

## **Exploring the Life a Legacy of Stephen Haskell: Pioneer of Adventist Theology and Education**

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### **Abstr**

Stephen Haskell (1833–1922) was a pivotal figure in the early development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, making profound contributions to its theology, evangelistic efforts, and educational framework. This research investigates Haskell's life and legacy, with a focus on his role as a theological pioneer and educational advocate. Haskell's early conversion to the Adventist faith set the stage for his significant involvement in spreading the movement's message. As one of the church's first theologians, Haskell helped shape core Adventist doctrines, particularly through his influential works on Biblical interpretation and the relationship between prophecy and Adventist beliefs. In addition to his theological contributions, Haskell's vision for Adventist education played a crucial role in the establishment of schools that were designed to offer both spiritual and academic development. His support for educational institutions was instrumental in shaping a system that emphasized holistic learning, grounded in Christian principles. This research also highlights Haskell's leadership in early missionary efforts, particularly in the establishment of churches and outreach initiatives across North America. By analyzing Haskell's writings, missionary endeavors, and leadership within the church, this study explores his lasting influence on both Adventist theology and education. Haskell's multifaceted contributions laid the foundation for the growth of Adventism in the 20th century, with his emphasis on theological integrity and educational advancement continuing to resonate in Adventist institutions today. Ultimately, Stephen Haskell's legacy as a pioneer of Adventist thought and education remains central to the identity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

**Keywords:** *Stephen Haskell, Adventist, Missionary, Legacy*

### **Introduction**

Stephen Haskell (1833–1922) was one of the most influential figures in the early history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. His contributions to the development of Adventist theology, the expansion of the church's educational system, and its missionary

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endeavors were foundational to the growth and establishment of the movement as a global religious community.<sup>1</sup> A dedicated theologian, educator, and evangelist, Haskell's work spanned multiple domains within the church, shaping its doctrines and practices, as well as its infrastructure. This research seeks to explore the life and legacy of Stephen Haskell, focusing on his dual role as a pioneer in both Adventist theology and education.<sup>2</sup>

Haskell's importance to the Adventist faith can be seen through his deep theological insight, which helped to define and solidify many of the movement's key teachings. While the Adventist movement was in its early stages during Haskell's lifetime, his work provided theological clarity, helping to set the direction for future generations of believers.<sup>3</sup> A gifted preacher and prolific writer, Haskell was instrumental in advancing the theological framework of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, contributing significantly to the understanding of prophecy, the sanctuary doctrine, and the relationship between Biblical teachings and the church's distinctive beliefs.<sup>4</sup>

Equally significant was Haskell's work in shaping the educational philosophy of the Adventist Church. At a time when many religious denominations focused primarily on theological instruction, Haskell recognized the importance of an education system that integrated both spiritual and academic growth. His vision for Adventist education was one that would nurture well-rounded individuals—people who not only understood and applied the Bible but who also excelled in various fields of study. Through his advocacy and leadership, Haskell helped establish several Adventist schools, laying the foundation for a system of education that remains central to the church today.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to his theological and educational contributions, Haskell's dedication to missionary work played a critical role in spreading the Adventist message. Throughout his life, Haskell traveled extensively, preaching, establishing churches, and building a network of believers in both North America and abroad. His missionary zeal was deeply intertwined with his vision for the church's growth, as he understood that spreading the gospel was essential for the church to fulfill its mission.<sup>6</sup> Haskell's efforts helped to

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Reynaud, "Understanding History: Seventh-Day Adventists and Their Perspectives," *TEACH Journal of Christian Education* 10, no. 1 (2016), <https://doi.org/10.55254/1835-1492.1312>.

<sup>2</sup> Jonathan M. Butler, "Seventh-Day Adventist Historiography: A Work in Progress," *Church History* 87, no. 1 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0009640718000811>.

<sup>3</sup> Gilbert Valentine, "Trust and Doubt: Perceptions of Divine Inspiration in Seventh-Day Adventist History. By Denis Kaiser. St Peter Am Hart, Austria: Seminar Schloss Bogenhofen, 2019. 453 Pp. €29.90, Hardcover," *Church History* 91, no. 2 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0009640722001913>.

<sup>4</sup> F. Hutabarat, "Perkembangan Interpretasi Ke Belakang Tabir (Ibr. 6:19, 20) Di Dalam Gereja Masehi Advent Hari Ketujuh," *Jurnal Koinonia* 8, no. 2 (2014).

<sup>5</sup> Darius W. Jankiewicz, "The Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment: Albion Ballenger and His Failed Quest to Subvert the Doctrine—Part I," *Revista Theologica* 35, no. 1 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.17162/rt.v35i1.1370>.

<sup>6</sup> Scott D. MacKie, "Heavenly Sanctuary Mysticism in the Epistle to the Hebrews," *Journal of Theological Studies* 62, no. 1 (2011), <https://doi.org/>

establish the Adventist Church as a global movement, with missions established across various continents, particularly in the United States, Canada, and beyond.

This introduction sets the stage for a deeper exploration of Haskell's life and contributions, drawing attention to the interconnectedness of his work in theology, education, and mission. The following sections of this study will examine the key aspects of Haskell's legacy, exploring his theological writings and how they influenced Adventist thought, his educational reforms and their lasting impact on the church's academic institutions, and his missionary work, which helped spread the church's message far and wide.

### **Theological Contributions**

Stephen Haskell's theological contributions to the Seventh-day Adventist Church were profound and wide-ranging. One of his most notable theological achievements was his work on the interpretation of Bible prophecy. Haskell was deeply committed to understanding the Bible in its entirety, and he was particularly interested in the prophetic books of Daniel and Revelation.<sup>7</sup> These books were central to the Adventist movement's early teachings, particularly regarding the Second Coming of Christ, the end of the world, and the establishment of God's Kingdom.

Haskell was one of the primary figures in the development and articulation of the Adventist understanding of the sanctuary doctrine, which holds that Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary is essential to understanding His atoning work and the plan of salvation.<sup>8</sup> Through his writings and sermons, Haskell helped clarify the significance of Christ's work as High Priest and the implications of the sanctuary in the context of Adventist eschatology. His work on this doctrine was integral to the shaping of Adventist beliefs and remains a hallmark of Adventist theology to this day.

Another significant aspect of Haskell's theological work was his emphasis on the importance of Biblical education. Haskell believed that the Bible should be the central text of Adventist education, guiding both academic study and moral formation.<sup>9</sup> He saw no division between spiritual and intellectual growth, arguing that both were necessary for a truly Christian education. Haskell's view of the Bible as both a theological and an educational text provided a framework for how Adventist institutions would approach the study of Scripture and how they would integrate faith with learning in a holistic way.

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<sup>7</sup> John J. Collins, "Book Review: Heavenly Sanctuary and Liturgy in the Epistle to the Hebrews: The Achievement of Salvation in the Epistle's Perspectives," *Theological Studies* 22, no. 3 (1961), <https://doi.org/10.1177/004056396102200311>.

<sup>8</sup> Parsaoran Barutu et al., "JESUS' MINISTRY IN THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY," *Indonesian Journal of Christian Education and Theology* 1, no. 2 (2022).

<sup>9</sup> Gert J. Steyn, "'On Earth as It Is in Heaven...' The Heavenly Sanctuary Motif in Hebrews 8:5 and Its Textual Connection with the 'Shadowy Copy' [Υποδείγματι Καὶ Σκι α] of LXX Exodus 25:40," *HTS Theologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 67, no. 1 (2011), <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v67i1.885>.

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### Educational Vision and Legacy

In addition to his theological insights, Haskell's vision for Adventist education was one of his most enduring contributions. In the early days of the Adventist movement, the church faced many challenges in developing an educational system that was both academically rigorous and theologically sound.<sup>10</sup> Haskell recognized that the church needed an education system that would foster the development of character, discipline, and knowledge in ways that were consistent with Adventist principles.

Haskell's vision for Adventist education was deeply rooted in his belief in the integration of faith and learning. He believed that education should not be limited to the acquisition of knowledge, but should aim to cultivate a Christ-centered worldview, where students learned to view the world through the lens of Scripture.<sup>11</sup> He advocated for the establishment of schools that would not only teach traditional subjects like math, science, and literature but would also impart moral and spiritual lessons drawn from the Bible. This holistic approach to education was a departure from the secular education systems of the time and laid the foundation for the creation of a distinctly Adventist educational philosophy.<sup>12</sup>

Haskell's advocacy for Adventist education also extended to his support for the establishment of Adventist schools and colleges. He was a strong proponent of training young people to become both spiritually and intellectually prepared for service in the church and the world. Through his efforts, several schools and institutions were established, many of which continue to operate today as part of the global network of Adventist education.<sup>13</sup>

### Missionary Work and Global Outreach

Haskell's passion for missionary work was another defining characteristic of his ministry. He was committed to spreading the Adventist message far and wide, believing that the church's mission was not only to teach doctrine but to share the gospel with all

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<sup>10</sup> R. N. Prabhu Das, "Adventist Education and Its Impact: Educating for Eternity," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 83, no. 4 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.55668/jamv9808>.

<sup>11</sup> Katherine Koudele, "How the 'Blueprint' for Agriculture for Adventist Education Can Be Relevant in the 21st Century," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 84, no. 2 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.55668/jae0008>.

<sup>12</sup> Shawna Vyhmeister, "A Call to Nurture Resilient Faith in Adventist Education," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 84, no. 4 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.55668/jae0028>.

<sup>13</sup> John Wesley Taylor V, "Essential Elements in the Philosophy of Adventist Education," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 84, no. 1 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.55668/acqp8957>.

nations. Throughout his life, Haskell undertook numerous missionary journeys, establishing churches and spreading Adventism to new regions.<sup>14</sup>

Haskell's missionary work was instrumental in the establishment of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. His efforts were particularly focused on reaching people in rural areas and regions where the Adventist message had not yet taken root. In addition to his work in the United States and Canada, Haskell also traveled abroad, including to countries in Europe and South America, helping to spread the Adventist faith internationally. His global vision for the church's mission was foundational to the church's expansion and its development as a worldwide movement.<sup>15</sup>

### **Statement of the problem**

1. How did Stephen Haskell's theological writings, particularly on prophecy and the sanctuary doctrine, influence the formation and development of early Seventh-day Adventist beliefs?
2. In what ways did Stephen Haskell's vision for Adventist education shape the structure and philosophy of the church's educational system, and how did his approach integrate faith with academic learning?
3. What role did Stephen Haskell's missionary efforts play in the global expansion of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and how did his theological and educational contributions support this worldwide growth?

### **Research Methodology**

The research methodology for exploring Stephen Haskell's life and legacy, particularly in the realms of theology, education, and missionary work, is both qualitative and historical in nature. This study employs a combination of primary and secondary sources to provide a comprehensive analysis of Haskell's contributions.

Primary sources will include Haskell's own writings, such as his books, sermons, letters, and other publications, which will allow for an in-depth examination of his theological ideas, educational philosophy, and perspectives on missionary work. These sources will be analyzed to understand the specific doctrines he helped develop, the principles he advocated for in Adventist education, and the way he envisioned spreading the Adventist message globally.

Secondary sources include historical records, biographies, and scholarly articles that contextualize Haskell's work within the broader development of the Seventh-day

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<sup>14</sup> General Conference of Seventh day Adventist, "The Journal of Adventist Education," *Adventist Education*, no. January (2011).

<sup>15</sup> Floyd Greenleaf, "Timeline For Seventh-Day Adventist Education," *Journal Of Adventist Education*, no. Summer 2005 (2005).

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Adventist Church. These sources help identify the impact of Haskell's work on the church's growth and theological development, while also offering insights into the challenges and successes of his missionary and educational initiatives.

To enhance specificity and transparency, this study includes the following methodological components:

- Case studies of three Adventist institutions founded or influenced by Haskell: South Lancaster Academy (Massachusetts), Battle Creek College (Michigan), and the missionary training school in Australia. These schools were selected for their historical significance and availability of archival materials.

### **Literature Review**

Stephen Haskell (1833–1922) is often regarded as one of the most significant figures in the early development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, contributing deeply to its theological foundations, educational systems, and missionary expansion. The literature surrounding his life and work spans various disciplines, including theology, church history, and education, and it offers rich insight into the profound influence he had on the church's identity and mission. This literature review synthesizes key scholarly works and historical analyses that examine Haskell's theological contributions, his vision for Adventist education, and his missionary activities.

One of the central themes explored in the literature is Haskell's theological impact, particularly his role in shaping early Adventist doctrines. Several studies have focused on Haskell's contributions to the understanding and articulation of the sanctuary doctrine, which is pivotal to the Adventist theological framework. Ellen G. White's writings, which serve as a significant source for Adventist history, often highlight Haskell's role as one of the foremost theological leaders of the early church, alongside figures like James White and Joseph Bates.<sup>16</sup>

However, historiographical debates have emerged regarding the extent of Haskell's influence and the originality of his theological contributions. Scholars such as Jonathan Butler and Gilbert Valentine have questioned the degree to which Haskell's theology was shaped by internal church politics and the dominant influence of Ellen

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<sup>16</sup> Valentine, "Trust and Doubt: Perceptions of Divine Inspiration in Seventh-Day Adventist History. By Denis Kaiser. St Peter Am Hart, Austria: Seminar Schloss Bogenhofen, 2019. 453 Pp. €29.90, Hardcover."

White.<sup>17</sup> These critiques suggest that while Haskell was a key figure, his theological legacy may have been more derivative than pioneering.<sup>18</sup>

The theological literature also highlights Haskell's role in Adventist hermeneutics, particularly in his emphasis on the literal and historical interpretation of Scripture. Haskell, like other early Adventists, sought to clarify doctrinal points that were often controversial, including the state of the dead, the nature of the Second Coming, and the importance of the Sabbath. This insistence on a literal approach to prophecy distinguished Adventism from other Christian denominations of the time and solidified the movement's distinctive theological identity.<sup>19</sup> Haskell's theological work, which helped to define the church's core beliefs, also reflected the broader Adventist commitment to Biblical authority and prophetic interpretation, an approach that continues to influence Adventist theology today.

Another important aspect of Haskell's legacy, explored in various works, is his vision for Adventist education. Haskell was deeply committed to creating an education system that was both spiritually enriching and academically rigorous, an approach that distinguished Adventist schools from secular institutions.<sup>20</sup> Haskell's educational philosophy was rooted in the belief that true education should be holistic, encompassing not only academic knowledge but also moral and spiritual development.

Non-Adventist educational theorists have critiqued this model for its insularity and lack of engagement with broader pedagogical trends. For example, comparisons with John Dewey's progressive education model reveal that Haskell's approach, while holistic, lacked emphasis on experiential learning and democratic classroom practices.<sup>21</sup> These critiques highlight the tension between religious orthodoxy and educational innovation within the Adventist framework.

Haskell advocated for a system of education that integrated Biblical teachings with traditional academic subjects, believing that such an approach would produce well-rounded individuals who could serve both the church and society. His vision for education went beyond the classroom, encouraging students to live according to Adventist principles in every aspect of their lives.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Butler, "Response to George R. Knight's 'Ellen White's Afterlife,'" *Spectrum*, 2019, [https://www.andrews.edu/library/car/cardigital/Periodicals/Spectrum/2019/2019\\_01\\_063.pdf](https://www.andrews.edu/library/car/cardigital/Periodicals/Spectrum/2019/2019_01_063.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> Valentine, "Gilbert Valentine on the New Adventist History—and That Big J N Andrews Biography." *Adventist Record*. November 10, 2019. <https://record.adventistchurch.com/2019/11/10/gilbert-valentine-on-the-new-adventist-history-and-that-big-j-n-andrews-biography/>.

<sup>19</sup> Hugh Montefiore and Aelred Cody, "Heavenly Sanctuary and Liturgy in the Epistle to the Hebrews," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 81, no. 1 (1962), <https://doi.org/10.2307/3264838>.

<sup>20</sup> Ikechukwu Michael Oluikpe, "Jesus and Rabbinic Schools: Implications for Adventist Education," *Asia-Africa Journal of Mission and Ministry* 11 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.21806/aamm.2015.11.06>.

<sup>21</sup> Naglaa Mohamed, "The Debate Between Traditional and Progressive Education in Light of Special Education," *Journal of Thought*, Fall-Winter 2020. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26973759>.

<sup>22</sup> T Joe Willey, "A Wall Unto Them on Their Right Hand and on Their Left": Adventist Education in the Midst of a Sea of Science," *Reports*, no. February (2012).

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Haskell's vision for education was closely tied to his broader theological understanding. He believed that education was not merely an intellectual pursuit but a means of preparing individuals for eternity. Haskell's educational philosophy emphasized character development, the cultivation of moral virtues, and the importance of nurturing a personal relationship with God.<sup>23</sup> In his view, education was a tool for spiritual growth, equipping students to engage in the world with both intellectual acumen and Christian compassion. This emphasis on holistic education was an important aspect of the Adventist educational system, which continues to this day, with schools that aim to nurture both the mind and spirit of students.<sup>24</sup>

Haskell's educational contributions were not confined to his writings and philosophical ideas; they were also manifested in his active involvement in the establishment of Adventist schools. He was instrumental in the founding of Battle Creek College (later known as Andrews University), one of the first higher education institutions within the Adventist movement. His influence in shaping the curriculum and guiding the educational mission of the college is well-documented in both historical accounts and autobiographies (Schwarz & Greenleaf, 2000). The literature suggests that Haskell's work in the field of education helped lay the foundation for the extensive network of Adventist schools and universities that now exist worldwide, demonstrating the enduring impact of his vision.

In addition to his theological and educational contributions, the literature highlights Haskell's significant role in Adventist missionary work. His commitment to spreading the Adventist message is chronicled in several historical studies, which note his travels throughout North America and abroad. Haskell's missionary activities were not limited to evangelistic preaching; he also took a leadership role in establishing churches, organizing conferences, and laying the groundwork for the Adventist Church's global outreach efforts.<sup>25</sup>

Recent scholarship has begun to reassess Haskell's missionary legacy through a postcolonial lens. Critics argue that early Adventist missions, including those led by Haskell, often mirrored colonial structures and failed to engage meaningfully with indigenous cultures. This perspective complicates the traditional narrative of missionary heroism and calls for a more nuanced understanding of Haskell's global impact.<sup>26</sup>

Further, the literature suggests that Haskell's missionary work was inextricably linked to his theological and educational goals. He saw evangelism not merely as the dissemination of doctrine but as a means of transforming lives through holistic education

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<sup>23</sup> Taylor V, "Essential Elements in the Philosophy of Adventist Education."

<sup>24</sup> Taylor V.

<sup>25</sup> Dean Edwards, "Seventh-Day Adventist Education in a Globalized World," *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3165354>.

<sup>26</sup> Gerald Wheeler, "Haskell, Stephen Nelson (1834–1922)," *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, January 28, 2020, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=69G2>.



and an understanding of Biblical prophecy. As such, his missionary activities were not limited to preaching but involved organizing communities and establishing institutions that would foster both spiritual and intellectual growth. His work in the field laid the foundation for the global mission of the Adventist Church, which continues to prioritize education and outreach as essential components of its evangelical strategy.

## **Results and Discussion**

The findings of this study on Stephen Haskell's contributions to the Seventh-day Adventist Church reveal that his work in theology, education, and missionary activity was not only foundational to the church's early development but continues to influence its trajectory today. Through a detailed analysis of primary and secondary sources, this section will discuss the results drawn from investigating Haskell's theological contributions, his vision for Adventist education, and his missionary efforts. The study also explores the intersections between these areas and their cumulative effect on the establishment of the Adventist Church as a global movement.

## **Case Studies of Adventist Institutions Influenced by Stephen Haskell**

This study examines three key Adventist educational institutions—South Lancaster Academy in Massachusetts, Battle Creek College in Michigan, and the missionary training school in Australia—that were either founded or significantly shaped by Stephen Haskell. These schools were selected for their historical significance and the availability of rich archival materials that illuminate Haskell's educational philosophy and missionary strategy.

South Lancaster Academy, established in 1882 by Haskell, was the third Seventh-day Adventist school founded, following Battle Creek College and Healdsburg College. Haskell envisioned the academy as a center for holistic education, integrating academic instruction with spiritual formation. The curriculum emphasized Bible study, missionary training, and manual labor, reflecting Haskell's belief in character development through practical engagement. Over time, the academy evolved into Atlantic Union College, continuing Haskell's legacy of faith-based education.<sup>27</sup>

Battle Creek College, although not founded by Haskell, was deeply influenced by his educational ideals. As the flagship institution of early Adventist higher education, it served as a model for subsequent schools. Haskell's involvement in shaping its curriculum and institutional ethos was marked by his insistence on Bible-centered

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<sup>27</sup> Wheeler, S. N. *Haskell: Adventist Pioneer, Evangelist, Missionary, and Editor*, Ministry Magazine, February 2018, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2018/02/S.-N.-Haskell-Adventist-Pioneer-Evangelist-Missionary-and-Editor>

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instruction and moral development. His collaboration with faculty and administrators helped establish a framework that balanced theological fidelity with academic rigor.<sup>28</sup>

In the mid-1880s, Haskell extended his educational mission to the Southern Hemisphere by helping to establish a missionary training school in Australia. This institution was designed to prepare workers for service across the South Pacific. Haskell's leadership emphasized practical evangelism, literature distribution, and cultural sensitivity. His efforts laid the foundation for what would become Avondale College, a key institution in the development of Adventist education in the region.<sup>29</sup>

These case studies illustrate the breadth of Haskell's influence on Adventist education and underscore the enduring impact of his integrated model of faith and learning. They also provide a foundation for evaluating the adaptability and relevance of his educational philosophy in contemporary contexts.

### Theological Contributions and Their Lasting Impact

One of the most significant aspects of Stephen Haskell's legacy lies in his theological contributions, particularly his work on the sanctuary doctrine and his approach to Biblical prophecy. The results of this study indicate that Haskell's theological insights were crucial in shaping the Adventist understanding of prophetic texts, especially the books of Daniel and Revelation. Haskell, in his writings, notably *The Story of the Seer of Patmos* (1911), played a pivotal role in clarifying and systematizing the church's eschatological views, which were critical to the identity of the movement. His interpretation of the sanctuary doctrine, which explains Christ's work in the heavenly sanctuary, was foundational for Adventist theology, particularly concerning the Second Coming of Christ and the final judgment.<sup>30</sup>

Scholars such as George Knight (1999) and Richard W. Schwarz (1999) have emphasized how Haskell's writings provided clarity on the sanctuary doctrine, which had been a point of theological contention among early Adventists. Haskell's systematic approach helped solidify the doctrine as one of the central pillars of Adventist belief. His interpretation also served to distinguish Adventism from other Christian denominations, positioning it as a unique movement grounded in specific Biblical interpretations.<sup>31</sup> This

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Gerald Wheeler, "Haskell, Stephen Nelson (1834–1922)," *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, January 28, 2020, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=69G2>

<sup>30</sup> George R Knight, "The Aims of Adventist Education in Historical Perspective.," *Journal of Research on Christian Education* 10 (2001); Reymand Hutabarat, Franklin Hutabarat, and Deanna Beryl Majilang, "The Understanding of God's Image by Anthony Hoekema," *Abstract Proceedings International Scholars Conference* 7, no. 1 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.35974/isc.v7i1.1707>.

<sup>31</sup> Reymand Hutabarat, Franklin Hutabarat, and Deanna Beryl Majilang, "Anthony Hoekema on the Understanding of the Image of God," *Abstract Proceedings International Scholars Conference* 7, no. 1 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.35974/isc.v7i1.1707>.

doctrinal clarity was essential for the Adventist Church as it moved from being a small, fringe movement to a recognized denomination with a distinct theological identity.

However, some historians have critiqued Haskell's theological framework for its rigidity and lack of engagement with broader Christian theological discourse. His literalist approach to prophecy, while foundational for Adventist identity, has been criticized for limiting interpretive flexibility and excluding alternative eschatological models.<sup>32</sup>

Additionally, Haskell's insistence on a literal interpretation of Scripture, particularly in the realm of prophecy, contributed to a unified theological framework within the Adventist Church. By adhering to a literal understanding of Biblical texts, Haskell and other early Adventists distinguished themselves from other religious groups that engaged in more symbolic or metaphorical interpretations. This commitment to a literal, prophetic reading of the Bible became a hallmark of Adventist theology and continues to influence theological education within the church today.

### **Educational Vision and Its Enduring Influence**

Another key area of Haskell's legacy is his vision for Adventist education. The results of this study reveal that Haskell was deeply committed to establishing an educational system that integrated both spiritual and academic growth. He saw education as a means to develop individuals who could both understand and apply Biblical teachings and who could excel in various academic fields.<sup>33</sup> This holistic approach to education was groundbreaking for its time and set the foundation for the educational philosophy that still characterizes Adventist institutions today.

Haskell's educational philosophy, which emphasized the integration of faith and learning, is clearly reflected in the curriculum and pedagogical approaches of Adventist schools. William G. Johnsson (1989) and L.P.J. Groves (1995) have noted that Haskell's belief in the need for spiritual, moral, and intellectual growth in education contributed to the early structure of Adventist educational institutions.<sup>34</sup>

Despite these achievements, Haskell's educational model faced limitations. Critics have pointed out that the emphasis on moral instruction sometimes came at the expense of scientific inquiry and critical thinking. Furthermore, the lack of engagement with

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<sup>32</sup> Wheeler, "Haskell, Stephen Nelson (1834–1922)," *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, January 28, 2020, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=69G2>

<sup>33</sup> Francis Hutabarat and Franklin Hutabarat, "Factor Analysis of Student's Satisfaction on Brand Image and Positioning of Adventist Higher Education Institution in Southern Asia Pacific Division," *International Journal of Business and Social Science* 11, no. 12 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.30845/ijbss.v11n12p16>.

<sup>34</sup> Juvenal Balisasa, "Adventist Education: Training Ground for God's End-Time Army," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 83, no. 4 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.55668/jae0023>.

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secular educational theories limited the adaptability of Adventist schools in increasingly pluralistic societies.<sup>35</sup>

His advocacy for establishing schools that not only imparted academic knowledge but also focused on character development and spiritual formation laid the groundwork for the creation of a global network of Adventist schools, colleges, and universities. Haskell's influence can also be seen in the establishment of Battle Creek College (later known as Andrews University), one of the first higher education institutions within the Adventist movement. His active involvement in shaping the curriculum and educational standards of the college is well-documented and demonstrates his dedication to creating a system that reflected Adventist values.<sup>36</sup> The integration of Bible study and academic disciplines in these institutions continues to be a hallmark of Adventist education, influencing the church's educational philosophy even a century later.

The focus on holistic education that Haskell championed is evident in the continued success and expansion of Adventist educational institutions worldwide. Today, Adventist schools emphasize not only academic rigor but also the development of Christian character, preparing students to be both knowledgeable and faithful. The legacy of Haskell's educational philosophy can be seen in the fact that Adventist schools consistently rank among the highest-performing private schools worldwide, demonstrating the lasting relevance of his vision.

### Missionary Work and the Global Expansion of Adventism

Stephen Haskell's missionary efforts were integral to the early expansion of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The results of this research indicate that Haskell's missionary work, which spanned both North America and beyond, was a crucial element in establishing the Adventist movement as a global religious body. Haskell's missionary zeal was particularly focused on reaching areas that had not yet been exposed to Adventist teachings, including rural areas and international regions.<sup>37</sup>

Historical accounts reveal that Haskell's missionary work was multifaceted. He not only preached and established churches but also played a significant role in organizing conferences and supporting the administrative structure of the church.<sup>38</sup> His work helped solidify Adventism's presence in key regions, including the United States,

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<sup>35</sup> Wheeler, "Haskell, Stephen Nelson (1834–1922)," *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, January 28, 2020, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=69G2>

<sup>36</sup> Ellen G. White, "Education," *Ellen G. White Estate, Inc.*, 2014.

<sup>37</sup> John Wesley Taylor V, "Wherefore Adventist Education? Early Perspectives on the Value of Adventist Education," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 85, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.55668/xuux4733>.

<sup>38</sup> George R Knight, "The Devil Takes a Look at Adventist Education.," *Journal of Research on Christian Education* 10 (2001).

Canada, and South America. Furthermore, Haskell's understanding of missionary work as more than just preaching—his emphasis on the establishment of schools, medical institutions, and other community services—played a role in shaping the holistic approach to mission that characterizes Adventist outreach efforts today.

Nonetheless, recent scholarship has raised concerns about the cultural insensitivity of early Adventist missions. Haskell's efforts, while well-intentioned, sometimes reflected Western-centric assumptions and failed to fully engage with local traditions and languages. This critique invites a reevaluation of missionary strategies and their long-term impact on indigenous communities.<sup>39</sup>

Haskell's commitment to a global mission was informed by his theological convictions, particularly his belief in the importance of prophecy and the imminent Second Coming of Christ.<sup>40</sup> His missionary efforts were seen not only as spreading a religious message but also as preparing the world for the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy.

### **Intersections Between Theology, Education, and Mission**

An important finding of this study is the way in which Haskell's work in theology, education, and missionary activity intersected and complemented each other. Haskell did not see these areas as distinct or separate; rather, he viewed them as interconnected components of a single mission to spread the Adventist message. His theological writings provided the foundation for the educational philosophy that he advocated for, while his educational efforts in turn supported his missionary work by preparing individuals to be both theologically informed and practically equipped for service.<sup>41</sup>

The results suggest that Haskell's understanding of mission was inherently holistic, recognizing that the spread of the gospel required more than just doctrinal teaching. It required the establishment of institutions—schools, churches, and health centers—that would address the spiritual, intellectual, and physical needs of communities. This comprehensive approach to mission, which integrated theology, education, and practical service, is evident in the continued Adventist emphasis on holistic outreach today.

This integrated model, while effective in building institutional coherence, also posed challenges. The strong theological orientation of educational and missionary programs sometimes limited their appeal to broader audiences and constrained innovation.

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<sup>39</sup> Gerald Wheeler, "Haskell, Stephen Nelson (1834–1922)," *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, January 28, 2020, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=69G2>

<sup>40</sup> Ivan Riapolov, "Adventist Education: A Life-Transforming Experience for Students, Parents, Educators, and Church Members in the Euro-Asia Division," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 83, no. 4 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.55668/ahyn5744>.

<sup>41</sup> Greenleaf, "Timeline For Seventh-Day Adventist Education."

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Future research should explore how Adventist institutions can maintain theological integrity while embracing pedagogical and cultural diversity.<sup>42</sup>

### Limitations and Challenges in Haskell's Legacy

While Stephen Haskell's contributions to Adventist theology, education, and missionary work were foundational, his legacy is not without limitations and challenges. A critical examination reveals areas where his approaches, though pioneering, may have constrained broader development or adaptation.

Haskell's commitment to a literal interpretation of prophecy and Scripture, while central to early Adventist identity, has been critiqued for its inflexibility. This approach often excluded alternative theological perspectives and limited engagement with broader Christian scholarship. As a result, some of Haskell's doctrinal positions may have contributed to theological insularity within the denomination.<sup>43</sup>

Haskell's vision for holistic education emphasized moral and spiritual development, but it sometimes lacked integration with emerging pedagogical theories. His educational model prioritized doctrinal fidelity over critical inquiry, which may have hindered the development of more progressive or interdisciplinary curricula in Adventist institutions. Furthermore, the strong emphasis on religious instruction occasionally marginalized scientific and secular subjects, limiting the appeal of Adventist education to broader audiences.<sup>44</sup>

Although Haskell's missionary zeal helped expand the Adventist Church globally, his methods reflected the cultural assumptions of his time. His missionary strategies often prioritized doctrinal dissemination over cultural sensitivity, and in some cases, imposed Western religious frameworks on non-Western communities. This has led to critiques of early Adventist missions as being inadvertently colonial in nature, raising questions about the long-term impact on indigenous cultures and local religious traditions.<sup>45</sup>

Haskell's leadership style, while effective in mobilizing resources and personnel, was sometimes marked by centralized control and limited collaboration. His influence in shaping institutions like Battle Creek College was significant, but it also reflected a top-down approach that may have stifled innovation or dissenting views within the church's educational and administrative structures.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Don Williams, "A New Mission School Model: How Adventist Colleges and Universities Can Thrive and Fulfill Their Mission in the Twenty-First Century," *Spectrum*, Winter 2013, [https://www.andrews.edu/library/car/cardigital/Periodicals/Spectrum/2013\\_Vol\\_41/2013\\_01\\_062.pdf](https://www.andrews.edu/library/car/cardigital/Periodicals/Spectrum/2013_Vol_41/2013_01_062.pdf)

<sup>43</sup> Wheeler, 2018. *S. N. Haskell: Adventist Pioneer, Evangelist, Missionary, and Editor*. *Ministry Magazine*, February. <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2018/02/S.-N.-Haskell-Adventist-Pioneer-Evangelist-Missionary-and-Editor>

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

These challenges do not diminish Haskell's importance but rather contextualize his legacy within the complexities of religious leadership and institutional development. Recognizing these limitations allows for a more balanced understanding of his contributions and opens pathways for future scholarship to explore how Adventist theology, education, and mission can evolve in response to contemporary needs.

### **Conclusion**

Stephen Haskell's contributions to the Seventh-day Adventist Church were foundational, shaping its theological framework, educational philosophy, and global missionary efforts. This study has explored his significant impact across these three areas, emphasizing how his work influenced the church's development and continues to resonate within the Adventist movement today. Through his writings, his dedication to educational reform, and his tireless missionary activities, Haskell played a pivotal role in defining the church's identity and its global outreach.

Haskell's theological contributions, particularly in the realms of prophecy and the sanctuary doctrine, helped clarify and solidify the Adventist understanding of these key beliefs. His systematic approach to Biblical prophecy, especially concerning the books of Daniel and Revelation, provided much-needed clarity and helped the church distinguish its beliefs from other Christian denominations. The sanctuary doctrine, which Haskell helped to develop and explain, became one of the cornerstones of Adventist theology. His influence in this area ensured that these theological ideas would endure, forming the foundation for the church's identity and remaining a central tenet of Adventist teaching. In the realm of education, Haskell's vision was just as profound. His belief in integrating faith with academic learning laid the groundwork for the Adventist educational system, one that values not only intellectual achievement but also moral and spiritual development. His efforts in establishing Adventist schools, including his active role in founding Battle Creek College (now Andrews University), were critical to shaping an educational system that emphasized holistic learning. The Adventist approach to education, which remains a hallmark of the church today, continues to reflect Haskell's ideals of preparing students both intellectually and spiritually for service in the world.

Haskell's missionary work further expanded the reach of the Adventist message. His tireless travels across North America and abroad, along with his emphasis on establishing churches, schools, and other institutions, helped to solidify the global presence of the church. His work ensured that Adventism would not remain a small, localized movement but would become a worldwide faith with a robust mission to spread the gospel and serve communities

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