

# *Our* Firm Foundation

The Seventh-day Sabbath

Christ Our Righteousness

The Immutable Law of God

The Non-Immortality of the Soul

The Three Angels' Messages

The Sanctuary

Volume 14, Number 12

December 1999

to: Jesus  
From: my heart

Christmas Gifts  
for  
Christ

# A Time for Giving

*What gift can we give our Saviour?*

Christmas is a time for giving. Families look forward to the Christmas season, with its music echoing through the halls of shopping malls, as people rush to shop right up to the last minute. Eagerly, they anticipate the hour when the children will gleefully unwrap their presents! Joyfully, the family members gather around the table heaped with all the good things that our plentiful economy provides!

Yet what is the meaning of Christmas? We celebrate it with gifts and cards to friends and loved ones. But 2,000 years ago the One who created the world by His Word—in unison with His Father—was willing to be born into the human family as a Babe in a barn in Bethlehem. See Ephesians 3:9; Psalm 33:6–9.

Christ came into the world as a Member of the fallen human family with the same heritage that other children of His time were born with. See Romans 1:3; 8:3; Philippians 2:5–10. He accepted the fallen nature of man after four thousand years of sin. By the Holy Spirit's power, He lived a sinless life to serve as an Example to all mankind—that everyone who is willing to be made willing can copy the divine blueprint in overcoming all sin. See *The Desire of Ages*, 49, 117.

The promises of God in the book of Revelation are only to those who by the Holy Spirit's power are seeking to walk the narrow path to the city of God—overcoming all sin—inherited or cultivated. See Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 21:7; John 16:33; 1 John 3:4–6.

So Christ came into this world to show to the whole universe—to men and to angels—the love of God: “For God so loved the world,

that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16.

Oh, what unspeakable love! Human language cannot describe it! It will be our study throughout eternity. The following inspired words will help us to grasp the meaning of the incarnation of God in human flesh:

“Christ came to the world to counteract Satan's falsehood that God had made a law which men could not keep. Taking humanity upon Himself, He came to this earth, and by a life of obedience showed that God has not made a law that man cannot keep. He showed that it is possible for man perfectly to obey the law. Those who accept Christ as their Saviour, becoming partakers of His divine nature, are enabled to follow His example, living in obedience to every precept of the law. Through the merits of Christ, man is to show by his obedience that he could be trusted in heaven, that he would not rebel. . . .

“The youth need to keep ever before them the course that Christ followed. . . . In the study of His life we shall learn how much God through Him will do for His children. And we shall learn that, however great our trials may be, they cannot exceed what Christ endured.

“Those who walk even as Christ walked, who are patient, gentle, kind, meek and lowly in heart, those who yoke up with Christ and lift His burdens, who yearn for souls as He yearned for them—these will enter into the joy of their Lord. They will see with Christ the travail of His soul, and be satisfied. Heaven

will triumph, for the vacancies made in heaven by the fall of Satan and his angels will be filled by the redeemed of the Lord.” *The Faith I Live By*, 114.

Jesus is our Example. He came into the human family as the greatest Gift that Heaven could provide so that we, by using the Holy Spirit's power, could overcome as He overcame. Oh, what love is this! All heaven and the universe is awed by this heavenly Gift!

“To pray in Christ's name means much. It means that we are to accept His character, manifest His spirit, and work His works. The Saviour's promise is given on condition. ‘If ye love Me,’ He says, ‘keep My commandments.’ He saves men, not in sin, but from sin; and those who love Him will show their love by obedience.” *The Desire of Ages*, 668.

By prayer, by studying His Word, we can—we will—overcome as He overcame.

“Nothing is apparently more helpless, yet really more invincible, than the soul that feels its nothingness and relies wholly on the merits of the Saviour. By prayer, by the study of His Word, by faith in His abiding presence, the weakest of human beings may live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold them by a hand that will never let go.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 182; see also *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 144.

May God help us now in this time of giving. May we give our Saviour a fully surrendered heart every day. May we become His witnesses to the world and to the church that we have overcome sin by experiencing His overcoming power. ✨

Ron Spear, Editor

It is the mission of Hope International and the editors of *Our Firm Foundation* to clearly present Christ and His truth. The days that yet remain of this world are few, and what we do we must do quickly. We must boldly proclaim the historic truths of Adventism that place us on so firm a foundation in the midst of this troubled world. —Editors

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# Christmas for Christ



*Ellen G. White*

Christmas and New Year's will soon be here, and what plans are we making in reference to them? How shall we employ them so that we may be workers together with God? The people in general celebrate the professed anniversary of the Saviour's birth, by feasting and merriment, and by making gifts to earthly friends. Time, thought, and money are devoted to these things, and Christ and His cause are neglected. The very day chosen to honor Christ is devoted by the many to honoring and pleasing themselves. Appointed to keep the Saviour in remembrance, it is spent in causing Him to be forgotten.

The Christian should pursue a course the opposite of this. At these seasons God's grace is brought before us in a special manner. We are bidden not only to recall the manifold blessings of the year, the rich gifts which Providence has so bounteously bestowed, but above all to remember the priceless Gift of God's dear Son. Here is an exhaustless theme for thought. The perfection of our Saviour's character awakens the admiration of angels. The brightest and most exalted of

the sons of the morning heralded His glory at Creation, and with songs of gladness announced His birth. They veil their faces before Him as He sits upon His throne; they cast their crowns at His feet, and sing His triumphs as they behold His resplendent glory. Yet this glorious Being loved the poor sinner, and took upon Him the form of a servant, that He might suffer and die in man's behalf. Jesus might have remained at the Father's right hand, wearing the kingly crown and royal robes; but He chose to exchange all the riches, honor, and glory of Heaven for the poverty of humanity, and His station of high command for the anguish of Gethsemane, and the humiliation and agony of Calvary.

Oh, the mysteries of redemption! How dark and selfish is the human heart that can turn away from such incomparable love, and set itself upon the vain things of this world! Our souls are cold and dull because we do not dwell upon the matchless charms of our Redeemer. If we occupy our thoughts in contemplating His love and mercy, we shall reflect the same in our life and character; for by beholding we

become changed. Only by exalting Jesus and abasing self can we celebrate aright the birth of the Son of God.

God's purposes of grace toward us are measureless. Rich and glorious beyond our power to express or to conceive are the blessings of redemption. Yet God has not left us to the enjoyment of these without requiring returns on our part. He calls us to become colaborers with Christ in the great plan of salvation. All who receive His grace are to communicate the precious gift to others. It was by a sacrifice that redemption was purchased for us, and we, in our turn, are to sacrifice, to make known to others the unsearchable riches of Christ.

When selfishness is striving for the victory, let us look to our Exemplar. The cross of Calvary appeals to every follower of Jesus to unite with the Saviour in seeking that which was lost. The wounded hands, the pierced side, the marred feet, plead for the sinner, whose redemption was purchased at such a cost.

If we keep Christmas at all, we should show that we understand its



# Gifts

significance.

Instead of saying by our actions that we are putting Christ out of our minds and hearts, let us testify to men, to angels, and to God, that we remember our Redeemer, by following His example of self-denial for others' good.

The end of all things is at hand. "The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly." Zephaniah 1:14. The people of the world are to be warned. Are we doing what we might and should do to diffuse the precious light of truth? Brethren, you see the truth, you understand the claims of God's law, you know that no willful transgressor can enter into life; and yet you see that law made void in the world. What is your duty? You are not to ask, What is convenient for me? What is agreeable? but, What can I do to save souls?

All around us, on the right hand and on the left, lies our work; everywhere are souls to be won for Jesus. The men and women whom we daily meet are Judgment-bound. They are either to live to offer praise to God and the Lamb through ceaseless ages, or they will perish with the wicked. Christ suffered and died that they might enjoy a blissful eternity. What sacrifice are we willing to make for their salvation?

The people are perishing for lack of knowledge. There are hundreds and thousands in our own country that know nothing of the special truths for this time. In other lands millions are buried in ignorance and superstition. There are those who will be responsible for these souls that have never heard the truth.

Brethren and sisters, I present before you our foreign missions as the object of your Christmas gifts. While we are not to neglect the fields at our own doors, let us at this time remember those that are in still greater darkness and destitution. Few realize the vast extent of the work which God has committed to us in our foreign missions. Europe alone, with an area about the same as ours, has a population of 350,000,000—six times that of the United States [in 1887]. And this is made up of many nations and

work, and those less experienced twenty-five cents, and from this meager pittance some are obliged to support a family of from eight to twelve. In Scandinavia the common laboring man earns about fifty-three cents, with which he pays his house rent and taxes, and supports his family. Those who accept the truth run the risk of being thrown out of employment, besides cutting themselves off from all hope of assistance from other churches or missionary societies. Often starvation stares them in the face. Of course this class can do little toward supporting those who labor among them.

In the Piedmont Valleys it is difficult for the missionary to gain access to the people in summer, as they leave their villages, and ascend the mountains to find pasture for their cattle. Upon returning to their homes at the approach of winter, they take up their abode in the

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peoples, that differ widely in their habits and customs, and among whose teeming millions more than a score of languages are spoken, with hundreds of dialects.

It is under many difficulties, and only by self-denial and sacrifice, that the missionary work in Europe has been carried forward. There is great poverty among the laboring classes. In Italy the most capable workmen in the factories receive only fifty cents for sixteen hours'

stables, the heat from their animals supplying the lack of fuel. It is here that the colporteur must meet them. In many places halls cannot be obtained, and meetings and Bible-readings are held in the stables. Sometimes as many as forty or fifty persons assemble to hear the truth. In some places the worker has walked seven miles, twice a week, to hold an evening meeting, returning home in the darkness—for he could not afford a lantern—across the

mountains, and along the edge of precipices where he was obliged to creep on his hands and knees. During our visit in Italy two of the workers walked fifteen miles to an evening service, returning on foot next morning, to save the small sum required for railroad fare. Thus in the midst of poverty and hardship, our brethren across the sea are seeking to spread the light of truth. Can we to whom God has intrusted means, who are enjoying so many of the comforts and even the luxuries of life, stand by and refuse to lend them a helping hand?

In nearly all parts of Europe the laws are more or less oppressive upon those who observe the Sabbath. But there are few countries in which the difficulties in the way of presenting the truth are greater



peoples. We invite all, men, women, and children, at the coming Christmas to do all that they possibly can do to aid in the accomplishment of this work. Let us throughout our churches unitedly resolve not to make the holidays a time of feasting and selfish gratification. Let us excuse the members of our household from making presents to us. Our time, our money, belongs to God. Every hour, every moment, is precious. Dollars, dimes, and even pennies should be treasured up to

If there are any who are in need of food or comfortable clothing, they should be remembered; we are not to neglect Christ in the person of His saints. But let us be constantly seeking to make God and His cause first in our thoughts and plans.

Many hardly know as yet what self-denial is, or what it is to suffer for the truth's sake; but none will enter Heaven without making a sacrifice. Yet self-denial will not make us joyless; it will not cast a shadow upon our holidays. It is not what we have, not the abundance of the things of this life, that will make us happy. Our happiness depends upon the relation we sustain to God. An approving conscience, a contented spirit, sweet communion with Jesus, will make us the happiest beings in the world.

God marks and remembers every act of liberality performed by His people. Every effort we make for Christ will be rewarded by Him. If the means intrusted to our keeping is employed for His glory, to save souls, He will give more into our hands. Every ray of light shed upon others will be reflected upon our own hearts. Every act performed, every gift bestowed, with an eye single to the glory of God, will result in blessings to the giver. No joy can equal the assurance of being an instrument in the hands of God of saving souls.

I pray God that those who profess to be followers of Christ may in truth follow in His steps; that they may be rivals in their missionary efforts; that they may be temperate in all things; that they may run with patience the race for the incorruptible reward; that when the Judgment shall sit and the books shall be opened, all may receive the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give them at that day. ❀

*Signs of the Times*, December 8, 1887.

Editor's Note: Although some of the statistical information in this article is certainly outdated, many of the same conditions presented still exist in less developed parts of the world. Let us all take heed to the principles expressed in sharing of our abundance with those in need.

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*Shall not every needless ornament, every extravagance, every selfish indulgence, be given up, and all these little outgoes, these tiny streams, flow into the Lord's treasury?*

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than in Russia. Proselytizing from the State church is forbidden; preaching by dissenters is prohibited; even colportage must be conducted with great caution, or the missionary will render himself liable to imprisonment, or exile to Siberia. Yet notwithstanding all this, and although comparatively little labor has been given to this field, there are two hundred Sabbathkeepers in Russia. This result is due in a great degree to the influence of our publications. All over the wide field these silent messengers are preparing hearts to receive the warning.

What is needed now in all our European missions is means to send out laborers, and to enable our printing-houses to publish books in the different languages. There are colporteurs willing to work if they can have the books. Shall we not supply them?

The banner of truth is to be unfurled in far-distant countries. The great and testing truths which God has committed to us are to be given to all nations, tongues, and

aid in bringing souls to Christ and the truth. Shall not every needless ornament, every extravagance, every selfish indulgence, be given up, and all these little outgoes, these tiny streams, flow into the Lord's treasury? Past pledges should now be canceled, as far as possible. Those who have robbed God in tithes and offerings should come before Him and make restitution. And to these let us add our free-will gifts.

Let your Christmas tree be dedicated to God, and let its boughs be laden with offerings for Christ. Do not give as though it were a task, doling out your donations with a niggardly hand. Good works are no drudgery. In giving to us His Son, God has poured out to us all Heaven in one Gift. Let us with an overflowing heart, with gratitude and joy because of Christ's matchless love, bring Him our offerings. Teach your children by your own example the blessedness of doing for Christ. Train them to go on errands of love for Him, and in all their gifts to remember the gracious Giver.

# Faith

# Works

## Biblical Faith

*Colin Standish*

In the July 1999 issue of the *Signs of the Times* magazine, editor Marvin Moore wrote a one-page Viewpoint article entitled “What Is Faith?” It appears that Elder Moore’s goal was to elucidate true faith and disassociate it from the false concepts of faith. This was a noble goal, but, sadly, the article failed to explain faith from the perspective of true Bible principles. The article commences with a very dangerous statement:

“In several recent editorials I’ve discussed the Christian teaching that the condition of salvation is faith, not obedience.”

This is indeed a strange and confusing statement. It clearly sets faith apart from, and separate from, works. That is a most dangerous dichotomy, for there is no faith independent of works. There has never been, and never can be, an individual who has the faith of Jesus who does not also have the works of Jesus.

As I have often said, there are many inseparable “Siamese twins” in the Scripture, and to separate them

apart is to destroy them both. Many times in the case of physical Siamese twins, no operation could be performed that would save the life of the two being separated, and, therefore, they must live together. The same is very true of some absolutely vital, Biblical “Siamese twins” such as: “justification and sanctification,” “truth and righteousness,” “law and grace,” “the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus,” “justice and mercy,” “the law and the gospel” and “we in Christ and Christ in us.”

James makes the point emphatically: “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.” James 2:17.

We often refer to Hebrews, chapter eleven, as the “faith” chapter, but indeed, more accurately, this chapter should be called the “faith that works” chapter, for there is no faith that cannot be demonstrated in appropriate good works. Would Abel have had faith had he not offered a more excellent sacrifice? Would Noah have had faith had he not prepared an ark for

the saving of his household as well as for others who might respond to God’s call? Would Abraham have had faith if he had refused to leave Ur of the Chaldees? Would Moses have had faith if he had not chosen to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season? In each case the two are wholly inseparable.

Now here we are not talking about the merit of salvation—or the basis of salvation. The only merit or basis of salvation is in the perfect life, death, resurrection and High Priestly ministry of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ:

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12.

Such statements as Marvin Moore has made are, at the least, confusing—if not deeply theologically flawed and very dangerous to salvation. Statements such as this are deeply problematical because of the fact that they create a confusion in

the minds of the readers. Moreover, we must keep in mind that the *Signs of the Times* is directed not only to Seventh-day Adventists but also to those not of our faith. Therefore, we must be especially careful not to give a false impression to those who may be seeking for truth.

probably should not have been included in the canon of Scripture. Yet it is amazing that it is not only James but also Paul who presents love as a condition of salvation: “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man,

Some have thought to believe that Christ was just answering with the words that the young man would expect to hear, but the evidence of other texts of Scripture are all in the opposite direction—that Jesus meant exactly what He said:

“And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul. To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?” Deuteronomy 10:12–13.

“Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.” Psalm 119:2–3.

“But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children’s children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.” Psalm 103:17–18.

Further on we see that Elder Moore has fallen into another trap. He emphasizes these words of Paul to the Philippian jailer:

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” Acts 16:31.

But what is belief?

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” 1 John 5:1–5.

Looking at the above text, we notice that the believers are those who believe in God, love Him and love His created beings. They keep His commandments—they overcome the world and they have that

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*By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.*

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God has given us many conditions of salvation. Not one of these conditions saves us—because without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin:

“And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.” Hebrews 9:22.

It would seem that Elder Moore has not discriminated between what is the merit and basis of our salvation and what are the conditions of salvation. Thus, we must look to the Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy to discover what are the conditions of salvation.

The Bible offers many conditions of salvation. Each one in itself is a work. The following two verses in the epistle of James were a stumbling block to Martin Luther, which may surprise you. However, believing that there were no conditions for salvation, Luther concluded that our love was not a condition of salvation. Here are two verses that prove otherwise:

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.” James 1:12.

“Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?” James 2:5.

This and other considerations led Luther to refer to James as an epistle of straw, indicating that it

the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” 1 Corinthians 2:9.

In fact, the similarity between Paul’s assertion and that of James is striking! Do we also call First Corinthians an epistle of straw?—I think not. Both present principles enshrined in other parts of the Scriptures. Most people do not consider love as being a work. However, you will notice in each of these texts, love is used as a verb—an action word directed toward Jesus. The Bible does not teach a conditional-less salvation.

Now, of course, neither does Elder Moore. He places one condition there—faith. And that is correct:

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” Ephesians 2:8.

The grace of God is accessed through faith. But let us look beyond that. We have to walk with Christ to be saved. Many Christians have problems with the response of Jesus to the rich young ruler who had asked the question, What shall I do to inherit eternal life? Note Christ’s response:

“And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” Matthew 19:16–17.



victorious faith of Jesus. However, we notice that even while expressing some thoughts that are truly Biblical, Elder Moore makes this amazing statement:

“On the other hand, the condition of salvation is not victory over sin. It’s not obedience. It’s not keeping God’s laws. God does not demand victory over sin before He will accept you and me and promise us eternal life in His kingdom. If victory and obedience were a condition of salvation then salvation would be by works.”

Once again the realization must come to the reader that Elder Moore has not made a distinction between works as a means of salvation, on the one hand, and works as a necessary concomitant [occurring or existing concurrently] of the faith by which we access the grace of God, on the other hand. We are reminded of the counsel that Sister White gave to Elder A. T. Jones in 1893 when he had been presenting the gospel in an unbalanced way—just as Elder Moore has presented it in his Viewpoint article. Here is counsel that is just as relevant to Marvin Moore now as it was to Elder A. T. Jones then:

“You repeated several times that works amounted to nothing, that there were no conditions. The matter was presented in that light that I knew minds would be confused, and would not receive the correct impression in reference to faith and works, and I decided to write to you. You state this matter too strongly. There are conditions to our receiving justification and sanctification, and the righteousness of Christ. I know your meaning, but you leave a wrong impression upon many minds. While good works will not save even one soul, yet it is impossible for even one soul to be saved without good works.” *Selected Messages*, book 1, 377.

Is Elder Moore correct when he says, “God doesn’t demand victory over sin before He will accept you and me and promise us eternal life in His kingdom”?

We will let the Word speak for itself:

“But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteous-

ness, is accepted with him.” Acts 10:35.

Compare this text with Deuteronomy 10:12–13 quoted earlier. Fearing God includes keeping the commandments and the statutes of God. Here in Acts, the scripture associates works with righteousness. In fact, after the very first sin, after Cain had murdered his brother, God asked of Cain the question:

“If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?” Genesis 4:7.

The implication is that if he had done evil he would not be accepted. Paul is even more specific in his epistle to the Romans:

“Let not then your good be evil spoken of: for the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.” Romans 14:16–18.

God’s approval—God’s acceptance—does depend upon man’s willingness to turn aside from his wicked ways. This is not just a single

“To obey the commandments of God is the only way to obtain His favor.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 28.

“John declared to the Jews that their standing before God was to be decided by their character and life. Profession was worthless. If their life and character were not in harmony with God’s law, they were not His people.” *The Desire of Ages*, 107.

“It is the inner worth, the excellency of the heart, that determines our acceptance with the Lord of hosts.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 638.

We cannot afford to be careless in the way that we present the simple truths of salvation, for eternity is predicated upon what we say. May God help us to study these matters carefully. Simple understandings lead us to avoid both the pitfalls of legalism and the disasters of antinomianism. Never once does the Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy say that works are the basis of salvation. If salvation could have been gained by works, we would not have needed the sacrificial death of Jesus on Calvary. In addition to securing our pardon; however, Jesus,

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*There are conditions to our receiving justification and sanctification, and the righteousness of Christ. . . . While good works will not save even one soul, yet it is impossible for even one soul to be saved without good works.*

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statement of Paul’s. Let us especially note the impact of Romans 12:1:

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

Peter chimes in with his assent:

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.” 1 Peter 1:2.

To these apostolic statements we add the testimony of Sister White:

by His life and death, left an example for each one of us:

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.” 1 Peter 2:21–22.

The Bible is full of conditions that we must meet if we would be saved. Therefore, let us not try to avoid legalism by presenting antinomianism as an alternative. The Scriptures present a complete and balanced gospel—the gospel of Jesus Christ. ❀



*S. N. Haskell*

# The Sanctuary

*Part 1*

Three sanctuaries, or temples, are brought to view in the Bible. The first is the heavenly sanctuary, where God reigns upon His throne, surrounded by ten thousand times ten thousands of angels. This temple was opened to the wondering gaze of the lonely seer on the Isle of Patmos, and also to Moses on Mount Sinai. The second, or earthly sanctuary, was a miniature model of the heavenly one, in which the priests served unto the example and shadow of the service in the heavenly temple. For more than fourteen hundred years, God designed that the service should be in the shadowy sanctuary. The time came when those following the shadow reached the substance.

Two days before the crucifixion, Christ slowly and regretfully left the temple for the last time. The priests and rulers were struck with terror as they heard His mournful words: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." Matthew 23:38. The beautiful structure remained until A.D. 70, but it had ceased to be the temple of God. The Father showed by an unmistakable sign that

the glory had departed. When the words, "It is finished" (John 19:30), were pronounced by the Sufferer upon the cross, the veil of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom by unseen hands. Terror and confusion prevailed. The knife raised to slay the sacrifice fell from the nerveless hand of the priest, and the lamb escaped.

Henceforth, the sinner need no longer wait for a priest to offer his sacrifice. The great Sacrifice had been made. Every child of Adam could accept His atoning blood. The way into the heavenly temple was now made manifest. The heavenly had taken the place of the earthly sanctuary. Hereafter, man's faith was to enter within the veil, where Christ officiated.

The Jews had lost sight of the fact that their bodies were to be the temples of the Spirit of God.

The third temple brought to view in the Bible is the temple of the human body. The Jews had lost sight of the fact that their bodies were to be the temples of the Spirit of God; and when the Saviour said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," they thought

only of the massive structure of marble and stone, and replied that it had taken forty-six years to build the temple, not perceiving that "he spake of the temple of his body." See John 2:19-21.

Glorious rays of light shine from the heavenly sanctuary upon those who study the typical work in the earthly. These rays, when gathered into the temple of the body, reflect the character of our great High Priest in the heavenly courts.

In the beginning, the body of man was created to be a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit; but Satan gained possession, and man partook of an evil nature. Before the body could again become a fit temple for the Spirit of God, the evil nature must die. Christ offered His life for the sinner, and before the foundation of the world He was counted as a "Lamb slain." See Revelation 13:8.

That man in his fallen condition might comprehend this Gift, and understand the work of redemption, the sinner that longed to crucify "the old man," the evil nature, was directed to bring an innocent animal, and take its life, as

an object lesson of the Lamb of God, and also to illustrate the fact that the evil nature of the sinner must die, in order that the Holy Spirit might dwell within. See Galatians 2:20.

Before the gate of the Garden of Eden, Adam and his family presented their offerings. Their clear minds grasped by faith the promise of the Redeemer, who would again open to them the joys of the garden. Adam by faith looked forward to the time when the Saviour would lead him once more to the Tree of Life, and bid him pluck and eat of its life-giving fruit. As he took the life of the innocent lamb, and saw by faith the "one sinless Man," suffering death for him, his heart went out in love and gratitude to God for His wonderful love, and for a time he forgot the terrible sorrow that weighed upon his soul. Every falling leaf, while it taught the death of Christ, was also a constant reminder to him that his sin had brought death into the hitherto perfect earth.

While man lived near God, the altars were lighted by fire from Heaven. But this perfect worship was marred. Cain's mind became so blinded by sin that he failed to grasp the infinite Sacrifice. Satan convinced him that God was an austere judge, demanding service. The love and sacrifice of the Saviour were overlooked. Cain and Abel each brought an offering to the gate of the garden; but the desire of the two hearts was greatly different. Abel brought a lamb, and as he took its life, his faith laid hold of the Lamb of God. The lamb was laid upon the altar, and fire flashed from the shining sword of the cherubim guarding the way to the Tree of Life, and the sacrifice was consumed.

Cain brought an offering of fruits. There was nothing in his offering that typified the dying Lamb of Calvary. No innocent life was taken in exchange for his forfeited life. He waited for the fire to consume it; but there was nothing to call forth the fire from the heavenly Watcher. There was no sweet love, no longing for deliverance from the thralldom of sin and death.

Cain and Abel are a type of all worshipers from that time to the

present. The followers of Cain multiplied ceremonies, and made offerings to the sun and various other objects. In it they overlooked the all-important principle that self must die, and that Christ must live in the temple of the human body.

Anciently, each family erected its own altars. The father was priest of the household, and was succeeded by the eldest son. At times sin separated the eldest from the family, and character, instead of age, decided who should act as priest.

Jacob knew the character of the one great High Priest; and as he lay with his head upon the stone in Bethel, and watched the angels ascending and descending upon that glorious ladder, he also saw the Lord above it. He beheld His glorious vestments, and in imitation of those garments he made Joseph a "coat of many colours." Genesis 37:3. The other sons of Jacob could not comprehend these beautiful truths. Even the coat was an object of hatred to them. When the brothers sold Joseph, they dipped the coat in blood, and its beauty was marred. The future revealed that Jacob had read aright the character of Joseph, for in the midst of Egyptian darkness he reflected the light of Heaven. He was a temple for the indwelling of the Spirit of God.

Before his wondering gaze were spread out the beauties of the heavenly sanctuary. Forty days the Lord communed with him, giving minute directions in regard to building a shadow of that heavenly structure upon the earth. In the midst of the idolatry of Egypt, Israel had lost the spiritual truth that the body was the dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Neither could they form any conception of the work done in heaven for sinful man.

To reach man in his fallen condition, God directed the building of the earthly tabernacle, that humanity might become acquainted with the nature of the work in the heavenly sanctuary. In this building, men divinely appointed were to perform in the sight of the people a shadow of the work that would be done in the heavenly sanctuary by the Saviour of mankind, when He should officiate as our High Priest.

The whole Jewish economy was a compacted prophecy of the gospel. Every act of the priest in the shadowy service, as he went in and out, was a prophecy of the Saviour's work when He entered heaven as our High Priest. "It was the gospel in figures" (see *Review and Herald*, February 21, 1899), the Lord's object lesson or kindergarten for the "children" of Israel. They had become children in understanding,

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When Israel came out of Egypt, their minds were so beclouded by sin that they no longer saw the promised Saviour in the simple offerings. God then said: "Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." Exodus 25:8. Six days were spent by Moses on the mountainside in deep searching of heart; then the thick cloud of glory covering Mount Sinai broke forth like devouring fire in the eyes of all Israel, and Moses was ushered into the presence of Deity.

and in order to reach them God taught in a way that the senses could grasp the gospel.

Man finally became so depraved that he failed to see light flashing from the Levitical laws and sacrificial offerings, and when the antitype of all their offerings came, they rejected Him.

Let us in imagination go back to the wilderness tabernacle, and see if we can discern the glorious gospel of Christ shining from the Jewish economy. A man enters the outer

court with a lamb, which he brings to the door of the tabernacle. With solemn awe, and eyes raised to heaven, he lays his hand upon its head, while his moving lips, like Hannah's of old, betray the burden of his heart. Then he lifts the knife, and takes the life of the sacrifice. His faith lays hold of the bleeding Lamb of Calvary, and his sin rolls from off his burdened heart onto

plead His blood in the heavenly sanctuary. It is the gospel of a crucified and risen Saviour that he beholds in the object lesson he himself is helping to carry out.

Soon the veil is lifted, and the priest returns. The offering has been accepted. The priest has made atonement for him, and he is forgiven. In the joy and freedom of forgiveness, he prays: "O that the

represented sin that had been separated from the sinner and destroyed, while the sinner lived a new life through Christ.

The sinner separated the fat from the sacrifice; the priest received it and burned it, illustrating the truth that we must cooperate with the Lord; and through Christ who strengthens us we can do all things. See Philippians 4:13.

As the man carefully searched for the fat, he realized more fully that his body was to be a temple of the Holy Spirit, and that when his past sin is forgiven and he is accepted, it is that he may become a dwelling place for the Spirit of God. When the Spirit enters a man, it, like a sharp knife, reveals one sin after another, and separates them from the sinner until the soul temple is cleansed. His faith grasps the promise of the "One" who dwells in the hearts of His people by faith. As he goes from the shadowy temple court, he realizes that he is a temple, not "empty, swept, and garnished," ready to be again entered by the power of evil, but a temple in which the Spirit of God rules and reigns. See Matthew 12:44.

Another man brings an offering; and as the priest takes the blood, instead of entering within the veil, he pours it at the base of the altar of burnt offering. Then a portion of the flesh, which represents sin, is prepared and eaten by the priest in the holy place. In this act the priest taught the children of Israel the wonderful truth that Christ bore "our sins *in his own body on the tree.*" 1 Peter 2:24. (All emphasis by author unless otherwise noted.)

Each separate offering presented some different phase of the work of Christ. The incense constantly ascending from the altar was an object lesson of the inexhaustible fund of perfect obedience accruing from the sinless life of our Saviour, which, added to the prayers of all saints as they are offered upon the golden altar in heaven, makes them acceptable before God. The perfume of the incense filled the air far beyond the temple court. Likewise, the sweet influence of Christians who

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*The burning fat upon the altar came up as a sweet savor before God, for it represented sin that had been separated from the sinner and destroyed, while the sinner lived a new life through Christ.*

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the great Sacrifice. The blood is carefully caught; every drop is precious, for by faith he views the real Sacrifice. The priest meets him, takes the blood of the sacrificed life, and passes from sight within the first veil, while the worshiper awaits with anxiety his return.

In childhood his father had told him of the "ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat;" that at times the bright glory of the shekinah above the mercy seat shone out and filled the sanctuary. Hebrews 9:4-5.

He had been told of that mystical table, with its twelve loaves covered with frankincense; also of the beautiful candlestick, whose seven lamps were ever burning; how the golden-plated walls on either side reflected the light, and like great mirrors reproduced again and again the brilliant hues of the richly embroidered curtains with their shining angels. Before the second veil, which concealed the sacred ark, he pictured the altar, from which the fragrant incense constantly ascended. By faith he sees the priest place the blood of the atoning sacrifice upon the horns of the altar. See Leviticus 24:5-7; Exodus 30:7-8. His faith looks past the shadowy service to the time when Christ shall

influence of all my sins might be forever wiped away!" when lo, he sees the priest go to the brazen altar in the court, and "pour out all the blood at the bottom of the altar." Leviticus 4:18. As he sees that blood, precious to him, because it represents his own ransomed life as well as the sacrificed life of the Saviour, poured upon the ground, his heart bounds with joy. He grasps the fact that the decree, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake" (Genesis 3:17), is met in Christ, and that the promised Saviour will finally cleanse the earth from all the effects of his sins.

The body of the lamb still lies near the door of the sanctuary, where the life was taken. He next turns to it, and with a sharp knife separates from the meat every particle of fat—all the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards, etc. All the fat is taken away, and the priest burns it upon the altar of burnt offering for a sweet savor unto the Lord. See Leviticus 4:8, 31. The fat is burned as a type of the final destruction, when "the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." Psalm 37:20.

Every sinner that clings to sin will be destroyed with the sin. God has made provision for everyone to separate from sin, that he may destroy the sin and save the sinner. The burning fat upon the altar came up as a sweet savor before God, for it

live a life of faith in God, is felt by all who come in contact with them.

The fire was replenished morning and evening, representing the morning and evening worship in the family. "The whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense." Luke 1:10. The lamps were a type of the seven lamps of the fire before the throne of God in heaven, which are the seven spirits of God. These "are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth." Zechariah 4:10. Seven denotes the complete Spirit of God that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world. Its life-giving rays lead the Christian to the celestial city.

The golden table held the "bread of his presence," which represented man's dependence upon God for both temporal and spiritual help and strength. See *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 354.

The ark was the center of all worship; it was the first article mentioned in describing the sanctuary. The law hidden in it was the great standard of judgment, and a perfect copy of that heavenly law before which the character of every

child of Adam will be tried in the tribunal on high. If that law witnesses to a character cleansed from sin by the blood of the atoning sacrifice, then the name will be confessed before the Father and the holy angels.

The continual burning of that which typified sin pointed forward to the time when sin and sinners would be consumed in the fire of the last day. As the ashes accumulated upon the altar of burnt offering, they were carefully collected by the side of the altar; and at a certain time the priest laid aside his priestly robes, carried the ashes without the court, and deposited them in a "clean place." See Leviticus 4:12. They were not thrown carelessly to one side, but put in a clean place. These ashes represented all that will be left of sin and sinners after the fires of the last days. "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun

of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Malachi 4:1-3. In that day the real ashes of the wicked will be left upon a "clean earth."

As the Jewish father walked to the sanctuary with his child, the mind of the child would be attracted by the ashes in the clean place. He would ask, "Why are those ashes put in a clean place, when you throw the ashes from our fire upon the dunghill?" The father's answer would explain the beauties of the new earth, when it will be made like Eden, and sin and sorrow will be forever removed. With it would come the gentle admonition to separate from sin, and keep the body temple pure, that in the great burning day the sin may be consumed without the sinner, and he be among the ransomed of the Lord. ✨

*The Story of Daniel the Prophet, 134-144.*

For further study . . .

## ***Magnificent Disappointment***

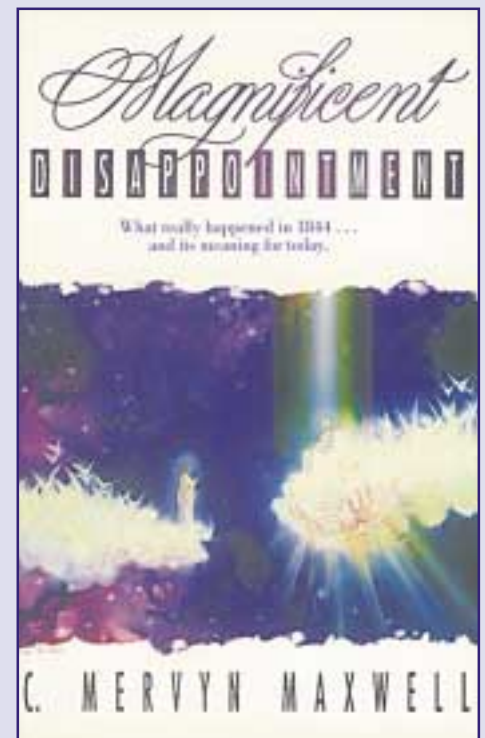
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### Four Major Earthquakes in Less Than Two Months

**News Item:** On August 17, Turkey was hit by an earthquake measuring 7.4 on the Richter scale. "At least 12,018 people killed, 33,000 injured, thousands missing and extensive damage in the provinces of Istanbul, Kocaeli and Sakarya." USGS, *National Earthquake Information Center*, 1999. Significant Earthquakes of the World, www.neic.cr.usgs.gov

**News Item:** On September 7, Greece was jolted by an earthquake of magnitude 5.9 on the Richter scale. "At least 135 people killed, 10 missing, and more than 1,600 injured, 50,000 homeless and over 34,900 buildings damaged or destroyed in the Athens area." Ibid.

**News Item:** On September 20, 1999, Taiwan was rocked by an earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale. "At least 2,101 people killed, 8,713 injured, 141 trapped, 12 missing and 12,000 houses destroyed; a dam, roads and utilities damaged on Taiwan by the earthquake and larger aftershocks." Ibid.

**News Item:** "A powerful earthquake measuring 7.5 on the Richter scale has struck Mexico, causing widespread damage in the south of the country.

"Reports say at least a dozen people have been killed." *BBC*, October 1, 1999.

"But what followed has been even more devastating than the earthquake. Because of the heavy rains many have died from the flooding and from mud slides. "Grief was mixed with growing anger in much of Mexico on Sunday as the death toll rose above 400 from landslides and flooding caused by record-breaking rain that has pummeled nine of Mexico's 31 states. More than 200,000 people have been driven from their homes along the Gulf Coast and in inland valleys." *LA Times*, October 11, 1999.

### Hurricane Floyd

**News Item:** "Hurricane Floyd caused an estimated \$6 billion of damage along the East Coast, but North Carolina bore the brunt. The state's early numbers:

- At least 42 people dead
- 30,000 homes damaged, at least 1,600 beyond repair
- 2.4 million chickens, 500,000 turkeys, 230,000 hogs drowned
- At least 24 municipal water-treatment systems compromised or flooded." *Newsweek*, October 4, 1999.

### Nuclear Accident Shakes Japan

**News Item:** "Japan is facing an unprecedented nuclear emergency after a major uranium leak.

"Radiation levels at the Tokaimura nuclear fuel-processing plant in north-east Japan are 15,000 times higher than normal." *BBC*, September 30, 1999.

### Nicaragua Plagued by Rats

**News Item:** "Nicaragua has declared a national state of alert to deal with a rat plague that is threatening an estimated 300,000 people.

"Reports from the affected area say that the rats have devastated local crops, although aid agencies say they are more concerned about disease.

"Since April, hundreds of thousands of hungry rats have swept through north-east Nicaragua, devouring the region's staple crops of corn, rice and beans.

"There are no official estimates of just how much food has gone, but some reports put the figure as high as 95%." *BBC*, September 6, 1999.

**Prophetic Perspective:** Almost 1,968 years ago, the disciples asked Christ, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matthew 24:3. In pointing to His coming, Christ said: "And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven." Luke 21:11.

Certainly, as we have seen in the above newsbriefs, the words of our Saviour are being fulfilled. The questions we must each ask ourselves are, Do I truly believe the words of my Saviour? Do I truly believe that these signs indicate His near return? He has warned us with these words: "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8. May our prayer be: Lord increase our faith.

### International Criminal Court and Secrecy of Catholic Confession

**News Item:** New York—"In ongoing meetings to refine aspects of the proposed International Criminal Court, the Canadian government has proposed that the new International Criminal Court revoke the centuries-old legal tradition that a Catholic priest may not be compelled to reveal what he hears in the confessional." *Zenit Daily Dispatch*, August 6, 1999.

**News Item:** New York—"Bishop Vincent R. LaRocca, Holy See delegate of the Preparatory Commission, which is responsible for articulating the statutes of the future Court, said the International Criminal Court will respect the secrecy of the confessional." Ibid., August 23, 1999.

### Clinton Follows Pope on Debt

**News Item:** "President Clinton pledged Sept. 29 to cancel all the U.S. debts of the world's poorest countries if they use the savings to 'finance basic human needs.' The move is part of a Jubilee effort long championed by John Paul II to free poor nations from the burden of paying interest on debts that could be used to feed and educate their people." *National Catholic Register*, October 10-16, 1999.

### World's Religions Set to Discuss Their Role in the Next Millennium

**News Item:** Vatican City—"Representatives of some 20 of the world's religions will meet at the Vatican this



## Have a news item of interest?

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month to discuss closer collaboration between believers to further justice and peace in the next millennium.

“At least 235 clergy and laity from 48 countries—including Israel, Algeria, Iran and India—will attend the Inter-Religious Assembly called for Oct. 24–29 by the Vatican’s Central Committee for the Great Jubilee 2000.

“The theme of the meeting is ‘On the Eve of the Third Millennium: Collaboration Between Different Religions.’

“‘In an epoch in which an encounter between religions seems more like clash, we need a clear effort for dialogue like this,’ Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, president of the jubilee committee, told a Vatican news conference Sept. 29.

“Bishop Michael Fitzgerald, secretary of the Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue, which is organizing the assembly, said no religious group had refused an invitation to attend, but that the Russian Orthodox Church had not yet responded.

“Relations between the Vatican and Orthodox leaders in Moscow have been strained by disputes over Church property and Moscow’s fears that Catholics are trying to win converts among the Orthodox.

“‘We are waiting for a response,’ Bishop Fitzgerald said. ‘There has been no refusal, but the situation is a bit difficult. We hope someone will come.’

“Bishop Fitzgerald said some of those invited were concerned that they might be asked to join in interreligious prayer. He noted that did not happen at a similar interfaith gathering at Assisi, Italy, in 1986 and said it will not occur at next month’s meeting.

“Those attending will include Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Tibetan Buddhists, Sikhs, Zoroastrians, Mandaeans, Jains, Shintoists, Confucians, Baha’is and Practitioners of traditional religions from India, Africa and North America. Practitioners of the Japanese religions of Tenrikyo, Miochikai, Rissho Kosei-Kai and Ennokyō will also attend.

“Christian faiths to attend include the Greek, Armenian, Romanian and Assyrian Orthodox; and the Valdesian, Anglican, Lutheran, Reformed, Mennonite and evangelical churches. The World Council of Churches also will be represented.

“The participants will make a pilgrimage to the Umbrian hilltown of Assisi, birthplace of St. Francis, on Oct. 27, the anniversary of Pope

John Paul II’s historic meeting there in 1986 with representatives of all the world’s major religions to celebrate the World Day of Prayer for Peace.

“The goal of next month’s assembly is to agree on a joint declaration on the role of religion in the next millennium. (RNS)” *The National Catholic Register*, October 10–16, 1999.

**Prophetic Perspective:** “And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.” Revelation 13:3.

Prophecy is being fulfilled. The Roman power is gaining more and more influence and control. As we see the Papacy having tremendous leverage over the International Criminal Court, as we see President Clinton following the Pope’s lead regarding canceling the world debt of poor nations, as we see the many world religions flocking to Rome, we can know that the end of all things is very near. Soon all the world will bow in submission to the Papacy—all, that is, but the little remnant of faithful commandment keepers. May you and I be among that group who will stand true to duty, is my prayer.



## Special Investigative Report on Y2K

In the following News Watch article we will look at some of the current news items regarding Y2K in an attempt to inform you of the potential problems we all may face in the very near future. In this report we do not claim that the news stories will necessarily come to pass exactly as reported, but we do believe that there is overwhelming evidence pointing to a coming crisis in this world. Whether January 1, 2000, will be the flash point leading

to that crisis only time will tell. We believe that the end of all things is very near, and that what we would do for Christ should be done now while there is yet time!

### Y2K Experts Poll Exposes Incompletion and Complacency

**News Item:** New York—“The results from the second Y2K Experts Poll conducted by IDG’s CIO magazine, ISACA and Dr. Ed

Yardeni’s Y2K Center exposes corporate ill-preparedness, complacency and misplaced vendor trust. Eighty-one percent of large, global companies polled are not Y2K ready at this time.” *PRNewswire*, September 30, 1999.

### Standby for the Y2K Bug Debacle

**News Item:** By Brian Hale, New York—“Most of the world’s top computer experts plan to stockpile

food, water and cash before the Y2K bug bites. But they are putting everyone else off-guard, lulling people into a false sense of security with their complacency and slackness." October 1999.

### **Vital U.S. Industries Harbor Y2K Laggards**

**News Item:** Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.—“Many large companies in vital U.S. industries, including telecommunications, pipelines, and airlines, have received Y2K ratings of ‘low’ or ‘below average,’ based on a study of their publicly disclosed Y2K budgets and expenditures by Weiss Ratings, Inc., the only provider of Y2K readiness ratings.” *Business Wire*, Oct. 11, 1999.

### **China Reports First Crash From Four Nines Bug**

**News Item:** Beijing—“A pharmaceutical factory in China suffered a computer crash on September 9, 1999, when the system read the date as a command to stop, the *China Youth Daily* reported Tuesday.” *Yahoo! News*, *Reuters*, 9-21-99.

### **Asia Imports More Coal to Guard Against Y2K**

**News Item:** Sydney—“Huge industries across Asia are beginning to build stocks of imported coal to guard against Y2K computer problems blacking out cities and closing down production of everything from cars to electronics across the region.” *Reuters*, 10-5-99.

### **Japanese Prime Minister Suggests Food Stockpiling**

**News Item:** Tokyo—“Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi will recommend that all Japanese stockpile several days’ worth of food and water as a precaution against any Y2K problems as the country enters the New Year, Japanese media said Tuesday.” *Reuters*, 9-14-99.

### **State-Run Programs Face Y2K Failures**

**News Item:** David McGuire, Washington, D.C.—“Even as the federal government nears completion of its internal Y2K fixes, disturbing new reports indicate that locally administered federal programs such as Medicaid, Child Welfare and

Unemployment Insurance face potential Y2K failures in several states, a panel of experts said at a congressional hearing today.” *Newsbytes*, October 6, 1999.

### **Maine Gets Taste of Y2K Glitch**

**News Item:** Portland, Maine—“State government got its first Y2K surprise months early when owners of 2000 model cars and trucks received titles identifying their new vehicles as ‘horseless carriages.’

“Despite millions of dollars spent to ensure state computers are ready for the year 2000, computers in the secretary of state’s office got confused over the 2000 model year designation.” *The Associated Press*, 10-12-99.

### **Chemical Plant to Temporarily Shut Down for New Year’s Eve**

**News Item:** Charleston, W. Va.—“Several chemical plant operators say they want to be safe rather than sorry this New Year’s Eve.

“Managers at Rhone-Poulenc, DuPont, Union Carbide and Ashland Chemical all say they will temporarily stop production as a precaution against Y2K Problems.” *The Associated Press*, 9-29-99.

### **U.S. to Build Y2K Command Bunker**

**News Item:** Washington—“The government is setting up an unprecedented command center to cope with any year 2000 emergencies, President Clinton’s top troubleshooter for the issue prepared to tell Congress Thursday. . . .

“At the heart of the new phase is the Y2K Information Coordination Center (ICC), the Washington-based hub of a multimillion-dollar crisis management bunker to be operational by Oct. 31 and wind up by June 2000.

“Koskinen said the command center was meant to keep tabs on critical private-sector activities as well as local, state and federal computer systems; on overseas developments; and on any ‘cyber incidents,’ such as attacks.” *Reuters*, July 29, 1999.

### **U.S. Prepares for Possible Y2K Violence**

**News Item:** Washington—“The U.S. government is preparing for possible violence from cults, guerrillas, hate groups and end-of-world-fearing zealots as 2000 approaches.” *Reuters*, August 31, 1999.

### **U.S. Lines Up Y2K Defense**

**News Item:** “No matter whether Y2K turns out to be a disaster of biblical proportions or a virtual hoax, government disaster planners believe they will be ready.

“The Federal Emergency Management Agency plans to have over 800 employees on the job from 28 December to 4 January at locations including the underground bunker below Virginia’s Mount Weather, executive associate director Lacy Suiter said. . . .

“Witnesses said that worst-case Y2K scenarios would include officials calling out troops to restore power, distribute food—or even impose curfews and quell riots. If that’s necessary, National Guard leaders say they’re ready.

“‘FEMA becomes the national contact upon declaration of a national disaster, and we coordinate with FEMA on site as needed,’ said Raymond Rees, a US Army major general and vice chief of the National Guard Bureau. ‘FEMA may request military support through DOMS [DOD Department Director of Military Support].’ ” *Wired News*, October 4, 1999.

### **Fringe Groups and Y2K**

**News Item:** “The FBI has ordered all its field offices to investigate organizations and individuals who may take violent action related to the millennium. . . .

“The threats come from two camps. One is made up of far-right Christians who view the millennium as the end of the world, a period of tribulation before God and his chosen people emerge triumphant. Most of them disavow violence, but analysts fear a few marginal socio-paths will use the religious backdrop to settle old scores. The second group thinks Y2K computer problems are a plot by the federal government and the ‘new world order’ to impose martial law and take away believers’ rights. These are the groups that talk about black



helicopters full of foreign troops, plague-laced jet contrails, and weather and mind-control machines. . . .

“Even if January 1 passes peacefully, America may still not be in the clear. Says one former FBI agent who tracked domestic terrorists: ‘People need to bear in mind that it might not happen on 1/1/00. It might take a year or two because it depends on whose calendar they’re using and how they interpret it.’” *U.S. News & World Report*, September 6, 1999.

### FBI Says Y2K Software Has Been Tampered With

**News Item:** “Malicious changes to computer code under the guise of year 2000 software fixes have begun to surface in some U.S. work undertaken by foreign contractors, the top U.S. cybercop said Thursday.

“‘We have some indications that this is happening’ in a possible foreshadowing of economic and security headaches stemming from Y2K fixes, the FBI’s Michael Vatis told Reuters. . . .

“In reporting evidence of possible Y2K-related sabotage of software, Vatis confirmed one of the worst long-term fears of U.S. national security planners. ‘A tremendous amount of remediation of software has been done overseas or by foreign companies operating within the United States,’ he said.

“‘Vatis said it was ‘quite easy’ for an outsider to code in ways of gaining future access or causing something to ‘detonate’ down the road.

“This could expose a company to future ‘denial of service attacks,’ open it to economic espionage, or leave it vulnerable to malicious altering of data,’ Vatis said.

“The Special Senate Y2K committee, in its final report last week, described the issue as ‘unsettling.’

“‘The effort to fix the code may well introduce serious long-term risks to the nation’s security and information superiority,’ said the panel headed by Robert Bennett, Republican of Utah, and Chris Dodd, Democrat of Connecticut.

“The panel said the long-term consequences could include:

increased foreign intelligence collection, increased espionage activity, reduced information security, loss of economic advantage, and increased infrastructure vulnerability.” *Reuters*, October 1, 1999.

### Senators Move to Ground Carriers Mum on Y2K

**News Item:** Washington—“The U.S. Special Senate Y2K Committee moved Tuesday to ground domestic air carriers that ignore a government survey about their Year 2000 preparations.

“Under a bill rolled out by Committee Chairman Robert Bennett, Republican of Utah, and Vice Chairman Chris Dodd, Democrat of Connecticut, carriers would have until Nov. 1 to respond or run the risk of losing their licenses from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).” *Reuters*, October 5, 1999.

### Y2K Cash Withdrawals Could Total \$44 billion in Fourth Quarter

**News Item:** Tampa, Fla.—“An estimated 32 million households plan to build a Y2K contingency fund. According to Mr. Vaidya, if consumers follow through with their stated intentions, total Y2K cash withdraws would total about \$99 billion, of which \$44 billion will be withdrawn during the fourth quarter of 1999.” *Business Wire*, September 20, 1999.

### Expected Y2K Expenses

**News Item:** “U.S. businesses and local, state and federal governments will spend an estimated \$200 billion to ensure that their computers recognize the year 2000.” *USA Today, Tech Report*, October 11, 1999.

The report listed 79 companies of which Citigroup rated the highest with expenses of \$950 million.

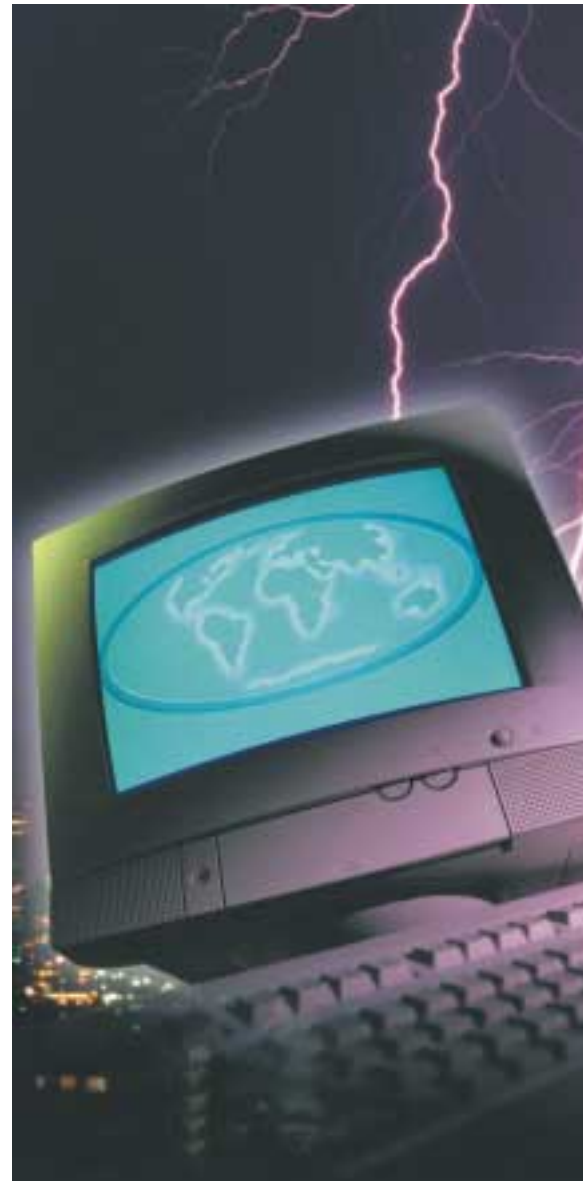
### Prophetic Perspective:

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” John 14:1-3.

As we look at the world about us, we take comfort in the words of our Saviour. We, like the faithful of old, “desire a better country, that is an heavenly.” Hebrews 11:16.

But before we reach that heavenly land we have a mission to accomplish. The Heavenly Father has committed into our hands the banner of the three angels’ messages. See Revelation 14.

Let us remember that no matter what the future holds, we have a specific task to accomplish. Let those who are strong, encourage those who are weak in the faith. While we do not profess to know the outcome of the Y2K computer bug, we do know the One who holds the world in His hands. The problem does seem to be potentially serious enough to warrant a careful preparation—both spiritually and physically. Let us then commit ourselves into the hands of Christ, for He is our faithful Saviour. ✠





# Unity among God's people

*Ellen G. White*

**I**speak to those who are acting as stewards in the cause of God. In your work for the advancement of the cause, act in such a way that the truth will be properly represented in all its lines. The ministry is not to be given an inferior position. Those who disparage the gospel ministry give sure evidence that they have lost their spiritual discernment. They need a better understanding of the claims of God. The Lord's servants are to be given ample room to do their appointed work. As teachers of men, women, and children, they are to see and understand the work for this time.

We are all workers for the Master. The instruction given in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew shows how His work is to be done. Self is to be kept under the control of the great Teacher. Study your Bibles. I have been charged to tell you all to study your Bibles with an intense interest. Practice its teachings. When this is done, less human wisdom will be seen, and more of

the wisdom of God. A large amount of time and strength will be saved.

The world by wisdom knew not God. The men and women of the world do not realize that they are daily deciding their own destiny, and that it becomes them to walk very softly before God. Immortality—a life that measures with the life of God—is not obtained through human beings, but through Christ, “who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life.” Romans 2:6–7.

Christians will discern Christ in their fellow men. They will not pull apart. Strife for the supremacy is after the working of Satan. Satan was the most beautiful angel in the heavenly courts, the most highly gifted, the most richly endowed. But he fell through jealousy and selfish ambition. Why, I ask, are men not afraid of themselves? Why are they so anxious to do something wonderful, something that will lead people

to say, “This is the work of a great man.” This is all vanity. Of ourselves we are weak and helpless. If the Lord has entrusted us with capabilities, let us remember that our gifts come from God. They are lent to us by Him, that thus He may test and try us. Let those who desire to win God's approval walk humbly before Him. Remember that you are only one among the Lord's agents. There are others whom He recognizes, and whose work He indorses.

Our institutions will be safely conducted only when those who are carrying the responsibilities in them fear their own weakness. Let them not feel highly exalted because they receive praise from men who do not see the truth in the living oracles of God. Those who know the truth should show these commandment breakers that they regard the law of God as a savor of life unto life. All who know the truth are to honor the truth. God says, Them that honor me I will honor.

We are to respect God's faithful servants, who preach His

Word, and who seek to win souls to the truth. Let us not link up with unbelievers, giving them honor because we suppose that they have great wisdom. Let us not cherish their words of praise in our hearts, while at the same time we show disrespect for the Lord's chosen instruments, regarding their counsel as unworthy of our notice. Association with those who believe not the truth will prove in time of temptation a savor of death unto death.

Those who claim to believe the truth should obey the Word of God just as it reads, practicing its instruction. Remember that those who love not their brethren, deny the faith. Many, because their brethren do not follow their leading, manifest toward them a spirit of hatred. God has never bidden us follow the leading of any man, and He has said, "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." 1 John 2:9-11. Can we not see from this what it means to be at variance?

Christ declares, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12. This light is all contained in the great commandment of love. "A new commandment I give unto you," Christ said, "That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13:34-35.

The union between Christ and His people is to be living, true, and unailing, resembling the union that exists between the Father and the Son. This union is the fruit of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. All true children of God will reveal to the world their union with Christ and with their brethren. Those in whose hearts Christ abides will bear the fruit of brotherly love. They will realize that as members of God's family they are pledged to cultivate, cherish, and perpetuate Christian

love and fellowship, in spirit, words, and action.

To be children of God, members of the royal family, means more than many suppose. Those who are accounted by God as His children will reveal Christlike love for one another. They will live and work for one object—the proper representation of Christ to the world. By their love and unity they will show to the world that they bear the divine credentials. By the nobility of love and self-denial, they will show those around them that they are true followers of the Saviour. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13:35.

In the Old Testament are recorded the laws which God gave for the guidance of His people. He would have His people today study these laws. "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy. . . . When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God. Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another. . . . Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night

person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour. Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the LORD. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD." Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-11, 13-18.

Christ is deeply grieved when His professed followers, His disciples, neglect to cultivate Christian love, when they act in a way that causes pain to the hearts of their brethren in the faith. They injure their religious experience, laying stumbling blocks in their own way and in the way of others. They dishonor the truth they claim to believe. By their passionate words and overbearing actions in dealing with their brethren, they show that they are controlled by the spirit of the enemy of all righteousness. They use common fire in the place of the sacred.

The most powerful evidence a man can give that he has been born again and is a new man in Christ Jesus, is the manifestation of love for his brethren, the doing of Christlike deeds. This is the most wonderful witness that can be borne in favor of Christianity, and will win souls to the truth.

In His prayer for His disciples, Christ said, "Neither pray I for these

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*To be children of God, members of the royal family, means more than many suppose. Those who are accounted by God as His children will reveal Christlike love for one another.*

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until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the LORD. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the

alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." John 17:20-21.

Christ brings all true believers into complete oneness with Himself, even the oneness which exists between Him and His Father. The true children of God are bound up with one another and with their Saviour. They are one with Christ in God.

“And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.” Verses 22–26.

These are indeed wonderful words. They need to be thought of, studied, and brought into the practical life. They are to be lived

to have their own way, instead of choosing the way and will of the Spirit of God? Those who do this will one day see the harm done to the cause of God by pulling apart. Instead of cooperating with Christ, instead of laboring together with God, many who occupy positions of trust are working in opposition to Christ. The Lord has presented this to me in a most decided manner to present to His people.

If God’s followers would seek to answer Christ’s prayer, revealing by the transformation in their lives the power of the truth, what a wonderful testimony would be borne to the world! How powerfully the character and work of Christ would be made known, and the glory of God made known!

It is our God-given duty to love one another as Christ has loved us. The performance of this duty brings with it the blessedness of peace and quietude in the Lord and the ennobling and uplifting of the whole being. Those who neglect this duty can never reach perfection. Those who love as Christ loved are born of God, and are “kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” 1 Peter 1:5.

royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” 1 Peter 2:1–5, 9.

I am instructed to say to our people, “Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.” James 1:22. There are many who are unprepared to meet Christ. “For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.” Verses 23–25.

A sacred relationship exists between Christ our Saviour and the believer. He says, “I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord.” Hosea 2:19–20. “Thou shalt know.” Is not this the desire of the soul? There are many who ridicule the idea of there being any certainty in religious experience. Some cannot bear to hear sanctification and the higher attainments spoken about. But the Word says, “Thou shalt know the Lord,” and this means holiness and sanctification.

How may we know God?—By doing His Word. We have the assurance of this. Read the first chapter of second Peter. The entire chapter is an assurance to the true believer. “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith

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*Some cannot bear to hear sanctification and the higher attainments spoken about. But the Word says, “Thou shalt know the Lord,” and this means holiness and sanctification.*

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out in the daily experience. Only thus can the result for which Christ prayed be produced.

The Spirit of Christ never leads those of the same faith to separate into distinct, independent parties. When such a separation takes place, an impression exactly opposite from that which Christ prayed, is given to the world.

Why do those who profess to believe in Christ, who profess to keep the commandments, make such feeble efforts to answer the Saviour’s prayer? Why do they seek

“Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. . . . Ye are a chosen generation, a

virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity." 2 Peter 1:2-7.

We must work upon the plan of addition, adding to our character the graces here mentioned. "If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Verses 8-11. This is our life insurance policy.

"That by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." The lust here mentioned does not only mean a perverse, base passion. It includes an unholy desire for riches, for praise, for the possession of power. To fear God and obey His Word is the only way to gain true exaltation. But forgetting this, man presumptuously craves more and still more worldly power and honor. He devises and plans in every way to accomplish certain results, losing

sight of justice and equity and love for God and his brethren. With a perversity that is blind to results, he sacrifices his peace of mind, his assurance of knowing God and Christ.

"When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died. And now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver, and idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen: . . . Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud, and as the early dew that passeth away, as the chaff that is driven with the whirlwind out of the floor, and as the smoke out of the chimney. Yet I am the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: for there is no saviour beside me." Hosea 13:1-4.

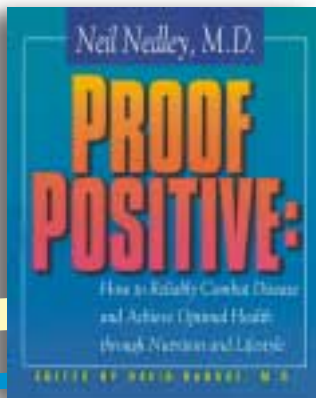
"O Israel, thou hast deserted thyself; but in me is thine help." Verse 9. "Return unto the LORD thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously. . . . I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. . . . Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD

are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein." Hosea 14:1-2, 4-5, 9.

The Lord is infinitely merciful and gracious. He is waiting for us to repent and turn to Him with humble confession, saying, We will take thy way, O Lord; we will no longer walk in the way of our own counsels. Have mercy on us and save us and those who have erred in following a path not cast up for the ransomed of the Lord.

The time has come for the renunciation of all self-confidence. The time has come to follow the Lord's way. He has given instruction for all who will be guided by Him, who have faith in His Word, and courage to go forward. God calls upon those who have walked in paths of their own choosing to return to Him. "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:6-9. ❄

*The General Conference Bulletin, July 1, 1900.*

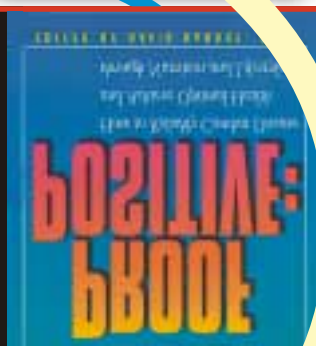


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*Health.*

# God's Purpose for this World

How to mark your Bible and know God's Word better

*We present this study with the desire that it will encourage you, our readers, to pursue a deeper examination of God's Word. The warning has been given us that "none but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict." The Great Controversy, 593–594. It is our suggestion that you use this study personally, in group settings, or with your family. We also encourage you to add other Scriptural references to this study as you proceed in your own personal, attentive scrutiny of God's Word.*

The Editors

## Bible Marking Directions

1. In this month's study our Bible marking key letters are GP, which represent "God's Purpose."
2. On the blank flyleaf at either the beginning or end of your Bible, write in the key letters followed by the first Scriptural text. This month's beginning entry should appear as follows:  
*1 GP Isaiah 45:18.*
3. Turn to the first reference and in the margin near it write the second reference. Then turn to the second reference and in the margin near it write the third reference, and so on to the end of the lesson. When you come to the last reference write "End GP."

Everybody in the world ought to understand God's purpose for this world—how that great purpose will be accomplished, and how all can have a happy and fulfilling part in it.

### 1GP Isaiah 45:18.

The great Creator made this world to be inhabited by man. When the Sovereign Creator laid the foundations of this earth He declared that they would endure forever. See Psalm 104:5.

### 2GP Genesis 1:26–28.

The fact that God made Adam and Eve pure and holy, and told them to multiply, proves that He made the earth to be inhabited by a race of righteous people just like the first pair He placed here.

The Creator's plan was for a perfect world, filled with a perfect number of perfect people. Sadly, the entrance of sin prevented the immediate fruition of His plan. See Genesis 3. As a result this earth has been spoiled, marred, ruined, and cursed by sin.

### 3GP Isaiah 24:5–6.

Because of the continued transgression of the Creator's laws, the curse has devoured the earth. Only those who faithfully keep His commandments will be privileged to enter the Earth made new. See Revelation 22:14.

### 4GP Proverbs 10:30.

That which has been long deferred will some day soon come to pass. God has decreed that the wicked shall not inhabit the earth—

they will be cut off and rooted out of it. See Proverbs 2:21–22.

### 5GP Psalm 37:9–11.

The wicked will be destroyed from off the earth, and then those who love and obey the Creator will be given this earth as an inheritance.

### 6GP 2 Peter 3:10, 13.

This destruction will be accomplished by a devouring fire from God, which will melt the earth, and purify it from all sin and sinners; then God will recreate it into the New Earth, wherein the righteous alone will dwell.

### 7GP Revelation 20:9, 14; 21:1.

This destruction will take place at the end of the 1,000 years of Revelation 20. The New Jerusalem will descend from heaven to become the glorious capital of the Earth made new. See Revelation 21:1–3.

The New Earth will be as perfect and lovely as this earth would have been if sin had never entered. It will be restored to its Edenic beauty. The meek will inherit the New Earth (see Matthew 5:5), and our heavenly Father's holy will shall be done on this earth as it is now done in heaven. See Matthew 6:10.

### 8GP Revelation 22:3.

The New Earth will never be marred by the curse of sin again. See Nahum 1:9.

### 9GP Revelation 21:4.

There will never be any sickness, sorrow, pain, or death in the New Earth.

**10GP Isaiah 35:5–6, 10.**

Everyone who lives in the Earth made new will be happy for eternity.

**11GP Isaiah 65:17, 21–23.**

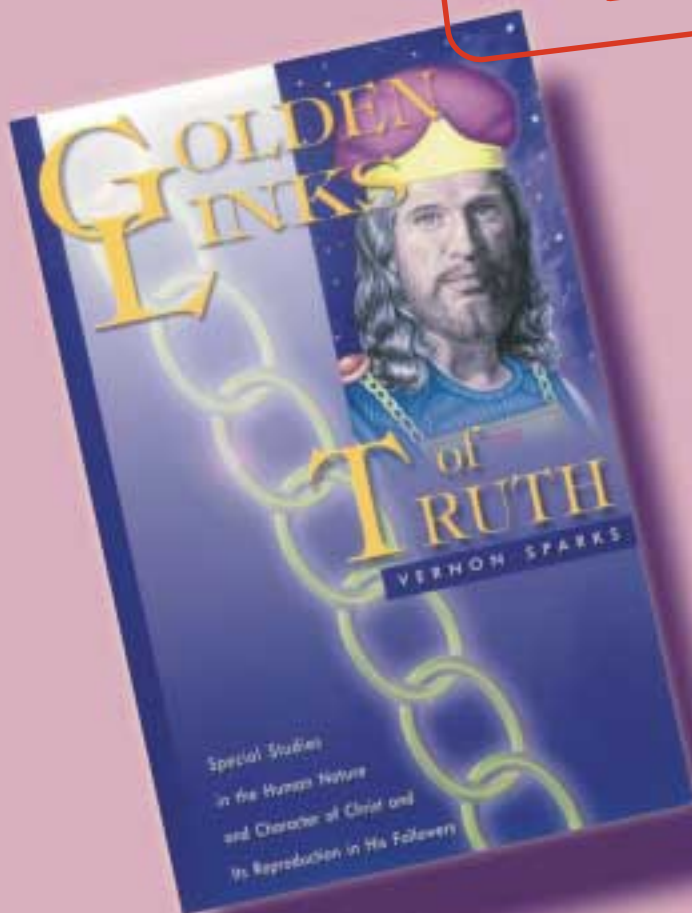
Every one of the redeemed will have their own personal home in the Earth made new.

**12GP Isaiah 66:22–23.**

From our country homes we will travel each week to be in the New Jerusalem for the holy Sabbath. There the ransomed will unite their voices in the loftiest songs of praise to Him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb. See Revelation 5:12–13. ✠

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# For Our Sake Also

*E. J. Waggoner*

**T**he fourth chapter of Romans is one of the richest in the Bible in the hope and courage which it contains for the Christian. In Abraham we have an example of righteousness by faith, and we have set before us the wonderful inheritance promised to those who have the faith of Abraham. And this promise is not limited. The blessing of Abraham comes on the Gentiles as well as on the Jews; there is none so poor that he may not share it, for “it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed.” Romans 4:16.

The last clause of the seventeenth verse is worthy of special attention. It contains the secret of the possibility of our success in the Christian life. It says that Abraham believed “God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.” Verse 17. This marks God’s power; it involves creative power. God can call a thing which is not, as though it existed. If a man should do that, what would you call it?—A lie. If a man should say that a thing is, when it is not, it would be a lie. But God cannot lie. Therefore when God calls those things that be not, as though they were, it is evident that

that makes them be. That is, they spring into existence at His word. We have all heard, as an illustration of confidence, the little girl’s statement that “if ma says so, it’s so if it isn’t so.” That is exactly the case with God. Before that time spoken of as “in the beginning,” there was a dreary waste of absolute nothingness; God spoke, and instantly worlds sprang into being. “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. . . . for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.” Psalm 33:6, 9. This is the power which is brought to view in Romans 4:17. Now let us read on, that we may see the force of this language in this connection. Still speaking of Abraham, the apostle says:

“Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah’s womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had

promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.” Romans 4:18–22.

Here we learn that Abraham’s faith in God, as One who could bring things into existence by His word, was exercised with respect to His being able to create righteousness in a person destitute of it. Those who look at the trial of Abraham’s faith as relating simply to the birth of Isaac and ending there, lose all the point and beauty of the sacred record. Isaac was only the one in whom his Seed was to be called, and that Seed was Christ. See Galatians 3:16. When God told Abraham that in his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed, He was preaching the gospel to him (see Galatians 3:8); therefore Abraham’s faith in the promise of God was direct faith in Christ as the Saviour of sinners. This was the faith which was counted to him for righteousness.

Now note the strength of that faith. His own body was already virtually dead from age and Sarah was in a like condition. The birth of Isaac from such a pair was nothing less than the bringing of life from the dead. It was a symbol of God’s power to quicken to spiritual life



those who are dead in trespasses and sins. Abraham hoped against hope. There was no human possibility of the fulfillment of the promise; everything was against it, but his faith grasped and rested upon the unchanging word of God, and His power to create and to make alive. "And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness." Romans 4:22. Now for the point of it all:

"Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Verses 23–25.

So Abraham's faith was the same that ours must be, and in the same object. The fact that it is by faith in the death and resurrection of Christ that we have the same righteousness imputed to us that was imputed to Abraham, shows that Abraham's faith was likewise in the death and resurrection of Christ. All the promises of God to Abraham were for us as well as for him. Indeed, we are told in one place that they were specially for our benefit. "When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself. . . . Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Hebrews 6:13, 17–18. Our hope, therefore, rests upon God's promise and oath to Abraham, for that promise to Abraham, confirmed by that oath, contains all the blessings which God can possibly give to man.

But let us make this matter a little more personal before leaving it. Trembling soul, say not that your

chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence." 1 Corinthians 1:27–29.

Have the simple faith of Abraham. How did he attain to righteousness? By not considering the deadness and powerlessness of his own body, but by being willing to

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*Abraham's faith was likewise in the death and resurrection of Christ. All the promises of God to Abraham were for us as well as for him.*

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sins are so many and that you are so weak that there is no hope for you. Christ came to save the lost, and He is able to save to the uttermost those that come to God by Him. You are weak, but He says, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." 2 Corinthians 12:9. And the inspired record tells us of those who "out of weakness were made strong." Hebrews 11:34. That means that God took their very weakness and turned it into strength. In so doing He demonstrates His power. It is His way of working. For "God hath

grant all the glory to God, strong in faith that He could bring all things out of that which was not. You, therefore, in like manner, consider not the weakness of your own body, but the power and grace of our Lord, being assured that the same word which can create a universe and raise the dead can also create in you a clean heart and make you alive unto God. And so you shall be a child of Abraham, even a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus. ✨

*Signs of the Times, October 13, 1890.*



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# HAS ROME

## Part 2



*Russell R. Standish*

*In this article Russell Standish concludes his remarks concerning an article published by Spectrum (vol. 27, issue 3, Summer 1999), written by Dr. Reinder Bruinsma, Secretary of the Trans-European Division. We encourage you to read Part 1 in the November 1999 issue of Our Firm Foundation if you have not already done so.*

The Editors

**T**he impression given by Dr. Bruinsma is that Sister White basically only reflected

the concepts of her contemporaries. Anyone who believes that Sister White was a slave to the ideas of others should read her statements concerning the Holy Spirit's personage and the eternal equality of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ with the Father. She unequivocally upholds these two concepts, but they were certainly not the views of 19th century Seventh-day Adventist ministers. Sister White did not rely on others for her concepts. She relied upon Divine Guidance. When

she quoted from other sources she did so because she was guided in that which was accurate.

Thus when Pastor Bruinsma states: "Ellen G. White's treatment of the history of the Catholic Church did not differ in essence from the approach of other Adventist writers" (*Spectrum*, op. cit.), he trivializes the Inspiration of the servant of the Lord. Bruinsma's statement continues: "In the chapter entitled 'Liberty of Conscience Threatened' [in the book *The Great Controversy*], we

# CHANGED?

detect the same insistence as in other representative Adventist publications that Catholicism will never change and that one should be not fooled by 'the fair front' it presents to the world. 'Every principle of the Papacy that existed in ages past exists today,' she wrote. *The Great Controversy*, 571." *Spectrum*, vol. 27, issue 3, Summer 1999.

This statement concerning "Liberty of Conscience Threatened" does a great injustice to the prophetic gift God bestowed upon Sister White. Dr. Bruinsma seems to be concerned that Sister White's writings are accepted as truth. Notice that on three occasions when he refers to her writings on Catholicism, he infers that they are holding back the progress of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's attitude toward Catholicism:

1. "Acceptance of her [Sister White's] statements in *The Great Controversy* and elsewhere as inspired pronouncements prevented later Adventism from taking another look at contemporary Catholicism while other Protestants were increasingly prepared to do so." *Ibid*.

2. "Still, her major writings about Roman Catholicism date from the 1880s and 1890s, and thus originated in a climate of Adventist confidence about the reality of the Catholic threat and the imminence of events predicted for decades. Once she codified those views, it became virtually impossible to reevaluate them critically without questioning her prophetic authority." *Ibid*.

3. "One of the most central reasons for sustained anti-Catholicism, however, was that Ellen G. White had codified these views in her writings. Thus, it would be virtually impossible to reevaluate them critically without questioning her prophetic authority." *Ibid*.

We would say, Praise God that she codified these matters for today! Contrary to Pastor Bruinsma's suggestions, they are being fulfilled precisely, and they provide a wonderful warning to every loyal Seventh-day Adventist.

## Further Confirmation of Inspiration

That Rome has not changed is plainly evidenced by the fact that the Pope issued "the most solemn

The Pope, in writing to American prelates, priests and laity, stated that "the Gospel was proclaimed by presenting the Virgin Mary as its highest realization."

Furthermore, in his post-synodal apostolic *Exhortation Ecclesia* in America, the Pope, in writing to American prelates, priests and laity, stated that "the Gospel was proclaimed by presenting the Virgin Mary as its highest realization." What a disgraceful destruction of the

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*Are the prophecies of The Great Controversy being fulfilled before our very eyes? Our answer is, Most certainly they are!*

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form of papal document" (*Reuters News*, November 30, 1998)—a Papal Bull entitled *Incarnationis Mysterium* on November 29, 1998. The Papal Bull offered to all Christians indulgences "that will eliminate time in purgatory" (*International Herald-Tribune* November 29, 1998) for certain duties from December 25, 1999, to January 6, 2001. Thus the disgraceful doctrines of indulgences and purgatory were reaffirmed. The great schism in the Christian church in the 16th century was triggered by the selling of indulgences.

Now the Pope hopes to use this same unscriptural doctrine as an ecumenical feature. "But by broadening the ways believers can earn an indulgence beyond Catholic rituals, the Pope is also trying to imbue indulgences with some of the ecumenical spirit he wants to lend the celebrations [of the new millennium]." *Ibid*. Has Rome changed?—Certainly not!

gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! Moreover, he encouraged the American people to regard the Virgin of Guadalupe as the "Patroness of all America and the star of the first and new evangelization." In addition, he urged that the Virgin be acknowledged as "Queen of all America." Again, we ask, Has Rome changed?—Again, we reply, Absolutely not!

Are the prophecies of *The Great Controversy* being fulfilled before our very eyes? Our answer is, Most certainly they are! On May 13, 1999, the *London Daily Telegraph* revealed some of the details of the Anglican/Roman Catholic Commission findings. We quote just four pronouncements for Seventh-day Adventists to evaluate. Let each one decide whether or not Sister White wrote under Inspiration. Let each judge whether her writings are being precisely fulfilled today. Notice these extracts from the

Commission's report: The Bishop of Rome has "a specific ministry concerning the discernment of truth." "The Primacy of the Pope is a gift to be shared." The Bishop of Rome "would exercise a universal primacy." The Pope is "a gift to be received by all the churches." To state that Rome has changed is to ignore totally the evidence of that which is transpiring in our present time!

### **Have Seventh-day Adventists Anything to Learn?**

Dr. Bruinsma also states that Adventists basically believe that they have much to teach and little to learn. "They want respect from other churches, yet they avoid closeness to them." *Ibid.*

We confirm that Seventh-day Adventists have much to teach and little to learn from apostate Christianity. We still have much to learn, but that is from Inspiration. God has entrusted to us the mighty three angels' messages that they might be proclaimed to all the world.

Furthermore, we must take issue with Dr. Bruinsma's statement: "Some time soon the Church must decide unequivocally whether it is a Christian church—with its own unique witness—amidst other Christian churches, or whether it must stand alone over and against all other Christian bodies." *Ibid.*

Here we see the ecumenical spirit being promoted. Never must Seventh-day Adventists become just another Christian church with its own unique witness. We are a movement called out to finish God's work on earth and to expose the apostasy of all the churches of Babylon.

### **Have Seventh-day Adventists Maligned the Medieval Catholic Church?**

We cannot understand Pastor Bruinsma's complaint: "In criticizing Catholic history, Adventists should try to be more balanced than in the past and should avoid offering a simple extension of the often biased and inaccurate picture that many past Protestants have offered of the medieval Church. Medieval Christianity also had positive and beautiful dimensions." *Ibid.*

Has Dr. Bruinsma not read the medieval record of the Papacy? Let us not look to Seventh-day Adventist or even to Protestant authors for clarity on this point. Let us look to the assessment of highly educated Roman Catholic authors concerning that era.

I recall back in 1955 when Colin and I were studying our History major at the University of Sydney, the professor, instructing us in front of a large class, including numbers of Roman Catholic teaching brothers, stated that during the 16th century the Papacy was a disgrace. He confirmed his statement by quoting from numerous Roman Catholic historians. The facts of history cannot be controverted, and must not be, by Seventh-day Adventists. It was this period that was incorporated into the important 1260-year prophecy of Daniel 7 and 12, and Revelation 11, 12 and 13.

Dr. Peter de Rosa, a Jesuit priest holding a doctorate from the Gregorian University of Rome, a former professor of ethics at Westminster Seminary (the chief Roman Catholic training school for priests in Britain), and also a professor of theology at Corpus Christi College, stated in his book *Vicars of Christ*, published in 1989 by Corgi Books, London, that in the *Libro Nero* (Black Book), which was a guide to inquisitors and which was still on display in the Vatican in the last century, the inquisitors were admonished: "Either the person confesses and he is proved guilty from his own confession, or he does not confess and is equally guilty on the evidence of witnesses [many of whom were unreliable]. If a person confesses the whole of what he is accused of, he is unquestionably guilty of the whole; but if he confesses only a part, he ought still to be regarded as guilty of the whole, since what he has confessed proves him to be capable of guilt as to the other points of accusation." *Vicars of Christ*, 228.

Dr. de Rosa claims that eighty successive popes invoked the Inquisition over a period spanning six centuries. See *ibid.*, 244.

Furthermore, Dr. de Rosa describes the appalling conditions of

the Papacy at the time John Huss was burned at the stake. Three popes were ruling simultaneously—Popes John XXIII, Gregory XII and Benedict XIII. John XXIII had attained to the papal office by murdering his predecessor—Pope Alexander V—and by bribing the other cardinals to vote for him in the papal conclave. Eventually, his crimes became so gross that he was brought before the Catholic Council at Constance. There he was charged with over seventy crimes. Dr. de Rosa quotes Gibbon from his book, *The Decline and Fall*: "The most scandalous charges were suppressed; the Vicar of Christ was only accused of piracy, murder, rape, sodomy and incest." Then Dr. de Rosa goes on to say: "It is significant that John XXIII was absolved from heresy, probably because he had never evinced sufficient interest in religion to be classed as heterodox." *Vicars of Christ*, 132. For these crimes John XXIII was sentenced to three years gaol [jail]. He and Huss were contemporary prisoners in the same gaol.

Notice Dr. de Rosa's insight into the treatment of Huss as compared with John XXIII: "Huss, brave, chaste, incorruptible, stern opponent of simony [bribery to obtain religious office] and clerical concubinage, met a harsher fate [than John XXIII]. Forbidden counsel, tried on a trumped-up charge, interrogated by Dominicans who had not read his books even in translation, he was sentenced to death. Wearing a high hat with three dancing devils on it, flanked by Count Palatine's swordsmen, he was led out of prison on a glorious summer's day in 1415. Practically the entire town followed as the procession made its way past the cemetery where Huss's books were being burned in a bright green meadow. He prayed for his persecutors as the fire was lit. Three times he was heard to say, 'Christ, thou Son of the Living God, have mercy on me,' before the wind blew flames into his face. His lips were still moving in prayer as he expired without a groan. To prevent his being honoured as a martyr, his ashes were scattered on the Rhine. It was

clearly more sinful to say, as did Huss and the New Testament, that after the blessing the Eucharist should still be called 'bread' than to be a greedy, murderous, incestuous Pope who misled the church on almost everything." *Vicars of Christ*, 132–133.

Dr. de Rosa also documents the fact that there were some apparently sincere bishops. These bishops called a council in Basle, Switzerland, in 1432. This group of earnest bishops issued the following declaration: " 'From now on, all ecclesiastical appointments shall be made according to the canons of the Church; all simony shall cease. From now on, all priests whether of the highest or lowest rank, shall put away their concubines, and whoever within two months of this decree neglects its demands shall be deprived of his office, though he be the Bishop of Rome. From now on, the ecclesiastical administration of each country shall cease to depend on papal caprice. . . . The abuse of ban and anathema by the popes shall cease. . . . From now on, the Roman Curia, that is, the popes, shall neither demand nor receive any fees for ecclesiastical offices. From now on, a pope should think not of this world's treasures, but only of the world to come.' " *Vicars of Christ*, 138.

It is interesting to observe the result of this righteous declaration. Dr. de Rosa stated: "This was strong meat. Too strong. The ruling pope, Eugene IV, summoned his own Council at Florence. Basle he labelled 'a beggarly mob, mere vulgar fellows from the lowest dregs of the clergy, apostates, blaspheming rebels, men guilty of sacrilege, gaolbirds, men who without exception deserve only to be hunted back to the devil whence they came.' The Papacy had squandered its chances; there were to be no more. The same century that saw Eugene IV censuring the best efforts of Basle at reform was to end with the pope who, above all, had come from the devil: Alexander Borgia." *Ibid*.

### **Seventh-day Adventism Has Not Been Misled About the Papacy**

Thus we see that that which was written concerning the Papacy in *The Great Controversy* is tempered with Christian love and courtesy. Papists themselves are not in any doubt concerning the vileness of the Papacy of the Middle Ages. Certainly this is no time for any Seventh-day Adventist leader to attempt to rewrite papal history. It is the history of a church led by Satan himself!

God's people deserve an explanation from Dr. Bruinsma concerning his understanding of the first and second beasts of Revelation 13. He cannot possibly hold the view that Rome has changed if he understands aright the identification of these two beastly powers.

Catholicism indeed resembles much of the Protestantism that now exists, because Protestantism has so greatly degenerated since the days of the Reformers." *The Great Controversy*, 571.

The evils of the Papacy today should be well understood: "Every principle of the Papacy that existed in past ages exists today. The doctrines devised in the darkest ages are still held. Let none deceive themselves. The Papacy that Protestants are now so ready to honor is the same that ruled the world in the days of the Reformation, when men of God stood up, at the peril of their lives, to expose her iniquity. She possesses the same pride and arrogant assumption that lorded it over kings and princes, and claimed the prerogatives of God. Her spirit is no less cruel and despotic now than

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*That which was written concerning the Papacy in The Great Controversy is tempered with Christian love and courtesy. Papists themselves are not in any doubt concerning the vileness of the Papacy of the Middle Ages.*

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Dr. Bruinsma would do well to contemplate the words of Inspiration: "There has been a change; but the change is not in the Papacy.



when she crushed out human liberty and slew the saints of the Most High." *Ibid*.

We have a burden for all those who are Roman Catholics and apostate Protestants. We take seriously God's plaintive plea to call these people out of Babylon. If we rewrite the history of the Papacy, and, if we are blind to that which is happening before our very eyes today, we will never please our Lord, and souls will be imperiled. It is a sad reflection on the Seventh-day Adventist Church of 1999 that it is necessary to uphold these truths, and to document the errors now being perpetrated by ordained, credentialed leaders within our ranks. Whoever could have thought that this would become necessary when merely a few decades ago Seventh-day Adventists were completely united upon the platform of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy truths? ❄

# Our Firm Foundation

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This is the first time I've visited your web site, and I'm pleased with the selection you offer. It's so important that Adventists keep up with what is going on in their church—Satan is going about like a “roaring lion” trying to dishearten, confuse, and discourage our people. Keep up the good work!

JR [via E-mail]

One of the inmates here showed me some publications that you sent out—*Behold He Cometh* and *Signposts*. I found them to be interesting and I would appreciate it if you would put me on your mailing list.

I have been interested in the end-times and trying to get something on it. Also, can you send me a correspondence Bible study course?

MS, California

I appreciate your *Our Firm Foundation*, for you tell it as it is, and as it was. I am celebrating my 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday tomorrow. I have never seen the information in our recent church magazines as we once saw years ago. Thank you for telling it like it is!

It seems there is a famine for the good news of prophecy! You seldom hear it preached anymore.

TH, California

I am writing in regards to the materials that you sent us last year, namely, to let you know what a blessing they have been to the men. We have seen the effect from these materials and the men are enjoying and benefiting from them immensely.

On behalf of all the men and myself here at Holmes, thank you again for your generous and thoughtful giving that continues to bless and enrich the lives of many.

May God continue to lead and guide, you and your ministry, and may His abundance be evident in your relationship with Him. Thank you for your giv-

ing that enables these men to give something to others.

HC, a prison chaplain, Florida

### From Overseas

I am a Seventh-day Adventist member. I am looking for books that might give more information about Christ. I am also requesting a KJV Bible with a reference section and study guide.

LC, Zimbabwe

I thank God always for the plans He has for us because they are plans of good and not of evil.

I came to learn of you through a magazine you or your staff sent to a friend of mine—*Signposts*. I was moved to read through it, especially the prophecy of Daniel 7 and Revelation 13. For now my aim is to kindly request you to send me any book(s) that can help me in understanding better these prophecies, especially those concerning our times. I'm a third year student in Tanzania Adventist College and our library is so limited in books on the present truth. I hope you can really assist me.

HM, Tanzania

May God's rich graces be unto each one of you as you spread the three angels' messages all over the world. I want to write you this letter and inform you that the work that you have done for years now and that you will continue to do is rich and rewarding. I have been greatly enriched because of your materials and not only me in Africa, but thousands of souls have opened their eyes through your present truth materials.

I am an evangelist endeavoring to reach many of my fellow Kenyans who are perishing in their sins. I kindly request you to donate to me any used Spirit of Prophecy 3-volume set to use in my study. Secondly, I need a lot of *National Sunday Law* books and *The Great Controversy* books to hand out to my surrounding Catholics.

Please, my dear Brethren at Hope, continue to alarm the people. Jesus is almost at the door and very soon He will appear in the Clouds of Heaven.

May God richly bless you for this so wonderful work. We from Africa daily prays for you. God richly bless!

PN, Kenya

The members of Bogobri Church support me in my attempt to defend the foundation (the original doctrines) of the Seventh-day Adventist church, so kindly support me by sending me more books and other things you deem necessary.

PT, Ghana

I feel the strong burden of evangelizing the immature, and reviving the weaker churches of Africa, especially Ghana. Since I can't do that alone, I have by God's grace put a program in place to train some youth to help achieve their goal. That just started on January 25, 1999, and the first quarter will end April, then I will enroll another group. For now I have twelve students.

I wish you could send me some books for my students—like *Home Remedies*, *Spirit of Prophecy*, etc. But above all, please—I request that you pray for me because I'm meeting with a lot of challenges—in short.

MD, Ghana

Thank you for the packages of *Behold He Cometh*, *Earth's Final Warning* and *Spirit of Prophecy* books among other publications.

God bless you mightily for your kindness and generous gifts rendered to me for years. They have helped me and my friends so much. Perhaps the truth that has been revealed to me I would not have known from somewhere else. Our good Lord will definitely reciprocate you for your generosity. Never! Never give up in serving Him! Sooner than we think He is coming!

GK, Kenya

## Have a letter to share?

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