

FEAR GOD AND GIVE GLORY TO HIM

BY DAVID LIN

**“Fear God and give glory to Him,
for the hour of His judgment has come;
and worship Him who made heaven and earth,
the sea and springs of water.” - Revelation 14:6, 7.**

This message, called the “everlasting gospel,” was due to be preached since the commencement of the investigative judgment, and no religious body besides the Seventh-Day Adventist Church even professes to preach it. In fact, this church alone holds the Bible as basis for its proclamation since 1844--the message of Daniel 8:14.

With a loud voice the angel calls on the world to fear God and give glory to Him, because most of them do not fear Him, nor give Him glory. Instead, in the church as well as in the world, people fear men, and give men glory. The text in Malachi 1:6 applies today: “A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am the Father, where is My honor? And if I am a Master, where is My reverence? Says the Lord of hosts to you priests who despise My name.”

Most preachers today lay emphasis on being saved, making it the sum total of the gospel. The idea of fearing God and honoring Him through obedience has no place in their thoughts. Now the “everlasting gospel” makes the fear of God and giving Him glory paramount, even making no mention of salvation. So why argue over being saved by grace or by works? The prime issue is that God is being dishonored by our world, where men are taught that once they believe they are saved, and it is not possible to obey God’s law. In a word, after you’re saved, do as you please, Heaven will be yours!

Hence Malachi injects a pertinent fact. After reproving His people for making lame and polluted offerings, God says, “From the rising of the sun even to its going down, My name is great among the Gentiles; in every place incense is offered to My name, and a pure offering; for My name is great among the heathen, says the Lord of

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In 400 B.C., when Malachi lived, the heathen world around Israel had been deeply impressed by a se- ries of four acts of God made known by royal edicts. The first was the story of three Hebrew worthies who were preserved in the fiery furnace after they refused to bow down to a golden image.

When Nebuchadnezzar repented after seven years of insanity, he issued another edict through his kingdom to glorify God. When Persia came to power, Daniel was saved in the lion’s den, and a third royal edict gave glory to the true God in the Persian empire. A fourth edict glorifying God was issued by King Ahasuerus through Mordecai after Esther prevailed against the wicked Haman.

Four miracles of divine intervention within a span of four generations left a lasting dent in the minds of the heathen, so God’s statement, “My name is feared among the heathen,” was patently true. Later, as Alexander came to power, God gave him a dream of the high priest in Jerusalem, whom he later met. This led him to show special favor toward the Jews.

Three centuries later, when Christ was born, the words of Balaam’s prophecy, “A Star shall come out of Jacob, a Scepter shall rise out of Israel,” Numbers 24:17, was Bible evidence that led the Magi in the East to know that the bright star they saw over Judea signaled the birth of the King of the Jews. Gentiles rejoiced in the light to which the Jews were blind.

“Outside of the Jewish nation there were men who foretold the appearance of a divine instructor. These men were seeking for truth, and to them the Spirit of Inspiration was imparted. One after another, like stars in the darkened heavens, such teachers had arisen. Their words of prophecy had kindled hope in the hearts of thousands of the Gentile world. . .



“Among those whom the Jews styled heathen were men who had a better understanding of the Scripture prophecies concerning the Messiah than had the teachers of Israel.” *Desire of Ages*, p. 33.

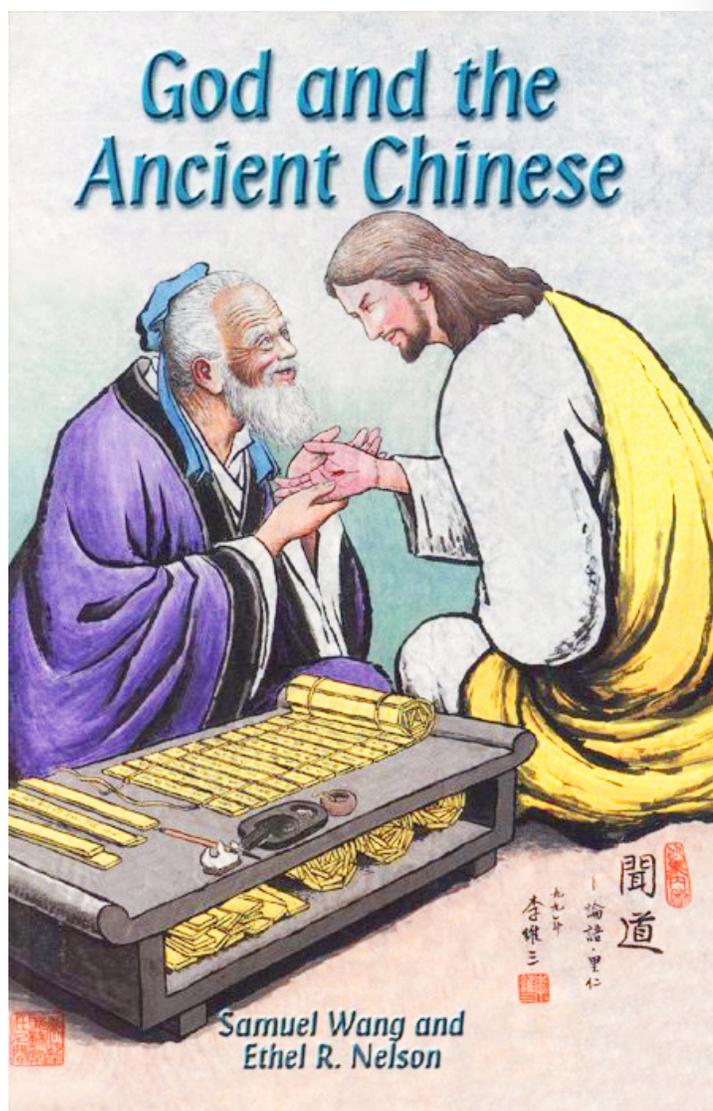
How could Ellen White, an American Christian who wrote these words, but had never lived in heathen lands, write with such assurance of God’s work among the heathen? We believe that she herself had the Spirit of Inspiration that she said was imparted to Gentile teachers of truth. Now to us she has left the task of substantiating her assertions with historical facts. For skeptical readers may ask: What basis did Ellen White have for writing these words? Was she writing from pure fancy? If not, can her words be proved with documentary evidence? A positive answer is now found in the Chinese classics.

The Chinese term for God, Shangdi, pronounced “Sheong-dai” in Cantonese, comes close to the Hebrew term El Shaddai (God Almighty). This affinity was early noticed by scholars who adopted it in their translation of the Chinese Bible. Dr. Chen Wei-zhong, a Canadian scholar, wrote a book in Chinese called “Our Common God,” and cites proof from Chinese books to show that the Shangdi honored by Chinese forebears had attributes identical to the God of the Bible.

Nu-wah, the legendary ancestor of the human race, is identical with Noah, whose Hebrew word is also pronounced Nu-ach. Then two other names associated with this progenitor are Fu-xi and Shen-nong, names linguistically related to Japheth and Shem. Another scholar, Liang Yan-cheng, edits a bimonthly journal that appeals to Chinese intellectuals by dealing with gospel truth in the context of Chinese culture. His journal has wide circulation among educated Chinese on mainland China, and paves the way for a deeper appreciation of God’s message for our time.

Samuel Wang and Ethel Nelson’s book, *God and the Ancient Chinese*, is a good attempt at introducing not only the gospel basics, but also a fuller body of present truth by showing how God and His word were known to Chinese patriarchs. It gives English readers a fair idea of how author Wang treats his topics more thoroughly in its Chinese version, which is to be published soon. He has collated many ancient Chinese texts that deal with Bible topics, expounding them in such a way as to convince Chinese readers that his application of these texts are valid, and not mere fancy.

Wang does not assume that his readers have read the texts before, so he first explains archaic expressions in modern language, then shows how their meaning agrees with Bible teachings. The array of texts Wang has amassed comprise impressive evidence that Christ is indeed the true Light which gives light to every man who comes into the world.



Ellen White's remarks quoted above gave Wang the assurance that he was not following a pet notion of his own, but that the Holy Spirit was active in other nations than the Jewish one. So it becomes an exciting adventure for a Chinese Christian to discover in the ancient writings of Chinese sages prophecies of the coming "Holy Man" and "Great King," whom they could not name, but who is now known to us as Jesus Christ the Son of God. He has said, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice, and there will be one flock and one shepherd."

Author Wang uses Chinese classical texts first to convince his readers that the truths of the Bible are not the teaching of foreigners, but were taught by Chinese sages long before the Bible was translated. Then he proceeds to expound the truths in greater detail, leading the reader step by step into a full knowledge of Bible truth. One chapter begins with the ancient ceremony of offering bulls and sheep to Heaven. Tradition required that they be offered outside the city gate, just as Hebrews 13:12 says, "Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate." After the reader sees the spiritual meaning of sacrifice, he is led into the wonderful truths of the cleansing of the sanctuary in 1844. The Chinese reader is awed to realize that in the Bible is to be found the pristine faith of his own ancestors.

A disciple of Confucius once suggested that the killing of sheep was cruel, why not change the ritual to spare the sheep? Confucius replied, "You care for the sheep, but I care for the ritual." How he would have rejoiced to learn the deeper meaning of the ritual as it is our privilege today! Said Jesus to His disciples, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear! For assuredly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it." Matthew 13:16,17.

Thus the entire vista of God's plan of redemption is open to the Chinese reader who enters by the familiar door of his cultural traditions. The Bible comes near as the great infallible norm for all peoples, given by Him who made us, and points us to the Lamb of God, "who takes away the sin of the world."

