earth.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix C, p. 111, for the complete "Doctrinal Statement" of the Bethel Temple Bible School.

<sup>2</sup>Bethel Temple Bible School Catalogue, 1960-1961 "Doctrinal Statement" (Seattle: Bethel Temple Bible School, 1960), p. 14. According to Pastor C. Joe McKnight, this is the only formal doctrinal statement of Bethel Temple, and it would represent the beliefs of W. H. Offiler (McKnight, personal interview, December 29, 1961.)

Offiler's acceptance of the orthodox Protestant view of the Trinity is clearly seen from the following statement:

The God whom we worship is always revealed in His Word as Threefold in His Nature and Being. Never!-- from the first word of the Book of Genesis to the last word in the Book of Revelation is the God of the Bible manifested as the singular, solitary numeral, or number ONE. The Oneness of God is NOT numerical! He is a oneness of thought and purpose! A Oneness of Ministry and Love. It is a Oneness of holy accord and harmony, and we repeat that the Oneness of God is NEVER numerical. He never means the number ONE.<sup>3</sup>

Offiler did not confuse the unique personality of each member of the Godhead: "While representing God as One it [the Bible] ascribes perfect Deity to all Three. The Father is Divine - A separate being. The Son is Divine - A distinct personality. The Holy Spirit is Divine - A distinct Person."<sup>4</sup>

Offiler reasoned that "The Threeness of the Godhead is demanded by the Law. The perfection of Testimony is in the mouth of Three! If Jehovah was not Threefold in His nature and Being He could not fulfill His own commandment."<sup>5</sup> He also recognized the distinction of substance in the Godhead,

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<sup>3</sup>God and His Name, p. 5. Because of his deviatory views on the Trinity and water baptism, Offiler was accused of being "Jesus Only." This he emphatically denied.

<sup>4</sup>McKnight, "Offiler's Notes," p. 64.

<sup>5</sup>God and His Bible, p. 16.

and held to the equality of the oneness of essence of the Trinity. "The attributes of the Godhead are applied to all alike. In the same measure. . . ."6

## II. OFFILER'S DEVIATION FROM ORTHODOX PROTESTANT THEOLOGY

The celestial symbols of the Godhead. Offiler believed that the subject of the Trinity should not be studied separate from the typical creations, and that too great an emphasis could not be laid on this suggestion.<sup>7</sup> By "typical creations" he meant the sun, the moon, and the stars, which he considered to be celestial symbols of the Godhead. Beginning with the sun as the created manifestation of God the Father, Offiler proceeded to construct an elaborate and inter-twined symbology. He asserted that the moon is the celestial symbol of the Son, and the stars are symbolic of the Holy Spirit. "In other words, the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars are the divinely created symbols of the family of God in the Heavens, . . . ."8

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<sup>6</sup>McKnight, op. cit., p. 65. In this statement Offiler claimed that the attributes of God are shared "in the same measure" by each Person of the Godhead, but in his book The Majesty of the Symbol (p. 16) he makes distinctions in the specific attributes of the members of the Trinity.

<sup>7</sup>God and His Name, p. 19; God and His Bible, p. 38.

<sup>8</sup>God and His Bible, p. 38; God and His Name, p. 21.



The colors of the Trinity. Offiler's book The Majesty of the Symbol is dedicated to the subject of Biblical symbolism, as interpreted by Offiler to bear upon the Trinity, and as he relates this symbology to his dispensational system. To each celestial symbol of the Trinity--the sun, moon, and stars--Offiler assigned a respective color.<sup>9</sup> The color of the Father is "golden yellow," standing for light; that of the Son is "crimson red," representing the atonement; and that of the Holy Spirit is "heavenly blue," representing heaven.<sup>10</sup> He based his selection of these colors upon the three primary colors of the spectrum:

The Rainbow . . . the Bow of Promise contains 3 distinct colors, Golden yellow, crimson red, and heavenly blue, a marvelous type [symbol] of the Godhead bodily as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>The Majesty of the Symbol, pp. 21, 22.

<sup>10</sup>This symbolism was portrayed in the sanctuary of Bethel Temple. Until 1961 there hung on the wall behind the platform of Bethel Temple three large signs constructed of plywood and neon lights. A large disk, painted yellow, hung on the left side, and over the center there was another disk painted red. To the right there hung three six-pointed Davidic stars painted blue. It is interesting that he used the Davidic star as a symbol of the Holy Spirit, rather than as a symbol of Christ, the Son of David. Until the remodeling of Bethel Temple in January of 1962 a Davidic star, with the name of Bethel Temple upon it, was affixed to the facade of the building at Second and Lenora Streets. See Appendix A, pp. 105, 106.

<sup>11</sup>Burton Gibson, "Notes taken from Offiler's lectures," November 30, 1939; cf., The Majesty of the Symbol, p. 21.



The Trinity and the triads of Scripture. To Offiler there appeared the probability that there existed some symbolic relationship between the various triads of the Scriptures and the Trinity.<sup>12</sup> Among these triads he listed in addition to the sun, moon, and stars, the following: (1) the three storied Ark of Noah; (2) the three fathers of Israel--Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; (3) the three angels--Gabriel (whom he identified as the angelic manifestation of the Holy Spirit), Michael (whom he identified as Christ), and the Angel of the Lord (whom he identified as the "Lord-Jesus-Christ") whom, it is assumed, he meant to be representative of the Father alone;<sup>13</sup> (4) the three measures of meal which Sarah baked for the visiting angels as celebrated in the Afirkomen of the Passover; (5) the Mercy-seat with its

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<sup>12</sup>Offiler seemed willing to go to almost any extremity to carry out the pattern of threeness of the Godhead. E.g., in Offiler's reference to Moses' rod there is an illustration of his employment of mixed symbolism: "It was this same Rod which Moses threw on the ground (Ex. 4:1-4) and which became the serpent, which, in Bible symbology, is the Devil! From this serpent Moses fled until he heard the Voice of God commanding him to take it by the tail. This he did, and immediately the serpent became the Rod. This rod, in passing through the various phases of its divine operations, is, in itself, a complete type of the Godhead Bodily, for first of all it becomes, under Divine Authority, the Rod of God." (God and His Name, p. 51). Thus, in the space of four sentences, he has the same rod, in its serpentine form, representing the Devil, and then in turn representing "the Godhead Bodily."

<sup>13</sup>God and His Bible, pp. 92-94.

two Cherubim of Glory; (6) the contents of the Ark of the Covenant--the tablets of the Law, the pot of manna, and the fruit-bearing rod; (7) the three witnesses required by the Law; (8) the three feasts of Israel--the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles; (9) the three days and nights (a) that Jonah spent in the belly of the fish, (b) and the three days that Christ spent in the tomb;<sup>14</sup> (10) the three coverings of the Tabernacle; (11) the triune manifestation of the Godhead at the baptism of Jesus in Jordan--the voice (symbolic of the Father), the Son, and the Dove (symbolic of the Holy Spirit); (12) the High Priest, the Urim, and the Thummim; (13) the three applications of the oil in the cleansing of lepers (Lev. 14:25); (14) in Moses' rod, the rock which he smote, and the "living waters" which flowed from the rock (Ex. 17: 5-7); et. al.<sup>15</sup>

One other triad Offiler considered as symbolic of the Trinity and the respective dispensations which he assigned to each member of the Godhead is taken from I John 5:7, 8.

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<sup>14</sup>Offiler had his own chronology concerning the Passion Week; See God and His Bible, pp. 90, 91; W. H. Offiler, The Resurrection (Seattle: published by the author, n.d.), pp. 16, 17, 29. Cf., Louis Johnson, "The Last Week of Our Lord" (Seattle: The Little Chapel, n.d.). (Mimeographed.); Louis Johnson, "Did Christ Go Into Hell?" (Seattle: published by the author, n.d.). (Mimeographed.)

<sup>15</sup>God and His Bible, pp. 45, 46; God and His Name, pp. 56, 57.



For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. (KJV)

Offiler ignored the sequence of these verses and identified the Father with the water; the Son (the Word) with the blood; and the spirit with the Holy Ghost.<sup>16</sup> To pair them according to their sequence as set forth in this Scripture would destroy his pattern by cross-association of his various symbolisms: the Father would be paired with the Spirit; the Son (the Word) would be paired with the water; and the Holy Ghost would be paired with the blood.<sup>17</sup>

The Name of the Trinity. Offiler worked out a detailed exposition, claiming that the words "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost" are not the proper name of God, but titles, and that the name of the Trinity is "Lord-Jesus-Christ."<sup>18</sup> Lord, claimed Offiler, is the name of the Father; Jesus is the name of the Son; and Christ is the name of the Holy Spirit:

The Father God has a definite Name, the LORD! The Son has a definite Name, JESUS. The Holy Spirit has a definite Name, the CHRIST.

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<sup>16</sup>God and His Bible, pp. 29-32.

<sup>17</sup>When it was more in harmony with his preconceived symbolical system to change the sequence of the verses, Offiler did not hesitate to transpose the various symbols so that he maintained the three dispensations as designated on his chart (See Appendix B, p. 108).

<sup>18</sup>God and His Name, pp. 76-92; God and His Bible, pp. 21-29.

These Three Names are significant of the Godhead Bodily and express the Tri-unity of the Godhead in a Triune Name, the LORD-JESUS-CHRIST. The LORD-JESUS-CHRIST is the Name of the Godhead Bodily as FATHER-SON-HOLY SPIRIT.<sup>19</sup>

Offiler's book, God and His Name, is given primarily to the development of this proposition concerning the name of the Trinity.<sup>20</sup>

### III. OFFILER'S VIEWS ON WATER BAPTISM

Offiler thought that Jesus commanded baptism "in the name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19), but that the New Testament record indicates that water baptism, as practiced by the apostolic church, was always in some form of the name "Lord-Jesus-Christ."<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>W. H. Offiler, "The Name of the Holy Spirit" (Seattle: Bethel Temple Bible School, Oct. 18, 1934), (Mimeographed.) Cf., God and His Name, chapters 6, 7.

<sup>20</sup>The Assemblies of God disapprove of the application of the name "Lord Jesus Christ" to any person other than the Son of God. "The appellation, 'Lord Jesus Christ,' is a proper name. It is never applied, in the New Testament, either to the Father or to the Holy Ghost. It therefore belongs exclusively to the Son of God. (Romans 1:1-3, 7; 2 John 3.)" (General Council of the Assemblies of God, "Statement of Fundamental Truths," The Pentecostal Evangel, Number 2487 (January 7, 1962), p. 16); cf., Carl Brumback, God in Three Persons (Cleveland, Tenn.: Pathway Press, 1959).

<sup>21</sup>God and His Name, pp. 86-106; God and His Bible, pp. 29, 79-86.



Offiler's baptismal formula. Offiler recognized that Christ, in Matthew 28:19, expressly commanded baptism in the name of "the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." He felt that a denial of this would impeach the entire testimony of Jesus Christ. But he also believed that the apostles were directed by the Holy Spirit to baptize in the name of "Jesus" and its compound forms with "Lord" and "Christ."

If either of these scriptures can be proved to be wrong, then the entire structure of the Eternal Word must collapse. But, thank God, neither is wrong, and if neither is wrong then both must be RIGHT, and if BOTH records are RIGHT, then BOTH should be used, for ONE must be synonymous with the OTHER. They must of necessity blend into one another . . . the NAME of the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST is the LORD-JESUS-CHRIST.<sup>22</sup>

Offiler thought that both the words "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" and "Lord-Jesus-Christ" should be employed in forming the proper baptismal formula. He believed, further, that "the following order was given to him of the Lord":

According to the words of Jesus Christ, (Matt. 28:19) and the Revelation of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38, 8:16-17; 10:47-48; 19:1-6)

"I baptize thee in the NAME of

The FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST

the

LORD -- JESUS -- CHRIST

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<sup>22</sup>God and His Name, pp. 91, 92; cf., William Phillips Hall, A Remarkable Biblical Discovery or "The Name" of God, According to the Scriptures (New York: American Tract Society, 1929), pp. 62-75.

into the likeness of His Death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the Glory of the Father, even so you also shall walk in newness of life."<sup>23</sup>

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit in relationship with Water Baptism. While Offiler followed the Pentecostal tradition in associating the "baptism in the Holy Spirit" with the glossolalia phenomenon, he seemed to think that there is some spiritual sense in which the two baptisms both "blend" into the one baptism spoken of in Ephesians 4:4-7 (cf., I Corinthians 12:13): "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all" (RSV).

Baptism in Water should always be followed by Baptism with the Holy Spirit, if the candidate has not already received it.<sup>24</sup>

Here he makes a distinction between the two experiences, but he goes on to say:

There is ONE Baptism. Eph. 4:5. Thus Baptism in Water and Baptism in the Holy Spirit is looked upon as ONE operation. Witness the Baptism of Jesus in Water and the Spirit at the same moment. Lk. 3:21, 22. [The] Baptism of Jesus in Water and the Spirit [occurred] at the same moment. [This is] The Perfect example.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>McKnight, "Offiler's Notes," p. 85; cf., God and His Name, p. 94. This is the baptismal formula used today at Bethel Temple and the Little Chapel in Seattle.

<sup>24</sup>McKnight, op. cit.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.; cf., God and His Name, pp. 94, 95; God and His Bible, pp. 80-83.



Offiler believed that salvation (being washed in the blood of Christ by faith) together with water baptism (in the name Lord-Jesus-Christ) and the baptism in the Holy Spirit (as evidenced by speaking in tongues) constituted the normal Christian experience of the New Testament Church, and that water baptism without a baptism in the Holy Spirit is short of the New Testament pattern. He believed that water baptism is a physical or outward evidence of salvation, and that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a spiritual evidence of salvation, salvation being the one baptism into the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:5) of which the baptisms in water and the Holy Spirit are symbolic. W. W. Patterson reflects this position of Offiler's in his exposition on water baptism.

Paul by thus baptizing them into the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ baptized them into the Lord Jesus Christ, showing us that baptism into the Name and the Person are one, for the Name and the Person are one and inseparable. His name embodies what He is and His Name conveys the same unto those that believe. They were baptized into the one Lord by this one baptism (Eph. 4:5). . . .<sup>26</sup>

Baptism and Regeneration. While Offiler did not believe in baptismal regeneration (salvation through observing the ordinance of water baptism) he did believe that baptism in the name Lord-Jesus Christ was necessary to inclusion in the Bride of Christ.

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<sup>26</sup>W. W. Patterson, Sr., "Bible Study Outlines used at the Netherland Indies Bible Institute" (Seattle: published by the author, n.d.), pp. 27, 30-37.

That Offiler did not believe in baptismal regeneration is clearly stated in his book God and His Name:

It is also quite evident that neither the Baptism in Water, nor yet the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, are in any way related to the experience of the New Birth! Both of these experiences are subsequent to the New Birth. Jesus Christ was Born the Son of God thirty years before He experienced either Baptism. So neither baptism was necessary to the New Birth. Both are for the express purpose of making the believer a partner with Jesus in all diverse experiences of Christlike living, and for the providing of a similar anointing that the flesh life of the christian may be completely subjugated to all the will of God.<sup>27</sup>

However, that baptism according to his formula was necessary to inclusion in the Bride of Christ is seen in Offiler's comments on re-baptism.

When that marriage is consummated, the wife of the Lamb will take His name, and that New Name is the name of the LORD-JESUS-CHRIST. Furthermore, in all the various ordinances and sacraments of the Church there is but ONE in which the NAME is ordained of reception, and that is the ordinance of Water Baptism: . . .<sup>28</sup>

He believed that "a church denomination or Assembly that refuses to take the NAME of the LORD-JESUS-CHRIST in Water Baptism could never find a place in HIS BRIDE."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>God and His Name, p. 93.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 98.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 104. This does not mean that Offiler believed that others are not saved, but only that they are not included in the "Bride of Christ." C. Joe McKnight, personal interview, April 26, 1962; Louis Johnson, personal interview, April 27, 1962; cf., God and His Name, p. 93.



Summary. In this chapter it has been observed that:

(1) Offiler accepted the orthodox Protestant view that God is eternally existent in three Persons who are distinct as to identity, but equal in essence. (2) Offiler's deviation from the orthodox Protestant view on the Trinity occurred (a) in connection with his designation of celestial symbols--the sun, moon, and stars--to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit respectively; (b) in his assigning to each celestial symbol and its respective member of the Trinity one of the primary colors of the spectrum; (c) in applying to the Trinity a number of traids which he considered symbolical of the Godhead; and (d) in connection with the name of the Trinity, which he believed to be "Lord-Jesus-Christ." (3) His view concerning the name of the Trinity was further expressed in his baptismal formula, and (4) although he did not believe in "baptismal regeneration", he did hold the deviatory views (a) that baptism in the name Lord-Jesus-Christ is necessary to inclusion in the Bride of Christ, and (b) that there is a sense in which water baptism in the name of the Godhead and baptism in the Holy Spirit are both part of the same operation whereby the believer is "baptized" into the Body of Christ which is the Church.

## CHAPTER III

### THE ESCHATOLOGICAL VIEWS OF WILLIAM HENRY OFFILER

In the preceding chapter the Trinitarian views of W. H. Offiler were examined, and his deviatory views on the Trinity and water baptism were observed. Eschatology was another field of study to which Offiler devoted much of his interest and pulpit ministry. It was also in this area that he deviated to the greatest extent from dispensational fundamentalism as generally held by Pentecostalists. This chapter will examine Offiler's eschatological views and the influence upon them of his deviatory Trinitarian beliefs.

#### I. A SURVEY OF OFFILER'S DEVIATORY DISPENSATIONAL VIEWS

Offiler deviated from dispensational fundamentalism in the development of a tri-dispensational system and deviant views in regard to certain events which occur in his third dispensation.

Offiler's dispensational system. Offiler taught that there are three dispensations: the first dispensation is that of the Lord (the Father); the second dispensation is that of Jesus (the Son); and the third dispensation is that of Christ (the Holy Spirit). Offiler divided the span of



time into seven days of one thousand years each, constituting the perfect week of the Lord.

The Lord's Week is a week of seven days, each day of the Lord is one thousand years long. . . .

The first day reaches from Adam to the translation of Enoch. The second day reaches from Enoch to the covenants with Abraham. The third day, extends from Abraham to the translation of Elijah, and the building of the Temple. The fourth day, reaches from the translation of Elijah, to the Birth, the anointing, the ministry, the death, the resurrection, and to the ascension of the Lord Jesus. The fifth day is from the blessed Christ, to the middle of the present age, 1000 A.D. The sixth day, reaches from the middle of the present dispensation, to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord, the sabbath of the ages. The Kingdom Age, The Millennial Age, The Thousand Years.

If the seventh day of the Lord is one thousand years extent, so are all the rest. The one thousand years of the Kingdom Age, Rev. 20:6, 8, seals the fact of the days that have gone before.

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From the fall into sin, to the end of the Kingdom Age, is a period of seven thousand years. <sup>1</sup>This comprehends ALL TIME. From Eternity to Eternity.<sup>1</sup>

Offiler divided the first six days of his week into three pairs of two days each to form his three dispensations.

These Ages, or Dispensations, are Three, and are measured off in the various prophecies that pertain to the times. Times, as revealed in the Bible, is a period of 7,000 years! No more and no less. It is composed of seven one thousand year days of the Lord. One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years is as one day. (II Peter 3:8; Psalm 90:4.) Six of these

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<sup>1</sup>God and His Bible, pp. 179, 180; cf., Patterson, op. cit., p. 5.

one thousand year days have been given to man. The seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord our God. It is the thousand years of the Kingdom Age. . . . The last period of time before the establishment of the New Heavens and New Earth. . . .

The six days of man's operations is again divided by the Spirit of the Lord into Three dispensations of two thousand years each. Each dispensation is equal with the others as concerning time. . . . As Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are co-equal and co-eternal in all things, so the dispensations of time are exactly the same in duration--two thousand years each. The first dispensation reaches from Adam to Abraham, two thousand years.<sup>1</sup> The Central Dispensation reaches from Abraham to the birth of Christ, two thousand years. The third dispensation reaches from Christ in His First coming to Christ in His Second coming, two thousand years.<sup>2</sup>

Offiler was interested in the possibilities of Biblical numerology and symbology. Having decided upon three dispensations to coincide with his pattern of symbology for the Trinity, he went to considerable length attempting to fit Bible prophecy into this framework. There are, however, apparent contradictions, as, for example, in the fixing of the chronology of the dispensations.

In one of the preceding quotations (cf. ante, p. 22) Offiler designated the end of the first dispensation and the beginning of the second with the Abrahamic covenants (he did not say which one). Elsewhere Offiler has the second or central dispensation open with the birth of Isaac: "The second dispensation opens with the birth of the Typical Son Isaac who was offered as the Living Sacrifice on Mount

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<sup>2</sup>God and His Name, pp. 62, 63.



Moriah. . . ."3 Then, in another place, he has the second dispensation opening with the offering up of Isaac: "It began with the offering up of Isaac, the son of Promise, and ended with the sacrifice of the Promised Son."<sup>4</sup> Thus, he ambiguously marked the end of the first dispensation and the beginning of the second dispensation at two, if not three, different times: (1) the calling of Abraham, (2) the birth of Isaac, and (3) the offering up of Isaac on Mt. Moriah.<sup>5</sup>

The problem of fitting Offiler's dispensational system into three two-thousand year periods became even more difficult when he endeavored to fix the end of the second or central dispensation and the beginning of the third. In one place he ended the second and began the third dispensation with the birth of John the Baptist: "This is the Dispensation of the Spirit! Beginning with the outpouring at the Birth of John. . . ."6 Then, in the same sentence, he included the birth of Jesus as the beginning of this dispensation.<sup>7</sup> But in his book The Seventy Weeks, he marked the anointing of Christ with the Holy Spirit as occurring at

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<sup>3</sup>Majesty of the Symbol, p. 130.

<sup>4</sup>God and His Name, p. 64.

<sup>5</sup>By emphatically insisting that each dispensation is no more nor less than 2000 years Offiler marked the time of Abraham's calling, or Isaac's birth or sacrifice as having occurred exactly 2000 years after Adam's creation.

<sup>6</sup>God and His Bible, p. 30

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

his baptism in Jordan.

. . . While Jesus Christ was born the Son of God he did not become the anointed Son, until that moment when the Holy Ghost, in the form of a Dove rested upon Him. .  
8

We are left to decide, then, whether the Holy Spirit came upon the Son of God for the first time, at his birth, or at his baptism in Jordan thirty years later; and to determine the beginning of the third dispensation accordingly.

In another place, he marked the death of Christ as the occurrence which ended the second dispensation and began the third:

This central Dispensation reaches from Abraham to Jesus Christ, a period of Two Thousand years and during this period is comprehended all the sacrificial Blood ever shed, for it covers the entire time of Covenant Sacrifice, which begins in Abraham, through Isaac, the type, down to that sacrifice on the Cross of Calvary of Jesus, the only begotten Son of God!<sup>9</sup>

Offiler was quite specific as to the exactness of this time: "Jesus was crucified in the evening of the fourth day or at the end of 4,000 years!" he claimed.<sup>10</sup>

However, he designated still one more time for the beginning of the third dispensation--the Day of Pentecost:

. . . the last dispensation (which is the dispensation

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<sup>8</sup>W. W. Offiler, The Seventy Weeks (Seattle: Temple Publishing House, n.d.), p. 9.

<sup>9</sup>God and His Bible, pp. 31; 33, 34.

<sup>10</sup>McKnight, op. cit., p. 66.



of the Spirit) opened with the outpouring of the Blessed Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost. . . .<sup>11</sup>

Thus, Offiler set five different times for the ending of the second dispensation and the beginning of the third: (1) the birth of John the Baptist, (2) the birth of Jesus, (3) the baptism of Jesus in Jordan, (4) the death of Christ at Calvary, and (5) the Day of Pentecost.<sup>12</sup>

A study of Offiler's dispensational chart<sup>13</sup> will disclose his method of substituting his tri-dispensationalism for the more traditional dispensational system.<sup>14</sup> The tribulation period is included by Offiler in his third dispensation. While he was not clear concerning the beginning points of the second and third dispensations, Offiler was consistent in marking the end of the third dispensation with the ushering in of the Millennium. However, he identified the Millennial Age with the beginning of eternity:

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<sup>11</sup>God and His Bible, p. 34.

<sup>12</sup>Offiler emphatically declared that each dispensation is no more nor less than 2000 years. (God and His Name, pp. 62-64; God and His Bible, p. 42). Thus, he positively marks these events as occurring exactly four thousand years after the creation of Adam (if, indeed, time began with the creation or sin of Adam instead of with the creation of the solar system by which man marks time; cf., p. 23.)

<sup>13</sup>See Appendix B, p. 108.

<sup>14</sup>For a chart study of the more traditional dispensational system see Clarence Larkin, Dispensational Truth; cf., Peter Hoogendam, "God's Program of Last Things," Moody Monthly (Special Prophecy Issue), Vol. 60, No. 9. (May, 1960), pp. 17-19, 25. R. F. Yeadon and G. W. Gamlen, in their teaching of the Tabernacle symbolism at the Bethel

The one Thousand Years of the Millennial Age constitutes the beginnings of eternity for all who are permitted to attain to that Kingdom State.<sup>15</sup>

If, however, the Millennium is placed within the realm of eternity, it leaves the "seven day" cycle of time incomplete, and elsewhere Offiler identified the Millennium as being the seventh day of this time cycle.<sup>16</sup>

Offiler and the time of the Second Advent. While Offiler was inconsistent in his various attempts at setting the time when the third dispensation begins, on his chart he marked the time at the crucifixion.<sup>17</sup> In so doing, he predicted the time of the second return of Christ and the beginning of the tribulation period, which he set as beginning three and one-half years before the second advent. He insisted that the present dispensation will end exactly two thousand years from the time it began:

. . . a dispensation covers a period of time 2000 years in extent, and Two Thousand Years is 40 jubilees. Each dispensation is of exactly the same duration, that

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Temple Bible School, overlaid the plan of the Tabernacle upon Offiler's dispensational chart, placing the Court of the Tabernacle in the second dispensation (beginning with Moses and extending through the Cross.) The Holy Place covers the third dispensation; and the Most Holy Place is identified with the Millennial Age: see R. F. Yeadon, "Tabernacle Studies" (Seattle: Bethel Temple Bible School, 1940), chart of the tabernacle. (Mimeographed.); Appendix B, p. 109

<sup>15</sup>The Majesty of the Symbol, p. 128.

<sup>16</sup>Supra, pp. 22, 23. <sup>17</sup>See Appendix B, p. 108



is, 2000 years, or 40 Jubilees, and three times  
 forty equals 120! At the 120th Jubilee, Jesus  
 will come! . . .<sup>18</sup>

If he began the third dispensation with the birth of Christ, and counted ahead two thousand years, he could have set the time of the second advent at something around 1996.<sup>19</sup> By counting ahead from the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan, he could have set the second advent at around A.D. 2026. By setting the end of the central dispensation at the Cross, however, he could have determined the time of the second advent to the exact day and hour by tracing the dates back to the crucifixion, assuming that the date of the crucifixion could be determined accurately. With equal exactness, he could have predicted the time of the second advent, if he decided that this present dispensation began at Pentecost. Thus, he could have insured considerably more accuracy in an effort to determine a date than others who have made similar attempts. This is essentially what Offiler attempted to do.

By counting backward from the Cross, he determined the time of the creation of man as occurring at 4000 B.C., and the beginning of the central dispensation at 2000 B.C.. He marked the beginning of time with the sin of man, and counted forward to mark the points of future events.

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<sup>18</sup>God and His Bible, p. 42.

<sup>19</sup>Cf. post, p. 30; see Offiler's Dispensational Chart, Appendix B, p. 108.

When sin came, time began! Time and sin run a parallel course across the ages of time, when sin is destroyed, then, time shall be no more, Rev. 10:6. This moment comes in the end of . . . the present age, and at the Second Coming of the LORD-JESUS-CHRIST. The One Thousand year reign of Christ and His Saints is in parenthesis between the end of this dispensation, and the coming of the New Heavens and the New Earth. Rev. 21:1.<sup>20</sup>

This explanation poses two questions: first, if it is the orbiting of the earth around the sun that determines the measurement of time, and the earth was set in its orbit before Adam's sin, time would have been measured from the beginning of the fourth day of creation (Gen. 1:14-19). Secondly, if time is not measured by the twenty-four hour rotation of the earth in its orbiting around the sun, and if time ends with the second advent of Christ at the end of this age, there arises the problem of finding some criterion, consistent with the six preceding one thousand year days, by which to measure the boundaries of the millennium.<sup>21</sup>

Without offering any explanation to resolve these problems, Offiler went on to state that:

Sin came into the garden to Adam and Eve in the year 4000 B.C. . . . There is known to be a mistake of eight years in our reckoning of the times, and adding eight years to . . . 1957 would bring us down to the year 1965~~7~~. The "Cleansing of the Sanctuary," Dan. 8:14, is scheduled for 1965, or thereabouts, and the Cleansing of the Sanctuary is the Perfection of the Church, and

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<sup>20</sup>God and His Bible, pp. 60, 61.

<sup>21</sup>Offiler ended time with the second advent; cf. ante., p. 27. Elsewhere, however, he included the millennium in the seven one thousand year days of time, cf. p. 22.



a necessary prelude to the Marriage of the Lamb, Matt. 25:1 to 10.<sup>22</sup>

If Offiler's calculations were correct, the "cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary" has already transpired, or else this momentous event is on the very threshold of fulfillment.<sup>23</sup>

Offiler went on to predict the "glorious coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, with his bride, the Church, [in] 2000 A.D."<sup>24</sup> All the intervening events of the seventieth week of Daniel must come to pass by the year 1992,

. . . shortly after comes the 120th Jubilee and the end of the present age, 6000 years from the fall. Following this comes the Thousand year reign of the LORD-JESUS-CHRIST which reaches to the year 3000 A.D. After that ETERNITY! [Italics not in the original.]<sup>25</sup>

Apparently Offiler allowed for the eight year differential in the calendar in arriving at the year 1992 as the end of the present age. Counting back from 1992 three and one-half years, the ascension of Anti-Christ and the beginning of the Great Tribulation could be expected to occur in

<sup>22</sup>God and His Bible, p. 61.

<sup>23</sup>There is a striking similarity between Wm. Miller and Ellen G. White (Seventh-day Adventists) and Wm. Offiler in their attempt to set the date of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. The difference is that the former claimed the sanctuary cleansing occurred in 1844, while the latter predicted the event to occur in or around 1965. See Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1930), pp. 420-422; Wm. Edward Biederwolf, Seventh Day Adventism, The Result of a Predicament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1953), pp. 3-17.

<sup>24</sup>God and His Bible, p. 61.    <sup>25</sup>Ibid.



the fall of 1988.<sup>26</sup>

In the above passage Offiler defined the Millennium as a parenthesis which is preceded by time and followed by eternity. But in another place he stated, "The One Thousand Years of the Millennial Age constitutes the beginnings of eternity. . . ." <sup>27</sup> It cannot be the beginning of eternity if eternity does not begin until the millennium is past.

In another place, writing on Daniel's vision of the he-goat (Daniel 8), Offiler calculated forward to mark the beginning of the Great Tribulation near A.D. 1966:

If we date the 2,300 yrs. from the vision of the He-goat (Alexanders INVADING Asia) or B.C. 334, 2,300 years from that time brings us to the years A.D. 1966 and will bring us very near to the time of the Great Tribulation.<sup>28</sup>

While Offiler made several predictions, he was careful to speak in generalizations rather than in becoming committed to specific dates. According to W. W. Patterson, Sr., Offiler did not intend to be dogmatic, but rather, proposed to stimulate interest and individual study of these prophetic problems in speculative theology.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Offiler realized that no one knew for certain the actual date of the Second Coming of Christ because no one knew when the two-thousand years of the present dispensation would be completed due to the uncertainty as to the exact date of their beginning. It could not then be stated accurately at what time the events of the end time would occur. Louis Johnson, personal interview, April 26, 1962.

<sup>27</sup>Cf., p. 27.

<sup>28</sup>McKnight, op. cit., p. 70.

<sup>29</sup>Patterson, in an interview, Nov. 27, 1961.

The dispensations and the symbols of the Trinity.

Having designated to each member of the Trinity a respective dispensation of two thousand years duration, Offiler also assigned to each dispensation the corresponding celestial and spectrum symbols of each person of the Godhead. He designated the sun as the symbol of the first dispensation--the dispensation of the Father (Lord)--with the corresponding color of "golden yellow." To the second dispensation--that of the Son (Jesus)--he gave the symbol of the moon, with the corresponding color of "crimson red." The third dispensation--that of the Holy Spirit (Christ)--he symbolized by the stars (the Davidic star) with the corresponding color of "heavenly blue."<sup>30</sup>

Offiler marked the beginning of the third dispensation with the appearing of the star of Bethlehem:

. . . at the beginning of the Gospel Dispensation we are faced with a celestial phenomena for which it is impossible to account on any ordinary grounds. The Star of Bethlehem was a well informed Star.<sup>31</sup>

That he designated the natal star of Jesus as the symbol of the dispensation of the Holy Spirit is affirmed elsewhere:

At the very beginning of this Dispensation of the Holy Spirit we are confronted by the advent of the Star of Bethlehem. The dispensation that is symbolized by the Stars was opened by the coming of a Star, the Star

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<sup>30</sup>Cf., pp. 24-26; Majesty of the Symbol, Chaps. 2-5.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 48.



that came out of Israel. Num. 24:17. It was "His Star", Matt. 2:2, the Star of Messiah.<sup>32</sup>

By stating that the dispensation of the Holy Spirit begins with the Star of Bethlehem, Offiler placed the entire life and ministry of the Son in the dispensation of the Spirit.<sup>33</sup> In fact, the most important part of the ministry of the Son--His atoning work on the Cross--is thereby placed in the dispensation of the Spirit. On his chart, however, he marked the beginning of the third dispensation at Calvary, which would place the Bethlehem Star (his symbol of the Holy Spirit) in the dispensation of the Son. As has been previously noted, Offiler pointed to five different times for the beginning of the third dispensation.<sup>34</sup>

Having developed his views in regard to the Trinity, Offiler seems to have woven his system of eschatology around his view concerning the name of the Godhead and the corresponding celestial symbols of each of the three Persons of the Trinity. That Offiler's dispensational system grew out of his effort to correlate his views on the name of God with a parallel tri-dispensationalism is an opinion affirmed by

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 133.

<sup>33</sup>It is interesting to note that Offiler recognized the Star of David as a symbol of the Son--the Messiah, and yet he made both the Star of David and the Bethlehem Star become synonymous symbols of the Holy Spirit and the third dispensation. This is typical of Offiler's multiple use of symbols to represent more than one thing including juxtaposed antitypes; cf., footnotes 10, p. 11; 12, p. 12; 17, p. 14.

<sup>34</sup>Cf., p. 26.



Otto Jantz, Louis Johnson, and C. Joe McKnight.<sup>35</sup>

## II. DANIEL'S SEVENTY WEEKS

Offiler's interest and concern with the interpretation of Daniel's prophecy of the "seventy weeks" (Dan. 9) led him to publish a thirty page booklet dealing with the subject.<sup>36</sup> This interpretation of Daniel's prophecy is integrated with his dispensational system.

The beginning of the seventy weeks. Offiler followed the generally accepted date for the beginning of the seventy weeks as commencing with the issuing of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. Although there may be some question as to the exact time of the decree, Offiler assumed that the date 457 B.C. is correct and was the exact time when Artaxerxes, King of Persia, made his proclamation. Taking this date as his starting point, Offiler referred to the prophecy of the angel:

. . . Unto Messiah, the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and three-score and two weeks, or sixty-nine weeks in all. A period of four hundred and eighty-three years at the end of which time Messiah was to come! . . .

The very fact that it was to reach "unto Messiah the Prince" fixes the bounds of the first, and second periods of seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks, or Sixty-nine

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<sup>35</sup>Otto Jantz, personal interview, Sept. 25, 1961; Louis Johnson, personal interview, April 26, 1962; C. Joe McKnight, personal interview, April 27, 1962.

<sup>36</sup>The Seventy Weeks.

weeks in all, at the "anointing", with the blessed Holy Ghost" of the Son of God in Jordan. . . .

At the time of His anointing Jesus "Began to be about thirty years of age," Lk. 3:23, thus by the processes of the simplest arithmetic we have 457, less the four years of mistake which makes it 453 B.C. Add to the 453 the age of Jesus at the time of His Messiahship, which was 30 years and you have the full prophesied complement of sixty-nine weeks, or 483 years, fulfilling to the letter the announcement of the angel Gabriel, and confirming the Christian believer in his faith in the divine inspiration of the blessed Word of God.<sup>37</sup>

Elsewhere Offiler reached the same date by figuring backward from the baptism of Jesus:

The simplest way of arriving at the days of the "Commandment to build and restore Jerusalem" is to measure backwards from the anointing of Jesus. He was 30 years of age at the time of His anointing Lk. 3:23. Add to this the 457 yrs. B.C. at which time the commandment was given. Ezra 7:11-26. This makes 487 years. Now subtract the 4 years mistake of our present calendar and this leaves 483 years of exactly 69 prophetic weeks. The last week is seven years.<sup>38</sup>

The division of the seventy weeks. The seventy weeks are divided by Offiler into three distinct periods: (1) the seven weeks, or forty-nine years during which time the Temple and the wall of Jerusalem were rebuilt under the direction of Ezra and Nehemiah; (2) sixty-two weeks, or four hundred and thirty-four years extending from the time of the completion of the wall to the anointing of Jesus at his baptism in Jordan; and (3) the last, or seventieth week "in which was

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., pp. 8-10.

<sup>38</sup> McKnight, op. cit., p. 78. In this quotation Offiler made a calendar adjustment of four years, but elsewhere (cf., p. 30) he made an adjustment of eight years.



to be enacted the Atonement of Christ, and the consummation of all things."<sup>39</sup>

The division of the seventieth week. According to the chronology outlined above, Offiler placed the first three and one-half years of the seventieth week at the end of his central dispensation, beginning with the anointing of Jesus and ending with the Cross. He divided the seventieth week by placing the entire church age between the first and second three and one-half year periods.

The ending of the sixty-ninth week brought the beginning of the seventieth, the first half being covered . . . by the ministry of Jesus Christ for three years and a half, at the end of which Jesus died on the cross. This brings us to the midst of the last week.

Between the time of the ending of the first half of the last week at the cross, there intervenes this entire church age. The ending of the church age comes at the opening up of the great tribulation period of three and a half years. The period of the great tribulation is the last half of the seventieth week and the full consummation of this great prophecy, for the end of the tribulation period brings the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the destruction of all ungodly flesh. . . .<sup>40</sup>

This interpretation poses some of the same problems and might incur some of the same objections as those raised against the mid-tribulation rapture theory and the

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<sup>39</sup>The Seventy Weeks, p. 10.

<sup>40</sup>God and His Bible, p. 112. This division of the seventy weeks is also held by others and appears to be one of several general views: cf., Matthew Henry, Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible (Vol. 4 on "Daniel," chap. 9. 6 vols.; New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., n.d.), no page nos.



post-tribulation rapture theories.<sup>41</sup>

The Abomination of Desolation. Offiler identified the "Abomination of Desolation" referred to by Christ (Matt. 24:15; 23:38) and as prophecied in Daniel 9:17, 27, as the abomination that was set up after the death of Jesus Christ upon the Cross of Calvary, i.e., the repairing of the veil in the Temple and the continuation of ceremonial sacrifices after Christ had put an end to the sacrifices of the law by the offering up of Himself in death. Offiler made Christ the Prince who caused the oblation to cease by the offering of his own complete sacrifice. He presented Christ as the one who is cut off, not for His own sake, but for the sake of all mankind. According to Offiler, God used Titus to completely destroy the temple because the sacrifices of the

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<sup>41</sup>The following objections are raised to the theory of a mid-tribulation or post-tribulation rapture: (1) a split seventieth week denies the essential unity, purpose, nature, and scope of the week; (2) National Israel and the Church are confused by leaving them both on the earth during the tribulation period--the 144,000 Hebrew converts and the Gentile converts of Rev. 7 would lose their identity by becoming part of the church itself; (3) there is a failure to distinguish between the Church Age and the Tribulation Period, not by making them synonymous or overlapping, but by including them both in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit; (4) the failure to distinguish between the rapture and the second advent does not allow time for the intervening Bema Seat judgment and the Marriage Supper of the Lamb; (5) the identity of "the prince who shall come" spoken of in Dan. 9: 27, is interpreted to refer to Titus rather than to his anti-type--the Anti-christ. For a discussion of these objections to a split seventieth week see Pentecost, Things To Come, pp. 193, 194.

Jews were an abomination to Him after He had already offered His own Son in their stead.<sup>42</sup>

Offiler believed that "the last half of the 70th week belongs to the period of the Law, and the Law will be re-established for the purpose of vindication of the Word of God, and for the infliction of those penalties prescribed by the Law."<sup>43, 44</sup>

Daniel 11. Offiler's interpretation of this prophecy was influenced by his views on the "Abomination of Desolation." He believed that verse 31 of Daniel 11 is related to Daniel 9:26 as to time: "The Abomination of Desolation fixes the exact time of verse 31. The taking away of the daily Sacrifice was accomplished at the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ."<sup>45</sup> Yet, in the same place he stated: "Verses 31 and 39 [refer] to Rome." The question, then, is whether it was Christ or Rome that caused the oblations to cease.

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<sup>42</sup>God and His Bible, pp. 108-113.

<sup>43</sup>Offiler, "General Bible" (Seattle: Bethel Temple Bible School, May 24, 1934), (Mimeographed.)

<sup>44</sup>Offiler believed that "The sufferings of Christ satisfied every demand of the law," and abrogated its ordinances (McKnight, "Offiler's Notes," p. 79, cf., The Seventy Weeks, p. 16), and yet he expected the Law to be reinstated during the latter half of the 70th week; see Heb. 9:24-28.

<sup>45</sup>McKnight, op. cit., p. 62.



He identified the King of the North as having various manifestations--Spain, Napoleonic France, Germany (Wilhelm--this opinion was apparently formed prior to World War II), and Russia. He identified the King of the South as that of Italy--Mussolini.<sup>46</sup>

Offiler interpreted Daniel 11:4 as referring to four kingdoms--those of the North, the South, the East, and the West. He stated: "England is in the Isles that are 'Farest West.'"<sup>47</sup>

### III. THE GREAT MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH

The influence of Offiler's views concerning the celestial symbols of the Trinity is apparent in his interpretation of the twelfth chapter of Revelation. Using this passage of Scripture as a Biblical basis for his theories, Offiler propounded what he called "The Great Mystery of the Church."

This mystery, briefly, is that: (1) the perfected Church (the Spirit-baptized believers--both Jew and Gentile) is carried into the wilderness of Arabia at least one year

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>That Offiler held views related to those of British Israelism was confirmed by Louis Johnson, in an interview, Feb. 6, 1962, and by C. Joe McKnight, in an interview, Feb. 6, 1962. For a discussion of these views as held by Offiler and Johnson see Louis Johnson, "Destiny of the Nations" Seattle: The Little Chapel Bible Class, n.d.), (Mimeographed.)



prior to the beginning of the last three and one half years of Daniel's seventieth week (the Great Tribulation period). Those who are not Spirit-baptized believers form the remnant of the Church which must endure the tribulation sufferings, but the Spirit-filled believers flee to the Arabian desert, guided by the Holy Spirit (symbolized by the Eagle's Wings).

(2) The Woman, who is symbolized by the sun, moon, and stars, is pregnant with the Manchild. This woman is the Church--the Bride of Christ--who is united with the heavenly bridegroom at the wedding of the Lamb. (3) From the Bride of Christ, 144,000 virgins (belonging to the twelve tribes of spiritual Israel--not national Israel) are chosen to bear a divine-human progeny through their union with Christ. (4) This marriage is both literal and spiritual in nature; i.e., Christ will cohabit with 144,000 virgins, whose offspring collectively will form the Manchild. (5) This Manchild is carried to the throne of God in heaven, where Satan is defeated in a war with the Manchild. (6) Michael, one of the twelve archangels (Offiler identifies Michael as Christ), directs the heavenly battle in which Satan is defeated, and He casts Satan out of heaven. (7) Satan comes to earth and is incarnated in the Anti-christ, who makes war on the remnant. It is during this last three and one-half years of Anti-christ's rule that the tribulation occurs. (8) At the end of the three and one-half years Christ returns to earth

with the Manchild, Satan is bound for a thousand years, and the millennial reign of Christ is ushered in.<sup>48</sup>

The identity of the Woman of Revelation 12. That Offiler's views in connection with the Trinity and its celestial symbols influenced his eschatological interpretations is seen in his identity of the Woman of Revelation 12. Offiler believed that

It is utterly impossible to understand the Vision of the Woman of Rev. 12 until one understands the language of the Symbol. The Sun, the Moon, and the Stars are the One God created agency for the revelation of His own eternal Power [and] Godhead. Rom. 1:20. The complete revelation of the Word of God in its marvelous relation to the Sun, Moon, and the Stars must be studied and comprehended before one can understand its vast import or receive the benefit of its spiritual truth.<sup>49</sup>

Offiler identifies the Woman of Revelation 12 as the Church--the Bride of Christ. The Church is represented by

A woman clothed with the SUN, having the MOON under her feet and crowned with a diadem of Twelve STARS. This woman is the Church in her fully perfected and glorified state. The Bride of the Lamb! A Married woman! ! !, about to become a mother. [She has] Been married at least One Year! [She is] Still on the earth . . . before the time of the great tribulation.<sup>50</sup>

Offiler identified this woman as having become immortal: "The Sun-clad Woman is the perfect immortal Church."<sup>51</sup> He interpreted this symbology of the sun-clad woman literally

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<sup>48</sup>Cf. post for a documented discussion of the above.

<sup>49</sup>McKnight, "Offiler's Notes," p. 117; cf., The Majesty of the Symbol, pp. 96, 97.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid. <sup>51</sup>Ibid.; cf., The Seventy Weeks, p. 22.



to mean that the church is clothed with the sun, i.e., the Church inhabits the solar sun.<sup>52</sup> The moon, which turns to blood (Rev. 6:12), is a symbol of the atonement by which the Church is perfected. "The 'Twelve Stars' at her head are the Twelve Apostles of the Last Days . . . Spirit filled men to be raised up and appointed by the head of the Church . . ." <sup>53</sup>

The woman (those who are Spirit-baptized believers) does not go through the great tribulation; she is

. . . taken out into the wilderness, on "Eagles Wings" for the entire period of the Great Tribulation, or One Thousand Two Hundred and Three Score Days, (1260 days). Thus the question need be debated no longer, the CHURCH does NOT pass through the Great Tribulation!! She is taken out at its commencement!<sup>54</sup>

The wilderness to which the Church is led by the Holy Spirit is the "same wilderness into which Israel went from Egypt. . . The Church will be nourished and fed of God upon the Body and Blood of her Lord." <sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>The Majesty of the Symbol, pp. 99-101.

<sup>53</sup>McKnight, op. cit., p. 117. Offiler believed that "the first twelve apostles are shadowed in Ex. 15:27 and the last twelve apostles are shadowed in Josh. 3:12; 4:2. The first twelve apostles and the last twelve constitute the 24 elders who sit on 24 thrones. Rev. 4:4. The Sun-clad Woman of Rev. 12 is the restored of the last days, the restored Church. When the Church is restored its form of government (12 Apostles) will also be restored." (McKnight, Ibid., p. 118.)

<sup>54</sup>The Seventy Weeks, p. 22; cf., God and His Name, pp. 24-26; The Majesty of the Symbol, pp. 23-25, 96-99.

<sup>55</sup>McKnight, op. cit., p. 119. What Offiler means by the above statement is not clear.



According to Offiler, the Woman is symbolized by the five wise virgins (Matt. 25:1-13) who were prepared for the marriage feast, having their cruses of oil full (representing the in-filling oil of the Holy Spirit). The remnant are symbolized by the five foolish virgins.

After the Woman, the Church escapes the devil and his powers, Satan turns his attention to the remnant of her seed, that is the Unwise Virgin class who missed the "Taking Out" of the Church and the Marriage of the Lamb. The unwise Virgins are those who refuse the Oil . . . [i.e.,] The Baptism in the Spirit. This company are left in the "outer darkness" of the great tribulation . . . and must pay the price of their lack by the shedding of their own Blood under the sword of the antichrist. . . . Very early in the tribulation period every one who names the Name of Christ will die by the sword, until there is not one left who believes. . . . It is the end of the Time of the Gentiles. Their opportunity of Salvation has passed away forever. None will be saved during the great tribulation! ! . . . The "remnant of the Woman's Seed" are not the Jews! . . . The Jews come in under the testimony of the Two Witnesses and die by the sword of the antichrist as all others who take the Name of Jesus during that time.<sup>56</sup>

The double use of the celestial symbols was employed by Offiler. He recognized the sun, moon, and stars as being symbolic of Israel in Joseph's dream (as representing Jacob, Rachel, and Joseph's brethren who became the tribal heads of the nation of Israel, Gen. 37:9); yet, he employed the same symbols as representing the Church.<sup>57</sup> Offiler

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<sup>56</sup>McKnight, op. cit., pp. 120, 121.

<sup>57</sup>The Majesty of the Symbol, pp. 23-25. Double, and even triple, prophetic reference, which makes multiple use of symbols is not uncommon; however, the more traditional

believed that ". . . the tribes of Israel are today composed of both Jews [whom he distinguished as the tribes of Judah and Benjamin], Israelites [the other ten tribes] and Gentiles. Membership in the tribes of Israel was made possible by the Atonement of the Cross."<sup>58</sup>

The identity of the 144,000. Offiler identified the 144,000 as the "same company as that of the 7th chapter [of Revelation]. Not two companies of 144,000."

. . . They are "Virgins!" Not men! Virgins--pure Chaste women. Pure unmarried women. Virgins! No authority [is] to be found anywhere for any other interpretation.

. . . Woman was made for man! If for any reason there [are] found some who are kept separate [sic] from marriage, they must be "Bought" back from that state. The Lord must Redeem them. They bring forth the absolute first fruit!<sup>59</sup>

That Offiler believed in the physical cohabitation of Christ with the company of 144,000 virgins is indicated in his insistence that the marriage of Christ to his bride is a literal as well as a spiritual union:

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interpretation of Rev. 12 identifies the Woman as Israel and the Manchild as Christ. Cf., Frank M. Boyd, The Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ (Springfield, Mo.: Gospel Pub. House, 3 vols., 1950), Vol. 2, pp. 59-71.

<sup>58</sup>Offiler, "The Book of Revelation" (Seattle: Bethel Temple Bible School, n.d.), Lesson #16, Chapt. 7. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>59</sup>McKnight, op. cit., p. 125; cf., God and His Bible, p. 179. There is a resemblance here to the Mormon view of the necessity for women to be married and bear children.



. . . The Manchild is the results [sic] of that Marriage. The Marriage of the Lamb is as literal as it is spiritual and as Spiritual as it is Literal. This is assured by the fact that Jesus is God and Jesus is Man. . . . Jesus Christ is as Human as He is Divine. [He is the] Perfect Man (and as such He demands a wife). . . .<sup>60</sup>

When opposition arose to Offiler's teaching concerning the Manchild, he became reluctant to declare his beliefs on the subject, and stated his regret for having broached his theories on the matter. He became ambiguous in his remarks about the Manchild, and explained that the conception of the Manchild would be similar to the mysterious and miraculous virgin birth of Christ.

While Offiler stated that he believed in a "literal" union of Christ with the 144,000, he never said exactly that he believed in a physical union of Christ with the 144,000, but compared the conception of the Manchild to the immaculate conception of Christ in the Virgin Mary by the "overshadowing" of the Holy Spirit. However, since Offiler insisted upon a literal as well as a "spiritual" union of Christ with the 144,000, it appears possible that he believed in the physical union of Christ with the 144,000.<sup>61</sup>

The identity of the Manchild. The Manchild, the offspring of Christ and his union with the 144,000 virgins who are chosen from among the Spirit-filled Bride (the Church),

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<sup>60</sup>McKnight, op. cit., p. 118.

<sup>61</sup>Louis Johnson, written statement, April 27, 1962. Although it would be denied by some that Offiler believed in the physical union of Christ with the 144,000, it was indicated by McKnight, Johnson, and Jantz that it may have been that he did believe in such a union. Statement by McKnight, personal interview, Dec. 29, 1961; statement by Louis Johnson, personal interview, Feb. 6, 1962; written statement by Jantz, April 30, 1962.



was considered by Offiler to be a company of sinless human-divine beings.

. . . the Manchild [is the] highest creation of God. [It is] The completed Mystery of God and of Christ and of the Church. The Manchild company [is] Born of the Church! [This Church] Which is the Bride of Jesus Christ . . . Produces an offspring which needs no redemption! For both Christ and the Church are One in Godliness, Purity and incorruptability before the Manchild is born. Thus the Manchild is born perfect! It is the direct result of the Marriage of the Lamb.<sup>62</sup>

In identifying the Manchild, Offiler announced the sequential existence of three manchildren.

(1) Moses [was] the manchild in connection with the Tabernacle of Witness, in the wilderness. . . .

[2] Jesus, was the Manchild in connection with the Temple of Solomon, The Savior and Redeemer of mankind.

[3] The final manifestation of this particular subject is found in Rev. 12:1-6 and pertains, to the Marriage of the Lamb, Jesus, to the Church, which is represented by the Sunclad Woman of Rev. 12. The 144,000 are involved in this finished mystery of God, and are sealed for this special ministry with the seal of the Living God, Rev. 7:3-8.<sup>63</sup>

It is when the Manchild is taken up to the throne of God in heaven that the final war in the heavenlies occurs.

"There was War in Heaven." The advent of the Manchild in the heavens is the signal for the final war in the heavenlies. Michael--Christ--Jesus fights and his messengers [Fight Satan with Him], the devil also fights and his angels [Join him in fighting the Manchild] and prevails not. At this moment satan receives the head crushing blow promised in the first prophecy. Gen. 3:15.

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<sup>62</sup>McKnight, "Offiler's Notes," p. 119.

<sup>63</sup>God and His Bible, pp. 132, 133.

"The seed of the Woman shall crush the serpents head." This crushing blow brings the casting down from the heavenlies of Satan, the fallen archangel. It is the seed of this Woman, the fully redeemed church, . . . joined to Christ in Holy wedlock, which brings about the complete fulfillment of this prophesy [sic].<sup>64</sup>

The time of the Marriage of the Lamb. Offiler believed that the Second Coming of Christ would occur at the end of the seventieth week, following the great tribulation.

The time of the Great tribulation is that period of time which immediately precedes the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the second time. It is the last three and a half years in the end of the present age. It is the last half of Daniel's seventy week prophecy, the last half of the last, or 70th week. At the end of this tribulation period, Jesus will come [italics not in the original].<sup>65</sup>

The problem that arises is one concerning the time of the marriage of the Lamb. Offiler stated: "At the second coming, the first manifestation of Jesus Christ will be in His Church. . . ." "The Church is the Bride (to be) of Jesus Christ. . . ." <sup>66</sup>

The parable of the Ten Virgins shows the Church as still "A Virgin" that is unmarried. She is waiting for the Bridegroom! And [is] ready to go in to the Marriage. This is emphatically applicable, only to the end of this Age.<sup>67</sup>

The difficulty of placing the marriage of the Lamb at the second coming of Christ is that Offiler had already

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<sup>64</sup>McKnight, op. cit., p. 119; cf., God and His Bible, p. 148.

<sup>65</sup>God and His Bible. p. 139.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid, p. 149.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.



declared the Church to be previously married to Christ, and to be pregnant with the Manchild, whose birth and wafting to heaven results in the beginning of the tribulation period. To avoid the problem of having the Manchild illegitimately conceived out of wedlock, Offiler explained that the second coming takes place in two phases: (1) a secret appearing of Christ to the Church for the marriage of the Lamb, prior to the Tribulation, and (2) the triumphal return of Christ following the tribulation.<sup>68</sup>

#### IV. THE RESURRECTIONS

Offiler believed that immediately following death, the departed spirits of the righteous are carried to the presence of God Who resides in the solar sun (see pp. 52-58 ). The departed spirits of the ungodly are left to grope in outer darkness (2 Pet. 3:7) where they are chained as prisoners until the final judgment. Offiler did not believe in soul-sleep nor in the annihilation of the dead.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>Ibid. The interpretation which regards the second coming as occurring in two phases--(1) the pre-tribulation rapture of the church, and (2) the triumphal return of Christ to establish the millennial kingdom following the tribulation--is not unique with Offiler. See, Myer Pearlman, Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible (Springfield, Mo.: Gospel Publishing House, 1937), p. 390; I. M. Haldeman, Ten Sermons on the Second Coming (New York: Charles C. Cook, 1906), chapter IV.

<sup>69</sup>The Majesty of the Symbol, pp. 120-122.



The two resurrections. There are but two resurrections, according to William Offiler. The first resurrection takes place at the end of the present age, at the beginning of the Millennium.

In the First resurrection, all of God's holy dead shall be raised, and caught up with the living saints, the church, to meet the Lord in the Air, I Thess. 4:15-16-17. This is the exact moment of the Second Coming of the Lord.<sup>70</sup>

The second resurrection takes place at the end of the Millennium. In the second resurrection are all the ungodly dead:

. . . especially that great company, who had taken the number, the name, or the Mark of the Beast.

These hosts of the wicked are classed as Gog, and Magog, and it is this company that Satan goes out to deceive! and who shall, together with him, be cast into the Lake of Fire--a literal burning Hell.<sup>71</sup>

Five translations. Offiler mentioned five translations: (1) Enoch (Gen. 5:21-24; Heb. 11:5); (2) Moses, whom God buried and resurrected after three days (Deut. 34:5-8); (3) Elijah (II Kings 2:1-11); (4) Jesus Christ (Acts 1:9-11); and (5) the Church (I Thess. 4:15-18).<sup>72</sup>

The Two Witnesses. Moses and Elijah, according to W. H. Offiler, are the two witnesses of Revelation 11:3. This conclusion is based, in part, on the fact that it was

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<sup>70</sup>God and His Bible, p. 151. <sup>71</sup>Ibid.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., pp. 59, 60.

Moses and Elijah who appeared with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration (Lk. 24:4).<sup>73</sup>

Moses and Elijah, together with Enoch, according to Offiler, were the three Wise Men--the Magi--who came from the East (i.e., from the sun--heaven) to worship Christ at the time of his birth in Bethlehem:

Three Men were translated from earth to Heaven before the Cross of Christ, Before the Birth of Christ. They were translated for the very purpose of this witnessing and testimony. They are Enoch, the seventh from Adam. Moses, the Mediator of the Law Covenant. Elijah, the Prophet of God. These Three translated ones are the Three? Wise Men who attended the incarnation of the WORD at His Birth in Bethlehem! If this be not true--and if Moses and Elijah were not at the Birth of Christ--then they have no complete testimony to offer Israel concerning the Birth of Messiah. Their testimony is fatally Faulty! !<sup>74</sup>

Enoch and Elijah were translated without seeing death; therefore, Offiler insisted, they shall have to die a physical death. However, in making Moses one of the two witnesses, there arises the problem of having Moses die a physical death twice, while Enoch is apparently left to experience a physical death in some unaccounted for way.

All men have the privilege of being born twice. All men have the privilege of dying TWICE. Once naturally and once with Christ. The Bible records the fact of the SECOND DEATH.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup>The Majesty of the Symbol, pp. 60-64.

<sup>74</sup>McKnight, op. cit., p. 115; cf. God and His Bible, pp. 145-147.

<sup>75</sup>McKnight, op. cit., p. 116. Offiler seems to ignore the fact that the second death (Rev. 21:8) is a damnation to everlasting hell.



In the above statement, Offiler argued that Moses is one of the two witnesses and that he will have the privilege of experiencing a second physical death.

#### V. THE MILLENNIUM

Offiler avoided the problem of having to include in the second resurrection (a resurrection to damnation) any righteous mortals who might die during the Millennium. He simply stated that there will be no human life on the earth during that thousand year period.

Climatic conditions on the earth during the Kingdom Age will be such as bar all that is merely human. Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God! There is no more possibility of unredeemed humanity dwelling on the earth during the Thousand Years. . . . During the Millennial Age the SUN will shine with a Sevenfold Strength, utterly prohibiting the possibility of ordinary life. . .

Thus the Millennial state is a resurrected state. None but those who have attained to the Perfect Church, together with the dead in Christ who rise in the first resurrection, will ever "Live and Reign with Christ for a Thousand Years." . . . Nowhere does the bible [sic] teach that sinners will be saved during that age.<sup>76</sup>

According to Offiler, the glory of the Millennium will be the shekinah glory of the sun, and no human would be able to endure such brilliant glory. The resurrected saints and those living who are translated will be changed, or perfect-ed, and will have free access to both the millennial earth

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<sup>76</sup>The Majesty of the Symbol, pp. 67, 68.



and the God of Heaven in the sun.<sup>77</sup>

## VI. THE FINAL JUDGMENT

At the end of the Millennium, the Great White Throne judgment shall take place, and all whose names are not found written in the Lamb's Book of Life will be cast into everlasting hell fire. It is the earth itself, according to Offiler, that shall become the "Lake of Fire."

At the end of the millennial age then the earth shall become a burning, flaming world, a lake of fire revolving in its appointed orbit, it will take its place in the comet class, a comet being a world on fire. . . .<sup>78</sup>

God will then create a new heaven and a new earth for the righteous to inhabit throughout the endless ages of the eternity to come.

## VII. HEAVEN

The death of William Henry Offiler's daughter Edith appears to be related to his view of heaven. At that time Offiler experienced what to him was a revelation concerning heaven.<sup>79</sup> This revelation became a factor that affected the theology of William Offiler by apparently becoming the initial hypothesis from which he postulated his theories concerning heaven, and the celestial symbolism of the Trinity

<sup>77</sup>God and His Bible, pp. 157-170.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., p. 200.      <sup>79</sup>See pp. 75, 76.

(the sun, moon, and stars.)<sup>80</sup>

Heaven in the sun. It came to Offiler as a revelation that heaven is in the sun; God is in the sun; God is a sun; the sun is inhabited; the departed souls of the righteous go within seven minutes time to their new abode in the sun, which is the New Jerusalem (cf. post).

Offiler was firmly convinced that Scripture is to be interpreted literally as well as spiritually and vice versa. This axiom of interpretation of Offiler's contributed to his conclusion that God is a sun:

. . . the LIGHT of the world is GOD. Physically and Spiritually GOD is our LIGHT. . . . There is not a divinely inspired scripture that is not as LITERAL as it is SPIRITUAL, and as SPIRITUAL as it is LITERAL; that does not apply to the heavens above and to the earth beneath in an exact, coequal sense! . . . Thus when God said He was Light, He meant just that: all there is of light. "He that directeth HIS LIGHT unto the ends of the earth." Job 37:3.<sup>81</sup>

Offiler further stated his belief that God is a sun, or at least that He is symbolized by the Sun: "The SUN is inseparable from the God of all the Earth. 'The Lord God is a SUN and Shield,' Pslm. [ sic ] 84:11."<sup>82</sup> "In the SUN is exemplified the glorious 'MAJESTY OF THE SYMBOL'. The Presence of God is there."<sup>83</sup> But Offiler was careful to avoid

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<sup>80</sup>Cf., p. 10.

<sup>81</sup>The Majesty of the Symbol, pp. 16, 17.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., p. 115.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., p. 114.



the charge of being a "sun-worshiper," by stating elsewhere that ". . . the SUN is not God, and God alone must be worshiped [*italics not in the original*]." <sup>84</sup>

The book The Majesty of the Symbol was given to an exposition of Offiler's belief that:

The Sun is the Christians' Heaven and the actual dwelling place of our God. And this, by the Grace of God, we shall PROVE, that every Child of God may know exactly where their loved ones are in the bosom of God. <sup>85</sup>

Heaven seven minutes away. Satisfied in his mind that heaven is in (or on) the sun, Offiler gathered the statistics estimating the distance of the sun from the earth as theorized according to the astronomical calculations of that day, and concluded that it takes just seven or eight minutes to reach heaven from the earth by traveling at the speed of light:

Light travels at the speed of 186,000 miles per second. Quicker than a thought, almost. Light, as it pours forth from our SUN, is just seven or eight minutes in reaching this earth. The SUN is approximately 90,000,000 miles from this earth, and a simple example of multiplication and common division will prove to your satisfaction that the foregoing is true. And the relationship between Spirit and Light is that they travel with exactly the same velocity. The redeemed spirit of man, in its journey to God's heaven, travels on the "Wings of Light". The moment the redeemed physical body of the Christ left

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<sup>84</sup>The Majesty of the Symbol, pp. 39-42.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., p. 36. The desire of Offiler to resolve the mysteries of immortality in connection with the death of his daughter Edith is reflected in this quotation.



the earth's atmosphere, He traveled on the wings of Light, or at the very same velocity as light.<sup>86</sup>

Thus, he deduced, in just seven or eight minutes after Christ said, "It is finished," He sat down at the right hand of the Father. Likewise, with the Christian, "It is just seven or eight minutes from the time of death till the saint reaches home! . . ."<sup>87</sup>

The sun inhabited. The sun is inhabited by the spirits of the righteous saints, the angelic hosts, and by the Godhead, declared Offiler. As an evidence that the sun is inhabited by the spirits of the departed righteous, he identified the Magi who visited the infant Christ, as being Moses, Elijah, and Enoch, who returned to earth from the sun.<sup>88</sup>

The Wise Men came from the "East", from the SUN-RISING. They came from the actual dwelling place of God. The place of His Throne. THE SUN.

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We are out in deep water now! and this seems to be the time to say just who these Three Wise Men were . . . The names of these Three Men are Enoch, . . . Moses . . . /and/ Elijah. . . .<sup>89</sup>

To substantiate his theory that the sun is inhabited by the angelic hosts, he quoted from Rev. 19:17--"And I saw

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<sup>86</sup>The Majesty of the Symbol, p. 88. <sup>87</sup>Ibid., p. 120.

<sup>88</sup>See p. 50; cf., God and His Bible, p. 190.

<sup>89</sup>The Majesty of the Symbol, pp. 59, 60.

an angel STANDING IN THE SUN."<sup>90</sup>

To lend some scientific credence to this theory that the sun is inhabited by the saints, angels, and God, Offiler quoted the astronomer, Herschel, who testified at the time of his death: "that after a lifetime of the study of the Sun, he had concluded that the SUN was a WORLD, INHABITED BY BEINGS WHO RADIATED LIGHT."<sup>91</sup>

The New Jerusalem in the sun. That city of which Saint John speaks in Revelation 21 is presently situated in the Sun, according to Offiler. This is the reason that there is no need of any other light to illuminate the Holy City. "Such a city as this could not possibly exist anywhere in this universe but on the SUN," he exclaimed.<sup>92</sup>

Heaven not always in the sun. Offiler anticipated two problems that arise by identifying the sun as the place called Heaven: first, if Heaven is in the sun, where was Heaven before the sun was created; and secondly, where will Heaven be when the present heavens and earth pass away according to II Peter 3:10?<sup>93</sup> To resolve these problems he

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<sup>90</sup>The Majesty of the Symbol, p. 102.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., pp. 110-111.

<sup>93</sup>See David Greenfield, "Where is Heaven?", Eternity, Vol. 11, No. 6, (June, 1960), p. 21; Donald Grey Barnhouse, Eternity, Ibid., pp. 21, 26. Greenfield asks the question,



explained that the present sun will not necessarily always be the home of Heaven. "But we do say that for the period of man's activities on the earth, a period of Six Thousand Years, and also for the period of the Millennial Kingdom of One Thousand Years, that the SUN is the Habitation and Throne of the God of the Bible."<sup>94</sup>

The problem of a flaming sun. Another problem that poses itself is the scientific evidence of astronomical research which indicates that the sun is a gaseous nebulae. If the sun is "a conglomeration of incandescent gases,"

. . . the blasting, burning furnace that modern science--and millions of christians [sic] --says it is, then . . . [the Church, which he placed in the sun] is a Church clothed with a flaming, burning hell of fire!!! . . .

If our SUN was a burning furnace of fire as the scientist proposes, then all the wonderful symbology of the bible [sic] must go for naught.<sup>95</sup>

Offiler recognized that if the scientists are correct, his solar Heaven is a virtual flaming Hell. He dismissed the thought as simply ridiculous. ". . . The view-point of the scholars and of the astronomers has been absolutely wrong! . . . They flounder in an ocean of question marks, which

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"Where is Heaven?" and Barnhouse answered: ". . . Heaven is where the Lord Jesus Christ is." Since God was in His "Heaven" before He created our universe of matter, Heaven existed prior to and apart from the material universe.

<sup>94</sup>The Majesty of the Symbol, p. 126.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., pp. 99, 100, 124.



sooner or later may result in a general intellectual insanity."<sup>96</sup> Since he was convinced that his revelation was true, he reasoned that the scientists were the ones who were in error, not himself. He concludes:

We have endeavored to solve this question concerning heaven in a perfectly biblical way by bluntly saying that the Heaven of God is positively located on our SUN, that the SUN is the Throne of God and the Habitation of all the holy celestial beings of which we have any knowledge.<sup>97</sup>

Summary. It has been observed in this chapter that:

(1) there was a definite inter-relationship between Offiler's deviatory Trinitarian views and his deviatory eschatological beliefs. The influence of Offiler's deviatory Trinitarian views upon his deviatory eschatology was seen in his tri-dispensational system with his designation to each of his three dispensations the respective (a) name (Lord, Jesus, Christ), (b) symbol (sun, moon, stars), and (c) color (golden yellow, crimson red, heavenly blue) of each Person of the Godhead.

(2) Offiler was not always consistent in delineating the time limitations and dates of his dispensational system: e.g., (a) he ambiguously pointed to three different times

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<sup>96</sup>God and His Bible, pp. 36, 37; cf., McKnight, op. cit., pp. 28-30; Offiler, "The Sun--God's Throne--Our Heaven" (Seattle: Bethel Temple Bible School, December 8, 1952), Lesson #3, Sheets 1-3. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>97</sup>The Majesty of the Symbol, pp. 121.

for the beginning of the second of his dispensations; (b) he set five different times for the beginning of the third of his dispensations; (c) in predicting the approximate time of the Second Advent of Christ he allowed for a four year time differential in the calendar in one place, and in another place he allowed an eight year differential; and (d) in one place he included the Millennium in the seven thousand year span of time, but elsewhere he ended "time" before the beginning of the Millennium. (3) Offiler's interpretation of Daniel's prophecy of the "seventy weeks" was overlaid upon his second and third dispensations, with the entire church age dividing the last week into two segments of three and one-half years each.

(4) Offiler held deviatory views concerning the interpretation of Revelation 11 and 12: (a) he identified the Two Witnesses of Revelation 11:3 as Elijah and Moses, stating that the latter had been resurrected by God and that he would be given the privilege of dying the "second death." (b) These two witnesses, together with Enoch, Offiler identified as the Magi who visited the Christ child at his first advent, having returned to earth from their abode in the Heaven of the sun to worship the infant Jesus. (c) The Woman of Revelation 12 was identified by Offiler as the Spirit-filled believers of the Church. Those Christians who



were not Spirit-filled from the remnant who are to die as martyrs during the Tribulation. (d) From the Spirit-filled body represented by the Woman, 144,000 virgins will be set apart to cohabit with Christ in a physical (literal) and spiritual union. (e) The multiple offspring of this union of Christ and the 144,000 will collectively form the "Manchild." This Manchild will be carried to Heaven where it will defeat Satan and cast him out of Heaven. The defeat of Satan will mark the beginning of the tribulation period.

(5) Offiler believed in two resurrections, five translations, and (6) held deviatory views concerning heaven. In regard to heaven Offiler believed that (a) "God is a Sun," but the sun is not to be worshipped as God; (b) God is in Heaven and that Heaven is in the sun; (c) Heaven is seven minutes away from the earth, assuming that the departed souls of the righteous will travel to that solar Heaven at the speed of light; (d) the New Jerusalem is located in the sun, at least during the seven one thousand year days of time, and (e) the sun is inhabited by God, the angels, the heavenly hosts, and the departed souls of the righteous dead.

Having deviatory views concerning the Trinity, Offiler, as has been observed in this chapter, also formed other deviatory views in his interpretations of eschatology.



## CHAPTER IV

### POSSIBLE DETERMINANTS OF OFFILER'S DEVIATORY VIEWS ON THE TRINITY AND ESCHATOLOGY

There are three factors which combine in the forming of theological doctrines. The first is the authoritative source of knowledge on the subject--the Scriptures. In chapter two Offiler's interpretation of the Scriptures concerning the Trinity was discussed, and in the preceding chapter his interpretations of the Scriptures in regard to eschatology were discussed.

A second factor in the forming of theological concepts is that of Christian experience, the correlative of the written Gospel. However, the experience of emotion and spirit must be guided by the intellect which is the third factor involved in the development of theology. While the emotional, mystical, sacramental, charismatic, and intellectual experiences of the individual Christian are less reliable than the authoritative Scriptures, they are not altogether invalid, nor disregarded by the students of Christian theology and dogma.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, in considering the development of the deviatory views of William Henry Offiler, this chapter will review those determinants, other than the Scriptures, which may have influenced him.

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<sup>1</sup>George Park Fisher, History of Christian Doctrine (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), p. 11.

## I. MYSTICAL EXPERIENCES

William Offiler fasted frequently, and claimed to have experienced a number of visions, some of which were subsequent to his extended fasts. Among his visions were four which are considered by his widow and friends to have been especially significant.

Offiler's vision and healing. The first of Offiler's mystical experiences occurred when he was a young man, following his conversion and prior to his marriage.<sup>2</sup> After coming to this continent, William Offiler contracted a bone disease which he traced to an injury incurred earlier while playing soccer as a boy in England. Sick, dissatisfied with his life, and full of doubts concerning the reality of God's existence and the Christian faith, he determined to make a final effort to find credence in his childhood religion.

After fasting and praying for twenty-one days he was overcome with an intense feeling of depression and doubt. He felt a mental conflict raging within his mind, but could not differentiate between the voice of God and the voice of Satan. Emotionally distraught, physically weakened, and spiritually discouraged, he took his Bible and threw it across his room and vowed never to pray again, for it seemed

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<sup>2</sup>By "mystical" experiences is meant Offiler's purported experiences of visions, revelations, and supernatural phenomena.



to him as if God did not hear his prayers and he was finding no answer to his questions. He put on his coat to go out and get something to ease his pain. Then, suddenly he felt an unseen hand grip him and turn him around, compelling him to return to the place where he had been praying. Then he felt what he believed was the finger of God touch his jaw bone, and he was instantaneously healed, as he stood in what seemed to him as "a blaze of glory."<sup>3</sup>

A voice which he knew to be Christ's spoke to him saying, "If I with the finger of God cast out devils, then know most assuredly that the Kingdom of God has come nigh unto you." Following this experience, Offiler, in an enraptured state, continued to fast an additional three days.

Although Offiler had been reared in the Anglican Church of his native country, England, and had consecrated himself to missionary service as a boy, it was not until just prior to receiving this mystical vision and healing that he considered himself genuinely converted.<sup>4</sup> However, from this first known of his mystical experiences, he gained faith to believe in the reality of God, and in divine healing which became a part of his pastoral ministry in later years.

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<sup>3</sup>Statements by Mrs. Hildah Offiler, personal interviews, Nov. 27, 1961; Feb. 2, 1962; April 30, 1962. The account of this vision and subsequent visions reported in this chapter and in the biographical sketch (Appendix A) were related by Mrs. Offiler, and confirmed by McKnight, Johnson, and Patterson in personal interviews with them.

<sup>4</sup>Cf., pp. 96, 97.

Offiler's vision and call to the ministry. It was during the year 1914, while Offiler was employed by the Great Northern Railway Company at Glacier National Park in Montana, that he felt a call to the Christian ministry. During December of the preceding year he had received what he believed was a "call" into full-time ministry, but he had dismissed any thought of an imminent engagement in a ministerial career. Then, one night he had what he considered to be a vision (dream). In this vision he saw himself fall into quick-sand as he was walking along a path in the Park toward his office. As he cried for help, God came to him, and asked him if he would preach the gospel. He promised the Lord that he would enter the ministry. Immediately, in his vision, he was rescued from the quick-sand.

Twice more during that same night, he experienced a reoccurrence of the same vision. His wife, Gertrude Offiler, awakened and related having experienced an identical vision, during the same night. It appeared to them both that God wanted Offiler to enter the ministry at once. He obeyed what he thought was the guidance of the Holy Spirit by breaking a two-year contract with the Great Northern Company and leaving Glacier National Park to return to Spokane to seek the further direction of God. This vision was considered by Offiler to have a direct bearing upon his entry into the ministry, and upon his coming to Seattle.



Offiler's vision and baptism in the Holy Spirit. It was during the interim period, while he was in Spokane prior to coming to Seattle, that Offiler received a glossolalial experience (the baptism in the Holy Spirit). This experience was accompanied by a vision which Offiler described in a sermon manuscript.

My experience in the Baptism lasted one and one-half hours. I was lost in God, going through the marvelous experiences of Christ in his death and resurrection. In the last part of it I was in a foreign country and I saw in front of me native villages and women going about fixing their meals, and coming down the middle of the road I saw a magnificent savage, with big, wonderful eyes. I looked at him and was kind of asking God the question: "What does he want?" The Holy Ghost said: "He is waiting for you to bring him the Gospel." He may be waiting yet. But I have had my hand in a lot of missionary work and will more from now on. In a way I have been a missionary but I don't think I have filled that yet. I must see that place, and when I see that man I am going to fill him so full of the Glory of God.<sup>5</sup>

While this vision, and the preceding one, may not reveal any indications of having had a direct bearing upon Offiler's deviatory theology, they are included here because they illustrate his affinity toward visions and mystical experiences, and the vision above shows a possible relationship between his mystical experience at the time he received this initial glossolalial experience and his keen interest in missions.

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<sup>5</sup>Offiler, from his typewritten sermon notes, Feb. 1, 1936. Although Offiler realized the fulfillment of his ambition to travel to the mission field, he never indicated that he met the man of his vision.

Offiler's vision and fast in Los Angeles. Another mystical experience which seems to have made a profound influence upon the life and views of William Offiler was a vision which he had while in Los Angeles.<sup>6</sup> Offiler had experienced disappointment and bewilderment when his attempt to reconcile the "Oneness" problem was rejected by both the orthodox and New Issue groups.<sup>7</sup> Offiler decided to make a trip to Los Angeles with the intention of seeking the Lord in regard to the matters which were troubling him.

While in Los Angeles, he had an opportunity to speak in one of the churches of the city, and there he taught some of his views. In the fervent spirit of the meeting, he made some statements which he, himself, later questioned. After returning to his hotel room and reflecting upon these statements, he determined to fast and pray and seek God's guidance concerning his teachings, asking God to show him some sign indicating their truth or error.

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<sup>6</sup>The exact date of Offiler's trip to Los Angeles is not known, but according to statements by Mrs. Hildah Offiler and Otto Jantz, in personal interviews, Feb. 1, 1962 and Feb. 27, 1962 respectively, the time was somewhere between 1916 and 1919. This experience occurred in close proximity to Offiler's attendance at the 1915 General Council of the Assemblies of God, and might have been the time when Offiler became definitely convinced about the correctness of his Trinitarian interpretation, especially if he visited the Oneness missions in the Los Angeles area at that time, which may have been the case.

<sup>7</sup>See pp. 72-74.



After fasting without food or water for six days and nights, he experienced a vision in which he entered an operating room and saw a body completely bound in bandages, except for its nostrils. He saw several men dressed in white (whom he identified as doctors) come into the operating room, and after viewing the body, they said that they could do nothing to help. Offiler asked to look at the bandaged body, and in his vision, God revealed to him that this body was symbolical of the church and its present state, but that the time would come when the church would be loosed. This he interpreted as being a verification of his deviatory teachings.

Following this vision he experienced an intense thirst. He decided to take a drink from the pitcher of water on a table in his room, but, according to Offiler, God stopped him. He begged God to allow him to drink the water, and he heard God say to him, "How thirsty you are for natural water--so thirsty are my people for spiritual water." Offiler then sought the Lord for that "spiritual water" and continued his fast for three more days.

This vision served to give Offiler a positive faith in the veracity of his teachings in regard to the Trinity, although he never claimed to base his deviatory views upon any vision. However, he did base his deviatory views on heaven upon a "revelation" (see pp. 75, 76).

Offiler's mystical experiences and his theology.

According to his widow and others, Offiler did not form doctrine from his visions, but sought God for confirmation that his deviatory views were Scripturally correct. He believed that such confirmation was granted to him in his mystical experiences. Although Offiler was dogmatic in regard to his interpretation of the Trinity and baptism according to his formula, he was never dogmatic about the validity of his deviatory eschatological views.<sup>8</sup> He believed that his deviatory eschatological interpretations were all in the realm of mysteries which would be continually expanded and unfolded in the future, especially as prophecy is fulfilled at the close of the age. Patterson stated that Offiler did not intend to be dogmatic about the setting of dates, either, which might explain why he remained ambiguous about determining the exact points of time marking his dispensational system. When Offiler would run into conflict on dates, contradictions, or discrepancies, he apparently dismissed them as part of the mystery of things to come.<sup>9</sup>

## II. LITERATURE

Several books influenced the theology of William Offiler.<sup>10</sup> Among them were the following: Gospel in the Stars by Joseph A. Seiss; A Remarkable Biblical Discovery by

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<sup>8</sup>Patterson, op. cit.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>McKnight, personal interview, Dec. 29, 1961.



Wm. P. Hall; Celestial Symbol Interpreted by H. W. Morris; and also several of the standard commentaries which contain views similar to those held by Offiler.

Gospel in the Stars. The influence of the book The Gospel in the Stars; or Primeval Astronomy by Joseph A. Seiss seems apparent. This is indicated by the fact that (a) in the very first sentence of the preface Seiss refers to the astronomer Herschel.<sup>11</sup> It may be significant that Offiler called upon this same astronomer to corroborate his theories concerning the solar sun being Heaven.<sup>12</sup> (b) The thesis of Seiss's book is that the ancient astrological myths were perversions of an original prophetic revelation of the Gospel of Christ revealed by God in the stars. He says:

. . . [the] old mythologies . . . give powerful impulse toward the conclusion that the constellations and their associated myths and traditions are themselves, in their original, from the very same prophetic Spirit whence the Sacred Scriptures have come, and that they are of a piece with the biblical records in the system of God's universal enunciations of the Christ.<sup>13</sup>

The whole book takes on the nature of a Christianized astrology, rather than an astronomical study. The very first subject of discussion in Seiss's book is the sun--the identical object which so intrigued Offiler, and around which Offiler erected his views on heaven and his celestial symbolism.

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<sup>11</sup>Joseph A. Seiss, The Gospel in the Stars; or, Primeval Astronomy (Phila.: The Castle Press, 1884), p. 3.

<sup>12</sup>Cf., p. 67.

<sup>13</sup>Seiss, op. cit., p. 6.

While Offiler claimed that the idea that "God was in every creation typical of Himself" was original and unique with him, it may be seen from a reading of Seiss's book that he at least believed that the heavenly bodies (the sun, moon, stars, planets, etc., of which Offiler made so much) are a part of God's self-revelation through the creation. If Offiler's theories were original with himself, they were at least not unique with him.<sup>14</sup> (c) It is also interesting to note that Offiler gave to some of his books double titles as did Seiss. While the giving of double titles is not uncommon, it is not improbable that the parallel between Seiss's book and The Majesty of the Symbol and God and His Bible are coincidental.

A Remarkable Biblical Discovery. Offiler was encouraged in his views on the name of the Trinity by William Phillips Hall's book A Remarkable Biblical Discovery or "The Name" of God, According to the Scriptures.<sup>15</sup> William P. Hall

<sup>14</sup>Cr., The Majesty of the Symbol, pp. 136, 137. Although similarities of thought between Offiler and Seiss are evident, especially in Offiler's book The Majesty of the Symbol, it is not the purpose of this paper to make, nor is there room for, an exhaustive comparison between Offiler and any of the books which are suggested here as having had a possible influence upon his theology. Therefore, no special attempt to verify such an influence is made, except to make a few observations in connection with some of the sources listed.

<sup>15</sup>McKnight, statement in a personal interview, Oct. 7, 1960.



dedicated his entire volume to the exposition of his thesis: that the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is "Lord-Jesus-Christ." The possible influence of Hall upon Offiler is seen in (a) that chapter two of Hall's book carries the title "God and His Name," and (b) that Offiler's book by this identical title--God and His Name--followed the publication of Hall's book by four years. (c) There is a striking parallel between the thesis of both authors; and (d) Offiler refers to Hall in his book, stating that the work of the latter:

. . . has included a long and careful scrutiny of the original manuscripts of the scriptures, and has established beyond any question of doubt that the Name of God, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is positively revealed as the LORD-JESUS-CHRIST.<sup>16</sup>

While Offiler held his deviatory views concerning the name of the Trinity several years before Hall's book was published, it is apparent that Offiler took cognizance of Hall's work and was influenced, perhaps, to the point of borrowing from Hall for the title of his own book.

Celestial Symbol Interpreted. Another work to which Offiler made reference in his own writing is the book Celestial Symbol Interpreted by H. W. Morris.<sup>17</sup> From his remarks in reference to Morris's book, it is apparent that Offiler

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<sup>16</sup>God and His Name, p. 89.

<sup>17</sup>H. W. Morris, Celestial Symbol Interpreted (no information concerning the publisher available).

regarded this work highly. He called Morris's book "a wonderful and marvelous presentation of the spiritual characteristics of the SUN." It is also indicated that Offiler believed that Morris missed the "primal thought," or truth (concerning the celestial symbolism of God). Offiler said of Morris, that in his book of seven-hundred pages:

. . . he brings to light an array of facts concerning the spiritual aspects of the SUN that are without compare in the literature covering the subject.<sup>18</sup>

The fact that this is one of the three books to which Offiler made direct reference in his own works indicates that this book may have had a profound influence upon his views.

### III. OTHER INFLUENCES

The New Issue. William Henry Offiler attended the second meeting of the General Council of the Assemblies of God which convened at St. Louis in October, 1915. That meeting had been called for the primary purpose of discussing the teachings of the "New Issue." There were those in the Pentecostal movement and in attendance at that meeting who taught that Jesus is God; i.e., Jesus is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is Lord-Jesus-Christ.<sup>19</sup> This teaching

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<sup>18</sup>Majesty of the Symbol, p. 137.

<sup>19</sup>Carl Brumback, Suddenly . . . From Heaven (Springfield, Mo.: Gospel Publishing House, 1961), pp. 191-210.



became known as the "New Issue," "Oneness," "One Name," and "Jesus Only."<sup>20</sup>

When the "New Issue" controversy arose at the 1915 General Council, William Offiler spoke in defense of the Trinitarian position. Anxious to maintain a unity in the Pentecostal movement, he offered what he considered was a synthesis, in the hope of effecting a compromise that would be acceptable to both factions. This synthesis centered around the baptismal formula which he later adopted, and which he later expanded in connection with his Trinitarian symbolism and dispensational system.

Offiler was disappointed and considered it as a personal failure that he was not successful in averting the cleavage which inevitably came because of the "New Issue" teaching, and withdrew his association with the General Council of the Assemblies of God following the 1915 meeting.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>The dissension over this issue became so vehement that the general council meeting at St. Louis in 1916 one hundred sixteen delegates walked out of the council meeting in a body and later formed what came to be known as the "New Issue" or "Jesus Only" movement. Dr. Willard Pierce, Academic Dean, Northwest Bible College, personal interview Dec. 16, 1958. Although the Oneness split reduced the list of ordained ministers from 585 to 429 following the 1916 council, the Assemblies of God have continued to grow to become the largest Pentecostal movement in the United States, with 9,428 ordained ministers, 8,233 churches, 508,602 members, and nearly one million Church School members listed in 1961. Brumbach, op. cit., pp. 209, 365-370.

<sup>21</sup>Hildah Offiler, personal interview, Nov. 27, 1961.

That the New Issue had a possible bearing upon Offiler, however, may be indicated by his deviatory Trinitarian views and especially by his baptismal formula.

Offiler's insistence upon a literal translation. Another factor which influenced the theological interpretations of William Offiler, was his conviction that the Scriptures must be interpreted both literally and figuratively.

The Word of God is not only capable of a "Literal" interpretation [but a] "Literal" interpretation is absolutely necessary to a correct understanding of the Scripture of Truth. "My Word is Spirit and my Word is Life," said Jesus.

All Scripture MUST be interpreted on this Dual basis. Great harm has come, and much misunderstanding and false teaching have come by spiritualizing the WORD with an utter disregard of its human or earthly side.

The proofs are "Legion" that the Bible is One Word which cannot be broken. [It is] to be studied as a whole, dealt with as a whole, [and expounded] as a whole.<sup>22</sup>

Offiler's conviction of the necessity for a literal as well as a spiritual or symbolical interpretation led him to the extreme of endeavoring to find a symbolical meaning in everything, and in trying to interpret symbolical meanings literally. An example of this is seen in his theory that the sun is the literal heaven to which the souls of the departed righteous go after death. Another example of this

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<sup>22</sup>McKnight, "Offiler's Notes," p. 44; cf., God and His Bible, p. 99; Majesty of the Symbol, p. 17.



is seen in his belief that the Magi came from the sun.<sup>23</sup>

The death of Offiler's daughter Edith. The death of William Offiler's daughter Edith appears to be related to his deviatory views on Heaven. In December, 1923, his youngest daughter, Edith, died of scarlet fever. At that time Offiler experienced what to him was a revelation concerning Heaven.

While his daughter lay dying, William Offiler searched for an answer to the mysteries of death and immortality. While pondering these questions, he walked to the window of his home located on Queen Anne Hill in Seattle, and looking out of the window toward Puget Sound, he saw a brilliant sun setting over the Olympic Mountains to the west. As he stood gazing at the setting sun, it came to him as a revelation: Heaven is in the sun; God is in the sun; and the departed souls of the righteous go to that solar Heaven which is the New Jerusalem.<sup>24</sup> Offiler described the experience surrounding his revelation as follows:

Some years ago the writer lost his one remaining daughter. As she lay in an adjoining room, breathing her last, I walked over to the window. The Sun was setting in the west, a burning blaze of glory. I stood and watched it as it reached the horizon. It seemed as though the Spirit of the Lord prompted me to look at its splendor. I noted its perfect sphere. The outlines of

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<sup>23</sup>See p. 50.

<sup>24</sup>See pp. 52-57.

its edges were sharply defined against the shadowy blue beyond. As I gazed at that marvelous Orb, the Spirit of God seemed to whisper to me, "IT IS A WORLD", and like a flash of light in a darkened sky the truth dawned in my spirit. It was a revelation to me [*italics not in the original*]. From that moment my searchings in the Bible became more a search for the location of God's Heaven, the place where He dwelt, and the place to which the redeemed of all ages have gathered.

Scripture after scripture thrust itself into my heart until there was no room for a shadow of doubt but that the SUN, that SUN which attends our world in eternal beneficence, that SUN which we see every day and by which we live, and move, and have our being in human sense, was the actual habitation of our God. Its Glorious Light was the Light of God, and that there He had established His Throne! In our Sun was discovered the World of Light of which our Bible so often speaks, and that it is in or on the SUN that God's Heaven is found!<sup>25</sup>

With the idea that God is in the sun, and that the sun is the heaven to which his daughter Edith's soul had gone, Offiler made a search of the scriptures in an effort to determine if the Bible corroborated his revelation. The result of his study was the formulation of his complex and peculiar system of apocalyptic eschatology.<sup>26</sup>

Summary. As has been noted in this chapter, there were several factors which appear to have influenced Offiler in the development of his deviatory views. Among these influences were (1) certain mystical experiences which Offiler had: (a) when he received a vision and a miraculous healing

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<sup>25</sup>Majesty of the Symbol, pp. 123-124.

<sup>26</sup>Jantz, personal interview, Feb. 27, 1962, stated that it was not until after Edith's death that Offiler developed his deviatory eschatological system and symbolism.



following a twenty-one day fast after his "conversion;" (b) when he and his wife Gertrude experienced identical visions at the time of his "call" into full-time ministry; (c) when he received a vision of a foreign mission field at the time of his "baptism in the Holy Spirit;" and (d) while visiting in Los Angeles, when he received a vision that he interpreted as verifying his deviatory Trinitarian views.

(2) Among the literature which had a possible influence upon Offiler were three books to which he made direct reference in his own writings: (a) The Gospel in the Stars by Joseph A. Seiss; (b) A Remarkable Biblical Discovery by William Phillips Hall; and (c) Celestial Symbol Interpreted by H. W. Morris.

(3) That it is possible that the "New Issue" heresy, which became a controversy at the 1915 meeting of the General Council of the Assemblies of God which Offiler attended, had an influence upon him in his deviatory Trinitarian views. That this may be the case is especially apparent in his baptismal formula.

(4) His conviction that both a literal and spiritual (or symbolic) interpretation is absolutely necessary to a correct understanding of the Scriptures influenced Offiler's deviatory views. This influence is seen (a) in his deviatory Trinitarian view, especially as expressed in his synthesis

of both the orthodox and "New Issue" baptismal formulas in his own. It is seen further (b) in his views on Heaven; e.g., his belief that the Magi were Enoch, Moses, and Elijah, who returned to earth from the Heaven of the sun.

(5) It was noted that (a) while Offiler did not claim to base his deviatory views upon his mystical experiences, (b) he did believe that these experiences were granted to him by God as confirmation that his deviatory views were not erroneous. However, (6) it is apparent that (a) his deviatory eschatological views in regard to Heaven, (b) his celestial symbolism, and (c) perhaps his dispensational system, were based, in part, upon a mystical revelation which he claimed to have received at the time of his youngest daughter's death.

It is evident, therefore, that while Offiler claimed that his deviatory views were original with himself, there were certain determinants, including the heretical views of the "New Issue" and certain other deviatory writings, which influenced his thinking.



## CHAPTER V

### THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OFFILER'S DEVIATORY TRINITARIAN VIEWS AND HIS DEVIATORY ESCHATOLOGY

The purpose of this paper was to examine the Trinitarian views of William Henry Offiler and the possible influence of those views upon certain aspects of his eschatology. It was observed that Offiler believed in the traditional Trinitarian concept of one God in three Persons, and that the Persons of the Godhead are distinct as to their individual identity but one in essence. However, Offiler deviated from the orthodox position in regard to the name of the Trinity. It appears probable that this deviation was influenced by the "Oneness" issue which arose in the early years of the Pentecostal movement. Although Offiler did not adopt the Sabellian heresies of the "New Issue" group, he did accept their erroneous teaching that the name of the Trinity is Lord-Jesus-Christ. This deviatory Trinitarian position was expressed especially in his views on water baptism and his baptismal formula, and later influenced the development of his deviatory eschatological views.

Offiler's development of a deviatory apocalyptic system of eschatology apparently followed the death of his daughter Edith. At the time of her death, he received what he believed was a revelation concerning the location of

Heaven in the solar sun. Offiler then made an extensive search of the Scriptures to determine the Biblical corroboration for his theory regarding Heaven. In focussing his attention upon the sun, and discovering the mention of the related heavenly bodies--the moon and stars--he developed his system of celestial symbolism. Apparently Offiler's interest developed simultaneously in connection with speculative theology and the mysteries of Bible prophecy, and he began to develop the interpretations of his dispensational system.

The parallel between Offiler's trinitarian interpretation and his eschatology was seen in chapter three under the discussion of his dispensational system. (1) Offiler deviated from fundamental dispensationalism in the development of his own system, which he divided into three periods of two thousand years each. The influence of his Trinitarian interpretation of the name of the Godhead was emphasized in this dispensational structure. His first dispensation he called that of the Father, the second dispensation he designated that of the Son, and his third dispensation he identified as that of the Holy Spirit. Thus, it has been shown that there was an apparent influence of Offiler's Trinitarian views upon his eschatology. However, this influence was primarily in connection with his dispensational system.



Furthermore, there appears to be an inter-relationship between his deviatory eschatology and his Trinitarian interpretation as well as a counter-influence of the one upon the other. This was evident in his ascription of his apocalyptic symbolism to the Trinity. Here again this counter-influence and inter-relationship was confined primarily to his dispensational system. To each respective dispensation Offiler assigned a particular celestial symbol and primary color by which he also designated the respective Person of the Trinity with which he associated each dispensation. To the Father he assigned the first dispensation of two thousand years, and to both that dispensation and the Father Offiler designated the celestial symbol of the sun and the primary color "golden yellow." The Son of God, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, Offiler associated with the second dispensation of two thousand years, and to both that central dispensation and the Son he assigned the celestial symbol of the moon and the primary color "crimson red." To the Holy Spirit Offiler ascribed the third dispensation of two thousand years. To both the third dispensation and the Spirit of God he gave the celestial symbol of the stars (the Davidic star) and the primary color "heavenly blue."

2) Thus, while Offiler's deviatory Trinitarian views certainly influenced his deviatory eschatological system by suggesting the pattern of a dispensational triad, there was

a counter-influence of his eschatological views upon his Trinitarian interpretations as seen in his ascription of his celestial and spectrum symbolisms to the three Persons of the Godhead as well as to his three dispensations. (3) Further, it appears that this inter-relationship was confined primarily to his deviatory triadic dispensational system, and was only incidental to the other deviatory eschatological views which he held. For example, the only evident relationship between Offiler's deviatory Trinitarian views and his deviatory views in regard to the Manchild, is that the birth of the Manchild occurs during the latter part of his third dispensation--the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. The relationship, in this case, is only a spatial one (i.e., primarily a relationship of time) and in no way do his deviatory Trinitarian views affect his views on the Manchild.

4) Offiler taught only three dispensations, substituting his outline for the more traditional dispensational interpretations by fitting the various events of human history--past, present, and future--into his own framework. The ages of Innocence, Conscience, and Human Government he included in the Dispensation of the Father; the ages of Promise and Law he included in the central Dispensation of the Son; and the Church Age and the Tribulation period he included in the Dispensation of the Holy Spirit. The



Millennium he designated as an era by itself--a parenthesis--that is neither in time nor eternity (he was not always consistent on this last point). It appears, however, that this arrangement of the events of history within his dispensational triad was an arbitrary one without any special correlation to traditional dispensationalism except by coincidence.

5) In examining Offiler's teachings concerning the third dispensation, it was observed that (a) he overlaid Daniel's prophecy concerning the Seventy Weeks upon his dispensational framework, and (b) that he divided the seventieth week by placing the first three and one-half years of that week prior to Pentecost, and the last three and one-half years at the end of the third dispensation. Also in connection with this third dispensation it appears that Offiler held extremely deviatory views in regard to the interpretation of certain events surrounding the ushering in of the Tribulation period. (c) He identified the Woman of Revelation 12 as the Spirit-filled believers, from among whom are to be chosen 144,000 virgins for a special relationship with Christ. (d) It appears possible that Offiler may have believed that Christ will cohabit with this select number of virgins (the 144,000) in a physical-spiritual union which will produce a human-divine progeny--the Manchild. This Manchild will be carried to Heaven where Satan will engage

them in a war which will culminate in his defeat and banishment from Heaven, thus ushering in the Tribulation.

While an inter-relationship and counter-influence appears to exist between Offiler's Trinitarian views and his eschatological views, it also appears that both his unorthodox Trinitarian and eschatological interpretations were influenced by other determinants. Among these determinants were certain mystical experiences, certain literature, Offiler's insistence upon a dual literal-symbolical interpretation of Scripture, and the "New Issue" problem. It also seems that while there was an influence of these determinants upon his deviatory views, there was perhaps in some sense a counter-influence of the latter upon the former. For example, Offiler's acceptance of certain literature may have been influenced by his pre-conceived interpretations. His acceptance of Hall's book A Remarkable Discovery seems to have been determined by his pre-disposition toward a "Oneness" interpretation concerning the name of the Godhead. It also appears that Offiler's acceptance of Morris's book Celestial Symbol Interpreted was influenced by his previously developed celestial symbolism based upon his revelation. It is possible that Offiler's revelation concerning Heaven was a suggestion of his own imagination--an idea to which he clung as a possible answer to the mysteries of life after death.



It was observed that while Offiler did not claim to base any of his deviatory views upon his visions, he did, in fact, believe that these mystical experiences afforded him with confirmation as to the validity of his preconceived deviatory theories, so that in the end, his mystical experiences did influence his final acceptance of these deviatory views.

Conclusion. (1) The Trinitarian concept of William Henry Offiler is deviatory only in regard to the name of the Godhead. This deviation was especially evident in connection with Offiler's baptismal formula. (2) Offiler's Trinitarian deviation did not <sup>a</sup> effect his eschatology except as it appears to have influenced his method, which was dispensational. This Trinitarian influence is seen in Offiler's employment of the triadic pattern for his dispensational system, and further in the ascription of his deviatory name for the Trinity to the respective dispensations of his triadic eschatological methodology. (3) Therefore the Trinitarian view of William Offiler did not influence his entire eschatology directly, except as his deviatory Trinitarian concept regarding the name of the Godhead appears to have indirectly influenced his dispensational methodology. (4) There was a counter-influence of Offiler's deviatory eschatological views upon his Trinitarian views as seen in the application of his

apocalyptic symbolisms to the Trinity. This inter-relationship is confined primarily to Offiler's dispensationalism and is only incidental to his other deviatory eschatological views. It is an inter-relationship of methods, particularly in the realm of symbology. (5) Both Offiler's deviatory Trinitarian and eschatological views were influenced by certain determinants including Offiler's mystical experiences (his visions and his revelation at the time of his daughter's death), certain literature, the "New Issue", and his commitment to a dual literal-symbolical interpretation of the scriptures. (6) While these determinants appear to have influenced his deviatory views, there appears to have been a counter-influence of his preconceived theories and disposition upon his acceptance of certain of these determinants.

It may be concluded, then, that these influences and counter-influences seem to indicate a complex inter-relationship between Offiler's deviatory Trinitarian concept and his dispensational method of eschatology and the determinants of those deviatory views.



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\* Permission was secured from each individual interviewed to quote the information learned from them which is presented in this paper.



APPENDIX A



WILLIAM HENRY OFFILER



## A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF WILLIAM HENRY OFFILER

William Henry Offiler was born in Nottingham, England on December 20, 1875. His father worked as a lace maker, carrying on the art which was handed down to him by his father and the preceding generations. His mother, Helen Offiler, gave birth to a family of three boys and three girls, among whom William was the third child.

Offiler studied the boiler-maker trade, and served as an apprentice boiler-maker in England. He followed that trade upon coming to this continent, until the time of his entrance into the Christian ministry. It was in the year 1889 that he came to this hemisphere, first landing in Canada, and then, shortly afterward, coming to the United States.

William Offiler and his family had been members of the Anglican Church of England, and as a boy at sixteen years of age, he publicly dedicated himself to be a Christian missionary. He tells about this experience in his type-written notes for a sermon dated February 11, 1936.

When I was a boy of sixteen I was in a vast meeting in Nottingham, England, and in that meeting was John G. Paton. John Paton went down to those South Seas and transformed those tribes into beautiful Christians and now you can't find a cannibal on those Islands, but you can find lots of churches there, and while the modern missionaries are kind of spoiling those works by Modernism, nevertheless Paton and his missionaries triumphed.

In that meeting in Eng., the Lord Bishop said: "Is there anyone that wants to consecrate his life as a missionary?", and I stood up. He sent a man to take my name and address and in a few days I was placed in the Soudenes Missionary Society for a course of study. But before that four years was over I got an itching in my feet and so I left over there and came to America and found myself in Spokane and there God opened my eyes to a new thing. After fifteen years He sent me to Seattle and I have been doing missionary work ever since in my way.

In the year 1889, William Offiler was attracted to a street meeting being conducted, under the direction of a Captain McClellan, by the Volunteers of America in the city of Spokane. His interest was aroused, and he followed the Christians to their mission where he went to the altar, confessed his sins, and there experienced what he felt was his initial conversion. Prior to this time Offiler had received a mystical experience in which he was given what he considered to be a vision. This experience came to him following a twenty-one day fast, and was accompanied by a miraculous healing of a bone disease in his jaw (see pp. 62,63). It was at the time of his consecration in the mission that Offiler experienced deliverance from the tobacco habit, which may account for his marking his genuine conversion as occurring at this time, rather than at the time of his confirmation in the Anglican Church as a twelve year old boy, or at the time of his missionary dedication at the age of sixteen, or at the time of his miraculous healing.



William Offiler was attracted to the young lady who played the organ at the street meeting which led to his conversion; and soon a romance developed, which culminated in his marriage to Gertrude Riley, on November 16, 1900.

Sometime following their marriage, William and Gertrude Offiler were attracted to a series of cottage prayer meetings in the city of Spokane. A group of Christians, composed largely of Christian Missionary Alliance adherents, were meeting together to fast and pray in a series of meetings in various homes. After ten days of prayer and fasting, God poured out his Holy Spirit upon these earnest people, and news of the glossolalia phenomena among them spread throughout the city. William Offiler and his wife, Gertrude, together with Gertrude's sister, Hildah, attended these meetings. This was their first introduction to the Pentecostal revival that spread throughout the land at the turn of this century, but it was not until later that the Offiler's received their own personal Pentecostal experience. However, they continued to fellowship and worship with the Pentecostal church which was formed in the city of Spokane.

One day as William Offiler was walking along the banks of the Spokane River, he felt God speak to him about Jesse and the anointing of his son, David, by the prophet Samuel. He went to a tent meeting later, and as he entered the tent

an old Elder of the congregation jumped up, took the bottle of anointing oil and poured it upon William Offiler's head saying, "You are anointed to be our Pastor." Thus it was that in 1908 Offiler was made Pastor of this Pentecostal congregation which was known as the "Apostolic Assembly" in the city of Spokane, although Offiler, himself, did not receive a glossolalia experience until later in 1914.<sup>1</sup>

During those years Offiler continued working at his trade. He accepted a two-year contract as a boiler-maker with the Great Northern Railroad Company, and was stationed at Glacier National Park in Montana. It was during the year 1914, while employed at Glacier National Park, that he received a vision, which was experienced by his wife also, and which they both interpreted as constituting a "call" into full-time ministerial service.<sup>2</sup> Breaking his contract with the Great Northern Railroad Company, the Offilers returned to Spokane to seek God's direction for their lives. It was during this interim period in Spokane, prior to his coming to Seattle, that William Offiler received a "baptism in the Holy Spirit."<sup>3</sup>

Impressed that it was the leading of God, William and Gertrude Offiler moved to Seattle, and started his full-time

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<sup>1</sup>Hildah Offiler, personal interview, Feb. 7, 1962. This biographical sketch is based upon information obtained through personal interviews with Mrs. Offiler and others.

<sup>2</sup>See pp. 63, 64.

<sup>3</sup>See p. 65.



ministry at the Pine Street Mission in the location of what was then the Proctor Building at the corner of Second and Pine Streets in down-town Seattle. In spite of the fact that he had no formal seminary training in theology or for a ministerial career, Offiler was successful in attracting a following, and in developing the oldest Pentecostal Church in Seattle, and what grew to be the largest independent Pentecostal work in the Pacific Northwest.<sup>4</sup>

Offiler was successful in sponsoring camp meetings at Greenlake and Lake Washington until, because of the large size of the crowds which attended, he was forced to move to another location. In 1935 he established the Mirror Lake Bible Camp, a permanent campground covering fifty-five acres at Federal Way, Washington.

His congregation grew, and he moved to a new location at the corner of Seventh and Olive Streets in down-town Seattle. The new church was called the Pentecostal Mission and Apostolic Assembly. Outgrowing the quarters at Seventh and Olive Streets, the congregation moved to another location on Third Avenue between Blanchard and Bell Streets where they erected the original Bethel Temple building in 1920.

In 1943 the congregation acquired the old Crystal Pool building located at the corner of Second and Lenora

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<sup>4</sup>See p. 106.

Streets, which is the present home of Bethel Temple.

Offiler established a Bible School in connection with Bethel Temple. From this school Christian workers and ministers went forth to preach and teach. Through their efforts and with Offiler's encouragement and assistance, several branch works were established. At one time there were thirty-two churches represented in the Bethel Evangelistic Association which was organized in 1927 under Offiler's leadership. A number of these churches later affiliated with the General Council of the Assemblies of God.<sup>5</sup>

In 1925 Offiler pioneered in radio gospel broadcasting. The radio ministry he began at Bethel Temple has continued almost without interruption for the past thirty-seven years, with daily programs broadcast to a large

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<sup>5</sup>Among those congregations which were founded by W. H. Offiler and his followers, the following affiliated with the General Council of the Assemblies of God: West Seattle (pioneered by Rev. Freeborn in 1925, and pastored by Otto Jantz, 1932-37); Bothell (pioneered by Mrs. Fannie Clark and Mrs. Wanda Stoddard Dickey, and pastored for fourteen years by Otto Jantz); Renton (pioneered by Fred Hansen); White Center (pioneered by Al and Wilda Bade, and pastored by Rev. Ralph Devin); Bellevue (pioneered by Mrs. Fannie Clark and Mrs. Wanda Stoddard Dickey); Burien (pioneered by Ralph Devin and pastored by James Appel who later succeeded William Patterson as the Pastor of Bethel Temple); Kirkland (pioneered by Leonard Amendson, and Wilfred Gamlen, a nephew of Offiler's); Toppenish (pioneered by Bob Smith and pastored by William Christensen); and Snohomish (founded by Charles Price and pastored by Cleo Beatty Harrison). The above information was stated by Otto Jantz, personal interview, Sept. 25, 1961, and was confirmed, in part, by the records of the Northwest District Council office of the Assemblies of God, Houghton, Washington.



listening audience throughout the Seattle area. Offiler's radio and pulpit messages were put into print and mimeographed for distribution to his audiences and Bible School students. Offiler learned the printing trade and published five books and pamphlets, and a profusion of notes. He also published a monthly magazine (a four or eight page paper) called Pentecostal Power, which he edited, hand-set, and printed himself.

From his boyhood Offiler carried a great interest and burden for Christian missions, and although he was never able to personally fulfill a missionary "call", he promoted a large foreign missions program. Missionaries from Bethel Temple were the first to carry the Pentecostal testimony to the islands of Indonesia, where they established an indigenous Pentecostal church claiming a membership of over five hundred thousand converts. Bethel Temple missionaries established foreign Bible Schools in Manado, North Celebes; Batu, Java; Pematang Sintang, North Sumatra; and Serui, New Guinea. Other missionaries from Bethel Temple are stationed in Japan, Italy, Formosa, and Columbia, South America. From Indonesia workers went to Holland, where they are credited with establishing twenty churches. Bethel Temple supported as many as thirty missionaries at one time, and more than seventy missionaries have gone to the foreign fields directly from Bethel Temple. Offiler gave support and help to many

missionaries, including a number who were not affiliated with his church, who left from the Port of Seattle for the Orient and other mission fields.<sup>6</sup>

Offiler attended the second General Council meeting of the Assemblies of God in 1915, but because of difficulties which arose over the "New Issue", he did not affiliate with the General Council.<sup>7</sup> However, he continued to fellowship and cooperate with General Council churches in sponsoring joint services. It was only in later years, after propounding his deviatory eschatological views, that Offiler came into disfavor with some of the other Pentecostal groups. However, his followers established other independent churches in fellowship with various Pentecostal groups, and in recent years Bethel Temple has re-established fellowship with the other Full-gospel churches of the Seattle area.<sup>8</sup>

Offiler was highly regarded by his followers, especially because of his mystical experiences and his

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<sup>6</sup>Several of the missionaries supported by Bethel Temple later affiliated with the General Council of the Assemblies of God, among whom were: Rev. and Mrs. Ralph M. Devin, Rev. and Mrs. Perry Diamond, Rev. Kenneth Short, Rev. and Mrs. Raymond Busby, and Rev. Ralph Mader.

<sup>7</sup>See pp. 72-74.

<sup>8</sup>Through the efforts of one of Offiler's students, Ralph Sander, Sr., the Church by the Side of the Road of Riverton, Washington, and the Little Chapel at Second and Stewart Streets, Seattle, and the Seattle Revival Center were established; and through these institutions Offiler's teachings have been spread throughout the Seattle area and abroad.



exercise of supernatural charismata. Offiler practiced a life of prayer and fasting, and for the last ten years of his pastoral ministry fasted each weekend from Thursday evening through Sunday evening. Many miracles and conversions occurred under his ministry. As a teacher he was respected, and as a preacher he had an extensive ministry. His views on the Trinity, water baptism, and eschatology were adopted by his followers and the churches of the Bethel Evangelistic Association. His influence on the Pentecostal movement in the Pacific Northwest and abroad is seen today in the ministry of his followers who are perpetuating his teachings.

The life of William Offiler was touched with tragedy and bereavement. His first wife, Gertrude, contracted tuberculosis and became an invalid, upon whom he had to wait constantly. Her illness necessitated his doing all the housework, as well as nursing his wife, except when hired help was obtained. To William and Gertrude were born three children: William Edward was born September 19, 1901; Harriet Helen was born November 16, 1902; and Edith Gertrude was born March 28, 1909. Harriet died from the flue on June 15, 1918. Edith died of a kidney infection, contracted with an attack of Scarlet Fever, on December 1, 1926. It was at the time of Edith's death that William Offiler received the revelation concerning the location of Heaven in the solar sun and the

celestial symbolism which became a revolutionizing factor in the development of his deviatory Trinitarian and eschatological views.<sup>9</sup>

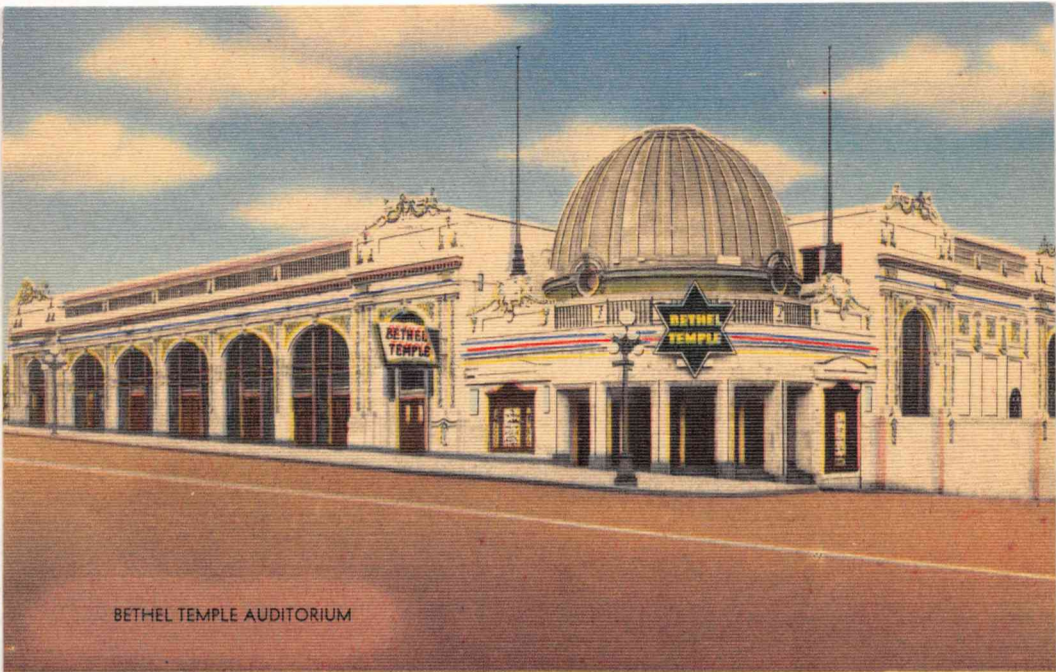
William Offiler's first wife, Gertrude, died of heart trouble on June 12, 1941. The Offiler's only son, William Edward, became an alcoholic, causing great grief to his parents. William Edward finally died as an alcoholic in a fire which engulfed a hotel on the Seattle Skidroad on August 26, 1958, but his father never learned of the final fate of his son, for William Henry Offiler preceded his son in death, going to his reward on September 29, 1957. He is survived by his second wife, Hildah, nee Riley (a sister to Gertrude Offiler, who lived in their home and was the constant companion of Gertrude and William) to whom William was married on April 11, 1942, and who presently resides at the Mirror Lake Camp Grounds at Federal Way, Washington.

William Offiler leaves behind a legacy of a life dedicated to God in unselfish service and spiritual leadership as a pioneer in the modern Pentecostal movement.

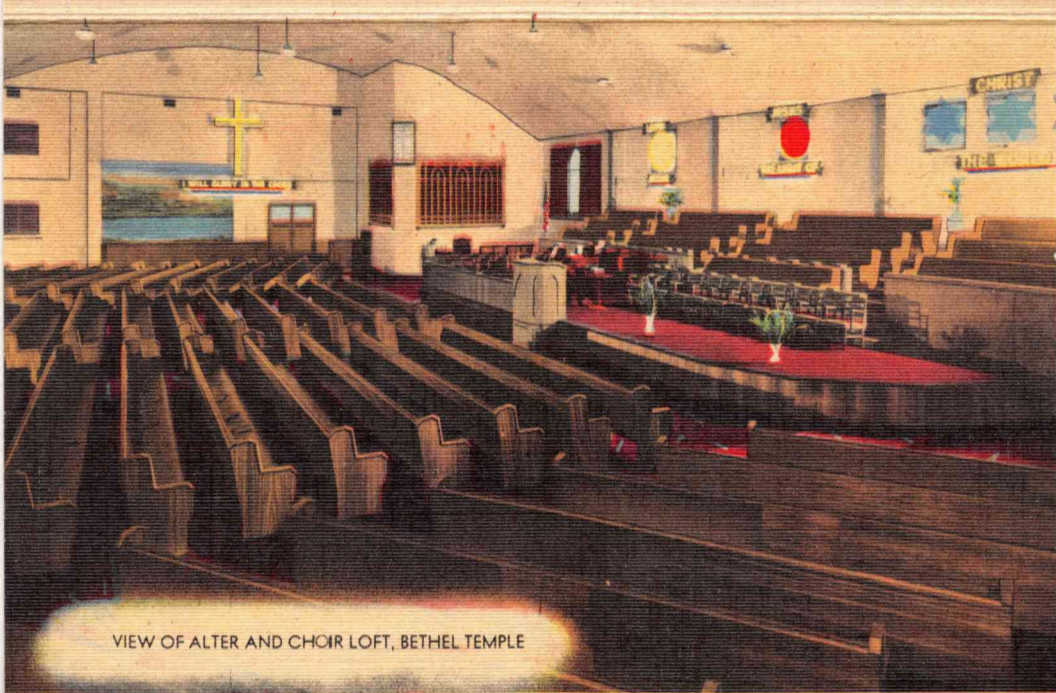
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<sup>9</sup>See pp. 75, 76.

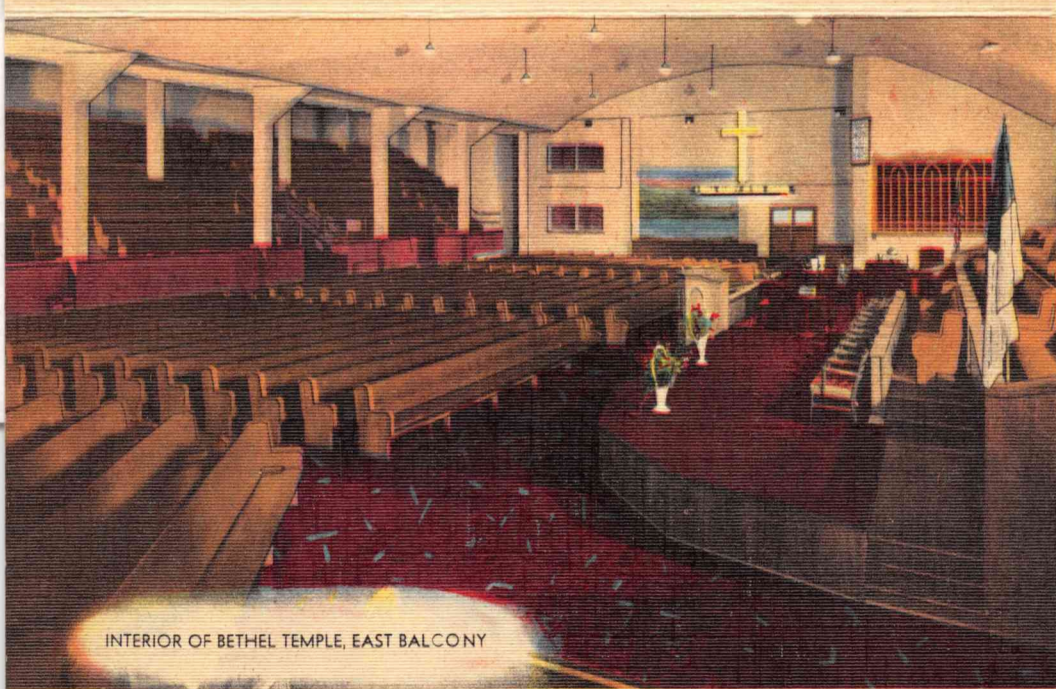




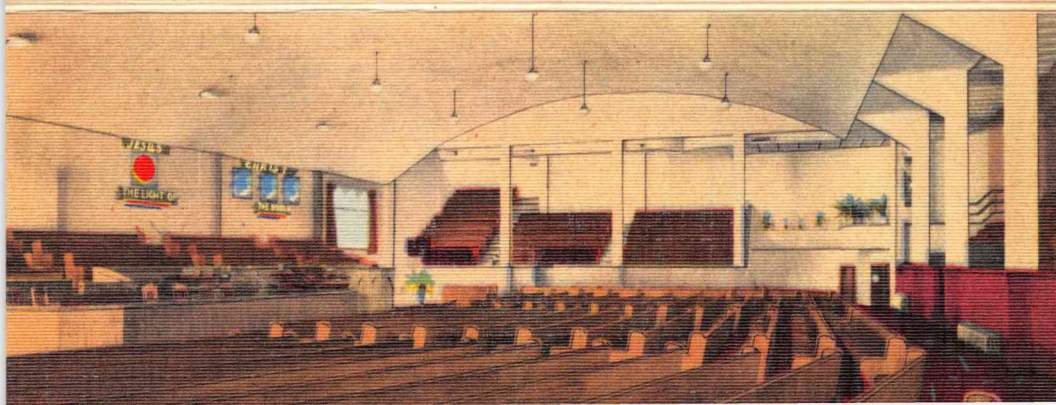
BETHEL TEMPLE AUDITORIUM



VIEW OF ALTER AND CHOIR LOFT, BETHEL TEMPLE



INTERIOR OF BETHEL TEMPLE, EAST BALCONY





Second and Lenora  
Seattle 1, Washington

C. JOE McKNIGHT, Pastor  
R. R. CABE, Associate Pastor  
W. H. OFFILER, Founder

Seattle's Pioneer Pentecostal Church. Our church was originally known as the Pine Street Mission. In 1920 a building was built on Third and Bell which was occupied until 1944. At which time the present building was acquired and renovated. It was formerly a swimming and a sport's center. Miraculously, during the war years the building was transformed into the present beautiful gospel auditorium.



OUR FOUNDATION—THE WORD OF GOD. A Bible-loving church.

BETHEL TEMPLE BIBLE SCHOOL—A day school presenting a three-year course of study. The Bible is our textbook.

NIGHT SCHOOL—A comprehensive course of study conducted one night a week.

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE—Covering most of the books of the Bible by home study at a nominal cost.

### BETHEL TEMPLE AUDITORIUM



MISSIONARY IN SPIRIT—The great vision of our church has always been the outstretched arms of the multitudes longing to hear the good news. This great vision has resulted in one of the modern-day missionary wonders. An Indigenous Pentecostal Church in Indonesia of some 500,000 members. Our missionaries are busy today training the native in Bible schools located in Menado, North Celebes; Batu, Java; Pematang Siantar; North Sumatra, and Serui, New Guinea. Approximately 250 students yearly gather to study the WORD. We also have missionaries laboring in Japan, Italy and Formosa. From Indonesia workers have gone to Holland, there are now some 20 churches in Holland as a result. In Columbia, South America, through the efforts of our missionaries, there are ten native Evangelists in Fellowship with us. Your investment in our missionary program is invited. All funds received for missions are sent 100% to the field.



EVANGELICAL IN EFFORT—A Lighthouse in the great Metropolitan area of Seattle.

BROADCASTING DAILY (Monday through Friday, 8:15 a.m., Sunday, 9:00 a.m.) from the Temple by way of Station KNBX, 1050 kc. These broadcasts have been beamed out from Bethel Temple for almost forty years.

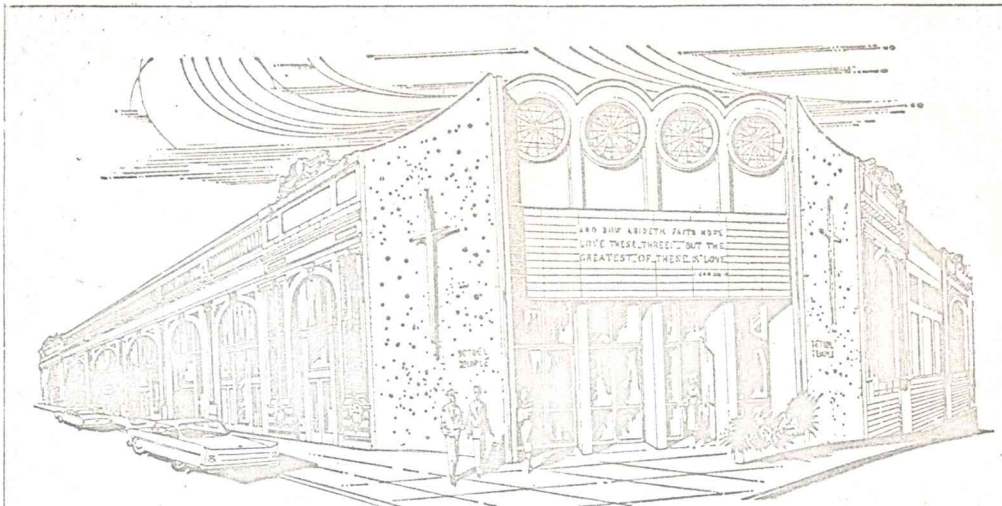
YOUTH RALLY—Every Saturday night for over forty years. Hundreds of young people have gone forth and today are ministering around the world.

We thank you for visiting with us. Please consider this my PERSONAL INVITATION TO YOU to come again real soon. If possible, make our church YOUR CHURCH HOME.

God wonderfully bless you!

*Rev. C. Joe McKnight*





### Landmark Changes Appearance

**BETHEL TEMPLE**, 2d Avenue and Lenora Street, with the dome which was a landmark for years removed, as it will look with completion of a new front and en-

trance. The former Crystal Pool building has been the home of the Pentecostal congregation since 1943.

## Remodeling Removes Temple Dome

Work on a new front and entrance for Bethel Temple, 2d Avenue and Lenora Street, has begun with the removal of the dome, long a city landmark, the Rev. C. Joe McKnight, pastor announced yesterday.

Scene of many of Seattle's past athletic events, the building was known for many years as Crystal Pool.

**BETHEL TEMPLE**, oldest of Seattle's Pentecostal Churches purchased the building in 1943 and remodeled it into the present house-

of worship. Prior to World War I, the congregation was located on Pine Street and before moving to the present site was in its own building at 3d Avenue and Bell Street.

The pastor for most of that period of some 40 years was the late Rev. W. E. Offiler, a pioneer in radio gospel broadcasting. The church has maintained an almost continuous radio ministry over 37 years.

**THE NEW ENTRANCE** will have glass doors, an attrac-

tive planter box, and will feature an 8-by-14 foot reader board. The work is expected to be completed within 60 to 90 days.

The contractors are H. Bertrand and Co. and the architects are Otis E. Hancock & Associates. Masonry work will be by Lund Masonry, iron work by Century Metals, lath and plastering by Gordon Brown, Inc., roofing and sheet metal work by Associated Roofing & Sheet Metal, painting by C. T. Long of Kent and floor coverings by the Sather Co.

APPENDIX B



THE GODHEAD BODILY	DEUT. 32:6	PSA. 89:26	ISA. 63:16	THE FATHER	JN. 10:29, 1 JN. 5:7, MATT. 28:9
THE NAME OF GOD				THE SUN	THE LORD ISA. 42:8
THE THREE EARTHLY WITNESSES	ADAM			THE WATER	1 JNO. 5:8
THREE DISPENSATIONS				THE FIRST DISPENSATION OF 2000 YEARS	
THE THREE HEAVENLY WITNESSES				THE FATHER	1 JNO. 5:7
CHERUBIM OF GLORY	GEN. 3:24				
ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY					GEN. 6:3
THE JUBILEES		20 JUBILEES			20 JUBILEES
TABERNACLE, TEMPLE, CHURCH					
BIBLE ASTRONOMY	GEN. 1:14-18				
TYPES OF THE GODHEAD	SUN, MOON, STARS, GEN. 1:14			NOAH'S ARK	GEN. 6:14, ABR. 1:1
THE ROD OF GOD	GEN. 3:15				EX. 4:2
THE GREAT MYSTERY	ADAM-EVE	GEN. 2:18-25			
FORTY DAYS—FORTY NIGHTS					GEN. 7:4
SEVEN TIMES	SEVEN DAYS				
TRANSLATIONS				ENOCH	GEN. 5:24 HEB. 11:5
CHRONOLOGY	4000 B. C. ADAM			3000 B. C. ENOCH	
FEASTS OF ISRAEL					
THE ROCK					
BLOOD OF ATONEMENT	GEN. 3:21				
SPIRIT OF PROMISE					
BREAD OF HIS PRESENCE					
ARK OF HIS COVENANT					
ISRAEL AND JUDAH					
THE COVENANTS	EDEN, GEN. 3:15-21				
BLOOD COVENANT	GEN. 3:21, 4:4				
THIS IS MY BODY	GEN. 3:21				
DUAL SACRIFICE					
THE ATONEMENT	GEN. 3:21, 4:4				
REGENERATION	GEN. 3:15				
ALMIGHTY GOD	GEN. 2:8				
CIRCUMCISION—SEAL	GEN. 3:15				
LAYING ON OF HANDS					
THE ANOINTING					
HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM					
WATER BAPTISM					
THREE DAYS—THREE NIGHTS					
THREE MEASURES OF MEAL					
COVENANT OF HEALING					
ANGEL OF THE LORD					
MELCHIZEDECK, MICHAEL GABRIEL					
THREE SHEPHERD KINGS					
SIGNS AND WONDERS	GEN. 1:14				GEN. 6:11
MESSIANIC PROPHECIES	GEN. 3:15				
THE WORD OF GOD	GEN. 3:8				
FAITH	ABEL GEN. 4:4			ENOCH—GEN. 5:22	NOAH GEN. 6:9
THE DOOR	GEN. 3:24				
SEVENTY WEEKS					
ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION					
SEVEN CHURCHES					
THE GREAT REVIVAL					
EARLY AND LATTER RAIN					
THE MANCHILD					
END OF ALL FLESH	GEN. 3:24				
THE SERPENT	GEN. 3:1, 3:15				
CHURCH TAKEN OUT					
EAGLE'S WINGS					
MIDNIGHT CRY					
GREAT TRIBULATION	GEN. 3:15				
FALSE PROPHETS	GEN. 3:1-15				
ANTI-CHRIST					
TEN TOES, TEN KINGS					
MARK OF THE BEAST	GEN. 4:15				
TWO WITNESSES					
SATAN CAST DOWN	GEN. 3:15				
SECOND COMING OF JESUS				ENOCH JUDE 14	
RESURRECTIONS					
THE THOUSAND YEARS					
TIMES OF THE GENTILES					
LAW AND GRACE					
TYPOLOGY	SUN, MOON, STARS, GEN. 1:14-18, NOAH'S ARK GEN. 6:14-22, ABRAHAM, ISAAC, JACOB; GEN. 12:1-13				
PREVAILING PRAYERS					
THREE THOUSAND					
JUDGMENTS	GEN. 3:15				NOAH GEN. 6:7, 7:1
SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN					
THE TWELVES					
THE 144,000					
THE LORD'S WEEK					
PROPHETIC MEASUREMENTS	GEN. 1:1-2, 2:4, 15:12-14, 29-27-28, 33:3, 41:1-36			FIRST DAY 1000 YEARS	SECOND DAY PSA. 90:5
FOUR PROPHETIC DAYS					EX. 12:3-6, TABERNACLE MATT. 23:34
THE VISION OF THE WATERS					"FOUR O"
THE COURT, THE HOLY PLACE, AND THE MOST HOLY PLACE					
MOLTEN SEA					
AFTER TWO DAYS—THIRD DAY					
TWO THOUSAND SWINE					
THE RAINBOW					GEN. 9:12



THE NAME AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GODHEAD BODILY ARE IMPRESSED

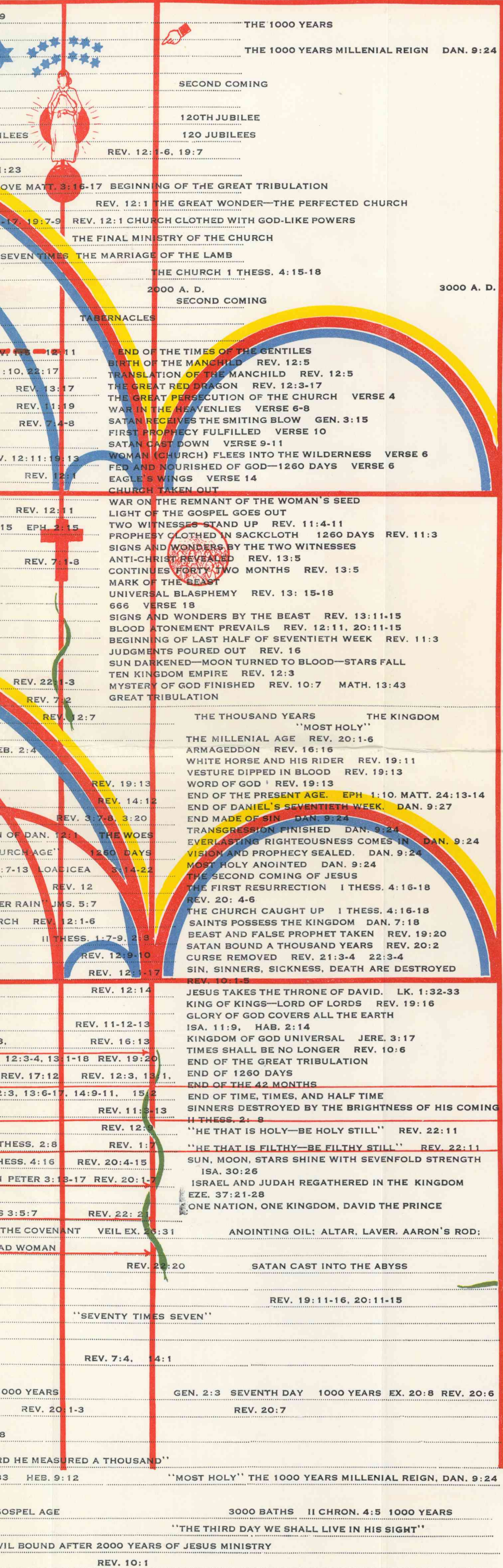
GEN. 5:7, MATT. 28:19		PSA. 2	ISA. 9:6-7	THE SON	LK. 1:31, 2:21, 3:22	LK. 2:11
RD ISA. 42:8		THE MOON.		JESUS	LK. 1:31, PROV. 30:4	
				THE BLOOD	I JNO. 5:8	
	DISPENSATIONAL TESTIMONY			THE CENTRAL DISPENSATION OF 2000 YEARS		
		EX. 25:18-20, 26:31	PSA. 80:1			
GEN. 6:3		MOSES	DEUT. 34:7	II CHRON. 5:11-14		I KGS. 10:10, II CHRON. 9:15
20 JUBILEES		20 JUBILEES	LEV. 25:9-10			20 JUBILEES
		TABERNACLE	EX. 25:8-9	TEMPLE	I KING 8:10-11	
	GEN. 37:9	NUM. 24:17	DEUT. 4:19	JOSH. 10:12-14	PS. 19	ISA. 13:10
	JOEL 2:10, 3:15	MATT. 2:2-10,				
GEN. 6:14, ABRAHAM, ISAAC, JACOB	GEN. 12	THREE CAKES	GEN. 18:6	THREE APPLICATIONS OF BLOOD—	THREE OF OIL	LEV. 14:14-17
EX. 4:2, 4:20, 14:16, 17:6			NUM. 17:8, 20:11	ISA. 11:1	JER. 23:5	ZECH. 3:8, 6:12
	ABRAHAM-SARAH	GEN. 17:15-17.	ISAAC-REBECCA	GEN. 24:67	JACOB-RACHEL	GEN. 29:28
GEN. 7:4			EX. 24:18, 34:28	LEV. 12:1-4, NUM. 13:25		1 KINGS 19:8, JONAH 1:17
	JACOB	GEN. 33:3	LEV. 4:6, 8:11, 14:7, 16:14-19, 26:18, 21, 24, 28,	JOSH. 6:4-15, I KGS. 18:43,	II KGS. 5:10, PRO	
			MOSES	DEUT. 34:7	JUDE 9	ELIJAH
						II KINGS 2:11
	2000 B. C.	ABRAHAM		MOSES		1000 B. C.
						ELIJAH
	PASSOVER	EX. 12:1-12	PENTECOST	EX. 34:22	TABERNACLES	LEV. 23:34
	GEN. 28:10-22, 49:24, EX. 17:1-6, NUM. 20:7-12, PS. 118:22-24,					ISA. 6:14-16, DAN. 2:34-35, ZE
GEN. 9:4	GEN. 15:1-21	EX. 12:1-23, 30:10-15			LEV. 10:17, 14:1-25	ISA. 53:1-12
	GEN. 15:17					JOEL 2
	GEN. 16:6	EX. 23:25, 40:23	LEV. 24:5-9			
				EX. 25:10-22	JOSH. 4:7, 7:6	I SAM. 5:3
						II CHRON. 13:9, 15-1
	GEN. 30:2-28	GEN. 32:28	RUTH 4:11	II SAM. 19:43	II KINGS 3:9	EZE. 37:18-23
NOAH	GEN. 9:8-17	ABRAHAM	GEN. 17:2-4	MOSAIC LAW	EX. 34:10	DAVID
GEN. 8:20						II SAMUEL 7:8-17, PS. 132:11, 89:3-4
		GEN. 15:9-10	EX. 12:13, 24:3-6			
		GEN. 14:18	EX. 23:25, 25:30	EX. 16:4,	I KINGS. 19:8	
	GEN. 13:9	TWO BIRDS	LEV. 1:14-17	LEV. 14:1-7	TWO WAVE LOAVES	LEV. 23:17
						TWO GOATS
	GEN. 22:1-14	EX. 27:1-8	EX. 12:1-13, 17:1-7,	NUM. 21:6-9		
	GEN. 12:1-5					
	GEN. 17:1, 35:11					EZE. 11:19, 18:31
	GEN. 17:9-27		EX. 4:26	JOSH. 5:2-9		ISA. 7:14
						ISA. 9:6
	LEV. 3:2, 16:21, 24:14	DEUT. 34:9				
			GEN. 28:16-22, 31:13	EX. 28:40-41, 29:7, 30:22-33, 40:15		ISA. 61:1-3
			EX. 13:21, 14:22	I COR. 10:2		JOEL 2:28-32
	THE FLOOD	GEN. 7:17-22		ISRAEL	EX. 14:22	I COR. 10:2
	GEN. 22:4	EX. 3:18, 5:3, 8:27, 10:22, 15:22		NUM. 10:33	JOSH. 1:11	JONAH 1:17
						I KINGS 17:12-16
	GEN. 18:6					II KINGS 5:1-14
		GEN. 20:17	EX. 15:26	NUM. 12:13		ISA. 53:5
	GEN. 16:10-11	CHAP. 18-20, 32:24	EX. 3:2	JOSH. 5:13-15		JUDGES 6
	MELCHIZEDEK,	GEN. 14:18-20	HEB. 5:6	7:1-21	PSA. 110:4	
						MICHAEL
						DAN. 10:13, 12:1
	GEN. 6:17					JUDE
	NOAH	GEN. 6:13	ABRAHAM	GEN. 12:1	MOSES	EX. 2:2
	GEN. 7:16					ELIJAH-JAMES 5:17
			GEN. 29:27			JESU
			EX. 8:26			DAN. 9:24-27
CHRIST	EX. 37:17-24	ZECH. 4:2-6	ACTS 7:38	"CHRIST IN THE MIDST OF THE SEVEN GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS"		REV. 1:12-13, 20
						EPH
			EX. 12 TO 15	JOSH. 1-6	EZE. 37:1-14, 47:1-12,	JOEL 2:23
GEN. 7:12-14						JOEL 2:23
			DEUT. 11:14			ZECH. 10
	GEN. 6:13		MOSES	EX. 1:15-22	TABERNACLE	
			GEN. 15:17	DEUT. 34:7	JUDE 9	II CHRON. 5:11-14
			GEN. 49:17	EX. 4:3	NUM. 21:16-8	THE SERPENT
	GEN. 19:17-23	EX. 13:1-22				
	JOB 39:26-30		EX. 19:4	DEUT. 32:11	DEUT. 8:3-4, 15-18	29:5
	JOB 34:20					ISA. 40:31
			EX. 11:4, 12:29	JUDGES 16:3	PSA. 119:62	
			GEN. 15:12-21	DEUT. 4:20		DAN. 7:21-22, 12:1
			LEV. 10:1-2, 17:7, 19:31	DEUT. 13:1-5	I KINGS 18:17-22, 22:22	ISA. 19:3
	GEN. 15:9-10, 48:5	GEN. 35:22, 48:5	GEN. 49:17	DAN. 7:25, 8:23-25,	ZECH. 11:17	THE GREAT IMAGE
	GEN. 15:19-21					DAN. 2:42, 7:20-24
			EX. 9:4-6			DAN. 3:1-7
	DEUT. 17:6	GEN. 19:1, 22:3				DAN. 12:5
			EX. 4:3			ISA. 14:12-17
	JOB 19:25					ISA. 63:1-4
	JOB 19:26-27		DEUT. 34:5-6			DAN. 12:2
			EX. 26:7-25, 34	THE MOST HOLY	10 X 10 X 10 = 1000 CUBITS	II CHRON. 4
		GEN. 33:3				DAN. 2:31-45
	GEN. 12:1-5	EX. 24:12	DEUT. 33:1-4			DAN. 4:16, 2:38
	ABRAHAM, ISAAC, JACOB; GEN. 12-50	THE ROCK	GEN. 28:16-22	PASSOVER	BLOOD, CLOUD, SEA; 12 WELLS, 70 PALM TREES; MANNA,	THE ROD, THE ROCK, THE LI
	THE JORDAN	WALLS OF JERICO	CANAAN	SAMSON	TEMPLE, I KG. 6	MOLTEN SEA, I KG. 7:23-26
			GEN. 18:23-33, 32:9-32	EX. 32:32	NUM. 12:13	I SAM. 1:11
						I KINGS 18:36-37
						SAMSON—JUDGES 16:27-30
GEN. 6:7,	7:22		SODOM-GOMMORAH	GEN. 19:24		DAN. 9:24-27
	GEN. 17:20, 35:22, 49:28	EX. 15:27	DEUT. 1:23	JOSH. 3:12, 4:1-3	I KINGS 7:25	
	GEN. 15:13	400 X 360 = 144,000	DAYS OF ISRAEL'S SUFFERING IN EGYPT			
COND DAY	PSA. 90:4	1000 YEARS		THIRD DAY	1000 YEARS	FOURTH DAY
3-6, TABERNACLE MEASUREMENTS	EX. 26:7-25	THE TWO THOUSAND CUBITS BETWEEN THE ARK, AND PEOPLE,	JOSH. 3:4	I KINGS 7:26	II CHRON	
"FOUR ONE THOUSAND YEAR DAYS IN WHICH THE LAMB IS KEPT HIDDEN."	EX. 12:1-14					
			EZEKIEL'S WATERS	EZE. 47:1-12	"HE MEASURED A THOUSAND"	"AGAIN
			OUTER COURT IN TABERNACLE SYMBOLIC OF THE 1500 YEAR PERIOD OF T			
GEN. 9:12-17,						EZEKIEL 1:28



IMPRESSED UPON THE DISPENSATIONS OF TIME

3:22 LK. 2:11 EPH. 1:13 ACTS 2:4 THE HOLY SPIRIT HEB. 2:4 JNO. 7:37-39
THE STARS. CHRIST ACTS 2:36
THE SPIRIT 1 JNO. 5:8
THE LAST DISPENSATION OF 2,000 YEARS
THE SPIRIT 1 JNO. 5:7
DISPENSATIONAL TESTIMONY
MARK 15:38 HEB. 10:20
ACTS 1:15 PENTECOST
20 JUBILEES
20 JUBILEES
THE CHURCH ACTS 2:4 MATT. 16:18
MATT. 2:2-10, 24:29-27, 45. ACTS 2:20 1 COR. 15:41-44 MATT. 13:43 REV. 1:20, 6:12-13, 7:16, 12:1 REV. 19:17, 21:23
ARK OF THE COVENANT, EX. 25:10 CONTENTS HEB. 9:4 THREE COVERINGS EX. 36:19 THE VOICE, THE SON, THE DOVE MA
ZECH. 3:8, 6:12 LK. 1:78 23:39 EPH. 4:13 REV. 11:1
JEHOVAH-ISRAEL ISA. 54:5 CHRIST-CHURCH MATT. 25:1-13 EPH. 5:22-33, REV. 10:7, 12:1-17, 19
MATT. 4:2, ACTS 1:3 1000 A. D.
"THE CHURCH AGE"
PASSOVER 1 COR. 5:7 PENTACOST ACTS 2:1-13
ACTS 4:10-12, 1 COR. 10:4, EPH. 2:20, 1 PET. 2:4-6
JOHN 19:34 HEB. 9:6-28
ACTS 2:33 EPH. 1:13 REV. 1:10, 22
JOEL 2 MATT. 26:25 JOHN 6:48-58 ACTS 2:42 REV.
MATT. 15:24 ROMANS 11:1-26
NEW COVENANT MATT. 26:28 ROM. 15:8 HEB. 12:24
MATT. 26:28 JNO. 19:18 HEB. 9:12 REV. 12:11
MATT. 15:21-28 1 COR. 10:16, 17 REV.
JNO. 6:35 19:34 LK. 17:11-37 REV. 12
GAL. 2:20, 5:24 REV. 5:6 REV.
MATT. 26:28 JNO. 3:1-10, 13:24 II COR. 5:17 GAL. 6:15 EP
MATT. 1:21 LK. 1:31-33, 3:22 JNO. 16:7-15 ACTS 2:1-4
JNO. 6:27 ACTS 2:1-13, 10:44-48, 19:1-6 ROM. 2:28-29, 4:11 I COR. 1:22 EPH. 1:13, 4:30 REV.
MK. 16:18 LK. 4:40 ACTS 6:6, 8:17, 13:3 II TIM. 1:6 HEB. 6:2
LK. 3:21-22 MK. 6:13 JOHN 12:1-8 ACTS 2:4-13, 10:38 II COR. 1:21 HEB. 1:9 1 JNO. 2:27 JAMES 5:14
EL 2:28-32 MATT. 3:11-12 JNO. 16:7-15 ACTS 1:5, 2:4, 8:18, 10:44-48, 19:6 EPH. 1:13-14
JOHN-LK. 3:3 JESUS LK. 3:21-22 THE CHURCH ACTS 2:38, 8:16, 10:48, 19:5
MATT. 12:40 MK. 8:31 ACTS 9:9
MATT. 13:33 LK. 11:5, 13:21 JOHN 6:48
MATT. 8:16-17 MK. 16:17-18 LK. 9:1-2 ACTS 4:8-10, ACTS 16:16-18, 19:11-12 REV.
MATT. 1:20, 2:13 ACT 5:19, 8:26, 12:23 RE
GABRIEL DAN. 8:16, 9:21, LK. 1:11-37
JESUS JNO. 10:14 HEB. 13:20 1 PET. 5:4
MATT. 24:29-30 LK. 2:34 MK. 1:27, 16:17 ACTS 2:43, 4:30, 5:12 ROM. 15:19 HEB. 2:4
LK. 24:44
JNO. 1:1 EPH. 6:17 HEB. 4:12
JESUS MK. 1:34 THE APOSTLES LK. 9:1-6 ACTS 5:15 HEB. 11
MATT. 25:10 JNO. 10:9 LK. 13:25
JNO. 2:20 THE CONSUMMATION OF DA
MATT. 24:15 "FOR THE OVERSPREADING OF ABOMINATIONS" "COVERS THE ENTIRE CHURCH A
REV. 2:1-7 SMYRNA REV. 2:8-11 PERGAMOS 2:12-17 THYATIRA 2:18-29 SARDIS 3:1-6 PHILADELPHIA 3:7-13
ACTS 2:4, 3:21
"EARLY RAIN" ACTS 2:1-13 "LATTER RAIN
JESUS MATT. 2:16 TEMPLE THE CHURCH R
ACTS 2:1-13
THE SERPENT MATT. 4:1-11, MK. 16:15-20 LK. 10:19 JNO. 3:14
MATT. 22:1-14, 25:1-13 LK. 17:26-37
LK. 17:32-37 MATT. 24:28
MATT. 25:6 LK. 11:5 MK. 13:35 ACTS 16:25
MATT. 24:21,
7:21-22, 12:1
2:22 ISA. 19:3 ISA. 8:19 MATT. 7:15, 24:11, LK. 7:21 MK. 1:23, 16:17 ACTS 13:6, 19:12 EPH. 6:12 I TIM. 4:1 I JNO. 4:1-3,
THE GREAT IMAGE DAN. 3:1-2 MATT. 26:25-48 ACTS 1:16-20 I JNO. 2:18, 19, 22, 23, 26 II JNO. 7 I JNO. 4:1-6 ANTI-CHRIST REV. 9:1, 12:3-4
0-24 REV. 17
3:1-7 REV. 12:3, 13:
5 ZECH. 4:2-14 MATT. 2:1, 18-19-20, 20:23 LK. 9:30, 24:4 ACTS 1:10-11
A. 14:12-17 LK. 10:18 LK. 23:33 HEB. 2:14-15
DAN. 2:34, 35 LK. 21:27 ACTS 1:11 I THESS. 4:14-18 II THESS.
2:2 MATT. 27:52-53, MATT. 28:6 JOHN 5:28-29, 11:25 PHIL. 3:21 I COR. 15 II COR. 5:10, JUDE 9 I THESS. 4:
II CHRON. 4:5 PS. 90:4 HOSEA 6:2 II PET. 3:8 1000 YEARS 11 PETER
2:38 600 B. C. LK. 21:24 ROM. 11:25 "TIMES OF THE GENTILES"
JOHN 1:17 ROM. 3:24, 4:16, 10:4 GAL. 2:16 3:6-29, 4:21-31, EPH. 2:8-10, TITUS 3:5:7
THE ROCK, THE LIVING WATERS I COR. 10:1-4 PILLAR OF FIRE; TABERNACLE; EX. 25:1-9 CANDLESTICK; INCENSE; ARK OF THE COV
DRAGON SUNCLAD WOM
LK. 3:21-22, 22:39-46 JN. 11:40-44 ACTS 7:59-60
30 PENTECOST ACTS 2:41
JERUSALEM MATT. 24:2, 25:31-46 II THESS. 1:7-10
9:24-27 MATT. 18:21-22
MATT. 10:1-16, 14:20, 19:28
FOURTH DAY II PET. 3:8 1000 YEARS FIFTH DAY 1000 YEARS SIXTH DAY 1000 YEA
7:26 II CHRON. 4:5 EZE. 47:1-12 HOSEA 6:2 MK. 5:13 "TIME OF THE GENTILES" 2520 YEARS LK. 21:24 REV.
"LAMB SLAIN FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD" I PET. 1:20 REV. 13:8
"AGAIN HE MEASURED A THOUSAND" "AGAIN HE MEASURED A THOUSAND" "AFTERWARD HE ME
EAR PERIOD OF THE LAW. EX. 27:18 "HOLY PLACE" IN THE TABERNACLE SYMBOLIC OF THE 2000 YEARS OF GOSPEL AGE. EX. 26:33 HEB
2000 BATHS OF THE MOLTEN SEA I KINGS 7:26 2000 YEARS OF THE GOSPEL A
"AFTER TWO DAYS HE WILL REVIVE US." HOSEA 6:2
" TWO THOUSAND SWINE" MK. 5:13 DEVIL BOUN
REV. 4:3





ETERNITY

END OF THE THOUSAND YEARS REV. 20 :7

END OF THE EARTHLY KINGDOM

THE "LITTLE SEASON"

SATAN LOOSED FROM HIS PRISON

SECOND RESURRECTION

GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

GOG AND MAGOG

THE RESURRECTION OF UNGODLY DEAD

THE FINAL DECEPTION

THE CAMP OF THE SAINTS ENCOMPASSED

FIRE FROM HEAVEN

THE LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE

THE SECOND DEATH

JESUS LAYS DOWN ALL RULE.

ALL AUTHORITY, AND POWER

THAT GOD MAY BE "ALL IN ALL"

I COR. 15:24-25

THE HOLY CITY REV. 21:2

NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH REV. 21:2

DEATH AND HELL CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE

CITY TWELVE GATES—TWELVE FOUNDATIONS

TWELVE TIMES TWELVE THOUSAND

144,000 REV. 21:12-16

THE CITY FOURSQUARE REV. 21:12-16

END OF THE SEVEN THOUSAND YEARS

THE AGES OF THE AGES

GOD DWELLING WITH MEN. REV. 21:3

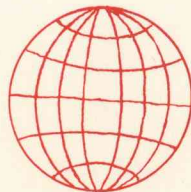


CHART STUDY

NOTE: A careful study of this prophetic chart of the ages will be of the greatest help in a proper understanding of the Bible, as the Word of God. This is its great purpose. It is also of great help and benefit in the understanding of Bible Chronology. It serves the purpose of locating chronologically, the various important teachings of the whole bible.

Every line, or outline on this chart has a spiritual significance, and covers the Work of God in His dealings with His people. There are positive teachings, and prophetic measurements never before published. Its teachings and conclusions are true and certain. Every moment of time is covered, from the Fall, to the utmost of complete redemption from sin, and its final disposition at the end of the Thousand Years of the Kingdom Age.

This chart is drawn to scale. Each seven-eighths of an inch represents a period of Two Hundred and Fifty years, and covers All Time to the end of the Thousand Years, at which moment, Eternity Begins and time shall be no more. There is subject material for Hundreds of Sermons! The writer has spoken Ten Hours on the subject of the "Great Mystery" without exhausting its inspiration.



The subject matter of the chart covers One Hundred Twenty themes, but is condensed under eighty-six Headings for lack of space, yet none of the subjects have been eliminated or ignored. The One Hundred Twenty themes are completely covered. The First group of scriptures to your right are the record of events scheduled to transpire at the beginning of the Great Tribulation period of Three and a half years, or at some time during its sway. The period of the Great Tribulation reaches to the End of the present Age, and the Second Coming of the LORD-JESUS-CHRIST.

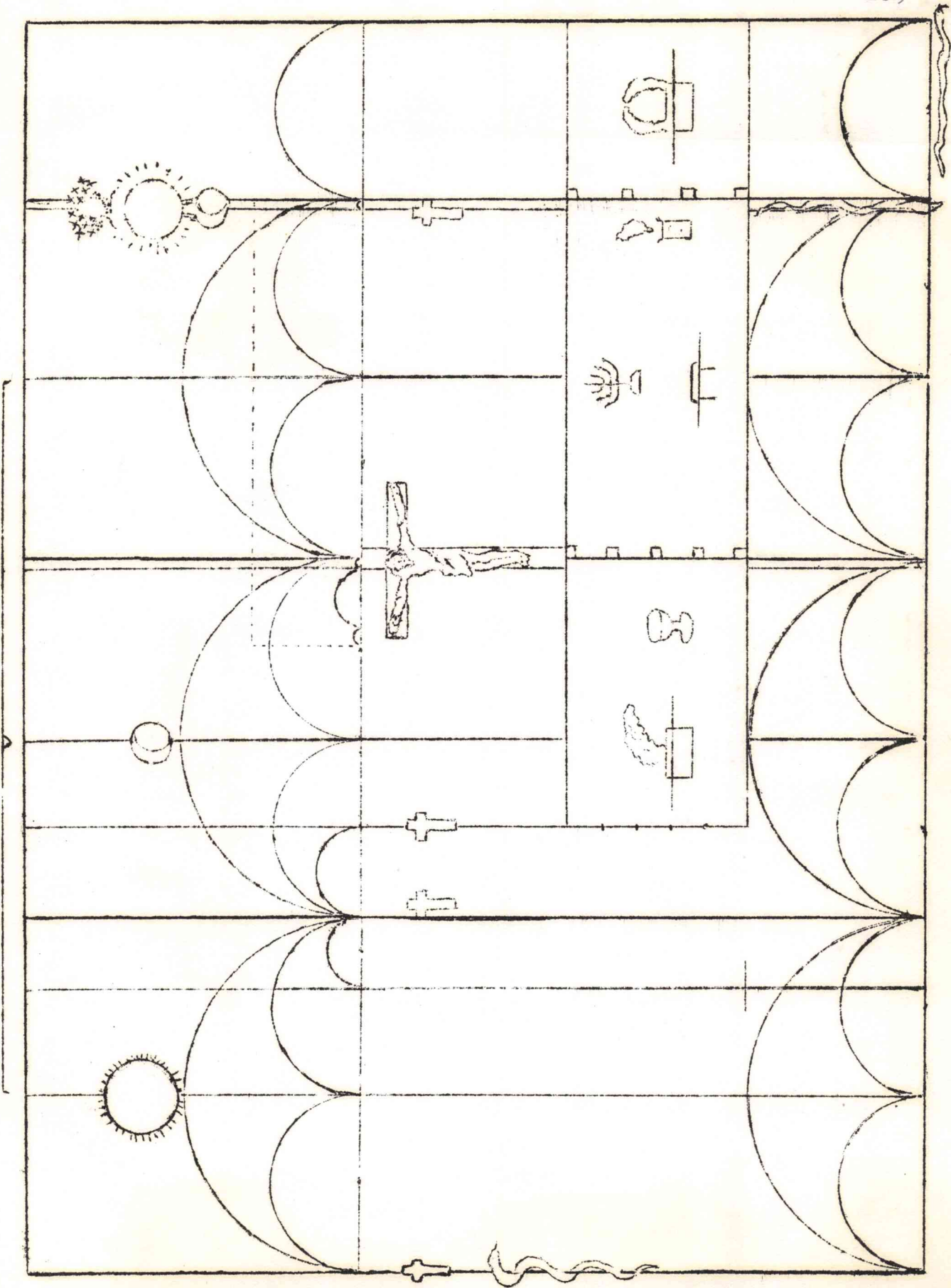
The Second group of scriptures record the events at the End of the Present Age, and establish the fact of actual earth conditions during the Thousand Year Reign of Christ and His Saints! The Third group of scriptures record the events of the "Little Season" at the end of the Thousand Years and bring to a brilliant and thrilling climax the Finished Work of the LORD-JESUS-CHRIST in complete REDEMPTION, and in the establishing of His Righteousness in the New Heavens and the New Earth for all the eternities in His Wonderful Love.

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1946

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APPENDIX C



## DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

## We Believe:

1. The Bible to be the Divine inspired Word of God, and accept the same as our only infallible guide in all matters of faith and practice.
2. In the One true Self-existent, Eternal, Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Immutable Triune God, Creator of heaven and earth.
3. In the pre-existence and virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. His working of miracles, sacrificial death, and literal resurrection and translation to glory.
4. In the Blood of Jesus Christ as the complete atonement for sin, and for the destruction of every work of Satan.
5. In the new birth for every believer. "Ye must be born again." John 3:3.
6. Divine healing in the atonement. "By whose stripes ye were healed." I Peter 2:24
7. Water baptism by immersion. "Buried with Him by baptism," in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost--The LORD JESUS CHRIST. A triune God with a triune name.
8. Baptism with the Holy Spirit according to Acts 2:4.
9. Heaven and hell. Two resurrections, the first of the righteous, and the second of the ungodly.
10. Holy living the standard of Christian experience. "Crucified with Christ." Gal. 2:20, 5:24.
11. Further: In the perfection of the church, the marriage of the Lamb and the casting down and binding of Satan. In the second pre-millennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the purging of the earth for the establishment of the kingdom and the one-thousand-year reign of Christ and His church, followed by the final judgment.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Bethel Temple Bible School Catalogue, 1960-61, p. 14.











