



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 15, Number 5


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Sunday Laws

How to Be Saved
Conceived in a Crisis
The Seven Churches

EQUAL JUSTICE UNDER LAW





Nature declares, Spring is here! Around my wilderness home, the hills and mountains still carry the snows of winter, but the sun is breaking through; and the thermometer says that warmer weather is coming. The creek thunders as the melting snow and rain declare that another summer will soon arrive with its flowers and buds. Our garden will again produce vegetables for our table. The fruit trees are blossoming, prophesying of another harvest. The birds are winging their way north, and our feeding station resounds with the songs of thanks from these beautiful, feathered travelers!

But while we consider our Creator's marvels of spring and summer, let us turn our minds to the hour of fast-fulfilling prophecies, which are telling God's faithful people that the end of all things is at hand!

Jeremiah's inspired statement will surely be the tragic wail of many Seventh-day Adventists: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Jeremiah 8:20.

The final movements will be increasingly rapid and momentous ones. Men, women, young people, Are you recognizing and understanding the signs of the times? Or have you been captured by the Laodicean attitude—increased with the goods and things of this world and feeling no need for a closer walk with Jesus in this final hour? Attentive worldlings are concerned about the approaching unavoidable crisis in the economy, as well as terrorism, crime and immorality.

"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Revelation 3:17.

Jesus' statement that "many are called, but few are chosen" (Matthew 22:14) has been fulfilled in every generation, but it will be seen especially in this final generation. God has been looking over this planet for more than a hundred years for a people who will seek Him with all their heart and soul and be obedient to all truth without compromise.

Will you be one of those whose character will shine out to the world in love for God's truth and for your fellow men? Will you give witness to the members of your church, friends, neighbors, and relatives that by the power of the

Holy Spirit there is no longer any guile in your life, that your sinful traits of character have been cast into the depths of the sea—never to be remembered after the judgment has passed? Is it your great desire to be among the 144,000? Listen to God speak to you in this final hour of probation:

"None are living Christians unless they have a daily experience in the things of God and daily practice self-denial, cheerfully bearing the cross and following Christ. Every living Christian will advance daily in the divine life. As he advances toward perfection, he experiences a conversion to God every day; and this conversion is not completed until he attains to perfection of Christian character, a full preparation for the finishing touch of immortality." *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 505.

Remember, only those who carry a burden for their own soul and for the souls of others, and who are attempting by the Holy Spirit's power to reach God's high standard of righteousness, will receive the seal of the living God and be saved. Only by confession and repentance, daily study of the Word of God, continuing in prayer, demonstrating the power of the Holy Spirit working in our lives, and reflecting the character of Jesus in our association with others, can we pass the test of our conversion.

May each of us daily pursue the experience of a full surrender of our will to God's will, is my prayer. ✨

Ron Spear—Executive Editor

About Hope International . . .

Hope International is a special ministry assisting in the God-given work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We believe this Remnant Church of Bible prophecy has been brought into existence by the calling of the Lord, and we look for its final triumph in purity at the second coming of Christ. That the church does not now perfectly reflect the will of our Lord is cause for sorrow, but not for discouragement. The Word of God stands pledged that all within her borders will be sifted and tried, and though the greater portion will fail the test, there will yet remain a remnant to honor the Lord by their obedience to all His commands. Therefore, Hope International urges upon all the duty of supporting the Seventh-day Adventist Church in every way possible, insofar as is consistent with the principles of the government of God and the leading of His Holy Spirit upon the heart.

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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4 **Conceived in a Crisis**
Kevin D. Paulson
A tale of two disappointments

7 **Sunday Laws: A Study of Principles**
D. E. Robinson and Ellen G. White
What should be our response when our religious freedoms are removed?

9 **A Thought for Mothers**
Jeff Bell
Special thoughts for Mother's Day

10 **Though He Slay Me**
Adam Reiswig
"If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons."

16 **The Unification of the Church of Rome With the Church of England**
Colin Standish
A wake-up call for Adventists to labor for souls while there is still time

23 **The Seven Churches**
Uriah Smith and James White
Lessons of encouragement and instruction for us today

28 **How to Be Saved**
Ellen G. White
Practical ways to maintain a saving relationship with Christ

departments

News Watch	14
Health for Life	20
Defending the Faith	26
Letters to the Editor	31

Conceived in a Crisis

A TALE OF TWO DISAPPOINTMENTS

Kevin D. Paulson

Like the original Christian movement, the great Second Advent movement was spawned in a crisis. Just as the resurrection of Jesus rescued the hopes of His disciples from the jaws of despair and oblivion, so the discovery of the sanctuary truth rescued the hopes and dreams of Adventism's founders from gloom and collapse.

The Walk to Emmaus

The waning Sunday twilight finds two disheartened followers of Jesus trudging toward the village of Emmaus, eight miles from Jerusalem. One week ago this day, the approaches to Zion had resounded with praise and hosannas as the humble Nazarene rabbi accepted honors He had heretofore shunned. Astride a beast, never before ridden, on His way to what the cheering throng fervently hoped would be His coronation as king of Israel, their Master had permitted His followers' hopes to build toward the long-awaited crescendo of glory. At once they envisioned the Roman armies driven from Israel, the legions of the world's great empire vanquished, and Jerusalem at last the metropolis of the earth.

Now, seven days later, the hopes of Messianic glory have withered—as surely as the palm branches themselves. The cries of “Hosanna” had turned, scant days later, into shouts of “Crucify Him!” In the end their beloved Master had suffered the fate reserved only for the vilest of criminals, revolutionaries, aliens, and slaves. With bitter hearts, the two disciples declare, against the silhouette of Jerusalem in the fading light, “We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel.” Luke 24:21.

But as they stroll along, a Stranger joins them. Their despair is so deep, their mourning so intense, that even prolonged conversation with this Man fails to disclose who He really is. Only at the supper table, as Christ blesses the meal in a manner with which they are well familiar, do they recognize their risen Lord!

At once they cast themselves at His feet in worship! Yet just as quickly He vanishes from their sight. The once-despairing disciples now leap to their feet in joy, dashing up the slope to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples the glorious news that Jesus, their blessed Saviour, has indeed been raised from the dead!

The Walk Through a New England Cornfield

Eighteen hundred years later, two other disciples can be seen, on another stroll of despair.

O. R. L. Crosier and Hiram Edson, among at least a hundred thousand others, have joyously awaited their Lord's second coming. For decades now, a newly aroused understanding of Bible prophecy has swept the earth—from America and England to such remote places as Chile and Mongolia. Then, only thirteen years before, a simple farmer and former army captain is forced to test a pledge he had privately made to God—that if he received an invitation to speak on the prophecies of Daniel, he would answer the call and do so. The invitation came quickly, and throughout the remainder of William Miller's life, they would continue to come.

Two months earlier, a man named Samuel Snowe had calculated that, according to authentic Jewish reckoning, the Day of Atonement for 1844 fell on October 22. Snowe reasoned that just as Jesus, the antitypical Passover Lamb, died at the time of the Passover, so the 2300-day

prophecy of Daniel 8:14 would likely end on the Day of Atonement. On that day the earth—which they held to be the sanctuary described in this passage—would be cleansed, the Lord would come, and God’s people would be taken to heaven.

Yesterday—October 22, 1844—was a day they would never forget! Thousands of homes and meeting halls filled with the expectant faithful; prayer and song rose from thousands of joyous hearts. Crops were left unharvested in the fields. Beds were made with the confidence that they would never be used again. One shopkeeper in Philadelphia had hung a sign in his store window with the words:

“This shop is closed in honor of the King of Kings, Who will appear about the 22nd of October. Get ready, friends, to crown Him Lord of all!”¹

However, not until the hour of midnight passed did the faithful watchers realize that their Lord was not to appear that day. Glorious anticipation became bitter crying and tears. As foretold by the apostle in Revelation, their experience had been sweet to the mouth, but bitter to the belly. See Revelation 10:9–10.

Now, on their way to console their grieving brethren, Crosier and Edson pass a cornfield. As with the disciples traveling to Emmaus, the truth of Scripture shines into their fainting but receptive hearts. Edson would later write that he “saw distinctly, and clearly,” that instead of Christ coming to earth to cleanse it with fire, He had instead gone into the Second Apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, to commence the final judgment of God’s professed people, of which the earthly Day of Atonement was a type.

Two Disappointments

The parallel between these two great disappointments is striking:

Both disappointments were the result of false views about Jesus’ coming. Just as the disciples falsely believed that at His first coming Christ intended to reign as an

earthly king, so the Millerite believers falsely held that the sanctuary cleansing of Daniel 8:14 referred to the cleansing of the earth by fire at Jesus’ coming. In both cases a more careful study of God’s Word would have prevented misunderstanding. In both cases the world scoffed and scorned and presumed a movement to be dead. And in both cases, the world was wrong.

Death and Resurrection

From the beginning of sacred history, God has specialized in turning darkness into light. See Genesis 1:2–3. From the dust of the

was given by God to symbolize this experience of death and resurrection. See Romans 6:3–8. By giving His life in the most humiliating way possible, and then rising from the dead in triumph, Jesus demonstrated what is to happen in the spiritual life experience of His people.

Not only does Christ’s own experience illustrate this principle, the experience of His disciples, in finding at last a true conception of the Messiah’s work, illustrates this principle as well. And again, in the experience of the early Adventists, we see how the dashing of a false dream and the birth of a true one

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ground He molded Adam—the monarch of His earthly creation. See Genesis 2:7. From a nation of slaves, toiling in brick vats under the conqueror’s heel, He created “a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.” Deuteronomy 7:6.

Some may not know this, but here we find one of the greatest proofs for the authenticity of the Bible story. When ancient people contrived the legends of their past, they made people to understand that they were descended from kings and gods. The Romans, for example, believed themselves to be descendants of the Trojan warrior Aeneas, who was thought to be the son of the goddess Aphrodite. The fact that the historical records of Israel acknowledge frankly that their ancestors were slaves is strong evidence that the story is true.

Such beginnings are a part of God’s master plan. Just as the kernel of wheat must die in order to bear fruit (see John 12:24), so self must be crucified with Christ in order for Christ to live in us. See Galatians 2:20. The rite of baptism

reveal how the death of self—often bitter and disappointing, like the Millerite experience—is to give birth at last to a new life in Christ.

The Footmen and the Horses

The story of Adventism is a story of sacrifice and self-denial. Pleasure, wealth, self-aggrandizement, even life’s practical necessities, have been relinquished for the sake of truth. Many of us who grew up Adventist remember stories by such authors as Josephine Cunnington Edwards, who often spoke of young people encountering Bible truth for the first time and then taking what was often a costly stand in its defense. The loss of fame, possessions, and even family and friends, figures prominently in these stories of our heritage. Little wonder that the prophet warns:

“We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.”²

The great crises, the wrenching disappointment, which brought the Christian and Second Advent

movements into being, dare not be forgotten. The past is to be our guide to the future. The experience of the disciples and our pioneers, which forged triumph from tragedy, should inspire the contemporary Adventist who seeks to be faithful when confronted with exploding apostasy and spiritual chaos.

Many faithful Adventists in the current scene, observing the accelerating departures from truth and purity, are tempted to abandon the struggle for revival and reformation and to consider the church's condition hopeless. However, the story of our pioneers surmounting the Great Disappointment should impart courage to these fainting hearts. Moreover, they

*The trials of today are but a
foretaste of the trials of tomorrow.
And if we are unable to endure
today's tests, what can we expect
of tomorrow's?*

should remember that the trials of today are but a foretaste of the trials of tomorrow. And if we are unable to endure today's tests, what can we expect of tomorrow's?

The challenge of Jeremiah is especially relevant to faithful Adventists in the present crisis:

"If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" Jeremiah 12:5.

The disciples' disappointment gave birth to the early Christian church, which proclaimed to the world that the Messiah of Scripture had come as promised. The Millerite disappointment gave birth to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which now proclaims to the world that the Messiah of Scripture is about to come the second time, as promised. And just as both the early Christian and Second Advent movements began with a crisis which gave birth to glory, so the Second Advent movement—restoring the neglected truths of Christianity—will culminate in the final crisis of the ages—which, true to the form of sacred history, will again give birth to glory—the everlasting glory of Christ's second coming and the bliss of eternal fellowship in God's presence! ✠

References:

¹ Jerome Clark, *1844: Religious Movements* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Assn., 1968), 48.

² Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches*, 196.

1844

by Kevin Paulson

Breathless with expectancy they wait throughout the land;
Hearts aglow and certain that the end is now at hand.
With joy they scan the heavens, with hope their spirits burn,
Expecting clouds and angels and the sound of Christ's return.

Based upon the prophecy of Daniel eight fourteen,
Saints await the greatest sight that men have ever seen.
This earth, God's sanctuary, is now to be restored.
With fire shall He consume it, with the lightning of His sword.

Morning, noon, and evening pass, yet Christ has not appeared.
Doubts so long suppressed revive the thought which they have feared.
But wait, it's not yet midnight; the bridegroom then will come,
Dispelling their uncertainty, their sadness and their gloom.

Slowly yet incessantly the minutes turn to hours.
Hope revives that soon an end will come to earthly powers.
But when the clock strikes midnight, all quietness instead;
No trumpets, clouds, nor angels, nor the raising of the dead.

Bitter tears and weeping take the place of hope and joy.
Now to face the world again with all that will annoy.
How sweet their hope has tasted, how bitter now it seems;
The end of all their confidence, the dashing of their dreams.

Yet their God has kept His watch throughout their bitter trial,
Knowing their confusion will last but a little while.
For there, within God's portals, beyond the starry sky,
A grand event transpired this day; their destiny is nigh.

Sunday Laws

A Study of Principles

D. E. Robinson and Ellen G. White

Because of a growing campaign by religious and political leaders to legislate laws of a religious nature – including the posting of the Ten Commandments in public buildings, the advocating of Sunday laws, and so forth – we believe it is increasingly important that Seventh-day Adventists understand how to respond to Sunday laws and how to relate to civil authorities. The following article was the first of an eight-part series written by Dores E. Robinson, one of Ellen G. White's secretaries. The series was published in 1911, from March 9 through April 27, in the Review and Herald and was entitled "A Study of Principles."

The Editors

THE following is a compilation from the writings of Mrs. E. G. White regarding our treatment of opponents, the crisis that will come on account of the enforcement of unrighteous laws, and the duty of Seventh-day Adventists to do all in their power to avert the crisis and to enlighten the people regarding the issue. The following principles have a vital bearing on this subject, and have through the years been advocated by Mrs. White:

1. It is the duty of all who know the truths of the third angel's message to labor in every way possible to teach the binding claims

of the law of God to friends, neighbors, and the people generally.

2. Great care should be exercised not to arouse bitterness or unnecessary prejudice that would cut us off from influencing those for whom we labor. We are warned against making harsh or denunciatory

statements, and possibly are susceptible to the truth, if it is presented in a winning way.

4. There are special advantages pertaining to the use of Sunday as a day for general missionary effort in behalf of those who should be warned of the impending crisis.

In our work, we are to watch for special opportunities to do effective labor. When the minds of the people are agitated regarding Sunday laws, it is an opportune time to enlighten them.

statements regarding opponents of truth, or against rulers and statesmen; and we are advised "to conform in all things to the laws of their state," even to the extent of waiving some of our rights, when we "can do so without conflicting with the law of God."¹

3. In our work, we are to watch for special opportunities to do effective labor. When the minds of the people are agitated regarding Sunday laws, it is an opportune time to enlighten them concerning the principles involved. We are to teach in a positive way the binding claims of God's law, rather than to attack or denounce men, some of whom may be acting conscien-

5. In the final crisis, the issue will be not merely in regard to refraining from labor on Sunday, but it will be over the disregard of the Sabbath. In Mrs. White's writings on this subject, almost invariably it is pointed out that the issue will be over the exaltation of the spurious, and the trampling upon the Sabbath of Jehovah.

It is believed that as these points are made clear by the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy, Seventh-day Adventists will appreciate more highly the teaching found in *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, regarding our methods of labor when Sunday laws are being rigidly enforced.

In the summer of 1886, several of our brethren were arrested in the Southern States for Sunday labor. In Maryland and Massachusetts, also, the Sunday laws were enforced against Seventh-day Adventists. Elder G. I. Butler, who was at that time president of the General Conference, wrote to Mrs. White, asking for her counsel regarding the duty of our people in the crisis that then seemed to be coming upon them. The following was written in reply:

“You inquire in regard to the course which should be pursued to secure the rights of our people to worship according to the dictates of our own conscience. This has been a burden on my soul for some time, whether it would be a denial of our faith, and an evidence that our trust was not fully in God. But I call to mind many things God has shown

“We are to be ready and waiting for the orders of God. Nations will be stirred to their very center. Support will be withdrawn from those who proclaim God’s only standard of righteousness, the only sure test of character. And all who will not bow to the decree of the national councils, and obey the national laws to exalt the sabbath instituted by the man of sin, to the disregard of God’s holy day, will feel, not the oppressive power of popery alone, but of the Protestant world, the image of the beast.”²

From another manuscript, written in Europe about the same time, we take the following instruction, pointing out our duty to enlighten the minds of the people, and speaking of the special opportunities to do this when the Sunday question is brought before the public:

“The world is overborne with falsehood and iniquity, and those whom God has made the depositaries of His law and of the pure religion of Jesus must be determined to let their light shine.”

me in the past in regard to things of a similar character, as the draft and other things. I can speak in the fear of God, it is right we should use every power we can to avert pressure that is being brought to bear upon our people. I know that were our people spiritualized by the truth the greatest love would be maintained.

“[We are] not to provoke those who have accepted this spurious sabbath, an institution of the Papacy, in the place of God’s holy Sabbath. Their not having the Bible arguments in their favor makes them all the more angry and determined to supply the place of arguments that are wanting in the Word of God, by the power of their might. . . .

“Everything in God’s world, both men and doctrines and nature itself, is fulfilling God’s sure word of prophecy and accomplishing His grand and closing work in this world’s history.

“There are many who, if they understood the spirit and the result of religious legislation, would not do anything to forward in the least the movement for Sunday enforcement.

“But while Satan has been making a success of his plans, the people of God have failed at their post. God had an earnest work for them to do, for the honor of His law and the religious liberty of the people are at stake. Yet the watchmen failed to discern the deceptions of the enemy that they might give the trumpet a certain sound in season to have some decided influence. . . .

“There are many who are at ease, who are, as it were, asleep. They say, ‘If prophecy has foretold the enforcement of Sunday observance, the law will surely be enacted,’ and having come to this conclusion they sit down in calm

expectation of the event, comforting themselves with the thought that God will protect His people in the day of trouble. But God will not save us if we make no effort to do the work He has committed to our charge. We must be found faithfully [doing our duty as] vigilant soldiers, lest Satan shall gain an advantage which it is our duty to prevent.

“We should diligently study the Word of God, and pray in faith that God will restrain the powers of darkness, for as yet the message has gone to comparatively few, and the world is to be lightened with its glory. The present truth—the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus—has not yet been sounded as it must be. There are many almost within the shadow of our own doors for whose salvation no personal effort has ever been made.

“We are not prepared for the time when our work must close. We must take a firm stand that we will not reverence the first day of the week as the Sabbath, for it is not the day that was blessed and sanctified by Jehovah, and in reverencing Sunday we should place ourselves on the side of the great deceiver. *The controversy for the Sabbath will open the subject to the people, and an opportunity will be given that the claims of the genuine Sabbath may be presented. . . .*

“The world is overborne with falsehood and iniquity, and those whom God has made the depositaries of His law and of the pure religion of Jesus must be determined to let their light shine. If they do nothing to disabuse the minds of the people, and through ignorance of the truth our legislators should abjure the principles of Protestantism, and give countenance and support to the Roman fallacy, the spurious sabbath, God will hold His people, who have had great light, responsible for their lack of diligence and faithfulness. But if the subject of religious legislation is judiciously and intelligently laid before the people, and they see that through Sunday enforcement the



A Thought for Mothers

Jeff Bell

Roman apostasy would be reenacted by the Christian world, and that the tyranny of past ages would be repeated, then whatever comes, we shall have done our duty.

“The man of sin thinks to change times and laws. He is exalting himself above God, in trying to compel the conscience. But God’s people should work with persevering energy to let their light shine upon the people in regard to the law, and thus to withstand the enemies of God and His truth.

When the law of God has been made void, and apostasy becomes a national sin, the Lord will work in behalf of His people. Their extremity will be His opportunity. He will manifest His power in behalf of His church. . . .

“As faithful watchmen you should see the sword coming, and give the warning, that men and women may not pursue a course through ignorance that they would avoid if they knew the truth. The Lord has enlightened us in regard to what is coming upon the earth that we may enlighten others, and we shall not be held guiltless if we are content to sit at ease, with folded hands, and quibble over matters of minor importance. . . .

“The people must not be left to stumble their way along in darkness, not knowing what is before them and unprepared for the great issues that are coming. There is a work to be done for this time in fitting a people to stand in the day of trouble, and all must act their part in this work. They must be clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and be so fortified by the truth that the delusions of Satan shall not be accepted by them as genuine manifestations of the power of God.”³ ❀

Review and Herald, March 9, 1911.

References:

- ¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 238.
- ² Letter 55, 1886; see also *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 12, 322–324; *Selected Messages*, book 2, 380; *ibid.*, book 3, 384–385.
- ³ *Sermons and Talks*, vol. 1, 78–84 (see also *Review and Herald*, December 24, 1889; *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 501–507); all emphasis supplied.

Can you imagine how Mary and Joseph felt when they realized that they were going to become the parents of the Son of God? I imagine they were thrilled with the idea of being “the ones.” How exciting! I would certainly feel that I had the corner on “the salvation market” at that point.

However, after some time of thinking about it, they must have been sobered by the fact that they would be responsible for teaching God’s Son how to be God’s Son. Jesus would have to know all the Scriptures as if He had written them Himself—which He in a certain respect had done. Jesus would have to be perfect—never an evil thought dwelt upon or an evil action contrived.

They came to the realization that teaching a person to be perfect would entail being as close to perfect as they themselves could possibly be in order to set a right example. What a challenge!

Of course, you say, Jesus had a close communion with His Father—that is how He maintained perfection. But in reality Jesus did not have an advantage over us in that respect, for we can have the same type of relationship with our heavenly Father that Christ had:

“The life of Christ has shown what humanity can do by being partaker of the divine nature. All that Christ received from God we too may have. Then ask and receive. With the persevering faith of Jacob, with the unyielding persistence of Elijah, claim for yourself all that God has promised.”¹

“Through the cross we learn that our heavenly Father loves us with an infinite and everlasting love, and draws us to Him with more than a mother’s yearning sympathy for a wayward child.”²

I am sure Mary and Joseph felt helpless in their situation. It is at such a point of helplessness when God can use a person the most. They realized that raising Jesus by themselves was an impossible task, so they sought God’s help.

Why should we do any differently? Are we raising our children to be sons and daughters of God? This Mother’s Day, mothers everywhere should feel that they have the most important responsibility ever given to mankind.

We certainly cannot brag that we know all we need to know about raising sons and daughters for the heavenly kingdom. We need to give up—or at least give all to God. Take everything to God and let Him deal with it. We need to help our children by being able to love, discipline, set a good example, and encourage them in the ways of the Lord. Without question, mothers play the most important role in the education and training of their children.

Parents, let us pray that God will give us the patience of the saints in dealing with our children. There are many promises that can be claimed. Fathers, as well as mothers, need to be claiming most of them. Our society here in America has fallen apart, and our children will not find many appropriate role models. Let us resolve by the grace of God through the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives to be the proper role models for our own precious children and for all the children everywhere. ❀

References:

- ¹ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 149.
- ² *Our High Calling*, 46.



Though He Slay Me

Adam Reiswig

Imagine what it must have been like on the morning of October 22, 1844. Picture the small companies of men, women, and children as they headed for the open fields and mountaintops in the very early morning hours of that day. Despite the cold chill in the air, you can hear songs of praise and gladness coming from many areas. As the dawn comes on, many are seen on their knees in what appears to be most earnest prayer.

Why are they here? This is no common gathering! This is to be the greatest day in the history of the earth—that day which Christians have much hoped for and awaited for nearly 2000 years! Can you just picture the excitement and joy of those gathered throughout the countryside? Oh, how high their hopes must have soared that day!

But, oh, how their spirits must have been crushed as the clock struck midnight that night, and they finally realized that their dear and most precious Saviour was not going to come that day! It was truly

the bitterest of disappointments. How could God not come after all they had ventured on that hope? Why would He allow their hopes to be thus crushed? Had He abandoned them to the ridicule of the world? What were they to do now? Oh, those poor souls!

And yet my mind is drawn to another time of trials that is yet to come upon this beloved church. The Spirit of Prophecy tells us that “the whole world is to be stirred with enmity against Seventh-day Adventists, because they will not yield homage to the Papacy, by honoring Sunday, the institution of this antichristian power.”¹

Are you ready for these tests? Are you prepared now to pass through that “time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation”? Daniel 12:1. We are told that the times just ahead of us are to be far worse than the terrible and bloody French Revolution—much worse even than the incredible massacre in Jerusalem when the Romans utterly destroyed it. Surely

our time of trouble draws near. However, God in His mercy is already working for us to prepare us for those trying times which the faithful of the Lord must pass through.

Have you ever had your hopes crushed? Have you ever felt tried or tempted to the uttermost? What was your response? How did you react? How do you find God’s leading in the midst of a trial or a temptation?

The fact is, He has been testing you today, yesterday, and the day before. Every time we are irritated by a spouse or sibling, every time we are perplexed by some situation, every time things do not happen as we would prefer, we must learn to recognize God’s blessings! Yes, *blessings!* How few Christians seem to understand this fundamental and important concept on an experiential level!

So often we hear Christians of even the most conservative caliber complain or worry about this or that small thing. What good can

such words possibly do? How do they affect those about us? Jeremiah asks, "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" Jeremiah 12:5. A serious question indeed!

It is quite within God's power to give each of His converted children a perfectly peaceful walk during our short stay in this world of sin. However, He sees here an opportunity to do something for us that is truly wonderful—to build us up into His likeness! What an incredible privilege it is to have the Lord and Majesty of the universe take a personal interest in us and our growth!

Temptations, Trials, and Tribulations—Why?

We are told in scripture that "there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 Corinthians 10:13. There does not fall upon us one trial, one temptation, one little problem for which God has not already made a way of escape for us. We can thus view every trial and temptation as a promise of God for deliverance.

But to begin with, why would God need to allow these trials to come our way?—Because of our sinful lives. We are strongly bent toward evil, and it is God's greatest joy to restore in us His perfect image! Let us look at what the servant of the Lord has to say: "The furnace fires are not to destroy, but to refine, ennoble, sanctify. . . . In the trials that come to us we should see the evidences that the Lord's eye is upon us, and that He means to draw us to Himself. It is not the whole, but the wounded, who need a physician. . . . The fact that we are called upon to endure trial, proves that the Lord sees something in us

very precious, which He desires to develop. If He saw in us nothing whereby He might glorify His name, He would not spend time in refining us. . . . Christ does not cast worthless stones into His furnace. It is valuable ore that He tests. The blacksmith puts the iron and steel into the fire that he may know what manner of metal they are. The Lord allows His chosen ones to be placed in the furnace of affliction, in order that He may see what temper they are of, and whether He can mold and fashion them for His work. It may be that much work needs to be done in your character-building, that you are a rough stone which must be squared and polished

working in our life, and invite Him to live in us—to give us the peace that passeth all understanding so that we can overcome all things—then we will come off the victors and be granted a seat on the heavenly throne. Do we truly understand the magnitude of that statement? What an incredible gift in exchange for the short time of temptations and trials we have in this world! Truly heaven is cheap enough!

James tells us, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may

What an incredible gift in exchange for the short time of temptations and trials we have in this world! Truly heaven is cheap enough!

before it can fill a place in God's temple. . . . And be assured that He will not strike one useless blow. His every blow is struck in love, for your eternal happiness. . . . It is these very difficulties that bring us into the audience-chamber of the Most High. We may seek counsel of One who is infinite in wisdom. Through conflict the spiritual life is strengthened. Trials well borne will develop steadfastness of character, and precious spiritual graces."²

Jesus says, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Revelation 3:19–21. What a promise! Can you see the line of reasoning there? It is God's infinite love for us that causes Him to use our trials as a way of driving sin out of our hearts. Then, if we accept His

be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." James 1:2–4. And Peter also admonishes, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." 1 Peter 4:12–13.

Are we not treated better than was our Lord? We shall never be called to endure the terrible sufferings that He passed through for us. How unworthy we are!

When we are called to endure these things we must remember also not to look for ways to avoid the trial—through compromise or neglect of duty. We cannot see the end from the beginning as does Jesus. We cannot always see the benefits or reasons for what happens; however, we must always have absolute trust in Christ's leading. He has promised that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his

purpose." Romans 8:28. Also God has said, "Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." Psalm 55:22. Therefore, if ever we are moved, it will be because of our own doings and never because of God's.

Only God Can Accomplish This Perfect Work in Us

Now, since we can see the benefits of trials, whether great or small, are we then to "help" God by putting ourselves in the way of temptations and trials? Never! Only God Himself, our Author and Finisher, can do this work. Any time we place ourselves in the way of temptation, we weaken ourselves toward sin. Only God, through His perfect wisdom, can

have with Him every moment: "I am the true vine. . . Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." John 15:1, 4. What an intimate union is here described! What He is describing for us is a life perfectly balanced between faith and works—between right thinking and right acting—and always given to much prayer.

"Pray in your closet, and as you go about your daily labor let your heart be often uplifted to God. It was thus that Enoch walked with God. These silent prayers rise like precious incense before the throne of grace. Satan cannot overcome him whose heart is thus stayed upon God. . . . Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares,

be swept away, it will bring rich returns. Integrity, firmness, and perseverance are qualities that all should seek earnestly to cultivate; for they clothe the possessor with a power which is irresistible—a power which makes him strong to do good, strong to resist evil, strong to bear adversity."⁶ This is precisely the strength and quality of character that we must desire.

Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." How is this? What was his secret to having this powerful relationship with Christ? He reveals it in the preceding verses: "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound . . . both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need." Philippians 4:11–13. That is it! In every trial, temptation, perplexity, irritation, annoyance, and frustration—as well as in every joy and happiness—we are to express our thanks to God. All that He allows to come our way is for our best good.

What do you do if you find yourself falling?—Repent, and in the most humble of attitudes come to God asking for forgiveness. Claim His numerous promises for strength, and then move forward with perfect trust in His Word—that He will do in you and for you exactly what He has promised—no matter what your emotions may tell you.

What do you do as you find yourself being tempted and tried?—Ask God to remind you of the great sacrifice of Calvary. As you behold the Lamb of God, bleeding and beaten and hanging helplessly upon that cruel cross, let your heart be broken and subdued to the will of God. Christ endured this amazing pain and agony of soul that not one of His children need be overcome by Satan. Claim the very fact that your trial is evidence that Christ will help you. Remember times in the past when you have been the victor by God's grace, and remind Him of them.

The Spirit of Prophecy tells us that God is especially pleased

In every trial, temptation, perplexity, irritation, annoyance, and frustration—as well as in every joy and happiness—we are to express our thanks to God. All that He allows to come our way is for our best good.

see what we can and cannot endure. "We are not to try to do the work of the Potter. Our part is to yield ourselves to be molded by the Master Worker."³

Do not worry then; that which is best for us will come. Our job is simply to learn how to surrender our will and our desires to Christ on a moment-by-moment basis so that when trying situations do arise we are secure in Christ. But how do we surrender to Christ?

A Walk of Prayer, Faith, and Works

The key to overcoming all things is the surrender of the will—perfect surrender. It was perfect surrender to the will of His Father that enabled Christ to live a life that was spotless. Jesus was our Example in all things, and He said, "I can of mine own self do nothing." John 5:30.

Further on, Jesus illustrates by parable the connection that we must

and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. 'The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.' James 5:11. . . . Let the soul be drawn out and upward, that God may grant us a breath of the heavenly atmosphere. We may keep so near to God that in every unexpected trial our thoughts will turn to Him as naturally as the flower turns to the sun."⁴

We are told to "always act from principle, never from impulse. . . . The only security for any soul is right thinking. As a man 'thinketh in his heart, so is he.' Proverbs 23:7."⁵

We know that our characters consist of our thoughts and feelings, but there is more: "A good character is a capital of more value than gold or silver. It is unaffected by panics or failures, and in that day when earthly possessions shall

when we bring before Him past mercies as a reason why He should now help us. At the moment a trial begins to work on you, immediately surrender it to God. Thank Him for the privilege of growing more like Him, and for allowing you to share in Christ's sufferings. Move forward in faith, trusting implicitly that He will bring about the needed victory. You can never be victorious of your own accord. It is all Christ. "If you make God your strength, you may, under the most discouraging circumstances, attain a *height and breadth* of Christian perfection which you hardly think it possible to reach."⁷

"We are to grow daily in spiritual loveliness. We shall fail often in our efforts to copy the Divine Pattern. We shall often have to bow down to weep at the feet of Jesus, because of our shortcomings and mistakes; but we are not to be discouraged; we are to pray more fervently, believe more fully, and try again with more steadfastness to grow into the likeness of our Lord. As we distrust our own power, we shall trust the power of our Redeemer, and render praise to God, who is the health of our countenance, and our God."⁸ This is

what it means to walk the Christian walk.

As we understand more fully that everything that happens to us can actually be a blessing, we will lose our murmurings—we will stop our complainings. We will begin to grow in our Christian walk as we had never dreamed possible. As the events in this old sinful world wrap up, if we "endure unto the end" (Matthew 24:13), we will take our place among the redeemed. We will truly develop into the sons and daughters of God: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Revelation 7:14-17.

Truly, what a wonderful future is in store for God's faithful people!

Jesus is almost here! The signs of the end are everywhere in our world. The end-time prophecies of the Bible are daily being fulfilled. All you need to do is to pick up a newspaper to see overwhelming evidence of the nearness of the end.

We *can* be ready! It is completely within our grasp to prepare for the trials that are just before us and by the grace of Christ to gain a character that will enable us to pass through this world and into the kingdom of heaven. I want that more than anything! What about you? Will you allow God to so work in your life that you can say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him"? Job 13:15. As we submit daily to the workings of Christ, I know we will soon meet together by the tree of life. May the Lord help us! "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Revelation 22:20. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. ✨

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- ¹ *Maranatha*, 217. (All emphasis supplied by author unless otherwise noted.)
- ² *Signs of the Times*, August 18, 1909.
- ³ *The Ministry of Healing*, 472.
- ⁴ *Steps to Christ*, 98-100.
- ⁵ *The Ministry of Healing*, 491.
- ⁶ *Maranatha*, 223.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 226.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 227.

THE BATTLE FOR THE MIND

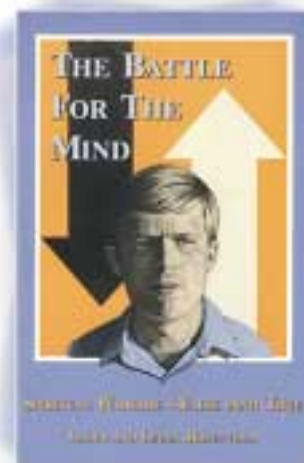
by Lloyd and Leola Rosenvold

During the past thirty years there has arisen among Seventh-day Adventists a movement of people who claim to have power to cast out demons through exorcism. Along with this is the "messenger" movement, in which many claim to receive heavenly messages for the remnant church. When these people claim Biblical authority for their activities, how can we know if these manifestations are really from God? *The Battle for the Mind* takes this question seriously, examining the Scriptures to discern truth from error.

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Legislators Honor Roman Catholics

News Item: “The controversy over a new chaplain for the U.S. House of Representatives took a bizarre twist yesterday as Republican legislators pushed through a resolution honoring the Roman Catholic school system.

“‘One could ask, why is this being done?’ said Rep. Jerry Kleczka (D-Wis.). ‘We have had Catholic School Week celebrated in this country for years and years. I hope that same level of pro-Catholicism exists when the House later this month has before it the appointment of a chaplain.’” *American Atheists Flashline*, February 4, 2000.

News Item: “The House of Representatives voted almost unanimously on Tuesday to award New York Roman Catholic Cardinal John O’Connor the Congressional Gold Medal, the body’s highest civilian honor. The only dissenter was Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas). Approval is expected by the Senate next month. . . .

“H.R. 3557 was introduced on January 31, 2000 – and the timing may be particularly significant. The measure was proposed in the midst of a controversial and divisive debate over selecting the next official Chaplain of the House of Representatives. It is an issue which has led to accusations of sectarian bias, political bone-throwing, and even anti-Catholic discrimination.

“Indeed, H.R. 3557 is the second piece of ‘Catholic friendly’ legislation which has come out of the House in the last 11 days. Is it just coincidence?” *Ibid.*, February 17, 2000.

Prophetic Perspective: It is sad to see the present course of our once great Protestant nation. “If any nation might justly be expected to keep clear of Romish influences, the

United States of America should be the one above all others, as it is constitutionally pledged to have nothing at all to do toward ‘an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.’ Yet this nation is in nowise behind the others in paying assiduous court to Rome.” *The Great Controversy*, 1888 edition, Appendix, 687. Certainly the above quotation describes the current situation very concisely. The United States of America is rapidly fulfilling the specifications of Revelation 13.

Growing Vatican Diplomacy

News Item: “In almost every edition of the weekly Vatican newspaper *L’Osservatore Romano*, we can find, accompanied by a photo, an account of an exchange of diplomatic credentials between the Vatican as a unique political-spiritual entity and one or other nation of the world. Very few are the countries with whom the Vatican does not have some kind of diplomatic relationship.” *National Catholic Register*, January 30–February 5, 2000.

News Item: “Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat is set to sign an agreement that will give the Roman Catholic church an official footing in Jerusalem. . . .

“The Palestinians’ agreement recognizes Roman Catholic property in ‘areas where Israeli legislation is in effect’ – a formula which includes east Jerusalem. . . .

“The agreement would also establish for the first time a legal framework to provide services and security to Catholic churches in Palestinian-controlled areas,’ a Palestinian official said.

“Palestinian official Emile Jarjoui said the agreement would ‘regulate the relationship between the Palestinian Authority and the Catholic churches in Jerusalem.’

“He added: ‘The agreement would also state the Vatican’s

position regarding Jerusalem, the peace process and Palestinian rights.’” *BBC News*, February 15, 2000.

Prophetic Perspective: These two news items point out another aspect of fulfilling prophecy. As the prophecy declares, the nations of the world will follow after Rome—Revelation 13:3 states that “all the world wondered after the beast.” “The influence of Rome in the countries that once acknowledged her dominion is still far from being destroyed. And prophecy foretells a restoration of her power.” *The Great Controversy*, 579.

Churches and Adventists Building Bridges to Rome

News Item: “Black Pentecostals say they can learn from the Roman Catholic Church. Leaders of 27 denominations, members of the Joint College of African-American Pentecostal Bishops, will travel to Rome this week to visit the Vatican and perhaps meet with the pope, the *Chicago Tribune* said. The bishops said it is time to recover some of the ancient traditions practiced by the Catholic Church.

“‘I think we can learn from each other,’ Larry Trotter of the Sweet Holy Spirit Full Gospel Baptist Church in Chicago said. ‘We come with a fervor and fire they may be missing, but they come with order and structure we may be missing.’ The bishops will attend a three-day seminar at the Pontifical North American College, a seminary for U.S. Catholics, and will attend a general audience and a healing Mass with the pope, the *Tribune* said. They also might have a short personal visit with the pontiff. . . .

“‘The shock to me was that these Pentecostals – these charismatic, tongue-speaking people – all wanted to go to the Vatican,’ J. Delano Ellis of Cleveland said. He is a friend of Cleveland Catholic Bishop Anthony Pilla, who helped



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arrange the trip. 'We are part of the body of Christ, and we want to grow closer to other parts of the body of Christ. It's time to build some bridges and tear down some walls,' Ellis said." *Religion Today*, February 7, 2000.

News Item: "Members of the London Adventist Credit Union prayed in one of the chapels in St Peter's, the Vatican, during their ten-day tour of Italy.

"The party of forty-eight members and friends left north London on a luxury coach, crossed the Channel to Calais and drove to Metz. Among the highlights of their continental tour were visits to Venice, Pompeii, Assisi and Florence." Dr. Albert A. C. Waite, *Messenger*, Volume 105, Number 3, February 11, 2000.

News Item: " 'The Seventh-day Adventist Church cannot be treated either as a "new religious movement," or as a sect,' declares a joint statement drawn by the Roman Catholic Church and the Adventist Church in Poland.

"Recognizing each other's autonomy and independence, the document was issued following 15 years of dialogue aimed at better understanding of the teachings and practices of the Catholic and the Adventist Churches, as well as improving relations without compromising each other's identity.

"The document cites the fact that 'relations between Catholics and Adventists have not been best in the past.' The statement was signed by representatives of the Churches, including Pastor Wladyslaw Polok, president of the Adventist Church in Poland, and Archbishop Alfons Nossol, chairman of the Polish Episcopate's Commission for Ecumenical Affairs." *Adventist News Network*, February 15, 2000.

Prophetic Perspective: Saddest of all is the ecumenical alliances

being formed between Rome and the Protestant denominations. But more specifically, the ecumenicalism of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with Catholicism causes us great pain of heart.

"The church that holds to the Word of God is irreconcilably separated from Rome. Protestants were once thus apart from this great church of apostasy, but they have approached more nearly to her, and are still in the path of reconciliation to the Church of Rome. Rome never changes. Her principles have not altered in the least. She has not lessened the breach between herself and Protestants; they have done all the advancing. But what does this argue for the Protestantism of this day? It is the rejection of Bible truth which makes men approach to infidelity. It is a backsliding church that lessens the distance between itself and the Papacy." *Signs of the Times*, February 19, 1894.

Fierce Solar Storms Expected

News Item: "A million miles from the earth, NASA's Advanced Composition Explorer (ACE) spacecraft suddenly found itself under assault. Late in January, the tiny, instrument-packed spacecraft was buffeted by an exceptionally powerful burst of particles spewed out by the sun. In the space-environment control room at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) headquarters in Boulder, Colo., alarms sounded. 'All of a sudden, a blast wave of solar wind showed up at the ACE spacecraft,' says NOAA's Joe Hirman, 'as dense as any we've seen, and, bam, 30 minutes later the earth's magnetic field got hit hard.'

"A few days earlier, the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory (SOHO), high above the earth, had captured images of another solar phenomenon—an unusually large prominence, a loop of fiery gases

800,000 miles wide, erupting from the sun's surface. It was also recording increasing numbers of flares—exceptionally hot blotches on the solar surface—and a proliferation of sunspots migrating inexorably toward the sun's equator.

"To astronomers, such events signal an approaching solar maximum, a period of great turbulence that roils the sun every 11 years or so. The last solar max occurred in 1989. Now the sun, right on schedule, seems headed toward a peak of activity later this year.

"During solar maximums, space weather becomes stormy. The normally benign sun pounds the earth mercilessly with ultraviolet radiation, X rays and floods of charged particles, distorting the planet's protective magnetic field and inducing powerful electric currents that can wreak havoc not only with spacecraft but also [with] many aspects of terrestrial life." *Time*, February 14, 2000.

Prophetic Perspective: "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. More and more as the days go by we may expect to see the upheavals of nature and other catastrophes. The end of all things is at hand, let us prepare to meet our Creator!

Religious Liberty Prayer Alert:

The Mitchell v. Helms case is pending in the Supreme Court of the United States. At stake is the role of the state in funding and monitoring religious schools and entities. A decision is expected by June. Please keep this case in your prayers, so our freedoms will be maintained and the wall of separation between church and state will not be lowered further. Information for this prayer alert was adapted from *Freedom Alert*, Winter 1999. ✨

The **UNIFICATION** of

the Church of **ROME**

WITH

the Church of **ENGLAND**

Colin Standish

For many years there have been clear signals that the Church of England is moving toward reunification with the Church of Rome. Now predictions are being made that this reunification could be completed as early as this year. In December 1999, while ministering in Australia, I was alerted to the great significance of some of the events that have been transpiring over the last year in Great Britain—events that are designed to set up this historic and gravely significant event.

To understand the situation we must first understand a little of the history that led the Church of England to separate from Rome. For centuries before the separation between the two churches, there had been uneasy relations between England and Rome. Long gone there was a close liaison between the Roman Church and the English Church—a liaison which had reached its zenith in the twelfth

century during the reign of Edward the Confessor. His total loyalty to Rome made him the darling of the popes of that era.

By the thirteenth century, under the rule of the very unpopular King John, who a year before his death signed the Magna Carta in 1215, there had developed a significant schism between Rome and the Monarch of England.

However, after his ignominious defeat at the hands of the French, John humbly accepted the overriding power of the pope. But excesses of the Papacy began to cause great ferment in England and discontent with Rome.

By the fourteenth century England was ripe for reformation. The heavy papal taxes levied against the English led many to question the true role of the Papacy in the leadership of Christianity. It was during this time that John Wycliffe—often called the Morning Star of the Reformation—under-

stood the cruel and despotic control exerted in England by the Papacy. At the same time the Papacy was exhibiting the most fearful wickedness and gross crimes, while still claiming that the pope was the vicar of Christ and the successor of Peter. Also during this period there were two, and even occasionally three, claimants of the papal throne. The Papacy had been set up for a number of years in Avignon, France. But when Urban VI became the pope he reestablished the see back in Rome.

Ecclesiastical turmoil was everywhere. The new pope, Urban VI, returned the seat of the Papacy to Rome after 70 years of “exile” in Avignon. But many of the cardinals rebelled against Urban’s strict discipline. They returned to Avignon and crowned the Bishop of Geneva, Robert of Cambray, as Pope Clement VII. Now there were two popes! That year was 1378. For 31 years, both Rome and Avignon

continued to elect popes; each one claiming to be the vicar of Christ; each claiming to be the infallible successor to Peter; each claiming that the other was the antichrist!

In England, a powerful priest who was the rector of Lutterworth, John Wycliffe, agreed with both of them:

“The fiend no longer reigns in one, but in two priests that men may the more easily overcome them both in Christ’s name. Now is antichrist divided, and one part fights against the other.”¹

Wycliffe survived what seemed like certain martyrdom because of the support of the powerful barons, and the occasionally open support of the king, who was only too anxious to rid himself of the excessive financial demands made upon England by the pope. But this reformation was much more than simply a reaction to the unreasonable demands of Rome. Wycliffe brought a deep and earnest study of the Scriptures, and the Lollards, who were his followers, carried his messages around England. Wycliffe, for the first time in England’s history, translated the Holy Scripture into the English language, and, while it was not a perfect translation, for it had been a translation from the corrupt Latin Vulgate; nevertheless, for the first time there were a handful of copies of the Bible that could be read in the English language.

Yet, it would be too strong to say that the Reformation had reached such a pinnacle that the Church of England had rejected the Papacy. Still powerful were the medieval fears of divine retribution that most Englishmen believed would occur should they sever their allegiance to Rome. Thus England was to be in the clutches of Rome for another century and one-half before the Reformation was to burst into full life.

In some ways the development of the sixteenth century Reformation was of deep embarrassment to the Anglican heritage. Henry VIII was one of the most profligate kings of England, and the evidence of history attests to the fact that the

establishment of the Church of England, independent of the Church of Rome, resulted from the unbiblical desire of the king to divorce his Roman Catholic, Spanish wife, Catherine of Aragon.

Tragic though this event was, we must not allow it to cloud the fact that there were many Protestants developing in England at the time. Some Protestants had inherited the foundation laid by men such as Wycliffe, Huss, and Jerome. Others were strongly influenced by the emerging Reformation on the continent under the leadership of men such as Luther, Malancthon, and Zwingli. The separation of the king from Rome facilitated the rapid growth of the Reformation that already was strongly developing in the realm.

reign of over forty years. Once again Protestant freedom was restored. However, it is wholly inaccurate to conclude that freedom of religion was now achieved in England. The Anglican Church proved itself to be only a little less persecutive of those who did not conform to her teachings and practices than had the Roman Catholic Church. Some Catholics lost their lives, and even more cruel at times were the punishments inflicted upon Protestant dissenters.

Upon the death of Queen Elizabeth, however, a serious uncertainty occurred. Elizabeth was called the Virgin Queen because she did not marry. Indeed, the Colony of Virginia received its name in honor of the unmarried status of this queen.

The Anglican Church proved itself to be only a little less persecutive of those who did not conform to her teachings and practices than had the Roman Catholic Church.

However, tragedy struck the emerging Protestants when the only son of Henry VIII, Edward VI, a sickly youth, died after a six-year reign. Because there was no other male heir to the throne, Catherine of Aragon’s daughter, Roman Catholic Mary, took the throne, and she immediately set about the ruthless persecution of Protestant leaders—earning her the title of “Bloody Queen Mary.” During her relatively short reign, such luminaries as the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, and Bishops Ridley and Latimer were burned at the stake.

Today a cross in the middle of a road in Oxford marks the spot where these three men rendered up their lives as a testimony to their loyalty to their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

But thankfully, Mary’s reign was relatively short, and her younger sister, Elizabeth, the daughter of Queen Ann Bollyn, began her long

There being no heir to succeed her, the government of England was placed in the great dilemma of choosing a new monarch. The crown fell upon the head of a distant relative of Queen Elizabeth, James VI of Scotland. Accepting the invitation to add the English crown to his Scottish crown, James made a triumphal journey from Edinburgh to London where he became James I of England. But he brought with him the distinctive beliefs of the Scottish monarchs in the concept of the “divine right of kings.” This was a concept that sat very uneasily with the English people and caused no insignificant amount of conflict.

However, during the reign of this Scottish king, one of the greatest treasures that could ever be given to the nation was achieved in the presentation of the Authorized Version of the Bible. Eschewing the corrupted Western Alexandrian Text—the darling of the Papacy—they used only the Eastern Syriac

Texts, which had been held in great purity over many centuries.

However, events were to change rapidly upon the death of James I. In 1625 his son, Charles, ascended the throne, only to be beheaded twenty-four years later for what was considered to be his treason against the English people. For about eleven years England adopted the Commonwealth of Oliver Cromwell and his son.

However, once again there developed a craving for a king to rule over them, and Charles II, son of Charles I, ascended the throne in 1660. This led to great tragedy for the nonconformists, including the Baptists, and Sabbath-keepers. One notable Sabbath preacher, John James, was hanged, drawn, and quartered in 1661 for what was declared to be treason against the new king.

it was the Act of Toleration, which plainly discriminated against Roman Catholics ever holding regal office in the kingdom. But it was the Act of Settlement, in 1701, that clarified “once and for all” that the monarch could not be Roman Catholic nor could his queen be Roman Catholic. It stated unequivocally that the monarch was not only head of state but also the head of the Church of England. This Act of Settlement, voted two hundred and ninety-nine years ago, has remained unchallenged for the succeeding three centuries.

However, there are moves afoot now to change the Act. The Act of Settlement has recently been reviewed by the Labor government of Great Britain. Because of its ramifications for other English ordinances, there has been some hesitancy to go forward. Yet, the

the Papacy in the sixteenth century, a Roman Catholic would assume the throne of England. Such a change could affect Prince Charles, heir to the British throne, whose girlfriend, Camilla Parker-Bowles, is a Roman Catholic.

Preparations to Reunite

A number of dramatic events were required before such a bold initiative could be successful. In the last two years or so, the Blair Government of England has effected these events. First and foremost, the most active countries of Great Britain had to be given their separate parliaments. Thus Scotland now has its own parliament, and Ulster (Northern Ireland) has more recently been given its own parliament, as has Wales. Few of us have perceived the deeper and far-reaching implications of these “generous” acts of the British Parliament. Prime Minister Tony Blair full well knew that any effort to reunite the Church of England with the Church of Rome would receive strong opposition from Scotland, Wales, and Ulster. The separate parliaments of these three nations in Great Britain will greatly facilitate Prime Minister Tony Blair’s clear desire to establish the reunification of the Church of England and the Church of Rome under the primacy of the pope.

Another unprecedented move from the Blair government was to create many additional life-peers (that is peers who would be lords during their lifetime, but through whom hereditary succession would not take place). Not only have many more life-peers been created in recent times but also hereditary peers no longer have the right to sit in the House of Lords—the British upper house of Parliament. Blair had probably evaluated that the hereditary peers would have posed vigorous opposition to the reunification of the Church of England with the Church of Rome.

It has long been suspected that Tony Blair is a covert Roman Catholic. Of course, under the present constraints, no Roman

The revision of the Act of Settlement is designed to permit the reunification of the Church of England with the Church of Rome under the leadership of the Roman pontiff.

Charles II’s profligate reign of twenty-five years saw continual persecution of minority religious groups. Upon his death, his younger brother, James II, ascended the throne of England in 1685. However, shortly thereafter he was converted to the Roman Catholic faith—a change of religion that now was intolerable in England. In what was called the bloodless revolution, James II was forced to abdicate as king, and then his daughter, Mary, and his son-in-law, Prince William of Orange, from the Netherlands, were brought over to take up the English throne. William and Mary reigned co-jointly.

England Cuts Ties With Rome

At this time it was determined never again to come under the autocratic rulership of the Papacy. The British Bill of Rights was enacted in 1689, and associated with

push today for amendments to the Act of Settlement continues to strengthen. Such an amendment would separate church and state in Great Britain.

Now for Seventh-day Adventists the separation of church and state in Great Britain might seem a cause for great rejoicing. This rejoicing would be justified if it were not for the fact that the revision of the Act of Settlement is designed to permit the reunification of the Church of England with the Church of Rome under the leadership of the Roman pontiff.

Should such an amendment to the Act of Settlement take place, if she so chose, Elizabeth II could become a Roman Catholic monarch. If that happened, or one of her heirs were converted to the Roman Catholic faith, it would mean that for the first time since Queen Elizabeth I was excommunicated by

Catholic could serve Great Britain as Prime Minister. However, while Blair has still maintained his membership in the Church of England, his lawyer wife is an active Roman Catholic, and, on not infrequent occasions, the Prime Minister has attended mass with her. It has been reported more recently in the British press that he has attended mass at the Roman Catholic Westminster Cathedral (not to be confused with the Anglican Westminster Abbey) on some occasions without his wife. Therefore, it seems that we can predict with a good deal of confidence that, once the British Parliament amends the Act of Settlement, Tony Blair will openly embrace the Roman Catholic faith.

In a letter to the editor of the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* (Australia), published on December 6, 1999, John

McNicol confidently predicted that in an announcement by the pope at the Vatican, Rome and Canterbury will be united on June 4 of this year. June 4 happens to be the queen's birthday and a holiday in Britain. While this is only speculation, nevertheless, it takes little imagination to predict that this reunification will take place in the near future.

We are certainly in the closing moments of this earth's history. The barriers between Protestantism and Catholicism are breaking down on every hand. In our own church there are dramatic moves towards the ecumenical movement—moves that will have devastating consequences for those who have not wholly surrendered their will to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We are seeing the step-by-step fulfillment of the prophecies of Revelation 13 and also the vindication of

the explanation of these prophecies in the book *The Great Controversy*.

We have not followed cunningly devised fables. And yet the vast majority of our people are blind to the nearness of the end. They are, like the people in Noah's day—unconcerned about the impending crisis—and, like the multitudes to whom Noah witnessed, they will be swept away and ultimately lose their eternal life. Surely this is a wake-up call to even the faithful in our church to "labor with earnest, ceaseless energy for the purifying of the church and the warning of the world."² The time has come for us to "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon us." Isaiah 60:1. ✠

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Immune System Boosters

We know much about our respiratory system, skeletal system, cardiovascular system, and digestive system. However, when it comes to our immune system, we have only recently begun discovering many of its wonders. The immune system is very different from most of the other body systems—which are based on a group of organs, and structures all basically dedicated to one main purpose.

Take the skeletal system, for instance. It consists of bones and their joints, which hold us upright and facilitate movement. But the immune system, which has no central control organ, interfaces intimately with all other body

laws of health.”¹ Keeping our immune system strong prevents most illness, as it was created to deal with any problem. It is when our immune system is weakened that we succumb to disease. And since it has to do with virtually every body system, there are many things we can do to keep it strong. Using nature’s remedies to combat illness does not leave the side effects of drugs, yet they deal with the actual cause of the illness instead of just masking the symptoms. Moreover, careful regard for the laws of health after the illness begins is still the best way to regain health quickly. “It is God who has made the provision that nature shall work to restore the

cells are released into the blood sooner than they would be otherwise, and they can often prevent illness, or at least minimize its symptoms. One study showed that a regular walking program decreased by one-half the length of time a cold lasted.⁵ Another study done at Loma Linda University found that 20 to 40 minutes of exercise two to four times a week increases the body’s natural virus-killing cells.⁶ Exercise is primarily a preventive measure. After illness sets in, rest should largely replace exercise.

2. Get regular sunshine exposure. “Perfect cleanliness, plenty of sunlight . . . are essential to freedom from disease.”⁷

Ultraviolet light from the sun kills many germs on contact, and actually increases the number and effectiveness of circulating white blood cells. This is especially helpful after illness has set in, but it can also be helpful in preventing illness. Factory workers who worked under low intensity ultraviolet light were absent from work half as many days as those who were not exposed regularly to ultraviolet light.⁸

3. Get lots of fresh, outdoor air. “Fresh air will prove far more beneficial to sick persons than medicine, and is far more essential to them than their food.”⁹

Colds are largely caught while indoors, where the air is predominately composed of positively charged ions. Fresh, outdoor air has a five to ten times higher concentration of negative ions as indoor air. Most germs do not survive long in the presence of negative ions. One study showed that absenteeism was 16 times higher among employees working

While the immune system may still have many unknowns, there are some very simple ways we have discovered to keep it functioning at its peak.

systems. It is mobile enough to reach every cell in every corner of the body, and it operates by way of interactions and secretions of various organs with a variety of white blood cells. Of the 100 trillion cells that make up the human body, only one in every one hundred is a white blood cell. It is the immune system that responds to fight off any disease-causing micro-organism, and that engineers the healing process. Any insult to the body—from a small paper cut, to an allergen, to a cancer virus—calls the immune system into action.

“Disease never comes without a cause. The way is prepared, and disease invited, by disregard of the

exhausted powers. The power is of God. He is the Great Healer.”²

While the immune system may still have many unknowns, there are some very simple ways we have discovered to keep it functioning at its peak to prevent disease and infection, or deal with each of them when they have not been prevented. Here are a few immune system boosters:

1. Exercise regularly. “Inactivity is a fruitful cause of disease.”³ “Healthful exercise in the open air will . . . help to preserve the body from disease, and will be a great help in spirituality.”⁴

Due to increased circulation during exercise, reserve white blood

in their normal office environment than their fellow employees who had added negative ions in their office.¹⁰

4. Eat simply, or not at all, for a few meals. “In many cases of sickness, the very best remedy is for the patient to fast for a meal or two.”¹¹

Eating simply means eating foods like fresh fruit and plain, whole grain toast. Since they are easy to digest, the body can use more of its energy fighting disease rather than digesting food. Replacing nutritionally empty calories, such as high fat or low fiber foods, often provides—along with those packed with nutrients, such as fresh fruit and plain whole grain bread—nutrients needed in the immune response. Vitamin C, for instance, increases the production of interferon which “interferes” with virus reproduction. “Of all the body’s systems, the immune system responds most sensitively to subtle changes in nutrition status.”¹²

5. Cut out all sugar or sweets. “The free use of sugar in any form tends to clog the system and is not unfrequently a cause of disease.”¹³

Sugar of any kind dramatically decreases the white blood cells’ ability to fight disease. Drinking $\frac{3}{4}$ of a can of pop decreases the number of bacteria that a white blood cell can kill by 25%. One piece of fruit pie decreases it by 60%.

6. Drink plenty of water. “In health and in sickness, pure water is one of Heaven’s choicest blessings. . . . Drunk freely, it helps to supply the necessities of the system and assists nature to resist disease.”¹⁴

The human body is 70% water by weight. Every body function takes place in water—not juice, pop, or coffee! If our body did not recycle the water it uses, we would need to drink 25,000 glasses each day. Amazingly, a sedentary person needs to drink only one ounce of water for every two pounds of body weight to replace daily fluid loss. During illness this should be

increased at least 1/3 to help eliminate the extra waste products and germs. A dehydrated cell cannot fight infection.

7. Use a variety of hydrotherapy treatments. “There are many ways in which water can be applied to relieve pain and check disease.”¹⁵

One aspect most hydrotherapy treatments have in common is that they increase the circulation, which in turn puts more of the elements of the immune system in circulation doing their job. Hot footbaths, hot tub baths, hot and cold showers,

9. Dress warmly in cold weather. “It is impossible to have health when the extremities are habitually cold; for if there is too little blood in them there will be too much in other portions of the body. Perfect health requires a perfect circulation.”¹⁸

If the body does not need to warm itself from the inside, energy is saved to focus on fighting illness. Also, warm clothing improves the circulation, which is the only way of getting the immune system components where they need to be.

In a study involving 400 volunteers, it was found that the group under high stress was twice as likely to develop colds as those under no stress.

and steam baths are a few hydrotherapy treatments helpful in stimulating the immune response. If used at the first sign of symptoms, the immune system responds more quickly than it would if nothing were done. An early response can in many cases prevent the illness.

8. Use no alcohol, tobacco, or caffeine. “When intoxicating liquor is used, the system is not able to resist disease in its original God-given power as a healer.”¹⁶

Alcohol depletes the body of vitamins A, B, and C, which are vital in maintaining a healthy immune response. Even in moderate doses—up to four ounces a day—alcohol dehydrates the body taking out more fluid than it adds.

“If tobacco is used . . . the healing power of nature is weakened to a greater or less extent.”¹⁷

Tobacco smoke destroys vitamins B and C. One cigarette can paralyze the hair-like cilia in your airway that help remove germs for as long as 30 to 40 minutes.

Caffeine, whether in soft drinks, pills, coffee, or tea, not only dehydrates the body but it also intensifies stress and its detrimental effects on the immune system.

10. Minimize stress. “The relation that exists between the mind and the body is very intimate. When one is affected, the other sympathizes. . . . Grief, anxiety, discontent, remorse, guilt, distrust, all tend to break down the life forces and to invite decay and death.”¹⁹

Whether stress is physical or psychological, it stimulates hormones that suppress the body’s immune response. In a study involving 400 volunteers, it was found that the group under high stress was twice as likely to develop colds as those under no stress.²⁰

11. Obtain adequate rest. “Proper periods of sleep and rest and an abundance of physical exercise are essential to health of body and mind.”²¹

“I know from the testimonies given me from time to time for brain workers, that sleep is worth far more before than after midnight. Two hours’ good sleep before twelve o’clock is worth more than four hours after twelve o’clock.”²²

Since many immune substances and activities are at a peak during sleep, adequate sleep is required for good immune system health. The saying “Early to bed, early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and

wise" may be truer than you think (at least the "healthy" and "wise" part!), since the sleep before midnight is twice as beneficial as sleep after midnight.

12. When ill, take herbs instead of antibiotics. "It would have been better if, from the first, all drugs had been kept out of our sanitariums, and use had been made of such simple remedies as are found in pure water, pure air, sunlight, and some of the simple herbs growing in the field. These would be just as efficacious as the drugs used under mysterious names, and concocted by human science. And they would leave no injurious effects in the system."²³

Herbs such as echinacea, garlic, and goldenseal enhance the immune system's activity, rather than overriding it, and they do not have the side effects of antibiotics. A clove of garlic blended in a glass of orange or grapefruit juice is a great way to receive the benefits of garlic without any garlic breath or body odor.

13. Do not be in a rush to bring down a fever. "Nature bears much abuse without apparent resistance; she then arouses and makes a determined effort to remove the effects of the ill-treatment she has

suffered. Her effort to correct these conditions is often manifest in fever and various other forms of sickness."²⁴

Fever is part of a healthy immune response. Bringing it down (unless above 102°), decreases and slows the immune response. One study showed that the white blood cell count almost doubled after having a fever (artificially induced) for 5-6 hours.²⁵ A tepid bath is one of the best ways to bring down a fever if it does need to be lowered.

14. Have a merry heart. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." Proverbs 17:22.

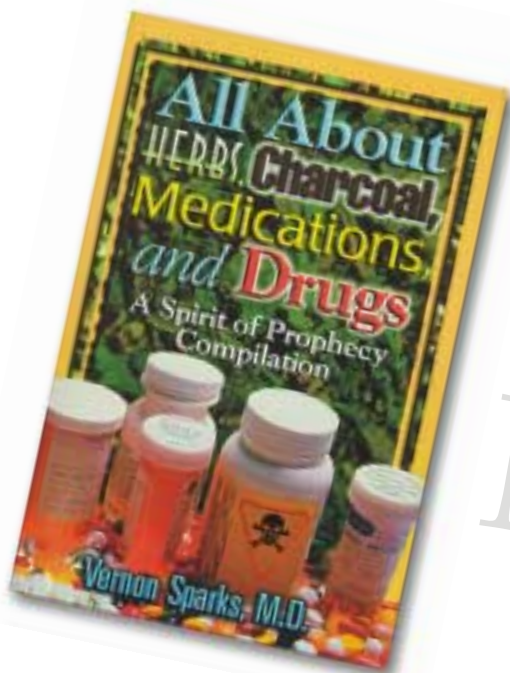
This is especially true regarding the immune function. A depressed mind or attitude means a depressed immune system. "Gratitude, rejoicing, benevolence, trust in God's love and care—these are health's greatest safeguard."²⁶ "Courage, hope, faith, sympathy, love, promote health and prolong life."²⁷

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Keeping our immune system working at its peak is the best way to prevent getting the colds and flu that go around this time of year, as well as treating them if we do succumb to them. ✨

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The Seven Churches

Uriah Smith and James White

In Revelation 2 and 3 are seven short epistles addressed to seven churches. These, like other lines of prophecy in this book, are doubtless to be taken as prophetic, covering the whole gospel dispensation. A few of the reasons for this view are as follows:

There were more churches in Asia than seven. Even if we confine ourselves to that western division of Asia known as Asia Minor, or even that small fraction of Asia Minor where the seven churches were situated which are addressed, there were other important churches in the same territory. Colosse was but a short distance from Laodicea. Miletus was nearer than any of the seven to Patmos, where John had his vision. And Troas, where Paul spent a season with the disciples, was not far from Pergamos.

Why, then, were just seven churches selected out of this number and not all of them addressed, if what is said pertained only to the Christians of those times? The entire book of the Revelation was dedicated to the seven churches. But the prophecy of this book was no more applicable to the seven literal

churches named, than to other Christians in Asia Minor, those, for instance, who dwelt in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Bithynia. Only a small portion of the book of the Revelation could have personally concerned the churches named, or any of the Christians of John's day; for the events it brings to view were mostly so far in the future as to be beyond the lifetime of the generation then living.

Again, the seven stars which the Son of man held in His right hand are declared to be the angels of the seven churches. The angels of the churches doubtless symbolize the ministers of the churches. The fact that the Son of man holds them in His right hand must denote the upholding power, guidance, and protection which He bestows upon these ministers. But are there only seven thus cared for by the Master? Rather, are not all the true ministers of the whole gospel age thus upheld and supported by Him?

Still further, John, looking into the Christian dispensation, saw only seven candlesticks representing seven churches, in the midst of which stood the Son of man. His

position in their midst must denote His presence with them, His watchcare over them, and His searching scrutiny of all their works. But does He thus regard only seven individual churches in this dispensation? Does not this rather represent His position in reference to all the churches in this age?

Why, then, were these particular churches chosen that are mentioned?—Doubtless for the reason that the names of these churches are significant, indicating the religious features of those periods of the gospel age which they respectively represent. If, for these reasons and others which might be adduced, these epistles are prophetic; they naturally apply to seven distinct periods of the gospel age—from the days of John to the end of time.

Let us then see if we can find an application of these epistles, which is both Scriptural and consistent, to seven different portions of the gospel dispensation.

The Church of Ephesus

This word "ephesus" signifies *desirable, chief*; and it may well be

taken as expressive of the character and condition of the church in its first state. Christ tells the members of this church that they have tried them which say they are apostles and are not. This could appropriately be addressed to a church covering the apostolic age. But even before this period ended, the church had begun to lose her first love, and was admonished to repent. The promise to the overcomer (verse 7) reveals the important fact that the tree of life, once here upon the earth, is now in the paradise of God. We understand this period to cover the age of the apostles and their immediate successors—say, to A.D. 100.

prophecy. But more than this, all the churches suffered in those persecutions; and where, then, would be the propriety of singling out one to the exclusion of the others, as alone involved in such a calamity?

The direction to them in verse 10 is to be faithful unto death, not *until*, as some understand it. They were to hold fast even at the expense of life itself, and then they had the promise of a crown of life in the future. The period covered by this church extends from the apostolic age A.D. 100 to the time when the church entered another period in the early part of the fourth century.

taught a plurality of wives, and so forth. The promise to the overcomer in this church is that he shall eat of the hidden manna, and receive a white stone, with a new name written thereon. What that is, it would perhaps be unnecessary, as well as useless, to inquire. Wesley says: “Wouldst thou know what the new name will be? The way to this is plain—overcome. Till then, all thy inquiries are vain.”

The Church of Thyatira

This name signifies *sweet savor of labor*, or *sacrifice of contrition*, and is an appropriate description of the church during a period of oppression and persecution. If the church of Pergamos reached down to the setting up of the Papacy in A.D. 538, the period of the church of Thyatira would naturally extend to the time when the persecuting power of the papal church was restrained by the great Reformation of the 16th century. This was that period of tribulation upon the church mentioned by our Lord in Matthew 24:21, such as it was never to experience again.

The woman Jezebel. See Revelation 2:20. This name is here used figuratively, denoting, probably, false teachers from Rome, some of whom Christians did suffer to preach and teach among them.³ “I will put upon you none other burden.” Verse 24. This, doubtless, refers to their relief from tribulation, the days of which were shortened by the great Reformation, for the elect’s sake. See Matthew 24:22.⁴

The Church of Sardis

The word “sardis” signifies *prince* or *song of joy*, or *that which remains*. For the period covered by this church, we come down this side of the Reformation, and of papal supremacy. By the Sardis church is undoubtedly meant the churches brought out by the great Reformation; and the definition of the name answers well to the condition of the church during this period. What high position has it held! What favor has it had with

Disadvantages in situation are no excuse for wrongs in the church, and this church [Pergamos] maintained some features for which they were severely censured.

The Church of Smyrna

The next address is to the church of Smyrna. The word “smyrna” signifies *myrrh*. It seems, therefore, to be a fit appellation [name] for the church of God when it was about to pass through the fiery furnace of persecution, and prove itself a “sweet smelling savor” unto God. This church was to have tribulation ten days; and if the message addressed to it was prophetic, those days were prophetic, and signified ten years. We have then a notable persecution of ten years’ duration here brought to view. And it is an indisputable fact that the last and most bloody of the ten persecutions under Diocletian continued just ten years, from A.D. 302 to A.D. 312.¹

It would be difficult to make an application of this language on the ground that these messages are not prophetic; for in that case only ten literal days could be meant, and we can hardly suppose that a persecution of only ten days on a single church would be a matter of

The Church of Pergamos

The word “pergamos” signifies *height, elevation*. The church entered into this period when Christianity had secured the throne of the Roman Empire, and Constantine had become a nominal convert to the gospel in A.D. 323,² and extended to the setting up of the Papacy in A.D. 538. The spirit of the world worked mightily in this period; hence the church is addressed as being where Satan’s seat is. Christ takes cognizance of the unfavorable situation of His people during this period. But disadvantages in situation are no excuse for wrongs in the church, and this church [Pergamos] maintained some features for which they were severely censured. They had those in their midst that held the doctrine of Balaam, referring to their falling into spiritual idolatry. They had also those that held to the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. This was a form of heresy said to have originated with one Nicholas, who

the world! But how has pride and popularity grown apace, until spirituality is almost entirely destroyed! . . . The True Witness says, "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." Revelation 3:3. The coming here brought to view is unconditional. By watching they would be prepared for it; and by not watching they would be overtaken as by a thief by this event. This proclamation they have heard in the great Advent movement of the present generation.

In the fifth verse we have some solemn facts stated in regard to the book of life. He that overcometh will not have his name blotted out; and this implies that all those who do not overcome will have their names blotted out from the book of life. This work of blotting out, as we have seen in our investigation of the sanctuary, takes place at the close of Christ's priestly work in heaven. There will be at the conclusion of that work but two classes: one class having their names retained in the Lamb's book of life, and their sins blotted out of the book of God's remembrance; the other having their names blotted from the book of life, and their sins retained to appear against them in the Judgment.

The Church of Philadelphia

The proclamation of the Advent doctrine to this church results in the introduction of another state of the church, called Philadelphia. This word signifies *brotherly love*; and this was the great characteristic of that church brought out by the preaching of the Advent doctrine. To this church, Christ says, "I have set before thee an open door." Revelation 3:8. The great work of the first message brought us to the cleansing of the sanctuary, when the door into the Most Holy was opened, and there was seen the ark of God's testament. See Revelation 11:19. This church has the promise of being kept from the hour of temptation which shall come upon

all the world to try them. This hour of temptation is, doubtless, that brought to view in Revelation 13:14, and in 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10, which will be produced by a still further development of spiritualism, which is already working so mightily in the land. Now, says Christ, "Behold, I come quickly." Revelation 3:11. This period brings us down very near to the time of the second coming of Christ.

The Church of Laodicea

The last message is to the church of Laodicea. The word "laodicea" signifies, *the judging of the people*; or, according to Cruden, *a just people*. And either of these definitions would apply to the time and people between the close of the first message, in 1844, and the end of time; for in this period of the

rich." Verse 18. That is, love and faith working together, hand in hand, to make them rich in good works, and rich toward God. They are counseled to buy white raiment; that is, to put on a robe of righteousness, or have their characters conform wholly to the law of God. They are counseled, also, to anoint their eyes with eyesalve, that they may see. This eyesalve is the unction from on high, the anointing of the Holy Spirit, which gives us true discernment in spiritual things. And God's people, during this time, will be rebuked and chastened by Him until they become zealous, and manifest true repentance.

Christ stands at the door, and knocks; and the promise to him who will open the door is that Christ will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with Christ. This

*He that overcometh will not have his name blotted out;
and this implies that all those who do not overcome will
have their names blotted out from the book of life.*

cleansing of the sanctuary the judgment of the people is going forward, and the result will finally be "a just people"—a people freed from all their sins.

This applies to the last generation of the church; and there is in this testimony that which should startle and arouse us. This church, with the light respecting the soon coming of Christ shining clearly forth, and that great event even at the door, is found in a lukewarm, half-hearted, indifferent condition; and at the same time, the members deceived with the idea that they are rich, and have need of nothing. In this condition they are very offensive to God. Not because in themselves they are worse than other people have been, or are, but because, having greater light, they should occupy a very advanced position. Says the True Witness, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be

denotes a union such as no church has ever before enjoyed; and an outpouring of the Spirit, and an exercising of the heavenly graces beyond anything in the previous experience of the church. This is, without doubt, the arising of the "day star" in "the hearts" of believers, spoken of in 2 Peter 1:19, and the time of refreshing spoken of by Peter in Acts 3:19, which the church is to experience just before the coming of Christ. And they need this work wrought for them to enable them to stand during the fearful scenes with which the world's history shall close.

Here it is, undoubtedly, that the parable of the wedding garment (see Matthew 22:11-13) applies. The king comes in to see the guests, which is an examination of our characters in the sanctuary above. A man is found there not having on

(Continued on page 27)

the Father. The key to victorious Christian living is the moment-by-moment surrender of our will to God.

Sister White wrote, "When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 312.

"And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity with His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His

service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us." Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, 668.

7BG: I John 4:7–8.

Love is the test of our rebirth experience. To be born of God is to receive Christ's divine nature. If we have Christ's divine nature, then we will love one another and even our enemies—because God is love. If we do not love others as Christ loves us, then we are still in the old nature, because the old nature is selfish and is not capable of putting others first. See also Matthew 5:43–45; Romans 5:6–8; John 15:12; 1 Corinthians 13:4–8.

8BG: I John 4:17.

"As he is, so are we in this world." These are among the most precious words in all of Scripture. Of course, we can only be like Jesus if we die to self and allow Him to have full reign in our life. The questions then become: Have I surrendered my appetite to Christ? Have I surrendered my possessions to Christ? Have I surrendered my sex life to Christ? Am I willing to think His thoughts? Am I willing to see people and treat them as He would? Will God have full authority in my life?

My prayer is that all of us will decide to be born of God every day that we might serve Him with our whole heart. God is worthy to have a people fully surrendered to Him—a people who have chosen to have self crucified—a people who have received His divine nature. ❄

The Seven Churches

(Continued from page 25)

the wedding garment, or not prepared to stand the test of the Judgment; he is cast out into outer darkness. And right in this critical time, when our cases in the sanctuary are pending and we are unprepared for that searching test, the True Witness comes to us with an earnest entreaty to buy of Him the white raiment, or to secure, while we may, the wedding garment, to be prepared for the King when He shall come in to see the guests, and to bid those who are ready, to the marriage supper of the Lamb. If we fail to heed this testimony, and so do not provide ourselves with gold, white raiment, and eyesalve, Christ here says, "I will spue thee out of my mouth." Revelation 3:16. The parable says, which is the same thing, that if we are not clothed with the wedding garment, we shall be bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness. Both expressions denote an utter and final rejection.

To the overcomer is here given a promise of sitting with Christ on His throne, as He has overcome and is now sitting with His Father in

His throne. This shows that Christ occupies two thrones; first, the throne of His Father, which He has occupied in conjunction with the Father ever since His ascension to heaven (see Hebrews 8:1; Zechariah 6:12–13); and secondly, the throne of His own kingdom, the throne of His father David, which He will take when He begins His own individual reign, at the close of His priestly work.

These messages to the churches are both interesting and important, as showing the internal history of the church from the days of the apostles to the end of time, and especially important on account of the solemn warning and the practical duties enjoined upon the last church. In this prophecy we are able to trace the history of the church step by step through this dispensation, finding the most accurate agreement between the testimony of God and the time and condition of the different periods of the church. It can thus be shown unmistakably that we have reached the last period—the Laodicean state of the church. And now, under the tremendous pressure of the spirit of the world and of the apostasy that

prevails in these last days, even that people who have the truth for this time, and should feel its searching power, and be animated with its life-giving spirit, are lukewarm—neither cold nor hot. But Christ is at the door; the Judgment is impending; the King is soon coming in to see the guests; how important, then, that some message be given us adapted to our condition and our dangers. Such a message we have in this last address to the church. To give heed to this will be our salvation; to reject it will be our eternal ruin. ❄

Uriah Smith, *Synopsis of the Present Truth* (1884), 190–201.

References:

¹ See *Buck's Theological Dictionary*, 332–333.

² See *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, 391.

³ See Wylie, *History of the Waldenses*.

⁴ Uriah Smith here writes, "Hold fast till I come." This language shows that this period reaches so near the end that some who were numbered with the church of Thyatira, would live to behold the coming of Christ."

Could it be that the "coming" here spoken of is instead the coming of Christ to the Most Holy Place, also spoken of in Daniel 7:9–14? See also Malachi 3:1–3; Matthew 24:39; Mark 13:35–36; *The Great Controversy*, 479–480, 491.



How to Be Saved

Ellen G. White

Penances, mortifications of the flesh, constant confession of sin, without sincere repentance; fasts, festivals, and outward observances, unaccompanied by

of Christ, is worthless. We not only dishonor God by taking this course but we destroy our present and future usefulness. A failure to appreciate the value of the offering

salvation that has been purchased for us at infinite cost. The plan of salvation is not understood to be that through which divine power is brought to man in order that his human effort may be wholly successful.

Those who would be saints in heaven must first be saints upon the earth; for when we leave this earth, we shall take our character with us.

To be pardoned in the way that Christ pardons, is not only to be forgiven, but to be renewed in the spirit of our mind. The Lord says, "A new heart also will I give you." Ezekiel 36:26. The image of Christ is to be stamped upon the very mind, heart, and soul. The apostle says, "But we have the mind of Christ." 1 Corinthians 2:16. Without the transforming process which can come alone through divine power, the original propensities to sin are

true devotion—all these are of no value whatever. The sacrifice of Christ is sufficient; He made a whole, efficacious offering to God; and human effort without the merit

of Christ has a debasing influence; it blights our expectations, and makes us fall short of our privileges; it leads us to receive unsound and perilous theories concerning the

left in the heart in all their strength, to forge new chains, to impose a slavery that can never be broken by human power. But men can never enter heaven with their old tastes, inclinations, idols, ideas, and theories. Heaven would be no place of joy to them; for everything would be in collision with their tastes, appetites, and inclinations, and painfully opposed to their natural and cultivated traits of character.

Happiness is the result of holiness and conformity to the will of God. Those who would be saints in heaven must first be saints upon the earth; for when we leave this earth, we shall take our character with us, and this will be simply taking with us some of the elements of Heaven imparted to us through the righteousness of Christ.¹

When through repentance and faith we accept Christ as our Saviour, the Lord pardons our sins, and remits the penalty prescribed for the transgression of the law. The sinner then stands before God as a just person; he is taken into favor with Heaven, and through the Spirit has fellowship with the Father and the Son.

Then there is yet another work to be accomplished, and this is of a progressive nature. The soul is to be sanctified through the truth. And this also is accomplished through faith. For it is only by the grace of Christ, which we receive through faith, that the character can be transformed.

It is important that we understand clearly the nature of faith. There are many who believe that Christ is the Saviour of the world, that the gospel is true and reveals the plan of salvation, yet they do not possess saving faith. They are intellectually convinced of the truth, but this is not enough; in order to be justified, the sinner must have that faith that appropriates the merits of Christ to his own soul. We read that the devils "believe, and tremble," but their belief does not bring them justification, neither will the belief of those who give a merely intellectual assent to the truths of the Bible bring them the

benefits of salvation. This belief fails of reaching the vital point, for the truth does not engage the heart or transform the character.

In genuine, saving faith, there is trust in God, through the belief in the great atoning sacrifice made by the Son of God on Calvary. In Christ, the justified believer beholds his only hope and Deliverer. Belief may exist without trust, but confidence born of trust cannot exist without faith. Every sinner brought to a knowledge of the saving power of Christ, will make manifest this trust in greater degree as he advances in experience.²

John pointed the people to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world. He said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29. There is a great deal in that "taketh away." The question is,

He will say, "Take away the filthy garments from him. And . . . clothe thee with change of raiment."

Zechariah 3:4. Jesus makes up for our unavoidable deficiencies. Where Christians are faithful to each other, true and loyal to the Captain of the Lord's host, never betraying trusts into the enemy's hands, they will be transformed into Christ's character. Jesus will abide in their hearts by faith.⁴

Just as soon as you commit sin, you should flee to the throne of grace, and tell Jesus all about it. You should be filled with sorrow for sin, because through sin you have weakened your own spirituality, grieved the heavenly angels, and wounded and bruised the loving heart of your Redeemer. When you have asked Jesus in contrition of soul for His forgiveness, believe that He has forgiven

It is the fragrance of the merit of Christ that makes our good works acceptable to God, and it is grace that enables us to do the works for which He rewards us.

Shall we keep on sinning as though it were an impossibility for us to overcome? How are we to overcome?—As Christ overcame, and that is the only way. He prayed to His heavenly Father. We can do the same. . . . When tempted to speak wrong and do wrong, resist Satan and say, I will not surrender my will to your control. I will cooperate with divine power and through grace be conqueror.³

Jesus loves His children, even if they err. They belong to Jesus and we are to treat them as the purchase of the blood of Jesus Christ. Any unreasonable course pursued toward them is written in the books as against Jesus Christ. He keeps His eye upon them, and when they do their best, calling upon God for His help, be assured the service will be accepted, although imperfect.

Jesus is perfect. Christ's righteousness is imputed unto them, and

you. Do not doubt His divine mercy or refuse the comfort of His infinite love.⁵

As we come to feel our utter reliance upon Christ for salvation, are we to fold our hands, and say, "I have nothing to do; I am saved; Jesus has done it all"?—No, we are to put forth every energy that we may become partakers of the divine nature. We are to be continually watching, waiting, praying, and working.⁶

Merits, Faith, and Good Works

Our acceptance with God is sure only through His beloved Son, and good works are but the result of the working of His sin-pardoning love. They are no credit to us, and we have nothing accorded to us for our good works by which we may claim a part in the salvation of our souls. Salvation is God's free gift to the believer, given to him for

Christ's sake alone. The troubled soul may find peace through faith in Christ, and his peace will be in proportion to his faith and trust. He cannot present his good works as a plea for the salvation of his soul.

But are good works of no real value? Is the sinner who commits sin every day with impunity, regarded of God with the same favor as the one who through faith in Christ tries to work in his integrity? The Scripture answers, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:10.

In His divine arrangement, through His unmerited favor, the Lord has ordained that good works shall be rewarded. We are accepted through Christ's merit alone; and the acts of mercy, the

warded at His hands.⁷

God demands of us perfect obedience to His law – the expression of His character. "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Romans 3:31. This law is the echo of God's voice, saying to us, Holier, yes, holier still. Desire the fullness of the grace of Christ; yea, long – hunger and thirst – after righteousness. The promise is, "Ye shall be filled." Luke 6:21; see also Matthew 5:6. Let your heart be filled with an intense longing for this righteousness, the work of which God's Word declares is peace, and its effect quietness and assurance forever.

It is our privilege to be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. God has plainly stated that He requires us to be

17:17.⁸

There are many who claim that they have been sanctified to God, and yet when the great standard of righteousness is presented to them they become greatly excited and manifest a spirit which proves that they know nothing of what it means to be sanctified. They have not the mind of Christ; for those who are truly sanctified will reverence and obey the Word of God as fast as it is opened to them, and they will express a strong desire to know what is truth on every point of doctrine. An exultant feeling is no evidence of sanctification. The assertion, "I am saved, I am saved," does not prove that the soul is saved or sanctified. . . .

Excitement is not sanctification. Entire conformity to the will of our Father which is in heaven is alone sanctification, and the will of God is expressed in His holy law. The keeping of all the commandments of God is sanctification. Proving yourselves obedient children to God's Word is sanctification. The Word of God is to be our Guide, not the opinions or ideas of men.⁹

By constantly looking to and patterning after Christ as our personal Saviour, we shall grow up into Him in all things. Our faith will grow, our conscience will be sanctified. We will more and more become like Christ in all our works and words. Thank God, we shall believe His Word. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Galatians 6:22-23.¹⁰ ✠

These passages may also be found in *Selected Messages*, book 3, 190-204.

References:

- ¹ *Review and Herald*, Aug. 19, 1890.
- ² *Signs of the Times*, Nov. 3, 1890.
- ³ *Manuscript Release*, vol. 6, 10.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 184.
- ⁵ *Bible Echo*, Feb. 1, 1892.
- ⁶ *Bible Echo*, May 15, 1892.
- ⁷ *Review and Herald*, Jan. 29, 1895.
- ⁸ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 4, 352-353.
- ⁹ *The Review and Herald*, March 25, 1902.
- ¹⁰ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 4, 356.

Those who are truly sanctified will reverence and obey the Word of God as fast as it is opened to them, and they will express a strong desire to know what is truth on every point of doctrine.

deeds of charity, which we perform, are the fruits of faith; and they become a blessing to us; for men are to be rewarded according to their works.

It is the fragrance of the merit of Christ that makes our good works acceptable to God, and it is grace that enables us to do the works for which He rewards us. Our works in and of themselves have no merit. When we have done all that it is possible for us to do, we are to count ourselves as unprofitable servants. We deserve no thanks from God. We have only done what it was our duty to do, and our works could not have been performed in the strength of our own sinful natures.

The Lord has bidden us to draw nigh to Him and He will draw nigh to us; and drawing nigh to Him, we receive the grace by which to do those works which will be re-

perfect; and because He requires this, He has made provision that we may be partakers of the divine nature. Only thus can we gain success in our striving for eternal life. The power is given by Christ. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God" John 1:12.

God requires of us conformity to His image. Holiness is the reflection from His people of the bright rays of His glory. But in order to reflect this glory, man must work with God. The heart and mind must be emptied of all that leads to wrong. The Word of God must be read and studied with an earnest desire to gain from it a spiritual power. The Bread of Heaven must be eaten and digested, that it may become a part of the life. Thus we gain eternal life. Then is answered the prayer of the Saviour, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." John

letters to the editor

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Just a note to thank you for all of the wonderful articles in *Our Firm Foundation*. I read it from cover to cover! I pray for you and the [Hope International] staff! May God richly bless you and your family. Also, I pray that Jesus will come soon!

EO, Florida

I love your magazine. Hope you are well. I will be praying for your work.

KF, Colorado

I have been so blessed by your magazine! It is so good to have the truth and the messages up-to-date of what is going on in the church and in the world.

We are on a very limited income and really cannot afford to pay at this time, but we would be very grateful to be able to continue receiving *Our Firm Foundation*.

RR, Pennsylvania

Thank you for continuing your prayers on my behalf. Also, please do so for my neighbor. He is having a rough time physically and, consequently, emotionally. Please pray also that he will be able to sell his house quickly.

JW, Texas

I hope this letter finds your ministry flourishing and standing in defense of the truth in these last days of earth's final conflict. Your ministry was so uplifting and strengthening to my family and me at a time when I was feeling very much disillusioned with the church. Please continue to preach the righteousness of Christ, which is the Testimony of the True Witness, which in turn is the Straight Testimony spoken of by Ellen White, which will purify God's remnant church. We live in very exciting times, with prophecy being fulfilled right before our very eyes!

DW, Illinois

From Overseas

Please send me a copy of your free Bible correspondence course. Your pamphlet was distributed in Israel, but there are no listings of places to contact here. As I am on a volunteer program in Israel this year, please let me know if there is a place to write to in Israel for further information or for ordering books. Thank you for your help.

AS, Israel

Greetings from Jerusalem! I have just read in a recent issue of *Earth's Final Warning* about a set of free Bible studies. I am a Christian, married, and father of five children. I would very much like to enrich the family with Spiritual reading from the Gospel.

Accordingly, could you send me the "Studies" in order to help us understand better the meaning of the Bible?

I am also interested in the companion set. Is it possible to receive a sample copy of the book, *The Acts of the Apostles*, for example?

I wish you success and prosperity in your Christian work. God bless you!

MH, Israel

We know you are doing God's work, and He is blessing your ministry. We have been so blessed by *Our Firm Foundation*! May God continue to bless your ministry as you reach out to so many souls around the world. Keep up the good work!

BW, Canada

We would like to thank you for the literature you have just sent us. Your parcel arrived only a week before our Youth Saturation at a nearby school. With the aid of your literature and the Holy Spirit, we turned the place upside down with the punctual three angel's messages. And for the blessed results in Christ, we won for Him many

souls, and also a branch Sabbath School has been planted.

With the little knowledge we have and the governing power of the Holy Spirit, we are by all means fostering these newly converted souls who have no Bibles at all.

Thank you for the *Earth's Final Warning* and *Behold He Cometh* magazines. Thank you also for the *Adventism in Crisis* and *Holy Living*. These are molding our lives!

What a wonderful and precious time it will be when seeing the fruits of your literature, including you and us—our fellow Adventists, and many yet-to-be-converted souls, internationally sing the song of Moses and the Lamb by the sea of glass! May the Lord keep and bless thee until we meet in the heavens above.

WM, Zimbabwe

On behalf of the Athlone Bible Study Group, I would like to extend our heart-felt gratitude for yet another priceless gift, which I received on the eleventh of January 1999.

It's really impossible to express our feelings in words because everyone was so touched that we can only say in our hearts, Glory and Majesty be to our Lord God Almighty through our Saviour, Jesus Christ, for giving you a heart and Spirit so tender and loving.

We are very, very grateful; we really appreciate this soul straightening, and strengthening gift. May the Almighty God stretch out His mighty hand and bless you all!

It is my humble and earnest prayer that the study of these Scriptures will revive and strengthen us in these times of trouble as we continue preparing and waiting for our Saviour's Second Advent. I also believe that those whom we study with and who haven't fully accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their only Saviour, will be moved by the Holy Spirit and will eschew all unrighteousness.

MP, Zimbabwe

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