CHAPTER II

ORIGIN, BELIEFS AND FORMATION OF SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
Introduction:

A study of the Seventh Day Adventist denominational history is a necessary supplement to the study of the doctrines in as much as it confirms the Adventist faith in the Lord’s leading in the establishment of the church.

An analysis of history without reference to the people who make that history is superficial, uninteresting and, in the long run, unprofitable. So in denominational history a study of the prominent leaders reveals that God uses all types of men for the spreading of His message. One factor common to all these early workers was their whole hearted consecration and determination to preach the gospel despite what seemed to them unsurmountable obstacles.\(^1\)

The Adventists believed that throughout time God has provided a means for the proclamation of his message of promised land. He has used men of all types to give to the world what was intended. His message has not changed but it is still the progress of a people towards the promised land, a kingdom which is being prepared for the faithful.

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\(^1\) Youth Department, “Senior Denominational History” Southern Asia Division of Seventh Day Adventists 1979, P.1.
The Adventist movement which is studied in the following pages show how God, in the years after the period of the Dark Ages, at the appointed time, raised up and caused to prosper, a movement based on the central theme of a returning Messiah.

**History of Adventist Movement**

Modern Seventh-day Adventism finds its roots in the Second Advent movement of the early nineteenth century. Second Advent movement is a belief of some Christian missions who awaited for the eminent return of Jesus Christ². Numerous examples from the Bible illustrate that in times of crisis God has guided his church through the ministry of prophets. These prophets gave God’s message to the people. The ministry of prophets that has been experienced in the past is promised to the Remnant Church prior to the return of Jesus. Never has the need for such guidance been greater than in the last days.

While many preachers proclaimed the soon coming of Christ in Europe and in other parts of the world, the belief made its largest impact in North America, Central to North America the Adventist beginnings was laid

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by a Baptist Lay man by the name William Miller (1780-1849). Among the other preachers who preached the Advent message were Lacunza Manual (1731-1841), Goussen Louis (1790-1863), Irving Edward (1792-1834) and Joseph Wolff (1795-1862).

These advent preachers belongs to different periods and also of different denominational backgrounds. Lacunza is a Jesuite, Goussen is a protestant Minster from an evangelical movement, Irving a Scottish Minster from the Presbyterian Church and Joseph Wolff is of Jewish birth who had catholic education and was connected with London Mission Society to promote Christianity among Jews.

The advent preachers have believed in the prophetic fulfillment. They have involved in the great religious awakening based on three great Advent signs which swept over the American colonies in the middle of the eighteenth century. These three great advent signs are the darkday, the falling of stars and the Lisbon earth quake. The first sign was dark day, which happened on May 19, 1780. Which was a remarkable day. On that day, candles were

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3 Ibid P.13.
lighted in many houses, the birds were silent and disappeared and the fowls retired to roost”⁶. The second of the advent signs was the falling of stars which happened on November 13, 1833. “On this day the inhabitants of this continent were in fact experienced to a real shower of shooting stars for nearly four hours”⁷. The third was the Lisbon Earthquake of November 1, 1755. Which was perhaps the largest earthquake which destroyed Lisbon. It lasted for six minutes and nearly thirty thousand people were killed and twelve thousand dwellings were demolished”⁸.

Early in the nineteenth century interest in the second coming of Christ erupted. In nearly every Christian body throughout the world study focused on the long neglected Bible prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation and the possibility that the advent of Christ to which they pointed was near⁹. These advent signs in the time of the religious awakening raised the great advent preachers. Lacunza became the forerunner of William Miller, the American Baptist lay Preacher, who announced the eminent coming of Christ and founded the movement popularly known as Millerite movement. It was

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characterized by a distinctive type of premillennialism and giving rise to a group of denominations classed as Adventist bodies”\textsuperscript{10}.

Many Bible scholars of Europe became the Millerite preachers. Josiah Litch (1809-1866), the Methodist Minister from England, Charles Fitch (1805-1844) the Presbyterian Minster, Joshua Himes Vanhaun (1805-1895) organizer of Millerite movement and Joseph Bates (1792-1872) a mariner, reformer and was one of the founders of Seventh-day Adventist church\textsuperscript{11}. These followers and many more, earnestly followed Millerite movement and waited for the second advent of Jesus.

**The Basis of Adventist Movement:**

The very name of Adventist movement, adopted in 1860, shows the principles upon which Adventist work is founded.

The Adventists believed in the second Advent or coming of Christ. This was the driving force behind their early work. They also believed that the Seventh-day is a movement which recognizes the seventh day i.e. Saturday of the week as God’s Sabbath, contrary to the belief that Sunday is

\textsuperscript{10} Roy Jemison, “Adventist Heritage” Ellen White research Centre, Pune, 2002, P 50

\textsuperscript{11} I bid. P, 46-49.
the Sabbath as believed by Sunday worshippers\textsuperscript{12}. The history of Adventist movement is the story of the preaching of this two fold message along with certain other points of doctrine such as a message which was commissioned by Christ in Matthew 28:20. And teach them everything I commanded to you. And surely I am with you always to the very end of the ages. And Matthew 24:14, “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come” to give to all the world.

In addition to that the Adventists also believed in the “Three Angels’ Messages” found in Revelation 14:6-12. Hence the movement is centered around the preaching of these distinct yet composite messages to the people for whom they were meant.

Each message was designed for a specific purpose and in the early movement was preached at a particular time. These messages include

\begin{itemize}
  \item[a.] First Angel’s Message – to announce the judgment hour; it was the basis of the very early, pre-disappointment work; that is before 1844.
\end{itemize}

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\textsuperscript{12} Youth Department, “Senior Denominational History” Southern Asia Division of Seventh Day Adventists 1979, P2.
\end{flushright}
b. Second Angel’s Message – to separate from the Apostate or false churches; a message preached after the first disappointment.

c. Third Angel’s Message – to direct attention to God’s law and in particular to the Sabbath day, a message which the Adventists are preaching today\textsuperscript{13}.

The Adventists insisted that it would be incorrect to form an idea of these three as separate and distinct, for they are continuous and should be thought, of as a whole. Thus the Adventists do not preach exclusively the third angel’s message, but the whole three, for the first and second are just as important today as they were a century ago.

The First Angel’s Message was the hope of the early believers who studied the Scriptures and believed that it was the Investigative Judgement, which would be commenced with Christ’s entry into the Most Holy Place of the Sanctuary. Those who studied their Bibles linked this message with other prophecies in particular that of the cleansing of the Sanctuary – and produced a theory that the Second advent would occur in 1844. This was the force behind the early movement – “The Advent Movement” as it may be called.

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid, P.2.
This movement and message is sometimes thought to have originated, in America and from there to have spread to the rest of the world. While it is true to a degree, it is only a partial explanation of the process. It was a world-wide movement, but it was from America as its center that it spread, linking the isolated lamps of truth.\textsuperscript{14}

THE GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT

It is necessary to review briefly the sequence of events that occurred to give a clearer picture of what happened during 1844, the year of disappointment. The whole movement is divided into three sections\textsuperscript{15}:

a. The first disappointment

b. The second or Great Disappointment

c. Between those, there was in evidence:

   i. The idea of the tarrying time

   ii. The midnight cry

   iii. The preaching of the second angel’s message.

The First Disappointment:


\textsuperscript{15} Ibid, P.5.
The whole Advent Movement was based on the 2300 day prophecy of Daniel 8:14 Holy Bible Daniel 8:14: He said to me “It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated” which the believers had calculated would conclude at the end of the Jewish year, March 21, 1843-March 21, 1844. This prophecy of the cleansing of the sanctuary was considered by Miller and others to refer to the destruction of the earth by fire at the second coming of Christ. The leaders of the Movement preached assiduously and William Miller, although he was almost 62 years of age, undertook a strenuous eight weeks’ tour of the country for the propagation of this philosophy. However, the day passed without the occurrence of the Second Advent16.

The Great Disappointment:

In those circumstances the message of the Second Advent was being preached before October 1844. This time their faith as unbounded, for William Miller records that their most frequent expression was “He will come” to which the people replied “He will not tarry a second time.”

On the expected day, October, 1844, the multitudes gathered in their meeting places awaiting Christ’s coming. However, the day passed without the event for which they were looking and “from the height of happiness and hope they fell to the depths of deepest disappointment”\(^{17}\).

One result of the great disappointment experience was that the believers were subjected to an intense campaign of jeering and criticism. The reason for the great disappointment may be summerised as follows:

a. The First Disappointment was due to the miscalculation. The early Advent believers reckoned that the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 would terminate with the Jewish year 1843 which would be march 21 in calender year 1844. Further study revealed that the decree of Artaxerexes went into effect in the autumn of 457 B.C. which would

\(^{17}\) Ibid, P. 195.
mean that the 2300 years would end, not in March, (the spring), but in October (the autumn) of 1844. Furthermore, the date, October 22, corresponded with the tenth day of the seventh month of the Jewish calendar, the date of the typical Day of Atonement.

b. The Second Disappointment was due, not to an error in the calculations, but to a misunderstanding as to the event to take place. Every denomination at that time believed that the judgement day would be introduced by the second coming of Christ. The early Advent people believed that the sanctuary to be cleansed referred to this earth. However, in a cornfield one day after the second Disappointment, Hiram Edson had a vision that the sanctuary to be cleansed was in heaven. Christ, as High Priest, entered the Most Holy place of the heavenly sanctuary to commence the work of the investigative judgement\textsuperscript{18}.

All those faithful believers were disappointed, some of them left the faith in Jesus, some became atheists, majority abounded Advent faith and some went to their previous Churches. Out of that seething shapeless mass of

\textsuperscript{18} Youth Department “Senior Denominational History”, Southern Asia Division of Seventh Day Adventists, Pune, 1979, P.13.
discouragement and confusion came the Seventh-Day Adventist Church\textsuperscript{19}. In this group of the earnest Christians were the pioneers of what was to become the Seventh-Day Adventist church, young James and Ellen white and retired sea captain Joseph Bates stood out as leaders. They visited little groups of Adventists in the New England States of America and as they studied the Bible and prayed with them together on a unified platform of the Sabbath doctrine emerged on which many of the scattered believers are united\textsuperscript{20}.

From among the disappointed came firstly those who became extremists and repeatedly set times who after few years seized to exist in any organized form. Secondly those who continued in Advent hope but differed little from other Protestants and became first day Adventists, thirdly those who ultimately became the Seventh-day Adventists. It was to them that the additional light was sent soon after the disappointment of October 22, 1844.

This little group of Adventists observed the seventh day Sabbath and the Sabbath teaching was spread quickly among the scattered Adventists. To this small group of struggling believers who refused to step off the prophetic platform and intimately related to the prophetic validity of the Millerite

\textsuperscript{20} Bureau of public Relations General Conference” Seventh-day Adventist Fact Book” Southern Publishing Association, Nashville, USA, 1967 P.10
message was the call of seventeen year old Ellen Harmon to the prophetic ministry”21.

**Pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church**

The great work of the Advent pioneers can be contributed to their study of the Bible, their openness to the leading of the Holy Spirit and their commitment to Jesus. This laid the strong foundations of today's Seventh-day Adventist Church. Some of them are Ellen G. White and James white, J.N.Andrews, Joseph Bates, Stephen Haskell, William Miller and Uriah Smith.

Ellen was a member of the Methodist church and she was received into this fellowship through baptism by Immersion. In one meeting she heard the lectures of William Miller about the Second Advent and was convinced and joined in the Adventist movement along with her parents. Because of their Adventist views Ellen and her parents were disfellowshiped from the Methodist church. At the time of Millerites disappointment in the spring of

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1844 Ellen was deeply affected and with others sought God earnestly for light and guidance in the succeeding days of perplexity”22.

On an unspecified day in December, 1844 Ellen Harmon received a vision what she and others of the advent group recognized it as a revelation from God. It showed them that if they continued to walk in the light that had been guiding them into an understanding the Advent message, they would be led ultimately to the city of God”23.

Ellen received the second vision wherein she was told to make known to others what was revealed to her”24. After her marriage with James white a young Adventist preacher of the Millerite Movement, they made long missionary tours for the salvation of souls.” Thus my husband sowed and I watered the seed of truth and God did give the increase”25.

Not long after the marriage, the whites began to observe and to teach the Sabbath. Early in 1846 Ellen Harmon’s attention had been called to the fourth commandment by Joseph Bates. At first she did not sense the

importance of fourth commandment. A later study of Bate’s tract “The Seventh-Day Sabbath A Perpetual Sign” led them to accept the Sabbath truth and later it was confirmed in a vision.

A solid foundation was built in the scripture and the Bible students were guided towards correct interpretation through the revelation given by Ellen White. This young woman had an important part in building the structure of Bible doctrines adopted by the early Adventists and strengthened through years by Seventh-day Adventists.”

Ellen G. White is the most translated woman in literature and the most translated American author of either gender. An uneducated and frail woman, she managed to write over 5,000 articles, 40 books and 50,000 pages of manuscripts. Her writings on health and temperance were groundbreaking.

J.N. Andrews was an intellectual, who enjoyed study in Bible much more than his physical activity. He was one of the best-known evangelists.

and leaders of the early Adventist Church. He was a respected theologian; who helped develop many Adventist doctrines.

He was influential in creating the church's bylaws and constitution. In 1855, after thorough investigation, Andrews adopted sunset of friday evening as the beginning of the Sabbath day of worship. This became a standard for Adventists. He also organised the church as a legal business association, allowing the church to obtain legal possessions and property. During the Civil War, Andrews lobbied Adventist draftees to be allowed to take a non-combatant stand. In 1860, he was involved in the organisation of the denominational publishing house. The following year he published his extensive research, *History of the Sabbath & the First Day of the Week*. The book reviewed the seventh-day Sabbath in history. He was the editor of the *Review and Herald*, one of the church's most successful publications, for a number of years²⁸.

In 1874, he became the first Seventh-day Adventist missionary in Switzerland. He organised the various companies of people who worshipped

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²⁸ Department of Education,” Lessons in Denominational History”, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Washington DC, 1942, P.129.
on Sabbath, or Saturday, into a unified community. While living in Basel, he was effected by tuberculosis and died.

**Joseph Bates** was a sailor and ship captain for many years. Having earned a small fortune, he returned to civilian life in 1828. As the Advent movement began, the retired sea captain became a respected evangelist and spiritual leader. In early 1845, Bates, through the power of the Holy Spirit, understood the Biblical truth of the seventh-day Sabbath, and in 1846 he published a 48-page tract on the subject. Bates was the oldest of the SDA church pioneers, and he became the first regional president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He lived to the age of 80 because he had a simple diet and lived a life of temperance. He organised one of the first temperance societies in the United States. Bates was a spiritual and courageous man.

**Stephen N. Haskell** was an evangelist and administrator. He began preaching to the non-Sabbath keeping Adventists in New England in 1853. Later that year he began to worship on Saturday, or Sabbath. He worked without pay in New England until his ordination in 1870. He was president of Seventh-day Adventist churches in various parts of the United States.

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29 Ibid, P.132
In 1885 he led a group of missionaries who began to spread the Adventist mission in Australia and New Zealand. In 1887 he began to establish the Adventist church in London, England. He travelled around the world as a missionary between 1889 and 1890, visiting Western Europe, Southern Africa, India, China, Japan, and Australia. Haskell is also remembered as the person who organised the first Adventist Church of African Americans in New York City in 1902. He led in temperance work in Maine in 1911, began printing books for the blind in 1912, and assisted in the development of the White Memorial Hospital in 1916. He wrote: "The Story of Daniel the Prophet", "The Story of the Seer of Patmos", and "The Cross and Its Shadow"\textsuperscript{30}.

William Miller had a strong religious background, the Holy Spirit impressed his heart, and he turned to the study of the Word of God. He found in Christ the answer to all his needs. His study led him to the great prophecies that pointed to the first and to the second advent of our Lord. The time prophecies interested him, particularly the prophecies of Daniel and The

Revelation. God used him to awaken the world to the nearness of the end and to prepare sinners for the time of judgement\textsuperscript{31}.

**Uriah Smith** accepted the message taught by the Sabbath-keeping Adventists and soon he was associated with the publishing interests of the believers in Rochester, New York. For about half a century he was the editor or on the editorial staff of the church paper, the *Review and Herald*. Smith was the first Secretary of the General Conference which was organized in 1863\textsuperscript{32}.

He is best known for his book, The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. He was the first Bible teacher at Battle Creek College. Smith was often seen limping down the streets of Battle Creek with his cane and artificial limb, for he had suffered an amputation as a teenage boy. Smith was a man who was on the march. Though he was busy with the Lord’s business and he always wanted others to be on theirs, yet he was a gracious and tender-hearted man.

**Printing and Distribution of Tracts:**

The next few years were a period of organizational establishment. The founders of the SDA Church, Bates, James and Ellen White began to encourage and publish the messages through tracts. They moved from place

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.P.787.
\textsuperscript{32} Clapham, Noel, "Seventh-day Adventists in the South Pacific 1885-1985" Signs Publishing Associations, Warburton, Victoria, Australia, 1985.pp118-140
to place in United States to strengthen the scattered Adventists, through paper, because they believed that “The paper could go to places where God’s servants cannot go”\(^{33}\).

As a result this idea, the paper “*The Present Truth*” was printed and published, later they published the *Adventist Review* during the summer of 1850 with the truth that they have received. The *second Adventist Review* and *Sabbath Herald* were later published\(^{34}\). In the visions and instruction given to Ellen White through the years it was found that the inspiration had built a world-belting system of publishing houses, turning out Seventh-day Adventist books, tracks, and periodicals in about two hundred languages\(^{34}\).

In 1855 Bates and Whites moved to Battle Creek, Michigan where the publishing office was built and it became a land mark in the development for Adventist movement. For the first time permanent headquarters were established. Later the publishing project was incorporated and became the denomination’s first legal body on May 3, 1861\(^{35}\).


“The number of sabbath keepers began to increase fast. There are more than twice the number of Adventists with in six months. This is due to the aggressive outreach through conferences and publications aimed at the large body of searching Millerites, by 1852 the sabbatarain Adventists experienced rapid growth. According to one estimate that seemed fairly accurate, their adherence went from about 200 in 1850 to approximately 2000 in 1852”\(^{36}\) in North and Central America.

Fundamental Beliefs of Adventists

Seventh-day Adventists accepted the Bible as their only creed and gave priority for certain fundamental beliefs as the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. These beliefs, constitute the church’s understanding and expression of the teaching of Scriptures. These fundamental beliefs clearly established as the major and most important beliefs and termed them as the five pillars of the Seventh-day Adventist church.

First, they honoured the Seventh-day as the rest day and considered it as the day of worshipping the creator God. The beneficent Creator, after the six days of Creation, rested on the seventh day and instituted the Sabbath for all people as a memorial of His Creation. The fourth commandment of the ten commandments given by God’s unchangeable law also insists on the observance of this Seventh-day Sabbath as the day of rest, worship, and ministry. The Sabbath is God’s perpetual sign of His eternal covenant between Him and His people. Joyful observance of

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this holy time from evening to evening, sunset to sunset, is a celebration of God’s creative and redemptive acts. (Gen. 2:1-3).  

Secondly the Adventists believe on the baptism which is included in the gospel commission of Jesus Christ that he taught and commanded his disciples to go and teach and baptize in the name of the father and of the son and of the holy Sprit. Jesus himself was baptized in the river Jordan by John the Baptist and told Nicodemus in his private conversation that, unless a person is born of the water and of the sprit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Basing on the same command, the disciples of Jesus, after Christ’s ascension to heaven, baptized three thousand people in the very first day. Further, Apostle Paul explains in Romans chapter six verse one to six that Baptism is a symbol of death, burial and resurrection. This explanation rightly suits to the meaning of the term baptism, which came from the Greek word Baptizo meaning completely dipped into the water. By baptism, the Adventists confess their faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. They testify the death to sin and of the purpose to walk in newness of life. Thus they acknowledge Christ as Lord and Saviour, and become His people, and are received as members by His church (Rom. 6:1-6).  

The third most important pillar of the Seventh-day Adventist church is the Remnant church and its mission. God throughout the Biblical history had his Remnant. The Remnant church even though small yet remained obedient bearing all

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the tribulations. Apostle John in his book Revelation which is also the last book of the Bible in chapter Twelve and verse seventeen points out the identifying Mark of the Remnant church is that they keep the commandments of God and focused mainly on the fourth commandment which talks about remembering the Sabbath day to keep Holy.\(^{40}\)

The universal Christian church is composed of all who truly believe in Christ, but in the last days, a time of widespread apostasy, a Remnant has been called out to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. This Remnant announces the arrival of the judgment hour, proclaims salvation through Christ, and heralds the approach of His Second Advent. (Rev. 12:17.)

Fourth belief of the Seventh-day Adventists is in the gift of prophecy that God's church in the last days receive the outpouring of Holy Spirit to specially guide his chosen people. The Seventh-day Adventist church believes and accepts Ellen white to be the prophetess who is bestowed with the gift of prophecy, especially to lead the God's people in these last days\(^{41}\). Ellen white who was weak in health was called by God when she was seventeen years old and thereafter she served as messenger of God and was instrumental in establishing the Seventh-day Adventist church. She wrote hundreds of books

\(^{40}\) The Department of Education General Conference of SDA “Principles of Life” Oriental watchman Publishing House, Home Poona .1985 P395
\(^{41}\) Opct PP.120, 121
and thousands of articles on health and spirit filled life guiding the Lord’s church. In one of her statements she said her writings were like lesser light, leading the church to the greater light which is the Holy Bible. One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the Remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen. G. White as the Lord’s messenger (Joel 2:28)42.

The fifth distinctive fundamental belief of the Seventh-day Adventist church is the state of the Dead and resurrection. The Church believes in the Biblical teaching that the living know that they die but the dead know nothing. Death is compared to sleep and in death thoughts perish. According to the Holy Scriptures the dead do not go to heaven or hell directly but wait until the resurrection day43. The wages of sin is death. But God, who alone is immortal, will grant eternal life to His redeemed. Until that day death is an unconscious state for all people. When Christ appears, soon the resurrected righteous and the living righteous will be glorified and caught up to meet their Lord44 (Romans. 6:23). Seventh-day Adventist church differs from the

43 Ibid, P.29.
other Christian denominations mainly in these five distinctive fundamental beliefs. However, there are other beliefs which are common with most of the Christian denominations.

**Common Beliefs with other Denominations:**

**Holy Scriptures** - The Seventh-day Adventists believe that the Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration through holy men of God who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. In this Word, God has committed to man, the knowledge necessary for salvation. (2 Peter 1:20, 21) “Comparison of the Dead Sea scrolls with later manuscripts of the old Testament demonstrates the carefulness with which the Holy Scriptures has been transmitted.\(^{45}\)

**Father** - God the eternal Father is the Creator, Source, Sustainer, and Sovereign of all creation. He is just and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. The qualities and powers exhibited in God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are also revelations of the Father (Gen. 1:1).

Son - God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through Him all things were created, the character of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is accomplished, and the world is judged. “He suffered and died voluntarily on the cross for our sins and in our place, was raised from the dead, and ascended to minister in the heavenly sanctuary in our behalf”. He will come again in glory for the final deliverance of His people and the restoration of all things (John 1:1-3, 14)\(^{46}\)

Holy Spirit - God the eternal Spirit was active with God the Father and God the Son in Creation, incarnation, and redemption. He inspired the writers of Scriptures. He filled Christ’s life with power (Gen. 1:1, 2). God is the Creator of all things, and has revealed in Scripture the authentic account of His creative activity. In six days the Lord made "the heaven and the earth" and all living things upon the earth, and rested on the seventh day of the first week. Thus, He established the last day of the week on Sabbath to perpetuate the memory of His completed creative work (Gen:1:2).

Nature of Man - Man and woman were made in the image of God with individuality, the power and freedom to think and to do. (Gen.1:26-
“In the place of the story of a fall, has come a story of an ascent\textsuperscript{47}, that is through Jesus.

**Great Controversy** - All humanity is now involved in a great controversy between Christ and Satan regarding the character of God, His law, and His sovereignty over the universe. This conflict originated in heaven when a created being, endowed with freedom of choice, in self-exaltation became Satan, God’s adversary, and led into rebellion a portion of the angels(Rev. 12:4-9)\textsuperscript{48}.

**Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ** - In Christ's life of perfect obedience to God's will, His suffering, death, and resurrection, God provided the only means of atonement for human sin, so that those who by faith accept this atonement may have eternal life, and the whole creation may have better understanding of the infinite and Holy love of the Creator. (John 3:16)\textsuperscript{49}

**Experience of Salvation** - In infinite love and mercy God made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, so that in Him we might be made


\textsuperscript{49} Research Institute for Better Reading Inc.,“Bible Readings for the Home.” Harvesttime Books Altamont, USA, 1988 P 46,47.
righteous. Through Christ the humanity is justified, adopted as God's sons and daughters, and delivered them from the lordship of sin. (2 Cor. 5:17-21).

**Growing in Christ** - By His death on the cross Jesus triumphed over the forces of evil. “Jesus' victory gives us victory over the evil forces that still seek to control us, as we walk with Him in peace, joy, and assurance of His love”. (Ps 1:1, 2; 23:4; 77:11, 12).

**Church** - The church is the community of believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. In continuity with the people of God in Old Testament times, the humanity is called out from the world; and they join together for worship, for fellowship, for instruction in the Word, for the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, for service to all mankind, and for the worldwide proclamation of the Gospel. (Gen. 12:3)

**Unity in the Body of Christ** - The church is one body with many members, called from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. (Rom. 12:4, 5) Lord's Supper-The Lord's Supper is a participation in the emblems of the body and blood of Jesus as an expression of faith in Him, as the Lord and Saviour. In this experience of communion Christ is present to meet and

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50 Ministerial Association “Seventh day Adventist Beliefs”, Review & Herald Publishing Association, Hagerstown, 1988, P.34.
strengthen His people. As the people partake, they joyfully proclaim the Lord's death until He comes again (1 Cor. 10:16, 17; 11:23-30).51

**Spiritual Gifts and Ministries** - God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts which each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity, given by the agency of the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 12:4-8)52.

**Law of God** - The great principles of God's law are embodied in the Ten Commandments and exemplified in the life of Christ. They express God's love, will, and purposes concerning human conduct and relationships and are binding upon all people in every age. (Ex. 20:1-17).” The Sabbath is central to the worship God, the memorial of Creation. It reveals the reason why God is to be worshiped, it teaches the great truth in the most impressive manner.53

**Stewardship** - Adventists are God's stewards, entrusted by Him with time, and opportunities, abilities and possessions, and the blessings of the earth and its resources. The humanity is responsible to Him for their proper use. The followers acknowledge God's ownership by faithful service to Him

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51 Kedas RW. “Adventist Movement of Western India”, Western India Union of SDA, Salisbury Park, Pune, 2005, P.32.
52 Ibid, P.36.
and by returning tithes and giving offerings for the proclamation of His
gospel and the support and growth of His church (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:15).

**Christian Behavior** - Adventists are called to be a godly people who
think, feel, and act in harmony with the principles of heaven. For the Spirit to
recreate in the humanity the character of their Lord. The Christians are
expected to produce Christ like purity, health, and joy in their lives. (Rom.
12:1, 2)\(^54\).

**Marriage and the Family** - Marriage was divinely established in Eden
by God the father even during the time of creation. It was affirmed by Jesus
to be a lifelong union between a man and a woman in loving companionship.
For the Christian, a marriage commitment means a commitment to God as
well as to the spouse, and this relationship be arranged only between partners
who share a common faith (Gen. 2:18-25)\(^55\).

**Christ’s Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary** - There is a sanctuary in
heaven, the true tabernacle which the Lord set up for his true sinless
followers. In it Christ ministers and, make available to believers the benefits
of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross. (Heb. 8:1-5).

\(^{54}\) Research Institute for Better Reading Inc., “Bible Readings for the Home.” Harvesttime
Books Altamont, USA, 1988 P.294

\(^{55}\) Ibid P.296.
Second Coming of Christ - The second coming of Christ is the blessed hope of the church, the grand climax of the gospel. The Saviour's coming will be literal, personal, visible, and worldwide. When He returns, the righteous dead will be resurrected, and together with the righteous living will be glorified and taken to heaven, but the unrighteous will die. (Titus 2:13).

Millennium and the End of Sin - The millennium is the thousand-year reign of Christ with His saints in heaven between the first and second resurrections. (Rev.20). On the new earth, in which righteousness dwells, God will provide an eternal home for the redeemed and a perfect environment for everlasting life, love, joy, and learning in His presence. For here God Himself will dwell with His people. (2 Peter 3:13).

ORGANIZATION AS A DENOMINATION

The Seventh day Adventist Church is a conservative Christian body, worldwide in extent, evangelical in doctrine, and professing no creed but the Bible. It places strong emphasis on the Second Advent, which it believes is near, and observes the Sabbath of the Bible, The seventh day of the week. These two distinguishing points are incorporated into the name Seventh-day Adventist. The church is administered by a democratic organization. The worldwide membership is distributed approximately as follows: one fourth in North America; one fifth in Latin America; one fifth in Africa; one sixth in Europe; one seventh in Asia; one twentieth in Australasia\textsuperscript{58}.

The SDA Church has consistently refused to adopt a creed or confession, preferring to base all beliefs on the Bible. However, several statements of general beliefs have been published. Church membership, is granted by vote of the local congregation, and is based on conversion and baptism by immersion, following instruction and acceptance of the doctrines

\textsuperscript{58} George R Knight, “A Brief History of Seventh Day Adventists, Review and herald Publishing Association, Hagerstown, USA, 1999, P. 55.
of the church standards of behavior, including total abstinence from liquor and tobacco.\textsuperscript{59}

The distinctive Adventist message may be summarized as “the everlasting gospel”- It is the basic Christian message of salvation through faith in Christ and in the special setting of the threefold message of Rev 14: 6-12. It is a call to worship the Creator, “for the hour of his judgement is come,” and to take a stand for God in the crisis, “The commandments of God, and the Faith of Jesus”\textsuperscript{60}.

The local “Church Administration is partly on a Presbyterian pattern, though ministers are not chosen by the congregation, but are assigned by the “conferences or missions, or sections, composed of a number of churches, and the departmental activities are supervised by representatives of the conference.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ADVENTIST MOVEMENT

A. The Early Growth:

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid P.60.
\textsuperscript{60} A directory of General Conference “Seventh-day Adventist Year Book” Review & Herald Publishing Association, Hagerstown, USA, 2007, P 4.
During the period of the Disappointment many people had accepted the call of the Second Angel’s Message and had left their former churches. Mrs. White considered that some form of organization was essential for the preservation of the unity of the Movement. However, this view was not shared by some who considered that “The Lord organizes His own church by the strong bonds of love.”

J. N. Loughborough reveals that it was not until the later 1850’s that there came upon these people a realization that some form of organization would be required to facilitate the spreading of the Third Angel’s Message.

In 1853 deacons were appointed in the Fairhaven church were Joseph Bates was located. Their task was to care for the church and its members during the interval between ministers’ visits.

The Adventist leaders at this time were ordained ministers of other denominations, yet there were quite a few laymen who took up the call of the preacher and the problem of ordination arose. Previously preachers had been given a card signed by the leading ministers but James White wrote articles in
which he suggested ordination of ministers. In 1861 therefore credentials were given to ordained workers\textsuperscript{61}.

\textbf{B. Administrative Organization}:

In October 1861 there was a gathering of Michigan workers at Battle Creek where a local conference was organized. This was a historical gathering for it marked the setting up of the first conference of Seventh-day Adventists. This was the first real advance since the Disappointment as far as organization was concerned.

James White was wholeheartedly in favour of the Michigan action and wrote continually, endeavouring to influence more organization. A few months later six other conferences followed the lead of Michigan.

The Michigan conference decided also upon the payment of a regular salary to ministers, also to invite other state conferences to a general meeting. This was held in Battle Creek in 1863. This historic gathering marked the setting up of the General Conference with headquarters located at Battle Creek. In 1903 the headquarters of the world organization were moved to their present location at Takoma Park, Washington D.C.\textsuperscript{62}

\textsuperscript{61} Youth Department, "Senior Denominational History" Southern Asia Division of Seventh-Day Adventists, 1979, P.20.

\textsuperscript{62} Ibid, p. 21.
The General Conference of May 1863, therefore decided upon:

a. An organization based on a constitution of 9 articles.

b. The election of John Byington as a President.

The next change came in 1901 when it was decided to revise the organization somewhat due to the great expansion of foreign missions, education, publishing, medical fork and other phases since 1863. At this conference it was decided to arrange the world field into Union Conferences in order to promote the work in Local areas. The idea had previously been tried in Australia where in 1894 under Mrs. White’s guidance the Australasian Union Conference had been set up with W. C. White as President.

The expansion of the work necessitated further changes which were made at the 1913 session of the General Conference. It was considered advisable to bring about a redistribution of responsibilities so that the Vice-President of the General Conference could devote more time to the world
field as a whole. Accordingly Divisional Conferences were organized to care for their own work. Thus the work shows a vertical type of organization:

   General Conference
   Division Conference
   Union Conferences
   Local Conferences

The General Conference used to meet every four years for its sessions but with 1970 the term was lengthened to five years. In between there are other meetings. From the world field delegates meet in what is known as an Autumn Council (Now called Annual Council) convened each year which decides on allocation of money to the various world divisions and particularly for mission fields.

C. Other Features of Organization:

1. Tithing:

   It was clear that the advances of the work would make it most desirable if ministers could devote all their time to the winning of souls. Uptil this time ministers had to depend upon believers’ donations which

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64 Ibid, p. 440.
were somewhat inadequate for their needs, as well as being irregular and unevenly distributed. Since they had families to support, ministers frequently had to engage in secular work so that no definite time for preaching could be allocated. Thus James White often cut wood to earn money to supply the necessities of his family. In addition the period of the late 50’s in America was one of uncertainty and scarcity of money, so that people could not be expected to aid the minister as much as before⁶⁵.

The leaders realized that some plan must be formulated for the support of the ministry and in 1858 J.N. Andrews formed a group to study for scriptural advice on the matter. The result was the introduction in 1859 of a plan called “Systematic Benevolence”, whereby the people gave a weekly offering of 25 cents by men and 10 cents by women as they felt they had been blessed by God. While this method had the disadvantage of geographical inequalities, it was a step in the education of the people towards planned giving for the support of the work⁶⁶.

In 1879 a committee was formed to study the Mosaic system of financial support and as a result the tithing system was outlined and

recommended. George Butler in 1883 prepared a pamphlet on tithing. Thus the ministry were now supported in their work by the tithes of the members.

2. Ownership of Property:

a. In the early days of the Movement there was very little property belonging to the people of the church. All that was owned was the Publishing House at Battle Creek, However, the growth and expansion of the work made it obvious that in the near future certain property would be required and there was raised the question of the legal ownership of this property.

b. A conference was called at Battle Creek in September 1860 to consider the matter, for there was opposition by some to legal incorporation as they felt it was linking church and state. James White, in whose name it was held, considered that some legal arrangement was necessary to ensure possession of property by the church on the grounds of the law of inheritance and even the event of apostasy.

c. J.N. Loughborough presented his plan whereby the church could hold property. His idea called for an association of men to be legal owner of church property. This was a satisfactory suggestion and after some

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67 Ibid, p. 159.
deliberation over a suitable name, it was decided in 1860 to adopt the name “Seventh-day Adventist”. In May 1861 the “Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association” was formed, being the first legal body of the denomination.\(^{68}\)

3. Camp Meetings:

The first gathering together of Seventh-day Adventists as a body in a meeting occurred in 1868, when in Wright, Michigan, the first camp meeting was held. Its purpose was to increase the spiritual growth of Seventh-day Adventist Believers.\(^{69}\)

**THE DEPARTMENTS OF SDA ORGANISATION:**

**A. SABBATH SCHOOL:**

One of the problems which faced the leaders of Sabbath work in the early days was the fact that the children and young people seem to have been neglected. The message was being preached to the adults and it was felt, quite rightly, in some quarters that instruction should be given to the young people and children.

\(^{68}\) Ellen white, “Counsels on Colporteur Ministry”, Review and Herald Publishing Association, Hagerstown, USA, 1942, P. 142.

\(^{69}\) Ibid, p. 160.
Jame White, a former school teacher, supported this view and considered that some paper should be printed to cater to the needs of the young people. In August 1852 appeared the “Youth’s Instructor” which continued to be the youth paper until 1970 when it was replaced by “Insight”\textsuperscript{70}.

In this paper also appeared the first series of Sabbath School lessons which were compiled by James White in rather unusual circumstances. While traveling north one day in 1852, he was resting for lunch when he received the inspiration to write lessons, so using his lunch basket as a table he drafted out the first series and printed them in the “Youth’s Instructor”.

From this simple beginning the work spread and later development occurred. The first Sabbath School meetings which were organized took place at Rochester and Bucksbridge, where John Byington fostered the work in 1853-4. The lessons studied by all age groups were those which James White prepared since that was all existing at the time. It was not until 1888 that lessons for senior classes appeared, being printed in the familiar Quarterly form\textsuperscript{71}.

\textsuperscript{70} Youth Department, “Senior Denominational History, Southern Asia Division of Seventh Day Adventists, 1979, p.23.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid, p. 23.
The idea of Sabbath School offerings occurred in 1878 but it was not until 1885 that the first offerings were given for the mission field. In that year the money went to the Australian field, where work had just commenced. Another project made possible by Sabbath School offerings was the construction in 1890 of the missionary vessel “Pitcairm”, which was used extensively in the South Seas. To facilitate the study of the Sabbath School lesson and to promote better organization, and the periodical “Sabbath School Worker” appeared in 1885.

In 1878 with numbers of Sabbath Schools growing there was organized the General Sabbath School Association whose name was later changed to International Sabbath School Association. In 1902 the Sabbath School Department was organized as one of the first General Conference Departments.

B. LAY ACTIVITIES:

Early in the Movement it was recognized that the distribution of literature was an excellent means of winning souls. Accordingly in 1869 there arose the first Adventist Missionary Society known as the “Vigilant Missionary Society”. S.N. Haskell realizing the enormous potential of this

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work, organized the “tract and Missionary Society” in 1870 which in 1882 became the “International Tract and Missionary Society.” In 1901 the International Tract Society ceased to function and the General Conference Publishing Department took over its responsibilities.  

However, it was soon realized that a better method of fostering lay missionary endeavour needed to be organized. Therefore, at the 1913 General Conference session the Home Missionary Department of the General Conference was organized. In 1966 the name of the department was changed to the “Department of Lay Activities” which looks after the Ingathering Campaign. This was originated by Jasper Wayne in 1903 by selling excess “Signs” and donating the proceeds to missions. His idea had Mrs. White’s approval.

C. PUBLISHING:

In 1840 the first Adventist paper, “The Signs of the Times” appeared but, although various booklets had been produced, it was not until 1849 that James White began to publish a small periodical called, “Present Truth,” the first S.D.A. periodical. The paper prospered and in 1851 it was called

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73 Ibid, p. 692.
“Advent Review and Sabbath Herald”. This paper is the General or Denominational church periodical for the whole world”\textsuperscript{75}.

The first printing press owned by the denomination was acquired in 1852 and set up in Rochester, New York, where the Whites had settled. Although it was only a hand press it performed yeoman service in the early publishing work. Shortly after this call was made for funds to purchase a steam printing press due to the great expansion of the work. Hiram Edson sold his farm and another farmer sold “Buck” and “Bill”, his oxen, and gave the money to help purchase the press. In 1855 money was raised and a two-story house constructed at Battle Creek, Michigan. This house became the headquarters of the Publishing work until it was moved to Washington D.C. after the Battle Creek fire of December 1902\textsuperscript{76}.

From that humble beginning the work has grown rapidly until there are printing presses all over the world turning out material to spread the Message.

The prominent publishing houses in USA are:

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid, p. 25.
\textsuperscript{76} Ellen white, “Counsels Colporteur Ministry” Review and Herald Publishing Association, Hagerstown, USA, 1942, p. 152.
i) The Review and Herald Publishing Association

ii) The Pacific Press Publishing Association and

iii) The southern Publishing Association.

In 1861 the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association was formed and in 1902 the Publishing Department of the General Conference was organized. The colporteur work which commenced in the early 1880’s is connected with the name of George King. Rejected for the Ministry, he decided to sell S.D.A. papers and found the response most gratifying. At the 1880 General Conference, it was decided to print the two books, “Thoughts on Daniel” and “Thoughts on Revelation” in a single volume and, with a more attractive presentation, to sell these to the people. In 1881 King commenced his work with the sale of “Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation,” followed by “The Great Controversy”. This proved most successful and other salesmen were recruited and trained by King. One of these was William Arnold, who opened up the work in Australia

D. MEDICAL WORK:

77 Op cit, p. 25.
1. It was due to the work of Joseph Bates and vision of Mrs. White in 1863 that Adventist health principles were firmly commenced and the gospel of health began to occupy a prominent part of Adventist Message.

2. Acting upon Mrs. White’s advice the Health Reform Institute set up at Battle Creek in 1866 became Adventist first sanitarium, its name later being changed to the Battle Creek Sanitarium. Other main sanitariums in America at present are located at Glendale and Loma Linda, California.

3. The lead in later years to the medical work was given by Dr. Kellogg, who was influential in medical ventures outside America also. Later a training school for nurses was set up at Battle Creek and the College of Medical Evangelists was organized at Loma Linda, California, being the only denominational one in the world.

E. EDUCATION :

Although the pioneers had in 1856 commenced a small school at Battle Creek it did not function long, being halted by the Civil War. The educational work commenced with the efforts of G.H.Bell. He was a state

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school teacher who had come for convalescence to the Health Reform Institute. He began helping the White boys with their studies and soon he was asked if he would commence a school. The request was fulfilled when in 1868 Bell opened a private school in one of the rooms in the General Conference at Battle Creek. Four years later the first denominationally controlled school began operation in battle Creek\textsuperscript{80}.

There was a great need for some senior school and in 1874 the first college was opened at Battle Creek. In 1901 this was transferred to a more rural setting where it has become known as Emmanuel Missionary College. (Now Andrews University.

In 1882 the need for more schools was satisfied with the opening of the South Lancaster Academy in Massachusetts and the Healdsburg College in California. These are now senior colleges being called Atlantic Union and Pacific Union respectively\textsuperscript{81}.

**F. YOUTH MINISTRY:**

It was recognized early in SDA Movement that there was a great work to be done for the young people. Youth were important. Furthermore,


\textsuperscript{81} Ibid, p. 369.
youthful vigour was important in the carrying out of the gospel commission to all the world, and it was clear that some sort of organization for them was essential.82

The first Young People’s Society was formed by Harry Fenner and Luther Warren at Hazelton in Michigan in 1879. They and their friends met every week and distributed literature which they paid for. Mrs. White sponsored the work and in 1893 a Young People’s Society of Christian Service formed. Other groups were organized and in 1907 the Young People’s Department of Missionary Volunteers was organized for the General Conference, the work having previously been under the control of the Sabbath School Department.83

Another feature of the Mission volunteers work is that it conducted JMV societies for juniors, It was in 1909 that JMV society work was commenced and the progressive class work, which forms a part of every society, was commenced in 1922.

G. OTHER DEPARTMENTS:

1. Communications:

82 Youth Department, “Senior Denominational History” Southern Asia Division of Seventh Day Adventists, Pune, 1979, p. 27.
83 Ibid, p. 28.
The communications is a recent organization but nevertheless a most successful avenue of service. The Voice of Prophecy work began with isolated broadcasts in the 1920’s and it was in 1930 that Pastor H.M.S. Richards’ first message was heard over the air in California. The introduction of Bible correspondence courses has been a tremendous aid in reaching people who possibly would never attend an evangelistic meeting. The Radio and Television Department was organized at the General Conference in 195284.

2. Bureau of Public Relations:

As far back as 1884 a scheme was proposed for using the newspapers for more widely for the spread of the Message. However, it was not until 1912 that the General Conference established this Bureau.

The aim of this Department is to assist the church in all its departments in its programme of reaching the multitudes and of co-operating with communication channels (Press, Radio, Television Exhibits, etc.) so as to

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influence public opinion in creating a favourable appreciation of the Advent Message and the church’s activities\textsuperscript{85}.

3. Religious Liberty

a. The main purpose of this department is to safeguard as far as possible the people of the Seventh-day Adventist church from any attempt by governments to introduce legislation restricting freedom of worship.

b. In America the General conference had set up a legal aid bureau and in 1889 the Religious Liberty Association was formed which became a General Conference Department in 1903\textsuperscript{86}.

4. International Temperance Association:

This department is organized as a separate society. At the General Conference level, it is known as the International Temperance Association. The first effort to organize a Temperance Society by the denomination was in January 1879, when the American Health and Temperance Association was formed. In 1946 this work was revived and strengthened. Professor W. A. Scharffenberg was invited to build up this department. Operating now as a Society it functions under its own constitution. In most countries around the world today Adventists have established a Temperance Society\textsuperscript{87}.

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid, pp. 21-22.
\textsuperscript{86} Op cit, p. 29.
\textsuperscript{87} R.W. Kedar, “Adventist Movement of Western India, Western India Union of SDA, Salisbury Park, Pune, 2005, p.122.
5. Ministerial Association:

This is an association of ministers and evangelical workers and is designed to promote improved work through the publishing of helpful material and suggestions. The monthly periodical issued by this Association is called “The Ministry”\textsuperscript{88}.

6. National Service Organization:

This was established to care for the interests of S.D.A. servicemen.

FUNCTIONS OF THE ADVENTIST CHURCH

In general, the services in the SDA Church are similar to those conducted in other Protestant churches\textsuperscript{89}. However, their weekly services are held on Saturday\textsuperscript{90}. Among their important services are the following:

1. **Sabbath School.** In most churches this service is conducted on Saturday morning; in a few, on Saturday afternoon. For the type of service.

\textsuperscript{88} Ibid, p. 123.
\textsuperscript{90} Ibid P – 4.
2. **The Regular Worship Service.** This is the main service of the church for preaching and worship, and is usually held at 11 o’clock Saturday morning, following the Sabbath school. It is conducted by the minister or elder. The Church Manual suggests the following order of worship:

3. **Baptismal Service.** Seventh-day Adventists practice baptism by immersion. Baptisms are often conducted in connection with the regular Sabbath morning services in baptisteries, with which many churches are provided. Sometimes baptisms are conducted away from the church in a lake or stream.91

4. **Communion Service.** The communion service is sometimes called the quarterly service because it is generally conducted once every three months. The partaking of the symbols of the bread and the wine in the Lord’s Supper is preceded by the preparatory service called the ordinance of foot washing, for which the men and the women separate, then reassemble for the supper. Seventh-day Adventists

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91 Opcit, P.1181
practice open Communion. Christians of other denominations are free to join in the service if they so desire.  

5. **Evangelistic Services.** These meetings for the public for the purpose of winning converts are conducted by the pastor with local assistance, or by a traveling evangelist. They may be held in the church but are often held in halls, tents, or other places of assembly.  

6. **Prayer Meeting.** This service is usually held on Wednesday evening for the purpose of prayer and Bible study. After song, prayer, and a short talk or Bible study, there is opportunity for successive prayers offered voluntarily by members of the congregation. Often there is, in place of or following the series of prayers, a testimony service (called in earlier times a social meeting), in which members of the congregation rise and speak briefly concerning their experiences and feelings.  

7. **M V Meeting.** This meeting is conducted by the MV Society, most often on Friday evening or Saturday afternoon, especially for the

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young people. Material for the programs, which vary widely in form and content, is furnished in the MV Program Kit.  

8. **Vesper Services.** Services at the beginning or the end of the Sabbath are conducted in certain churches at sundown on Friday or preceding sundown on Saturday. Services vary in form, but usually include music, Scripture reading, prayer, and a sermonet or devotional talk. In SDA schools the vesper service sometimes includes a testimony service.

9. **Church Dedication Service.** After all debts incurred in the purchase or erection of a church have been liquidated, a dedication service is held. It may be a part of the regular weekly worship service, but more often it is held separately on a Sabbath afternoon. It may include a statement regarding the history of the church; a dedicatory sermon, sometimes an Act of Dedication read responsively, and a dedicatory prayer.

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10. **Revival Services.** These are services held, usually in a series, often in connection with evangelistic meetings, to revive the church spiritually.

11. **Week of Prayer Services.** These services are held each night for a week, including two Sabbath morning services, in a designated period in the autumn. The meetings are more or less informal, similar to a typical prayer meeting, except that the principal feature is a reading—one of a series of articles published for these services—from the Review and Herald. Usually the reading is accompanied by comments⁹⁵.

12. **The Ten-Minute Missionary Service.** Between the end of Sabbath school and the beginning of the worship service the home missionary leader promotes and reports on the various activities of the church in Lay evangelism, such as literature distribution, *Ingathering in November and December once in a year*, temperance, welfare work, missions, and visitation.⁹⁶

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF THE SDA CHURCH**

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⁹⁶ Ibid, P.67.
The Seventh-day Adventist church had rightly framed its constitution for the smooth running of the denomination as it began to grow extensively. This constitution and by laws were amended during the general conference sessions as and when the need to amend arose. The present constitution frame work was revised at the fifty eight session held in saint Louis united states of America June 29 to July 9, 2005.

CONSTITUTION

Article one Name, This organization shall be known as General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Article two Purposes, The purpose of General conference is to teach all nations the everlasting gospel of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ and the commandments of God.97

Article three The Divisions of the General Conference, The General Conference conducts much of its work through its divisions, 13 in number which in turn are comprised of union conferences and union missions in specific areas of the world each division is an Adminstrative unit of the general conference with commensurate authority to carry out responsibilities in the territory assigned to it. It is not a separate constituent level of

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97 A directory General Conference “Seventh Day Adventist Year Book” Review & Herald Publishing Association, Hagerstown USA, 2007 P 9
organization. It shall act in full harmony with the general conference constitution, bylaws and the general working policy and action actions of the executive committee.98

In order to carry out the authority of the general conference, the actions of the Division committee shall of necessity, be in harmony with and complimentary to the decision of the general conference and in seeing and in action of the executive committee between sessions.

**Article four** Membership, The membership of the General Conference shall consist of, all Union Conferences and Union Missions that are properly organized and accepted by vote of the General Conference in session. All of the following entities are directly attached to the General Conference or a Division or Union of churches or local conferences.

**Article Five** General Conference Sessions, The General Conference shall hold Quinquennial sessions at such time and place as the executive committee shall designate and announce by a notice published in the review and herald in three consecutive issues atleast four months before the date for the opening of the session.

98 Ibid P -9
BY LAWS

The Seventh-day Adventist church has framed its by laws by the general conference for the smooth running of the denomination under the following headings.\(^9\)

Administration

The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, hereinafter referred to as the General Conference, normally shall conduct its worldwide work through its divisions, each division to operate within a specified territory in harmony with General Conference policies. The duly organized divisions are: Africa-Indian Ocean Division, Eastern Africa Division, Euro-Asia Division, Euro-Asia Division, Inter-American Division, North American Division, Northern Asia-Pacific Division, South American Division, South Pacific Division, Southern Asia Division, Southern Asia-Pacific Division, and Trans-European Division. The boundaries of these Divisions shall be subject to adjustment only at Sessions of the General Conference or at Annual Councils of the Executive Committee. The duly organized attached union is: Southern Africa Union Conference.\(^10\)

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\(^9\) Ibid, p. 11.
If a territorial adjustment is made at an annual council, it shall be made only, provided each division and other territory affected is represented at the council by at least one of its officers, or in the case of an unorganized territory, by a senior church leader from that territory. An exception to the requirement of such representation shall be made in a condition of emergency\textsuperscript{101}. In such a case, the Executive Committee shall make whatever adjustments are necessary for the conduct of the work in the territories affected. Union conferences and union missions, together with all other organizations and institutions within that division's territory, shall be responsible to that division's executive committee, or in the case of General Conference institutions and fields without divisional affiliation, to the General Conference Executive Committee.

Committees

At each regular session of the General Conference, standing committees, shall be elected to consider items of business that may be referred to them and to bring in their reports and recommendations to the

\textsuperscript{101} Ibid, P. 437.
session, the committees such as Church Manual Committee, Constitution and Bylaws Committee, Nominating Committee, Plans Committee\textsuperscript{102}.

\textsuperscript{102} Op cit, p. 25.
General Conference Vice Presidents And Division Vice Presidents

General vice presidents of the General Conference shall be elected to assist the president with the general administrative work of the General Conference. In addition a vice president shall be elected to serve as president of each division of the General Conference\textsuperscript{103}.

A General Vice President of the General Conference or the President of the North American Division shall, in the absence of the president, chair meetings of the Executive Committee. The role of the general vice presidents of the General Conference, in relationship to the divisions, is as follows: To serve as liaisons between the General Conference president and the divisions, To serve as administrative resource counselors, To strengthen the bond of the world Church\textsuperscript{104}.

Undersecretary And Associate Secretaries

An undersecretary and associate secretaries shall be elected to share with the secretary the responsibilities of the office. They shall perform such duties connected with the Secretariat as may be assigned to them by the

secretary or by the Executive Committee. The role of the General Conference undersecretary and associate secretaries, in relationship to the divisions, includes the following: To serve as liaisons with division secretaries as assigned by the General Conference secretary, To facilitate the processing of calls for interdivision employees, To recruit interdivision employees to fill the needs of the divisions, To assist the divisions with personnel and policy matters.105

Division Secretaries

A secretary shall be elected for each division to be designated a division secretary. Each division secretary shall work according to plans and programs voted by the General Conference in session and according to plans and policies agreed upon by the division executive committee. The secretary shall serve as vice-chairperson of the executive committee, and shall report to the executive committee after consultation with the president. It shall be the duty of the secretary to keep the minutes of the division executive committee meetings, to collect information and make such reports as may be required, and to do such other work as usually pertains to this office. Division

executive committees may appoint associate and assistant secretaries as may be required to carry on the work\textsuperscript{106}.

**Division Treasurers**

A treasurer shall be elected for each division to be designated “division treasurer”. Each division treasurer shall work according to plans and programs voted by the General Conference in session and according to plans and policies agreed upon by the division executive committee and shall report to the executive committee after consultation with the president. The treasurer shall be responsible for providing financial leadership to the division which will include, but shall not be limited to, receiving, safeguarding, and disbursing all funds in harmony with the actions of the division executive committee, for remitting all required funds to the General Conference in harmony with General Conference policy, and for providing financial information to the president and to the executive committee. The treasurer shall also be responsible for furnishing copies of the financial statements to the General Conference officers\textsuperscript{107}.

**Auditing Service and Audits**

\textsuperscript{106} Opcit, p.19.  
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid, P.20.
At each regular General Conference Session, the General Conference shall elect a director of the General Conference Auditing Service, whose duties shall be to administer the conduct of audits of the organizations of the Church throughout the world. Associate directors shall also be elected at each regular General Conference Session. The director and associate directors shall be recommended by the General Conference Auditing Service Board to the Session Nominating Committee after consultation with the administrations of the respective divisions\textsuperscript{108}.

**General and Division Field Secretaries**

The term general field secretary shall be used to designate general field leaders elected to assist the officers in carrying the field responsibilities of the General Conference. The general field secretaries shall work under the direction of the Executive Committee and the president, and be assigned either to field service or to special projects or responsibilities that are approved by the Executive Committee. The term division field secretary shall be used to designate field leaders appointed by divisions\textsuperscript{109}.

\textsuperscript{108} R.W. Kedar, “Adventist Movement of Western India”, Western India Union of SDA, Salisbury Park, Pune, 2005, p.68.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid, P 67.
Departments And Associations-Directors/Secretaries, Associates, And Assistants

Departmental and association directors/secretaries and associate directors/secretaries shall be elected by the General Conference Session and assistants shall be appointed as determined by the General Conference Executive Committee to serve the world Church through the Ministerial Association and the following departments: Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries, Children’s Ministries, Communication, Education, Family Ministries, Health Ministries, Public Affairs and Religious Liberty, Publishing, Sabbath School and Personal Ministries, Stewardship, Trust Services, Women’s Ministries, and Youth ministries.

Division Departments-Directors/Secretaries, Associates, and Assistants

Divisions shall appoint departmental, association, agency, and service directors/secretaries who shall serve under the direction of their respective division presidents and executive committees. They shall also appoint associate and assistant directors/secretaries as may be needed to serve in special capacities under the direction of their respective directors/secretaries. These appointments shall normally be made at the time of the regular
General Conference session, but in no event later than December 31 in the year of the regular General Conference session\textsuperscript{110}.

**Director of Archives And Statistics**

At the first Annual Council of the Executive Committee following a regular session, the General Conference shall appoint a director of Archives and Statistics whose duties shall be to administer the General Conference Archives and to compile and report the statistics of the world work, and who shall serve under the direction of the General Conference secretary and the Executive Committee\textsuperscript{111}.

**Executive Committee**

During the intervals between Sessions of the General Conference, the Executive Committee is delegated the authority to act on behalf of the General Conference in Session.

The membership of the Executive Committee includes representatives of all the divisions of the world field and the presidents of all union conferences and union missions, and therefore speaks for the world Church.

\textsuperscript{110} \textit{A directory General Conference “ SDA Year Book” Review & Herald Publishing Association, Hagerstown, USA, 2007} P 5

\textsuperscript{111} \textit{Ibid}, P 15
Major items affecting the world Church are considered at the Annual Council meetings of the Executive Committee, when all the members of the Committee are invited to be present. The authority, therefore, of the Executive Committee is the authority of the world Church.\(^\text{112}\)

**Division Executive Committees**

In each division, a division executive committee shall be constituted, as herein after provided, for the transaction of business pertaining to the division. The division executive committee functions on behalf of the General Conference Executive Committee in the division, and its authority shall be recognized by union and local organizations in matters of division administration and counsel.\(^\text{113}\)

**Remuneration and Expenses**

The Executive Committee shall appoint annually a minimum of eight persons not in its employ who, with officers of the General Conference and not less than seven presidents of union conferences, shall constitute a committee to review the remuneration, related allowances, and expenses of


\(^{113}\) Ibid, p. 439.
employees. The Executive Committee shall have power to make necessary adjustments from time to time in the remuneration of employees\textsuperscript{114}.

**Funds**

The funds of the General Conference shall be as follows: A tithe of the tithe receipts of the union conferences and union missions, unions of churches, and of the local conferences and missions not included in union conferences and union missions. Regular mission offerings. Special gifts and proceeds from the maturities of planned giving. A percentage of the tithe of the local conferences and missions of attached unions as determined by the General Conference. Appropriations from publishing houses, health care institutions, and other institutions that are under the control of the General Conference which, because of the character of their work, have more than local influence and responsibility, as may be arranged by joint counsel of the Executive Committee and the board of management of each institution\textsuperscript{115}.

**Division Retirement Plans**

Divisions shall adopt a plan for the support of retired and/or disabled employees and for dependent spouses and dependents of such employees in

\textsuperscript{114} Op cit, p.11.

harmony with the principles set forth in the General Conference Working Policy\textsuperscript{116}.

**Appropriations**

The Executive Committee shall make its appropriations to the world field at Annual Councils. These appropriations are to be based on budget requests from the fields. Appropriations shall be made subject to the receipt of the full amount of funds estimated in the General Conference budget\textsuperscript{117}.

**Finance**

To provide a working fund for regular operations and to protect against a possible financial emergency or depression, the General Conference shall maintain an amount of working capital as defined and specified in the Working Policy\textsuperscript{118}.

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\textsuperscript{116} East Central India Union of Seventh-day Adventist, “Administrators and Department Directors Council” Madanapalli, 2005, P.210.


\textsuperscript{118} Ibid, p. 14.