

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

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SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST
CHURCH

Is It Time for a
New Denomination?

Gambling for Time?

“As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. . . . Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.” Luke 17:26–27, 30.

Just as the probation of the antediluvian world ended seven days before the flood, so the probation of planet Earth and its more than 6.3 billion people will close before the seven last plagues are poured out and before the appearing of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. During that time there will be no intercessor for the human race, for no one can enter the heavenly temple. “And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.” Revelation 15:8.

The authors of *Left Behind* and others are preparing the world for Satan’s counterfeits. People are being given the false hope of a second chance for sinners to prepare for the coming of the Lord. Therefore, they will be ready to accept Satan’s impersonation of Christ. Let us remember Paul’s inspired warning:

“But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that

that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.” 1 Thessalonians 5:1–6.

Millions are waiting in the vain hope that some special event will signal when they should make a speedy preparation to be saved. Many of us Seventh-day Adventists are asleep in carnal security. Every wind of doctrine is now blowing through our churches. The great truths that were given to us through the Spirit of Prophecy and the Scripture are being buried under false theories.

“Perilous times are before us. Everyone who has a knowledge of the truth should awake and place himself, body, soul, and spirit, under the discipline of God. The enemy is on our track. We must be wide awake, on our guard against him. We must put on the whole armor of God. We must follow the directions given through the Spirit of Prophecy. We must love and obey the truth for this time. This will save us from accepting strong delusions. God has spoken to us through His Word. He has spoken to us through the *Testimonies for the Church* and through the books that have helped to make plain our present duty and the position that we should now occupy. The warnings that have been given—line upon line, precept upon precept—should be heeded. If we disregard them, what excuse can we offer?”¹

Prosperity has placed this final generation under a hypnotic spell. Seventh-day Adventists want to be saved—most pay their tithe and offerings, and attend Sabbath school

and church, believing that this will be sufficient for their entry into the kingdom of God, but Jesus says, “For many are called, but few are chosen.” Matthew 22:14. Many will find out too late that they were not judged safe to save.² See Daniel 5:27; Isaiah 1:9. Why?—Because God’s condition of salvation in every generation is obedience to all known truth without compromise.

The story is told that when Mount Vesuvius was erupting, pouring lava in the city of Pompeii, a woman was encased in lava with two gold earrings clutched in her hands. Perhaps she had hastened to her home to retrieve her precious treasure and was overcome in a desperate effort to escape. This woman encased in lava thought she had more time than she really had.

The closing scenes predicted in prophecy are ominously around us now—in the church and in the world. Are you, dear reader, one who believes that you have plenty of time to prepare for the crisis ahead? Are you gambling with your soul’s salvation? Every day that passes brings us closer to the close of probation, and the stakes get higher. The delay of character preparation could deny us the entry into the city of God. Praise God, we do not have to gamble! The door of the ark is still open. Why not commit your will to God now while it is still day, for the eternal night is now just before us? Study and pray. Say Yes to our loving Saviour. He longs to give you peace and assurance. ✠

Ron Spear, Executive Editor

References:

¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 298.

² See *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 136.

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 Is It Time for a New Denomination?
 Colin Standish
A look at five premises

9 The Cleansing of the Sanctuary
 A.T. Jones
What it entails, and why it is prolonged

12 Solemn Times
 Ellen G. White
The crisis of today demands unity and consecration.

16 How Nature Heralds the Coming of Christ
 Scott Kestel
Earthquakes, floods, famines—harbingers of the end?

18 Why Do Adventist Christians Get Sick?
 Bill Humeniuk
We have the health message, but are we living it?

22 Satan's Rebellion and God's Solution
 Ellen G. White
How can man be restored to the Garden of Eden?

26 Mark Your Bible!
 Lisa L. Epperly
Are you ready to share your faith?

28 Youthful Preacher
 C. Lester Bond
How one little boy led others to Christ with his marked Bible

departments

News Watch	14
Health For Life	20
The Garden of the Heart	24
Defending the Faith	30
Letters to the Editor	31



Is It Time for a New Denomination?

Colin Standish

Within the past year, several self-supporting leaders and workers have strongly urged that the time has come to declare that the Seventh-day Adventist Church (that is, that which is under the umbrella of the General Conference Corporation, including Divisions, Unions, Conferences and local churches) is now clearly Babylon, and that we should aggressively call members to voluntarily remove their membership from the structured church.

God had called the Christian Church out of the Jewish Church, the Protestant Church out of the Roman Catholic Church, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church out of the Protestant Churches. Each group came out when the former denomination was in deep apostasy and refused to be reformed and receive greater light.

Some argue that the Seventh-day Adventist Corporation is now in such deep and irreversible apostasy, insubordination, and worldliness, that the time has come to separate from it and to form a new denomination that will be loyal to God and to His Word. To fail to separate, they believe, will result in God's holding us responsible for the sins of the corporate church.

Others, including myself, strongly disagree with the basic premises of this group. There is deep apostasy and widespread worldliness and wickedness in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. However, we do not believe that the "coming out" message of this group is sustained by a plain "Thus saith the Lord." Indeed, we believe a thorough study of the words of Inspiration leads in the other direction. We believe that God will purify His church and prepare His people for translation by the sifting and shaking process.

We mourn over the state of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We are astounded that many leaders at all levels of the work appear to do nothing to address this gigantic problem. We are even more amazed that many leaders are ringleaders in this worldly movement. Yet we should not be shocked, because the Spirit of Prophecy has given to us every evidence of the fact that this would be the case:

"No superiority of rank, dignity, or worldly wisdom, no position in sacred office, will preserve men from sacrificing principle when left to their own deceitful hearts. Those who have been regarded as worthy and righteous prove to be ring-

leaders in apostasy and examples in indifference and in the abuse of God's mercies."¹

We believe that God will hold those unfaithful shepherds responsible for discouraging earnest and sincere people.

God is not calling out His people as He has done in past ages, but instead He is purifying His church through the shaking. In the meantime, we must exert every effort to warn our people against placing their trust in men—no matter how high their position. Our confidence must be riveted upon the Lord and His Word.

If a new denomination were established out of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, who can say that there would not need to be another one coming out of *that* church to establish yet another denomination? The "comings out" could continue *ad infinitum*. God's solution is the sifting and the shaking of His people.

Some who are urging the establishment of a new organization have presented five premises which I believe are either totally invalid or extrapolated well beyond their valid parameters.

Before we examine the five premises we should remember that

the Spirit of Prophecy warns, “Men fall into error by starting with false premises and then bringing everything to bear to prove the error true.”²

Thus we must test the premises in the light of the Word. If they prove to be false, we should place no stock upon the conclusions which have been drawn from them.

Premise 1: *With the exception of the book of Daniel, we cannot apply the prophecies of the Old Testament to our day.*

Though the person proposing this premise did not deny the inspiration of the Old Testament, he claimed that those prophecies could not be applied to the end-time — except for the book of Daniel.

However, God gave Sister White a different concept: “The prophets spoke less for their own time than for the ages which have followed, and for our own day.”³

That surely should settle the question. But let us examine it a little more fully. Their premise is necessary to take away and to ignore some of the strongest statements about the final triumph of the end-time church. If true, it would nullify such passages as Isaiah 4:3–4 and Ezekiel 9:3–5.

This premise basically echoes the words of many of the so-called New Testament Christians. They, too, attest to the fact that the Old Testament messages were God-inspired when they were written. They were relevant to God’s people at that time, they claim, but not to us today. Yet what does Scripture say?

“Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. *Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.*” 1 Corinthians 10:9–11. (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.)

“All scripture [referring to the Old Testament] is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction,

for instruction in righteousness.” 2 Timothy 3:16.

It is obvious as we study the Scriptures of the New Testament that every New Testament writer depended heavily upon the Old Testament, applying its principles and prophecies to the times in which they lived — and in many cases to the end of time.

Premise 2: *Because Sister White, up until 1898, fully expected to be translated without tasting death, her writings before 1898 are not relevant to us now.*

According to these brethren, the only writings of the servant of the

the beginning of the 1880s — almost two decades before the alleged time when she first had some inkling that she may pass through the portals of the tomb. There is not the slightest doubt that this prophecy is one of the most profound and relevant prophecies for our own time.

Here we see Sister White applying the prophecy of Ezekiel 9:1–6 to the very end of time. She describes the appalling state of our beloved church and the response of people, pastors, and leaders. Here we see the earnestness of the small remnant as they seek to turn back the tide of apostasy and wickedness. This

The prophets spoke less for their own time than for the ages which have followed, and for our own day.

Lord that validly apply to God’s people today are those which she wrote after 1898, the year she first began to recognize that she may well pass through the portals of the tomb. They argue: If Sister White believed that she would be translated to heaven without passing through the grave, there is no way that she could have prophesied or given counsel that would be relevant to the twenty-first century, for she had not the slightest thought that this sin-blighted world would continue this long.

However, though she did not realize for many years that time would linger so long because of the insubordination of God’s people, God knew. Surely His voice and messages through Sister White reach to our time.

Often the prophets of the Scripture had not the full understanding of the messages that they had received, nor a full understanding of future applications of the prophecies. Yet, God perfectly understood the messages that would be needed up to the end of time.

One modern example is the chapter in volume 5 of the *Testimonies* called, “The Seal of God.”⁴ Sister White wrote this chapter at

prophecy, given by God in the Old Testament, was given in greater detail to God’s remnant people at the beginning of the 1880s. Its relevance is being fulfilled in many ways today with pinpoint accuracy.

The apostles preached the imminent return of Christ.⁵ Jesus Himself told John, “Surely I come quickly.” Revelation 22:20. Yet He did not come in their day. Should we disregard their writings on this basis? — No. Then let us not use a different criterion to judge the writings of the servant of the Lord — Ellen White — from that which we use for the writers of the New Testament.

There is no question that this second premise is fraught with dangerous pitfalls. Let us beware, for it is another design of the enemy of souls to make of none effect the Testimonies of the servant of the Lord — and ultimately the Scriptures. Let us heed the following warnings:

“There will be those once united with us in the faith who will search for new, strange doctrines, for something odd and sensational to present to the people. They will bring in all conceivable fallacies, and will present them as coming from Mrs. White, that they may beguile souls.”⁶

“If you lose confidence in the *Testimonies* you will drift away from Bible truth.”⁷

“One thing is certain: Those Seventh-day Adventists who take their stand under Satan’s banner will first give up their faith in the warnings and reproofs contained in the *Testimonies of God’s Spirit*.”⁸

Others in our ranks declare that only the Spirit of Prophecy written prior to 1884 is valid and authoritative. If both groups were ever to come together, not one word of the Spirit of Prophecy could be considered inspired or relevant, at least for our times. How subtle are the deceptions of Satan! He hates the enlightenment of the Spirit of Prophecy.

It would become increasingly dangerous if we were to use “common sense” in a determined attempt to claim that the counsel of the Lord was no longer relevant for the days in which we live.

Ellen White had seventeen years after 1898 in which to warn those who would live later to put aside her counsels of earlier years, if indeed she believed that her earlier statements had no relevance to the end of time. Obviously, this never happened. She rather affirmed the veracity of her writings. When questioned, she responded, “I shall have to speak. I cannot and will not suffer reproach to come upon the cause of God, and my work that God has given me to do.”⁹

Premise 3: *Common sense dictates that it is time to establish a new denomination.*

Granted, “God wants us all to have common sense, and He wants us to reason from common sense.”¹⁰

Sister White also said that sometimes it is better to make a wrong decision than no decision at all: “It is even more excusable to make a wrong decision sometimes than to be continually in a wavering

position, to be hesitating, sometimes inclined in one direction, then in another.”¹¹

Obviously, Sister White was not referring to decisions that would be made in direct disobedience to the Word of God. Where we do not have a plain “Thus saith the Lord,” we do better to make a logical decision, wrong though time may prove it to be, than to risk delaying God’s work by our indecision.

We must be so careful, however, not to claim to be using sanctified common sense when we are really attempting to provide a basis for a doctrinal belief, a decision, or a judgment that we desire to make. It would become increasingly dangerous if we were to use “common

sense” in a determined attempt to claim that the counsel of the Lord was no longer relevant for the days in which we live. This concept of sanctified common sense could thus become a tool of satanic deception.

Premise 4: *God’s promises and threatenings are conditional.*

This is the most valid of the four premises. Sister White says: “It should be remembered that the promises and the threatenings of God are alike conditional.”¹²

Yet even with this statement, a study of Scripture would lead to certain levels of caution. Of course, there is no doubt that salvation, God’s rewards, and His punishments, are conditional. But it is amazing how many of God’s unfulfilled conditional prophecies have been fulfilled later or will be fulfilled at the end of time. These are especially true of the prophecies during the time of ancient Israel which were fulfilled at a later time. Indeed, in the Scriptures

we can find such prophecies. For example, Nineveh was not destroyed in forty days as Jonah warned. Instead, the people repented of their wickedness, and God honored their repentance by not destroying the city. See Jeremiah 18:8–10. However, Nineveh was destroyed later. See Zephaniah 2:13.

Another example was God’s promise to lead the children of Israel to the Promised Land. The few weeks it should have taken turned into forty years.

The same principle applies to modern times. The latter rain began to fall after 1888, but because the people refused to surrender all to the Lord, the latter rain ceased. Yet we still believe that eventually the latter rain will be poured out.

It is also plain from the Spirit of Prophecy that Christ should have returned long before this—before you or I were born. However, God’s people were not ready, and our present insubordination continues that delay.

One thing is certain: The latter rain *will* be poured out, the gospel *will* go to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people (see Revelation 14:6), and Christ *will* come the second time. All these events will happen in rapid succession after God has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion. See Isaiah 4:4.

“When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.”¹³

“We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel; but for Christ’s sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action.”¹⁴

God will not save any individual, any nation, any church, without first purifying it. But we have the assurance that the church will be purified through the shaking.

The angels bind up the wicked for the day of destruction and gather the saints into the kingdom of heaven. Sister White prophesied that

two parties will form in the church.¹⁵ This is very evident in our ranks today.

God will soon permit fearful, fiery persecution to separate the chaff from the wheat. I pray to God that before that day, we will prepare our hearts so that we will stand true no matter how we are treated.

The issue is not self-supporting work versus denominational work. God alone knows the wickedness that exists in each group. He also knows those who are faithful in each, and soon, very soon, the faithful in both camps will be united in one fold under the one Shepherd: "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." John 10:16.

Premise 5: *We are corporately responsible for the sins of the church to which we belong.*

Some have proposed that each individual who is part of an organization is responsible for the doings of that organization; and when an organization deepens in apostasy, if we do not separate from it, we are just as guilty as the perpetrators of the apostasy. They point out that Achan's family was destroyed because of Achan's sin, and that the congregation of Israel was in danger of being destroyed for the sins of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

However, we must consult Inspiration before drawing such conclusions. Sister White tells why Israel was in danger of being destroyed along with these three men: "They were sharers in the crimes of the men to whom they had given their sympathy and with whom they had associated."¹⁶

If we sympathize and associate with sinners, if we form friendly attachments with those who are leading others astray, we share in the same guilt as those who are the ringleaders in such apostasy. But to use these and many other examples as the basis for saying that we

should separate from the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, is surely shallow reasoning.

There is no evidence that Jesus voluntarily detached Himself from the church of His day. Later in His ministry He preached in the synagogue. See Matthew 13:54.

No one dies for the sin of another: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son." Ezekiel 18:20.

Instead of separating, we should be sighing and crying:

"In the time when His wrath shall go forth in judgments, these humble, devoted followers of Christ will be distinguished from the rest of

foundation upon which to call members to come out from the Seventh-day Adventist Church. These premises testify to the fact that there is no significant inspired evidence that would support the development of a new denomination.

This conclusion does not in any way preclude the need in certain cases to establish home or self-supporting churches. There are many reasons to open such churches. Self-supporting churches have been a part of God's Church since apostolic days. See 1 Corinthians 1:11; Philemon 1:1-2; Matthew 18:20.

I believe that the opening of a self-supporting church is acceptable,

Humble, devoted followers of Christ will be distinguished from the rest of the world by their soul anguish, which is expressed in lamentation and weeping, reproofs and warnings.

the world by their soul anguish, which is expressed in lamentation and weeping, reproofs and warnings. . . . They lament and afflict their souls because pride, avarice, selfishness, and deception of almost every kind are in the church."¹⁷

Some buttress their determination to forge ahead with a new denomination by asserting that probation has closed for the Seventh-day Adventist corporate structure. Such speculation is presumption. No man knows when his own probation is sealed—let alone that of an organization raised up by God.

Thus, our response to apostasy should not be that of forming a new denomination. Instead, we should pray as Daniel prayed about the apostasy in his day. Let us follow divine counsel instead of extrapolating Scripture or Spirit of Prophecy beyond what it really says.

Conclusion

I believe that these five premises lay a very fragile and faulted

but only after great efforts to reform the local denominational church have failed, and no other church alternative is available. Such churches could apply to become a branch Sabbath School, or a member of the sisterhood of churches, as long as no unacceptable conditions are required, such as the control of the pulpit.

Early Seventh-day Adventists worshiped in homes, in barns, and sometimes in tents or halls. As a lad, I remember a number of times visiting a home church several miles from the city of Newcastle where I lived. On a number of occasions my father was called to preach to that group.

It would be inconsistent with the counsel of the servant of the Lord to continue to listen to dangerous errors from the pulpit. Often the eternal destiny of our children is at stake—as is ours when we listen to error, or even "pleasant truth," instead of present truth week after week. Remember, not only does the

poison of deadly error kill the spiritual life of the congregation, but so do “empty-calorie sermons.”

Just as by beholding the Lord we are changed into His image (see 2 Corinthians 3:18), when we behold the devices of Satan we are changed into his image. I foresee the opening of many more self-supporting churches before the shaking and sifting complete their work.

God is calling for us to establish new churches in new locations, to raise up the foundation of the Lord and to encourage vibrant outreach and soul winning in new regions. God will honor efforts to establish our people in the truth and to have a safe haven in which

to bring converts so that they are not quickly destroyed by the errors and the indifference that is found in so many of the churches today.

However, none of these considerations in any wise justify the establishment of a new denomination.

May God keep us faithful and true to Him that each one of us may ultimately be saved in His kingdom and be together with our precious Saviour throughout eternity. ✨

References:

- ¹ *Testimonies* vol. 5, 212; see also *ibid.*, 211.
- ² *Testimonies*, vol. 7, 181.
- ³ *Signs of the Times*, April 2, 1896.
- ⁴ See *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 207-216.

- ⁵ For examples see: 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18; 5:1-11; James 5:8; 1 Peter 4:7. We are told, however, that Paul clearly understood that Christ would not return in his lifetime. See *The Acts of the Apostles*, 263-266; *The Great Controversy*, 356, 456-457.

- ⁶ *Selected Messages*, book 1, 41.

- ⁷ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 674.

- ⁸ *The Publishing Ministry*, 360.

- ⁹ Arthur White, *The Later Elmshaven Years*, 101.

- ¹⁰ *Manuscript Release*, vol. 6, 354.

- ¹¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 497.

- ¹² *Evangelism*, 695.

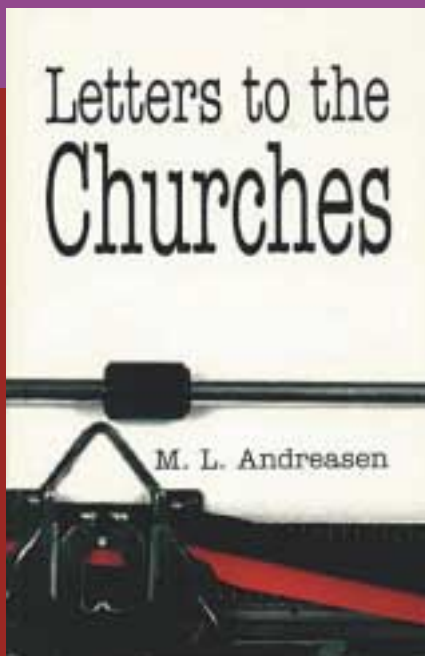
- ¹³ *Christ's Object Lessons*, 69.

- ¹⁴ *Evangelism*, 696.

- ¹⁵ See *Selected Messages*, book 3, 422-423.

- ¹⁶ *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 354.

- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 5, 210.



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Andreasen, M. L.
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The Cleansing of the Sanctuary

A. T. Jones

The cleansing of the sanctuary and the finishing of the mystery of God are identical as to time; and are also so closely related as to be practically the same in character and event.

In the "figure of the true" (see Hebrews 9:24) in the sanctuary service made visible, the round of service was completed annually; and the *cleansing of the sanctuary* was the *finishing* of that figurative and annual service. And this cleansing of the sanctuary was the taking out of and away from the sanctuary all "the uncleanness of the children of Israel . . . because of their transgressions in all their sins" (Leviticus 16:16), which, by the ministry of the priesthood in the sanctuary had been brought into the sanctuary during the service of the year.¹

The finishing of this work of the sanctuary and for the sanctuary was, likewise, the finishing of the work *for the people*. For in that day of the cleansing of the sanctuary, which was the Day of Atonement, whosoever of the people did not by searching of heart, confession, and putting away of sin, take part in the service of the cleansing of the sanctuary was cut off forever. Thus the cleansing of the sanctuary extended to *the people*, and included

the people, as truly as it did the sanctuary itself. And whosoever of the people was not included in the cleansing of the sanctuary, and was not *himself cleansed*, equally with the sanctuary, from all iniquity and transgression and sin, was cut off forever. See Leviticus 16:15-19, 29-34; 23:27-32.

And this was all "a figure for the time then present." Hebrews 9:9. That sanctuary, sacrifice, priesthood, and ministry was a figure of *the true*, which is the sanctuary, sacrifice, priesthood, and ministry of Christ. And that *cleansing* of the sanctuary was a figure of the true, which is the cleansing of the sanctuary and the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man, from all the uncleanness of the believers in Jesus because of all their transgressions in all their sins. And the *time* of this cleansing of the true is declared in the words of the Wonderful Numberer to be "unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (Daniel 8:14): which is the sanctuary of Christ in A.D. 1844.

And, indeed, the sanctuary of which Christ is the High Priest is the only one that could possibly be cleansed in 1844; because it is the only one that there is. The sanctuary

that was a figure for the time then present was destroyed by the army of the Romans who came and destroyed that city (see Daniel 9:26) and that sanctuary; and even its place was to be desolate "even until the consummation." Verse 27. Therefore the only sanctuary that could possibly be cleansed at the time referred to by the Wonderful Numberer, at the end of the two thousand and three hundred days, was alone the sanctuary of Christ—the sanctuary of which Christ is High Priest and Minister; the sanctuary and the true tabernacle of which Christ, at the right hand of God, is true Priest and Minister; the sanctuary and true tabernacle "which the Lord pitched, and not man." Hebrews 8:2.

What this cleansing means is plainly declared in the very scripture which we are now studying—Daniel 9:24-27. For the angel of God, in telling Daniel the truth concerning the two thousand and three hundred days, tells also the great object of the Lord in this time as it relates to both the Jews and the Gentiles. The seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, of the limitation upon the Jews and Jerusalem is definitely declared to be "to finish the transgression, and to

make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.” Daniel 9:24.

That is the true purpose of God in the sanctuary and its service in all time: whether in the figure or in the true; whether for Jews or for Gentiles; whether on earth or in heaven. Seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, was the limitation set for the Jews to have this accomplished for and in themselves. To accomplish this, to that people, of all people, Christ Himself came in person to show to them the Way, and to lead them in this Way. But they would not have it. Instead of seeing in Him the gracious One who would finish transgression, and make an end of sins, and make reconciliation for

children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” Matthew 23:37-38. “The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” Matthew 21:43.

The nation to whom the kingdom of God was given, upon its rejection by the Jews, was the Gentiles. And that which was to be done for the Jews . . . but which they would not at all allow to be done for them — that is the identical thing to be done for the Gentiles, to whom the kingdom of God is given. . . . And that work is “to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the

only the destruction of all who then shall not have received the gospel (see 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10): for it is not the way of the Lord to continue men in life when the only possible use they will make of life is to heap up more misery for themselves.

Again, in the service of the earthly sanctuary, we have seen that when the work of the gospel in the annual course was finished in behalf of those who had taken part in it, then all those who had taken no part in it were cut off. “Which was a figure for the time then present,” and which plainly teaches that in the service of the true sanctuary when the work of the gospel shall have been finished for all those who have a part in it, then all those who do not have a part in it will be cut off. Thus, in both respects, the finishing of the mystery of God is the final ending of sin.

The service in the earthly sanctuary shows also that in order for the sanctuary to be cleansed and the course of the gospel service there to be finished, it must first be finished *in the people* who have a part in the service. That is to say: In the sanctuary itself, transgression could not be finished, an end of sins and reconciliation for iniquity could not be made, and everlasting righteousness could not be brought in, until all this had been accomplished *in each person* who had a part in the service of the sanctuary. The sanctuary itself could not be cleansed until each of the worshipers had been cleansed. The sanctuary itself could not be cleansed so long as, *by the confessions of the people and the intercessions of the priests*, there was pouring into the sanctuary a stream of iniquities, transgressions, and sins. The cleansing of the sanctuary, *as to the sanctuary itself*, was the taking out of and away from the sanctuary all the transgressions of the people which had been taken into the sanctuary during the service of the year. And this stream must be stopped at its fountain in the hearts and lives of the worshipers, before the sanctuary itself could possibly be cleansed.

Therefore the very first work in the cleansing of the sanctuary was

The finishing of the mystery of God is the ending of the work of the gospel.

iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness to every soul, they saw in Him only “Beelzebub the prince of the devils” (Matthew 12:24); only One instead of whom they would readily choose a murderer; only One who as King they would openly repudiate, and choose a Roman Caesar as their only king; only One whom they counted as fit only to be crucified out of the world. For such a people as that, and in such a people as that, could He finish transgression, and make an end of sins, and make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness? — Impossible: impossible by their own persistent rebellion. Instead of His being allowed by them to do such a gracious and wonderful work for them, from the depths of divine pity and sorrow He was compelled to say to them: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy

vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.” This can be done alone in the finishing of the mystery of God in the cleansing of the true Christian sanctuary. And this is done in the cleansing of the true sanctuary, only in the finishing of transgression and making an end of sins in the *perfecting* of the believers in Jesus, on the one hand; and on the other hand in the finishing of transgression and making an end of sins in the *destruction of the wicked* and the cleansing of the universe from all taint of sin that has ever been upon it.

The finishing of the mystery of God is the ending of the work of the gospel. And the ending of the work of the gospel is, *first, the taking away of all vestige of sin* and the bringing in of everlasting righteousness — Christ fully formed — within each believer, God alone manifest in the flesh of each believer in Jesus; and, *secondly*, on the other hand, the work of the gospel being finished means

the cleansing of the people. That which was preliminary and essential to the cleansing of the sanctuary itself, to the finishing of transgression and bringing in everlasting righteousness, there, was the finishing of transgression, and the making an end of sins, and making reconciliation for iniquity, and bringing in everlasting righteousness *in the heart and life of each one of the people* themselves. When the stream that flowed into the sanctuary was thus stopped at its source, then, and then alone, could the sanctuary itself be cleansed from the sins and transgressions which, *from the people, by the intercession of the priests*, had flowed into the sanctuary.

And all that “was a figure for the time then present” — a “figure of the true.” Therefore by this we are plainly taught that the service of our great High Priest in the cleansing of the true sanctuary must be preceded by the cleansing of each one of the believers, the cleansing of each one who has a part in that service of the true High Priest in the true sanctuary. It is plain that transgression must be finished, an end of sins and reconciliation for all iniquity must be made, and everlasting righteousness must be brought in, in the heart’s experience of every believer in Jesus, before the cleansing of the true sanctuary can be accomplished.

And this is the very object of the true priesthood in the true sanctuary. The sacrifices, the priesthood, and the ministry in the sanctuary which was but a figure for the time then present, could not really take away sin, could not make the comers thereunto perfect. Whereas the sacrifice, the priesthood, and the ministry of Christ in the true sanctuary does take away sins forever, does make the comers thereunto *perfect*, does *perfect* “*for ever* them that are sanctified.” Hebrews 10:14. ✠

The Consecrated Way to Christian Perfection, 113–119.

Note:

¹ All emphasis supplied by author.



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Solemn Times

Ellen G. White

Brethren, we are far behind in our missionary work, both at home and in foreign countries. We are a people who claim to believe solemn and sacred truth, and our works in proclaiming the truth should correspond to our profession. Great trouble will soon arise among the nations, which will not cease until Jesus comes. The world is becoming more and more lawless. The churches are united in their efforts to restrict religious liberty. What are we as a people doing in this crisis? Are we purifying our souls by obedience to Christ's Words? Are we humbling our hearts before God, and confessing our sins? Are we seeking with earnestness and contrition of soul Him who is the Source of our strength? Are we claiming the promises, believing that Jesus pardons our transgressions and forgives our sins? Are we educating ourselves to overcome all temptation to murmur and complain?

Brethren, as never before we need to press together, unitedly following with calm faith and confidence Him who has prepared His throne in the heavens and whose kingdom ruleth over all. God has not forsaken His people, and our strength lies in not forsaking Him. Christ died to redeem us. By the infinite price with

which He ransomed us He has shown His love for us. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should believe in Him, and have eternal life.

With pity and compassion, with tender yearning, the Lord is looking upon His tempted and tried people. For a time the oppressors will be permitted to triumph over those who know God's holy commandments. All are given the same opportunity that was granted to the first great rebel to demonstrate the spirit that moves them to action. It is God's purpose that everyone shall be tested and proved, to see whether he will be loyal or disloyal to the laws which govern the kingdom of heaven. To the last, God permits Satan to reveal his character as a liar, an accuser, and a murderer. Thus the final trial of His people is made more marked, more glorious, more full and complete. The words of the prophet will then be fulfilled, "The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come." Isaiah 63:4. The song of God's people will be, "The LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved. The LORD is great in Zion; and he is high above all the people." Psalm 99:1-2.

Now and onward to the close of time the people of God should be wide-awake, not trusting in their own wisdom, but wholly in the wisdom of their Leader. They should set aside days for fasting and prayer. Entire abstinence from food should not be required, but they should deny themselves the food they usually enjoy, and partake of [a] plain, simple diet. No one should lift up his soul unto vanity, walking in self-indulgence and pride, for this is a time that demands genuine humiliation and most earnest prayer. We are nearing the most important crisis that has ever come upon the world. If we are not wide-awake and watching, it will steal upon us as a thief. Satan is preparing to work through his human agencies in secrecy.

There is in our churches a decided want of love for Christ and for one another. Christlike simplicity is looked upon as weakness. There is little clear spiritual discernment. Wrongs remain unconfessed. The transgression condemned in the law of God is on the increase in our borders. Sin is cherished and the result is hardness of heart.

Because those who are handling sacred things do not walk in the light, that light is becoming dark-

ness to them, and how great is that darkness. They are making strange mistakes in reading character. Men who do not possess moral worth are exalted, while those who are endeavoring to seek the Lord and walk in His steps are not appreciated. This danger will become more and more apparent. We must awake to the perils that are opening around us. All Phariseism, all self-righteousness, must be separated from the soul. Then we shall realize that we need Christ's righteousness, and we shall accept it by faith.

In our conferences it is revealed that the brethren do not see eye to eye in understanding the Word of God. There is among us a manifest want of searching the Scriptures. We must know the reasons of our faith. The importance and solemnity of the scenes opening before us demand this, and on no account must the spirit of complaining be encouraged. Are you in danger of cherishing malice, bitterness, and wrath if plans are introduced that do not harmonize with your ideas? Is not this indulging a war spirit, rather than a spirit of meekness and humility? Might you not better search the Scriptures together, with earnest prayer?

Ever we need to manifest kindness and true courtesy. We may have to plead most earnestly before legislative councils for the right to exercise independent judgment, to

worship God according to the dictates of our conscience. Thus in His providence God has designed that the claims of His holy law shall be brought before men in the highest authority. But as we do all we can as men and women who are not ignorant of Satan's devices, we are to manifest no bitterness of feeling. Constantly we are to offer prayer for divine aid. It is God alone who can hold the four winds until the angels shall seal the servants of God in their foreheads.

I have been instructed in regard to the danger of drawing apart. Let us leave to Satan and his agents the cruel work of accusing and fault-finding. Our work is to repent before God because of our unbelief and want of love for Him who died for us and for one another. The gold of love and faith is wanting in our ranks. Christ declares, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." Revelation 2:4.

We are nearing the most important crisis that has ever come upon the world. If we are not wide-awake and watching, it will steal upon us as a thief.

The Lord will do a great work in the earth. Satan makes a determined effort to divide and scatter His people. He brings up side issues to divert minds from the important subjects which should engage our attention. Individually we are to feel the importance of uniting in the firm bonds of Christian fellowship. With one heart and mind we are to prepare for the conflict, with faith laying our petitions before the mercy seat. The throne of God is arched by the bow of promise, and the prayers offered in simplicity and faith will be heard. It is God's glory to answer the supplications of His people.

Many are holding the truth with only the tips of their fingers. They have had great light and many privileges. Like Capernaum they have been exalted to heaven in this respect. In the time of test and trial that is approaching, they will become apostates unless they put away their pride and self-confidence, unless they have an entire transformation of character. ✠

Letter 5, 1883 (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 13, 329-333, "Solemn Times Demand Unity and Consecration"; written in November 1883, from Battle Creek, Michigan to "Brethren.")

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General Conference Rejects 1888 Study Committee Positions

News Item: The *Adventist Review*, May 2001, published the summary of the report of the Primacy of the Gospel Committee, which examined the positions of the 1888 Message Study Committee. The Primacy of the Gospel Committee, set up by the General Conference, met eight times between 1994 and 2000, allowing the 1888 Study Committee to make its case under church leadership examination.

This summary reported that “substantive disagreements remained with respect to much of what the 1888 Message Study Committee believes and teaches.” The General Conference members reported that they “did not find credible the 1888 study group’s view that church leaders have been and remain negligent or in error on the subjects under discussion.”

Prophetic Perspective: We applaud the General Conference for rejecting the “message” of the 1888 Message Study Committee, with its diabolical teachings of Donald K. Short, Robert J. Wieland, and Jack Sequeira. Their teachings and twisting of the gospel are indeed dangerous winds of doctrine.

If these errors are “blowing” in your area, the following books, available from Hope International, are recommended reading: *Beyond Belief Reviewed*, and *Those Who Do Not Remember the Past*, both by Kevin Paulson.

GC Settles Florida Lawsuit

News Item: “A three-year trademark infringement suit between the Seventh-day Adventist Church and a West Palm Beach, Florida, congregation, over the use of the name Seventh-day Adventist in identifying the church, has finally ended with a court-approved settlement.” *Adventist Review*, May 24, 2001, online edition.

The Florida congregation, pastored by Raphael Perez, will now identify itself with a two-line logo.

The top line, in bold will read: “Eternal Gospel Church.” The second line will read in smaller unbold font: “Founded in (1990 or later) by Seventh-day Adventist Believers.”

GC leadership “expressed hope that other independent congregations who may be tempted to infringe on the church’s trademark might find this solution as a basis to change their names.” Ibid.

The Pope Courts Moslems and Orthodox Christians

News Items: “Pope John Paul II, making a historic and controversial visit to Greece, asked for forgiveness Friday for sins the Roman Catholic Church committed against the Orthodox Church. . . . Greek church leader Christodoulos applauded twice during the pope’s statement at the Athens Archdiocese, sparking off what ANA [Athens News Agency] described as a guarded hope for reconciliation between the Roman Catholic and the Orthodox churches. The sects split in 1054. John Paul expressed ‘deep regret’ at the sack of Constantinople in 1204 during the Fourth Crusade.” United Press International, May 4, 2001.

“In a mass before leaving Greece, he [the pope] said all Christians should show ‘passion’ for eventual unity between all branches of Western and Eastern Christianity.” iWon News (Reuters), May 5, 2001.

“Pope John Paul entered a mosque on Sunday, becoming the first Pontiff in history to visit and pray in a Muslim place of worship.

“To Syrians, reports Pizzey, the fact the pope became first to enter a mosque was significant. The Grand Mufti of Syria said it was a visit that would bear fruit, which is exactly what the Vatican was hoping for.” Ibid, May 6, 2001.

The pope’s apology in Greece “brought a slight but significant thaw to centuries-old enmities dividing Christianity’s western and eastern branches. And in Syria, his historic visit to a Damascus mosque was greeted as an important gesture

advancing Christian-Muslim relations.” *U.S. News & World Report*, May 21, 2001.

Prophetic Perspective: The world continues to “wonder after the beast” as the Papacy advances in its quest to be the head of all religions.

Religious Liberties Threatened: Colorado Outlaws Faith Healing

News Item: “Colorado Gov. Bill Owens on April 16 signed into law a bill which would make faith healing a crime, under the state’s child abuse law, when used in place of medicine for a child in danger of dying, according to *The Denver Post*.

“The bill was strongly opposed by religious conservatives on the grounds that it violated the First Amendment’s right to freedom of religion.” The bill was motivated by the death of a 13-year-old girl who died from complications of diabetes that were left untreated because of her parent’s opposition to medical treatment. *Religion Today*, April 23, 2001.

Prophetic Perspective: This could open the way to the prosecution of parents who seek to combine prayer and simple natural remedies for the healing of their children. This could effectively force parents to choose chemotherapy and other toxic medications over effective natural treatment.

Scripture Attacked by New York City

News Item: “In a stunning display of religious intolerance, Assistant Corporation Counsel Dana Biberman asserted that New York City’s anti-bias policy prohibits any public expressions of intolerance toward homosexuality. In making her case to the judge in open [Federal] court, Biberman said, ‘Plaintiff’s billboard, though using biblical quotes, expressed open hostility and intolerance of homosexuality. . . . Whether these were quotes from the Bible or not, they were nonetheless . . . unnecessarily confrontational and offensive, [and] didn’t belong in Staten Island.’

"The billboard sign contained nothing more than a single Bible verse, Leviticus 18:22, which states, 'Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind. It is abomination.' The sign carried the subscription, 'I AM YOUR CREATOR.'

"Once the billboard signs were removed, New York City police went to Keyword Ministries Church to investigate the church's religious doctrine regarding homosexuality. Although Rev. Okewdy was not there, police questioned his wife.

"According to Okewdy's attorney . . . Biberman's comments bode ill for the future of religious liberties in New York and elsewhere: 'The position taken by New York City is consistent with policies adopted in San Francisco, Atlanta, and other cities across the country. In the past few years, major cities have increasingly enacted legislation that bans all public expression of perceived intolerance toward homosexuality. Because the Bible characterized homosexuality as sinful, it too, is now unwelcome. But most alarming is the police investigation into the church's religious doctrine. It appeared designed to intimidate the church from speaking out against homosexuality in the future,' he said." AFA [American Family Association] Center for Law & Policy release, May 7, 2001.

Tax Dollars for Religious Charities—Public Support Mixed

News Item: "The question is asked repeatedly in the debate over President Bush's plan to open federal programs to religious groups. Both sides agree there can be only one answer: Yes, all religions are eligible to apply for government contracts because to bar certain faiths from competing would amount to an unconstitutional government establishment of religion.

"A recent poll found that seven in 10 Americans believe 'charitable religious organizations' should be eligible for government funds. But support dropped when people were asked about non-mainstream religions:

"Asked if Muslim mosques or Buddhist temples should be eligible for money, only 38 percent said yes. For the Nation of Islam, it was 29 percent, for the Church of Scientology, 26 percent." Associated Press, May 6, 2001.

Let the Children Frolic Like Lambs—Under Mom's Care!

News Items: Good, wholesome, healthy play is becoming more scarce for children in today's society. " 'We're taking away childhood,' says Dorothy Sluss, a professor of early-childhood education at East Tennessee State University. 'We don't value play in our society. It has become a four-letter word.'

"Statistics back her up. In 1981, according to University of Michigan researchers, the average school-age child had 40% of the day for free time—meaning hours left over after sleeping, eating, studying and engaging in organized activities. By 1997, the figure was down to 25%. . . .

"What Brown calls 'play deprivation' can lead, he says, to depression, hostility and the loss of 'the things that make us human beings.'

"Play doesn't just make kids happy, healthy and human. It may also make them smarter, says Rosenfeld. . . . Play refreshes and stimulates the mind, it seems. And 'frequent breaks may actually make kids more interested in learning,' according to Rhonda Clements, a Hofstra University professor of physical education. . . .

" 'In the huge rush to build shopping malls and banks,' says Clements, 'no one is thinking about where kids can play. That doesn't generate tax revenue.' . . .

"Parental fear is also a factor. Fear of molesters, bacteria, zooming SUVs. Neighbors who own guns. . . .

"Consider this: since the 1980s, with the rise of the academic-standards movement, hundreds of American elementary schools have eliminated recess. The Atlanta schools have dropped recess system-wide, and other districts are thinking of following suit. Does a no-recess day raise test scores or aid

kids' mental performance? There's no evidence for it. There is plenty of evidence, however, that unbroken classwork drives children slightly batty, as Atlanta teachers are starting to note. Multiple studies show that when recess time is delayed, elementary-school kids grow increasingly inattentive." *Time*, April 30, 2001.

A study of prison inmates found that a common element in their childhoods was that " 'they didn't engage in rough-and-tumble play.' " *Ibid*.

According to another survey, "The more hours children spend away from their mothers, researchers concluded, the more likely they are to be defiant, aggressive and disobedient by the time they get to kindergarten. Kids who are in child care more than 30 hours a week 'scored higher on items like "gets in lots of fights," "cruelty," "explosive behavior," as well as "talking too much," "argues a lot" and "demands a lot of attention," ' said principal researcher Jay Belsky." *Ibid*.

Prophetic Perspective: Let us not allow the pressures and distractions of today's society to take our children away from the time they need to spend with their mothers and time engaging in healthy play and exercise.

"Infancy extends to the age of six or seven years. Up to this period children should be left, like little lambs, to roam around the house and in the yards, in the buoyancy of their spirits, skipping and jumping, free from care and trouble.

"Parents, especially mothers, should be the only teachers of such infant minds." *Child Guidance*, 300.

"For the first eight or ten years of a child's life the field or garden is the best schoolroom, the mother the best teacher, nature the best lesson book." *Ibid*.

"In order for children and youth to have health, cheerfulness, vivacity, and well-developed muscles and brains, they should be much in the open air, and have well-regulated employment and amusement." *Counsels on Health*, 177-178. ❀



How Nature Heralds the Coming of Christ

Scott Kestel

For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places." Matthew 24:7. I have no idea how many times I have read these words of Jesus about the end of the world without realizing how strikingly they are being fulfilled today. When He spoke those twenty-two words, our precious Jesus was just beginning to answer His disciples' question, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Verse 3. God has told us that in the end of the world, He is going to use the forces of nature to herald Christ's coming. Inspiration speaks:

"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."¹

When we begin to see these signs of the times, we can be sure that our "redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28. Friends, nature is shouting from her highest peaks in a last

attempt to wake up a sleeping world from its deadly slumber. Jesus is coming, and He is using the forces in His creation to tell us.

Earthquakes: Our Saviour says that earthquakes will be a sign of His coming and of the end of the world. In August 1999, a massive quake struck the country of Turkey. By November of that same year, 18,000 people were reported dead. That following summer, two more quakes struck that country. In the year 2000, Iceland experienced its worst earthquake in 30 years. In December of that same year Azerbaijan, part of the former Soviet Union, saw its worst earthquake in 40 years. In the year 2000, at least thirteen quakes worldwide registered greater than 7.0 on the Richter scale. The worst disaster ever to occur in India came when a 7.9 quake struck in January 2001. That earthquake was the fifth quake greater than 7.0 worldwide since January 1.

Extreme Weather: In June 2000, Chile experienced its worst flood in 20 years. In the same month, China saw its worst flood in 150 years. In September 2000, Cambodia had the

worst flooding in the country's history. Vietnam saw the worst flood in 70 years, and Japan had its worst season of flooding in 100 years. In New Zealand, floods killed one-third of all the lambs in the southern part of the country. In November 2000, flooding in Taiwan was the worst it has been in 30 years; flooding in Great Britain was the worst since 1625; and in Indonesia the floods were the worst in 20 years. Indonesia beat that record one month later when in December flooding was the worst since the 1940s.

Wild weather has been seen all throughout nature these past few months. In June 2000, Australia saw the worst cold spell in 32 years. Buffalo, New York, recorded the third largest snowfall in its history (43.7 inches fell in 24 hours). Grand Rapids, Michigan, recorded the most snow ever. In December 2000, Arkansas saw the worst ice damage in that state's history. Five states (Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Texas) set snowfall records. In January 2001, South Korea saw the heaviest snow in 20 years, and China was hit with the worst

snowstorm in 50 years. Kazakhstan, in Eastern Asia, experienced the coldest weather in 40 years.

In June 2000, Scotland saw the worst storm in 30 years. In September, Japan saw the most rainfall in its history—32 inches fell in 24 hours.

The heaviest rains in Hawaii's history hit in November 2000, dumping over 27 inches in 24 hours. In the Dallas/Fort Worth area, the heaviest rains to ever fall there in a 24-hour period were recorded. In January 2001, Australia suffered its wettest year ever—490 inches filled the rain gauge in Mt. Bellendenker. In Kenya, Africa, including its capital Nairobi, it was the wettest they have experienced in 40 years.

Famines: Jesus said famines would come as we neared the end. In July 2000, the Balkans experienced the worst drought, coupled with the worst crop loss ever. Iran and Pakistan were both struck with unprecedented seasons of drought. Europe recorded the worst heat wave in centuries. In November 2000, Chhattisgarh, India [India's newest state] experienced the worst drought in the country's history, resulting in a massive food shortage.

Lastly, the year 2000 brought Cuba its worst drought in 50 years.

What does it mean?

Now, two things make all this pandemonium quite remarkable: First, these are all the worst disasters in decades, centuries, or in some cases, in all of history. Second, all of these disasters have occurred over a period of eighteen months. I challenge anyone to find eighteen months, or even two years, anywhere in history that have been this tumultuous.

These things are just a small example of the harbingers of the second advent of Jesus in the Bible. Soon the table shall be full at the great supper of the heavenly Bridegroom. Let us pray that we shall be found clothed with the garments of Christ's righteousness—a perfect character—so that we can take our place. Let us wake up to the nearness of Christ's second advent, and remember that "the message of Christ's soon coming is designed to arouse men from their absorption in worldly things. It is in-

Soon the table shall be full at the great supper of the heavenly Bridegroom. Let us pray that we shall be found clothed with the garments of Christ's righteousness.

Matthew 24:7 also speaks of nations and kingdoms rising up against one another. Verse six says, "And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars. . . ." Think of how much global conflict the United States alone has been involved in since 1999.

tended to awaken them to a sense of eternal realities, that they may give heed to the invitation to the Lord's table." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 228. ✝

References:

¹ *Selected Messages*, book 2, 380.



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Why Do Adventist Christians Get Sick?

Bill Humeniuk

Recently I read a book authored by George H. Malkmus entitled *Why Christians Get Sick*. The author shows how “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” Hosea 4:6. He urges his readers to return to the Edenic diet of raw fruits, vegetables, nuts, and a limited amount of cooked grains.

Then I noticed what the Holy Spirit said as He inspired Ellen White to write: “Many have expected that God would keep them from sickness merely because they have asked Him to do so. But God did not regard their prayers, because their faith was not made perfect by works. God will not work a miracle to keep those from sickness who have no care for themselves, but are continually *violating the laws of health, and make no efforts to prevent disease*. When we do all we can on our part to have health, then may we expect that blessed results will follow; and we can ask God in faith to bless our efforts for the preservation of health. He will then answer our prayer if His name can be

glorified thereby. But let all understand that *they have a work to do*. God will not work in a miraculous manner to preserve the health of persons who, by their careless inattention to the laws of health, are taking a sure course to *make themselves sick*.”¹

Many Adventists are vegetarians. Yet while flesh may no longer be a part of our diets, too many of us are still eating to glorify our bellies. See Philippians 3:19. Many of our dishes are cooked with cheese, eggs, milk, refined white flour, white rice, excessive amounts of oil, and—oh, yes—sugar. Most of these foods are dead—devoid of life-giving vitamins and minerals. How about our store-bought, dairy-free imitation whip creams, salad dressings, mayonnaise, all of our packaged foods, and junk foods? All of these are full of chemicals, not to mention hydrogenated (saturated) fats, which are just as destructive to our bodies as lard.

“In the light given me so long ago, I was shown that intemperance would prevail in the world to an

alarming extent and that every one of the people of God must take an *elevated stand* in regard to reformation in habits and practices. . . . I was shown that God would give to His commandment-keeping people a *reform diet*, and that as they received this, *their disease and suffering would be greatly lessened*.”²

“I have been instructed that we are not to delay to do the work that needs to be done in health reform lines.”³

What is it going to take, my dear people, for us to take an elevated stand in our eating habits and to strengthen our immune systems for what is coming upon the world in uncontrollable disease? I believe we need to return to a much simpler diet of grains, raw fruits, nuts, and vegetables. These foods supply us with antioxidants, phytochemicals, and flavanoids to build up our immune systems for the time of trouble and to free us of all diseases and sickness now. Today science is proving over and over again that what Ellen White wrote through the

guidance of the Holy Spirit over 100 years ago is still correct and valid. Are we listening to the Holy Spirit today? After all, our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit—“Ye are not your own”—[self, flesh, cravings, tastes]. Are we glorifying God in our bodies and in our spirits, which are God’s and not our own? See 1 Corinthians 6:19–20. The final generation will fear God, *give glory to Him*, and worship Him. See Revelation 14:7. Therefore, they will glorify God in all that they eat, drink, and do. See 1 Corinthians 10:31.

Then the apostle Paul really summarizes it: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God [the body], him shall God destroy.” 1 Corinthians 3:16–17. This is a solemn thought. Then Paul adds that we need to strive for the mastery by being temperate in all things—keeping our bodies and bringing them into subjection. See 1 Corinthians 9:25–27.

My dear people, are we keeping our bodies to please the Lord or rather to satisfy the flesh and its cravings, inclinations, and tastes? “So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Romans 8:8. The apostle Paul tells us “to walk and to please God.” 1 Thessalonians 4:1. Oh, that we as a people may become temperate in all things and bring our bodies under the control of the Holy Spirit, who dwelleth in us! This statement may seem a bit strong, but John the beloved wrote: “And there shall in no wise enter into it [heaven] any thing that defileth.” Revelation 21:27. It was the same Holy Spirit that guided both of the apostles—Paul and John. And that same Spirit guided Ellen White 1,800 years later to continue writing many more statements on health reform. Why? Further instruction was needed, not only to guide God’s people to give up flesh foods, but also to guide them to reduce and eliminate junk foods, overcooked foods, and foods containing various chemicals. The purpose is to reduce disease and suffering, which plague many Adventists.

“The *work of health reform* is the Lord’s means for *lessening suffering* in our world and for *purifying His church*. Teach the people that they can act as God’s helping hand, by cooperating with the Master worker in *restoring physical and spiritual health*. . . . Abstinence from *all hurtful food and drink* is the fruit of true religion. He who is thoroughly converted will *abandon every injurious habit and appetite*. By *total abstinence* he will *overcome* his desire for health-destroying indulgences.”⁴

And what was this health reform diet that God’s commandment-keeping people were to partake of? “The Lord intends to bring His people back to live upon simple fruits, vegetables, and grains.”⁵

Are we going to continue rejecting God’s counsel now when we are on the very borders of eternity, as the children of Israel did on the borders of Canaan land?

“Grains and fruits prepared free from grease, and in as natural a condition as possible, should be the food for the tables of all who claim to be preparing for translation to heaven.”⁶ “Again and again I have been shown that God is trying to lead us back, step by step, to His original design—that man should subsist upon the natural products of the earth.”⁷ Why?—To prepare us for translation—to be free of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, obesity, and many other diseases that plague the people of our world, including Adventists.

A dear friend of mine died recently at 52 years of age—simply because he rejected the counsel of the Lord. Are we going to continue rejecting God’s counsel now when we are on the very borders of eternity, as the children of Israel did on the borders of Canaan land? In Numbers 11:4–6, we are told that they yielded to intense cravings and complained about the manna, loathing the bread of heaven. See also Numbers 21:5; Psalm 78:24–25. God gave them the desires of their flesh, their tastes,

their cravings, and their inclinations. While the flesh of the quail was still between their teeth, a plague was struck by the Lord, and many died. See Numbers 11:31–34.

God is leading us to partake of the tree of life, which, incidentally, has only fruit—no flesh, no junk food, and no foods that have been refined and overcooked. Don’t you think it would be a good idea to begin now, while we are on the borders of eternity, to preserve our health? “As we near the close of time, we must rise higher and still higher upon the question of health reform and Christian temperance.”⁸

“But when the plagues of God shall be all around you, you will then see the principles of health

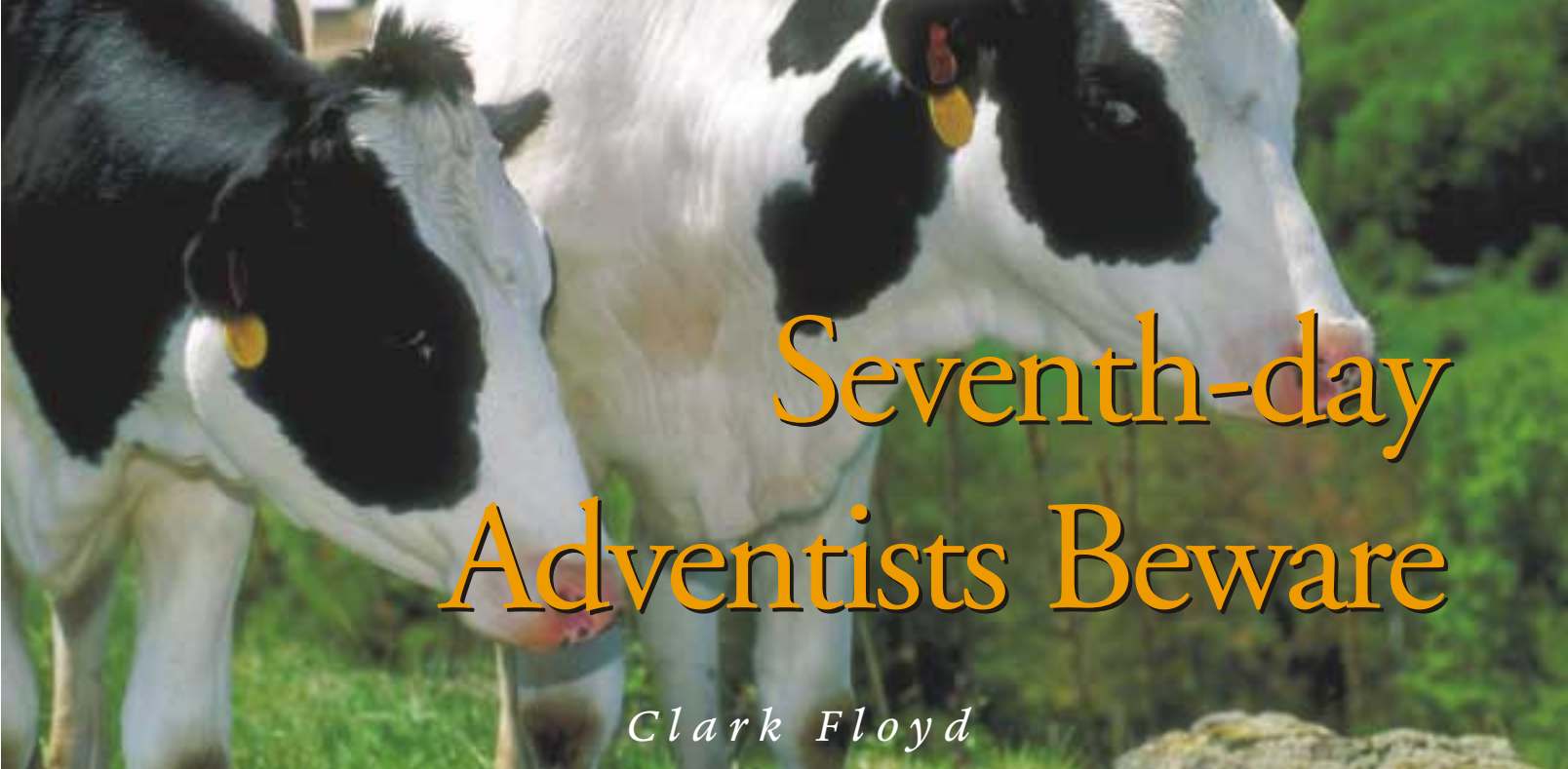
reform and strict temperance in all things—that temperance alone is the foundation of all the graces that come from God, the foundation of *all victories* to be gained.”⁹

There you have it, my people. The lovely, precious Jesus has left us an example in His first temptation in the wilderness—to control our appetites. “His example declares that *our only hope of eternal life* is through bringing the appetites and passions into subjection to the will of God.”¹⁰

God be with each of you to live that life more abundantly, not only here, but to prepare to live that life in eternity. ❁

References:

- ¹ *Review and Herald*, December 19, 1899. All emphasis supplied by the author.
- ² *Counsels on Health*, 531.
- ³ *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 76.
- ⁴ *Evangelism*, 263.
- ⁵ *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 322.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, 314.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 380.
- ⁸ *Counsels on Health*, 467.
- ⁹ *Temperance*, 201.
- ¹⁰ *The Desire of Ages*, 122.



Seventh-day Adventists Beware

Clark Floyd

Our gracious heavenly Father sees the deplorable condition of men who, some knowingly but many ignorantly, are living in violation of the laws that He has established. And in love and pity to the race, He causes the light to shine upon health reform. . . . He proclaims His law so distinctly and makes it so prominent that it is like a city set on a hill. All accountable beings can understand it if they will. Idiots will not be responsible.”¹

As we head into the last days of this earth’s history, Seventh-day Adventists have been given more light on the preparations necessary for being ready for the things ahead of us, especially the second coming of Jesus, than any other group. But, like the Jews of old, we have disregarded the counsel of the Lord, not only in the Bible, but also in the Spirit of Prophecy as contained in the writings of Ellen G. White. Even the disciples failed to heed all of the counsel Jesus had given them in regard to His coming crucifixion and ignominious death.

Jesus warned the disciples on many occasions. On one such occasion, He said: “Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be

mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: and they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things.” Luke 18:31-34. But with the disciples, there was a second chance. After the crucifixion, Jesus again opened the scriptures to them. See Luke 24:25-27.

Seventh-day Adventists are quickly running out of probationary time—soon will come a time when there will no longer be “a second chance.” Those who desire to pass safely through the diseases and plagues ahead and to be among those who are translated, must pay attention to God’s health message. Not only has it been given to clear our minds for better understanding and that we may be able to hear God’s voice, but also it has been given to better prepare us for the times ahead.

Many Seventh-day Adventists are still eating flesh foods—in spite of overwhelming counsel and evidence that this practice should long ago have been abandoned. “It has been clearly presented to me that God’s people are to take a firm stand against meat eating. . . . Those who use flesh meat disregard all the warnings that God has given concerning this question. They have no evidence that they are walking in

safe paths. They have not the slightest excuse for eating the flesh of dead animals. . . . Cancers, tumors, and pulmonary diseases are largely caused by meat eating.”²

In 1902 Ellen G. White wrote: “I am instructed to say that if ever meat eating were safe, it is not safe now.”³ “Animals are becoming more and more diseased, and it will not be long until animal food will be discarded by many besides Seventh-day Adventists. Foods that are healthful and life-sustaining are to be prepared, so that men and women will not need to eat meat.”⁴ The world has, in many respects, passed up a lot of Seventh-day Adventists in regard to a better knowledge of health reform and correct principles of eating—how sad!

I came into the Seventh-day Adventist Church over 20 years ago through an evangelistic series. The messages were very exciting—as well as quite Biblical. The health message was part of the overall information given—but I now realize that it was not given in its fullness. The need to abstain from flesh foods was pointed out, and soon the beef and pork in our freezer were disposed of. The “fake” meats became our substitute. But every night after the program, I went with the evangelist and others to the pizza parlor to partake of the “vegetarian” cheese

and tomato pizza. However, we have been given the following counsel: "Cheese should never be introduced into the stomach."⁵ We were being taught a lacto-ovo way of eating—better than meat eating, but not the best. And, unfortunately, the principle of not eating late in the evening was totally ignored.

Later as a Seventh-day Adventist pastor, I continued with my lacto-ovo regimen of foods. I loved my milk and other dairy products. I had not read all of the counsel concerning diet and food, and I learned to lightly regard that which I read in relation to dairy. After all, I reasoned, didn't Ellen White continue to use dairy? The food at our ministerial meetings included dairy—the leaders should know what is right, shouldn't they?

My first wife tragically died, and in time I married a lady from Uchee Pines, a self-supporting health ministry in Alabama. Finally, I began to better understand God's plan as contained in the health message. It became clear to me that dairy also needed to be discarded—the time had come long ago. Tragically, many Seventh-day Adventists—still a large majority—are ignoring the signs that Ellen White had spoken of—the tremendous increase of disease in animals.

"We see that cattle are becoming greatly diseased, the earth itself is corrupted, and we know that the time will come when it will not be best to use milk and eggs. . . . We know that when it does come, the Lord will provide."⁶ In her day the time had not come. In our day it has come, and the Lord has provided good substitutes through the many soy milks and foods available.

Many statements of warning came from her pen:

1899—"The light given me is that it will not be very long before we shall have to give up any animal food. Even milk will have to be discarded. Disease is accumulating rapidly. The curse of God is upon the earth, because man has cursed it."⁷

1901—"The time may come when it will not be safe to use milk."⁸

1902—"The time will soon come when there will be no safety in using eggs, milk, cream, or butter, because disease in animals is increasing in proportion to the increase of wickedness among men. The time is near when, because of the iniquity of the fallen race, the whole animal creation will groan under the diseases that curse our earth."⁹

Mad Cow Disease Is Real!

When the evidence is carefully and prudently examined, it is frighteningly clear that mad cow disease is for real. England and Germany have readily admitted it. The United States, to protect the beef, dairy, and other flesh-connected industries, has covered up some mad cow deaths by calling them Alzheimer-related. Disease in

but it shall not come nigh thee. . . . There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." Psalm 91:3, 7, 10–11. When God gives promises, such as those found in Psalm 91, He gives them on condition of our being obedient to all His counsel. When we have so much light on health reform, and continue to ignore it, we will suffer the consequences. Remember, "The liability to take disease is increased tenfold by meat eating."¹¹

God has given us a total health message for our own growth and protection in these last days of earth's history. He says to us, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." 3 John 2.

The time will soon come when there will be no safety in using eggs, milk, cream, or butter, because disease in animals is increasing in proportion to the increase of wickedness among men.

animals has increased to a great extent. The prion connected with mad cow disease is very difficult to destroy. The whole truth about it is not being told because of the panic and financial chaos that would result.

But even if there were no mad cow disease, other diseases are becoming stronger. They are becoming resistant to the antibiotics that once kept them under control. There will be no excuse for those Seventh-day Adventists who have had this great light but have not listened. "When we are exposed to prevailing epidemics and contagious diseases, the system is not in a condition to resist the disease" [if we are still eating meat].¹⁰

"God is no respecter of persons." Acts 10:34. "Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. . . . A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand;

Will you take the chance that those touting a lacto-ovo vegetarian diet, rather than a total vegan¹² diet, are right in the light of the counsel given, or will you move forward in the light of the testimony of God's Spirit, as well as current evidence, to better health and total obedience to God's leading? May the Lord God be your Guide! ✨

References:

- ¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 161.
- ² *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 383.
- ³ *Ibid.*, 384.
- ⁴ *Testimonies*, vol. 7, 124.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 68.
- ⁶ *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 359.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 357.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 210.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 349.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 386–387.
- ¹¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 64.
- ¹² *American Heritage College Dictionary*, 1495, "A vegetarian whose diet consists of plant products only."



Satan's Rebellion and God's Solution

Ellen G. White

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit." Isaiah 14:12-15.

Among the inhabitants of heaven, Satan, next to Christ, was at one time most honored of God, and highest in power and glory. Before his fall, Lucifer, "son of the morning," was first of the covering cherubs, holy and undefiled. He stood in the presence of the great Creator, and the ceaseless beams of glory enshrouding the eternal God rested upon him.

Little by little, Lucifer came to indulge the desire for self-exaltation. Because of the exaltation of Christ, the One equal with the Father, he allowed jealousy to arise in his heart.

"Why," he questioned, "should Christ have the supremacy? Why is He honored above Lucifer?"

Though all his glory was from God, Lucifer came to regard it as pertaining to himself. Not content with his position, though honored above the heavenly host, he ventured to covet homage due alone to the Creator. Leaving his place in the immediate presence of the Father, he went forth to diffuse the spirit of discontent among the angels. He worked with mysterious secrecy, and for a time concealed his real purpose under an appearance of reverence for God. He began to insinuate doubts concerning the laws that governed heavenly beings—laws that he declared were arbitrary, detrimental to the interests of the heavenly universe, and in need of change. Vital interests were at stake. Would Lucifer succeed in undermining confidence in God's law? Would he make so apparent these supposed defects in the law, that the inhabitants of the heavenly universe would be justified in claiming that the law could be improved?

By his rebellion against God's law, Satan brought sin into existence; for "sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4.

God in His wisdom did not use measures of force to suppress Satan's rebellion. Such measures would have aroused sympathy for Satan, strengthening his rebellion rather than lessening his power. If God had at the outset punished his rebellion, many more would have looked upon him as one who had been dealt with unjustly, and would have followed his example. It was necessary for him to have time and opportunity to develop his false principles. There was war in heaven, and the Prince of life overcame the apostate. Satan was cast out of heaven, with the angels who had united with him.

In the beginning God placed man under law, as an indispensable condition of his very existence. He was a subject of the divine government, and there can be no government without law. The tree of knowledge, which stood near the tree of life in the midst of the Garden of Eden, was to be a test of the

obedience, faith and love of our first parents. While permitted to eat freely of every other tree, they were forbidden to taste of this, on pain of death. They were also to be exposed to the temptations of Satan; but if they endured the trial, they would finally be placed beyond his power, to enjoy perpetual favor with God.

On this earth Satan sought to carry forward the work that he began in heaven. He declared that man could not obey the law of God. Approaching our first parents while they were on trial in the Garden of Eden, he succeeded by falsehood and misrepresentation in turning them from allegiance to God's law. Through their failure to resist temptation, they were brought under Satan's jurisdiction. Thus the enemy gained supremacy over the human race.

When man rebelled, all heaven was filled with sorrow. The penalty of disobedience to God's law is death. There appeared to be no escape for those who had transgressed the law. The law could not be changed in order to meet man in his fallen condition. But God's love for humanity can never be measured. Instead of condemning the human race to eternal death, He gave His only begotten Son for their redemption.

The Son of God, heaven's glorious Commander, was touched with pity for the fallen race. He entered into a covenant with God to save man, and to vindicate His Father's character as expressed in the law. He came to the earth in the form of man to refute Satan's lie, that God had given a law which man could not keep. He came to give Himself as a sacrifice for sin, thus revealing to the heavenly universe that the law is as changeless and eternal as is Jehovah Himself.

God is omnipotent, omniscient, immutable. He always pursues a straightforward course. His law is truth—immutable, eternal truth. His precepts are consistent with His attributes. But Satan makes them appear in a false light. By perverting them, he seeks to give human beings an unfavorable impression of the



Law-giver. Throughout his rebellion he has sought to represent God as an unjust, tyrannical being.

In the beginning it was Satan's purpose to separate man from God. And this purpose he has carried out in every age. Constantly he is at work among the children of men. He sways all classes. The same method of deception, the same logic, that he

to withstand Satan's power and deceptions, unless they accept the atonement provided for them in the remedial sacrifice of Christ, who is our Atonement—our At-one-ment—with God.

Those who believe on Christ and obey His commandments are not under bondage to God's law; for to those who believe and obey, His law is not a law of bondage, but of liberty. Everyone who believes on Christ, everyone who relies on the keeping power of a risen Saviour that has suffered the penalty pronounced upon the transgressor, everyone who resists temptation and in the midst of evil, copies the pattern given in the Christ-life, will through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ become a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Everyone who by faith

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used to deceive the holy pair in Eden, he has used in all succeeding ages. His plan of work has ever been one of deception. At times he assumes a cloak of piety, purity, and holiness. Often he transforms himself into an angel of light. He has blinded the eyes of men so that they cannot see beneath the surface and discern his real purpose. As a result of Adam's disobedience, every human being is a transgressor of the law, sold under sin. Unless he repents and is converted, he is under bondage to the law, serving Satan, falling into the deceptions of the enemy, and bearing witness against the precepts of Jehovah. But by perfect obedience to the requirements of the law, man is justified. Only through faith in Christ is such obedience possible. Men may comprehend the spirituality of the law, they may realize its power as a detector of sin, but they are helpless

obeys God's commandments, will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression.

Christ took upon Himself the nature of man, and by a perfect life demonstrated the falsity of the claims of him who constantly accuses those that are trying to obey God's law. And the blood of Christ shed on the cross is the everlasting, incontrovertible testimony that God's law is as immutable as is His own character. In the day of judgment, when the death upon the cross is seen in all its meaning, every voice will be hushed. Everyone will see that Satan is a rebel, and will acknowledge God's wisdom, justice, and goodness; with one accord declaring, "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Revelation 15:3. ✠

Review and Herald, July 23, 1902.



Honesty

This month we share with you the next in a series of articles that discuss how we can cultivate Christian character traits in the hearts of our children. “The Garden of the Heart,” in the February 2001 issue of *Our Firm Foundation*, laid the foundation for this series. It is available upon request.

The Editors

As parents, we are the gardeners of our children’s hearts. God has given us the responsibility to cultivate in them the lovely traits of character and so to help them reflect Christ. One of the beautiful traits of character is honesty. Honesty is absolute truthfulness; it means that we will state exactly what happened without exaggeration or deletion. We will tell the truth regardless of how it portrays us, or if it reveals us to be in the wrong.

Truthfulness is the foundational principle of many of the character traits that we want to help our children develop. If this quality is not cultivated in the heart of our child, the devil will come in and begin to take him down a path that soon leads not only to open lying, but to deviant, malicious behavior. God tells us, “Let the lying lips be put to silence.” Psalm 31:18.

In our society today untruthfulness is often excused by masking it with such names as joking, teasing, exaggerations, or “white lies.” Since white represents purity, could there ever be such a thing as a pure lie? Certainly not! God is calling each of us to a higher standard, to lift up our eyes to Him instead of seeking to excuse or justify sin. As we are willing to cooperate with Him, He will provide us with the grace we need.

The primary focus of our study will be how to cultivate the good in our children, but it is also important that we recognize how we might be unintentionally promoting wrong behavior. Do you know that through our example we can very subtly teach our children to lie? I have heard parents say to their children when someone calls whom they do not wish to talk to, “Tell them I am not home.” Is that the truth? When this is done, the parents are not only teaching their children to lie; they are in actuality commanding them to break the law of God.

Another way children are taught the wrong is through false praise. For example, in church you might say to a friend, “You look lovely today. Is that a new dress? Oh, it is very nice.” Then on the way home from church you talk about your disapproval of the dress. Our human nature desires to be liked, and we often say things to get another’s approval—even if it means speaking words that are not true. We must be sensitive to the Spirit’s call to guard our conduct so that our example does not strengthen the bad traits of character which we are striving to help our children overcome.

Help Children Distinguish Between Right and Wrong

The first thing we can do to cultivate honesty in our children is to help them distinguish right from wrong. In God’s Word we have a wealth of clear guidance on what is truth and what are the works of darkness. We should daily be helping our children bring the principles of His Word into their real-life challenges.

God has also given children a conscience to help them distinguish

what is true and right. When they do wrong, they feel guilty, and they may try to hide what they are doing from us.

We can help the child do what is right if, instead of accusing or condemning him, we say something like, “Honey, What are you doing? Why don’t you share with me what you are thinking?” Encourage him to tell the truth and make a clear distinction between right and wrong.

Teach Honesty in Children’s Play

Children love to play “make-believe”; it is a part of how they learn about the world. If the children are playing house and one is the mother and one the father, they are acting out a real-life situation, and there is nothing wrong with that type of play. However, we must be sure that the things they pretend could be real and are not fictitious in nature. Even in their artwork we should encourage them to draw realistically—not monsters or other abstract things that are not real. There is a vast difference between harmless pretending and fantasy, which leads the mind to unreality and discontentment.

Do Not Allow Exaggeration

Exaggeration is a form of untruthfulness that seems to come naturally to many of us. We may use it because it makes our stories more interesting or makes a bigger impression. Exaggeration often stems from either insecurity or overconfidence. It is important that we help our children uproot this tendency early and learn to always speak with truthfulness.

Sometimes a child might say something like this, “There were

thousands of birds outside." Our Saviour was a Master at making His stories colorful, interesting, and memorable, without exaggeration. To teach honesty and truthfulness we can say, "Yes, there were a lot of birds, but we do not know if there were thousands. Why don't you say, There was a flock of birds, or, There were lots of birds outside?"

If we allow our children to become accustomed to exaggerating in the little areas of their lives, Inspiration tells us where it will lead: "Exaggeration becomes habit, and blunt falsehoods come to be told with but little conviction or reproof of conscience."¹

Teach Accuracy in Word and Deed

Gossiping, or talebearing, is another habit that will lead them further and further from the truth. It is a habit that will continue to lead them further from Christ and will cause pain to others. We are told in Philippians 4:8: " whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Another way we can teach our children the trait of honesty is by helping them achieve accuracy, not just in their speech, but in their work. We know our children can be dishonest in deed as well as in word. Were they really doing their school assignment or did they jump back in their chair when they heard you coming? We have a part in cultivating these principles in the hearts of our children and youth as we ourselves allow Christ to work them in us.

Keep Your Word

If we make a promise, it is important to keep it. If we make promises and do not keep them, we are teaching our children that we cannot be trusted and do not always tell the truth. Then what reason will they have to always be truthful with us? If we keep making promises to our children and we do not fulfill

those promises, they will follow our example and say, "Yes, Mommy, I will do it," when they have no intention of obeying. In this way we are training our children to become dishonest and untruthful.

Do Not Allow Teasing As an Excuse for Dishonesty

Teasing leads children, as well as parents, to become dishonest. It is used as an excuse to tell an untruth and then turn it around by saying, "I was just teasing," or "I was only kidding." Teasing is no license to tell an untruth. It does not negate the wrong that has been spoken.

Do Not Encourage Indolence

Another area that leads to dishonesty and untruthfulness is a lazy spirit. I have been amazed, as I have studied different character traits, to see that indolence can cause the demise of almost every good trait we wish to develop. Let us help our children by giving them proper occupation.

An indolent spirit leads to untruthfulness when the child does not make the effort to give a truthful answer to a parent's questions because they have a lazy spirit. For example, you ask your child, "Did you fold the clothes?" And the child answers, "Oh, yes, I think I did." Now the child may or may not remember, but, if he really does not remember, he should take the initiative to find out about it so that he can give you a complete and accurate answer.

Punish the Misdemeanor, Not the Honesty

There have been times when our children have come to us confessing something they have done. They might say, "Mother, I was picking this up to dust, and it slipped out of my hands, and I broke it. I am sorry." In this case we can forgive them, and no correction is needed. If we harshly correct every time we find out that a little misdemeanor has been done, and our children have come to us in honesty to admit their wrong, we are encouraging them to be deceptive.

If there is a severe wrong that needs correction, we can tell the child, "Thank you for being honest, but you still will need to have correction." However, we should make it clear that the discipline is for the behavior and not for the honesty, and it might be appropriate to be more merciful with the correction because of the honesty.

As we surrender ourselves to the call of Christ to our hearts, we will be enlightened and empowered to cultivate these traits in our children and youth. He will reveal the need and the solution.

"Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight." Proverbs 12:22. ✠

Next month we will discuss how to cultivate courage and kindness.

References:

¹ *Adventist Home*, 313.



Cultivating Christian Character in Children

Alane Waters

In this series Alane presents the important role of the parent as the gardener of the heart. Then 18 different character qualities are discussed, showing some of the common pitfalls, as well as how to practically plant and cultivate the right seeds of character.

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See page 3 for shipping and sales-tax information.



Mark Your Bible!

Lisa L. Epperly

Suppose you are helping a group from your church distribute invitations to the upcoming evangelistic crusade. Armed with your Bible and a handful of invitations, you knock on the door of a green and brown trailer. A man in his mid-thirties comes to the door, remote control in hand.

“Good afternoon, sir!” you say, flashing him your biggest smile. “I’m handing out invitations to some meetings that are going to be held at our church in a couple of weeks. They are all about the Bible. I know they will be interesting, and I thought you might like to come.” You hand him the colorful brochure.

He smiles and shakes his head. “No thanks. I’ve had it with religion. The Bible’s just a bunch of lies. It says God is love in one verse, and then condemns sinners to everlasting torture in the next. Nope, don’t care to come.”

“But sir,” you protest, “the Bible says no such thing.”

“Oh yeah? Can you prove it to me? I’ve got time,” he adds, motioning down the hall. “You’re welcome to come in.”

What would you do?

Unless you give Bible studies on a regular basis, you might not know

where to start. But if you have *marked your Bible*, then you should have no problem. All you would have to do is look in the back for a study about hellfire, and you could give the man a Bible study on the spot.

The Tools

Before you begin Bible marking, you will need the right tools—but don’t worry; you won’t need many.

First and most importantly, you will need a Bible—but not just any Bible. For instance, a pocket Bible has its place, but the margins are too small to write in. Look for a Bible with wide margins, ideally with wide inside margins as well as outside.¹ It should also have some blank pages in the front or the back that you can write on. The studies in *Our Firm Foundation* are designed specifically for the King James Version.

To write the texts, you will need pens or pencils. If you use pens, choose those with a fine or extra-fine point. I prefer pencils over pens because I like to be able to erase mistakes, and I have found a mechanical pencil to be ideal, as it never has to be sharpened. Pencils are especially better if you plan to add texts to the studies later.

If you like to underline or highlight the texts you use, you will want to choose some colored pens, pencils, or highlighters. If you highlight, you should use dry highlighters, as they will not bleed through the thin Bible paper.

If you choose to underline, you will most likely find a flexible six-inch ruler to be your best choice.

The Method

The basic idea of Bible marking is to chain together a number of Bible texts on a particular topic. There are different methods, but for the sake of space and simplicity in this article, I will share only the method I use. Other methods are discussed on my website.²

Begin each study by writing the first reference in the front or the back of your Bible. If you have several pages, you can give each page a letter of the alphabet to make the studies easier to find. This is especially helpful if you plan to have a lot of studies.

The name of each study needs to be abbreviated to a two- or three-letter code. You will write this code beside each text in the study. Texts from several different studies are often on the same page, and the code will tell you at a glance which

text you want. When a single text is in several studies (such as John 14:15), the code will tell you which verse to go to next.

Use abbreviations for the books of the Bible that you write in the margins.³

One helpful feature of the studies in this and future *Our Firm Foundation* magazines is the comment that goes with each verse. Comments can be written between the code for the study and the reference of the next text, and will remind you how a particular text applies to the topic at hand. However, some people prefer not to use comments, and Bibles with extremely narrow margins do not have room for them.

Benefits of Memorization

You might find it handy to memorize the texts in the studies that you mark, as a backup in case you do not have your Bible with you when someone asks you a question. But there are many benefits to memorizing. The following study will give you a few of them and will also show you how to mark studies in your Bible.

On one of the blank pages in the front or the back of your Bible, write

Benefits of Memorization (MEM) Psalm 119:11.⁴

Turn to Psalm 119:11 and in the margin beside it write **MEM Helps us overcome sin. Isa. 50:4.**

Next to Isaiah 50:4 write **MEM Helps us witness. 1 Pet. 3:15.**

Next to 1 Peter 3:15 write **MEM Heb. 4:12.**⁵

Next to Hebrews 4:12 write **MEM Strengthens us for Satan's attack. Jer. 15:16.**

Next to Jeremiah 15:16 write **MEM Brings happiness. Isa. 28:10.**

Next to Isaiah 28:10 write **MEM Helps us in Bible study. 2 Cor. 3:18.**

Next to 2 Corinthians 3:18 write **MEM Helps us reflect Christ's character. Jer. 33:14.**

Next to Jeremiah 33:14 write **MEM God's promises have power. We need to know where they are. END.**

If you discover another text that you feel would fit into the study, you can go back and add it—either at the end or in the middle. When putting them in the middle, be sure to check the references to make certain you did not break the chain.

Defend Your Faith!

Once you have a study in your Bible, you only need an opportunity

to share it with someone. If you cannot see any opportunities, read the following story, entitled "Youthful Preacher," and then ask yourself what excuse *you* have. Also, pray for the Lord to bring someone across your path today, and He will!

If you have access to the internet, you can find more studies and additional information on Bible marking at www.biblemarking.com. Also, be sure to look up our "Defending the Faith" column each month and then share it with a friend! ✨

Notes:

¹ The Cambridge Concord 8vo Wide-Margin Edition, available from Laymen's Ministries, HC04 Box 94-C, St. Maries, ID 83861, is an ideal Bible for marking.

² <http://www.biblemarking.com/help>

³ Standard abbreviations are listed in the front of most Bibles. A list of suggested abbreviations is also available on my website: <http://www.biblemarking.com/help/abbreviations.html>

⁴ If you use colors, you may wish to write it this way: **Benefits of MEMorization: Psalm 119:11.** This saves space and makes the abbreviation obvious. If you use this method, you will want to write all the codes throughout the study in color.

⁵ Note that not all texts need comments.



Adventist Carnivals

Rosenvold, Lloyd / Rosenvold, Leola

This book seeks to examine some forms of worship that are becoming more and more prevalent in mainstream Adventist churches. Drawing from the Bible and the wealth of Inspired Writings given to us, it helps to

answer questions like: "Is Christian rock music pleasing to God?" "Should drama and theatrics be a part of our worship services?" "Are displays of ecstasy evidence of the working of the Holy Spirit?" Find answers to these questions and others in *Adventist Carnivals*. These things are not new, for they have happened in the past. We have a responsibility to examine God's past instruction before incorporating these elements into our sacred worship services today.

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Adventism in Crisis!

Spear, Ron D.

The shaking of the church will remove those who are not faithful, and strengthen those who are faithful. Though the church may appear as about to

fall, we have the assurance from God's Word that He will have a people in His church who will remain true to Him.

Paperback

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Please see page 3 for shipping and sales-tax information.

Youthful Preacher



C. Lester Bond

Mrs. Sheryl Coleman polished the mahogany surface of her favorite tabletop until it gleamed in the afternoon sun. *Good!* she smiled to herself. *Now that I have the cleaning finished, I'll have time to sit down and enjoy my new book!*

Just then someone knocked on the door. *Who's that?* she wondered. *My friends don't usually visit me this time of day. It must be some salesman.* Mrs. Coleman wrinkled her nose in annoyance. *Well, I'll just send him on his way. I don't need a vacuum cleaner, or a magazine subscription, or a set of encyclopedias. I don't need a thing.*

Mrs. Coleman opened the door with her lips poised to say, "No thank you, not today." But instead of a salesman, a young boy smiled up at her. His clothes were neat and clean, his hair was nicely combed, and his shoes were tied. "Good afternoon," he greeted her. "Would you like me to give you a Bible study?"

"Give me a what?" Mrs. Coleman blinked in astonishment. "A Bible study."

Mrs. Coleman frowned. "You must be joking. I've taught a Sunday school class for several years. And

you want to give me a Bible study?"

"Yes, ma'am." The boy gazed at her with steady brown eyes.

Mrs. Coleman hesitated. "Well, uh, oh, why, I—I, oh, all right, you may give me a Bible study if you want to."

"Very well, then. May I come next Wednesday at 3:30?" The boy nodded his head, and Mrs. Coleman felt herself nodding in reply. The boy smiled from ear to ear as he said, "It's all set then." He pulled a memo pad from his pocket and made a few notations. He looked up at Mrs. Coleman. "I'll see you on Wednesday at 3:30. Oh, by the way, my name is Calvin."

Mrs. Coleman watched Calvin until he disappeared down the street. "Can you believe it?" she exclaimed out loud. "What on earth will a little fellow like that do for a Bible study? Next Wednesday should be quite interesting!"

Bible Study

The following Wednesday at 3:30, Sheryl Coleman heard a knock. She opened the door, and there stood Calvin.

"Good afternoon," he greeted her. "Are you ready for your Bible study?"

Mrs. Coleman looked at her watch. "Oh, this is Wednesday, isn't it? And it's exactly 3:30. Come on in." She showed him to a chair in the living room.

"Thank you." Calvin sat down and waited until Mrs. Coleman had settled herself on the couch with her Bible. "Could we have a word of prayer before we begin?" he requested.

Whatever have I gotten myself into? Mrs. Coleman rolled her eyes a little. *I'm afraid I'm in for a real little sermon.*

After the prayer, Calvin opened his Bible. "What does the Bible say about why it is important to know God?" he asked.

What does it say? Mrs. Coleman wondered in confusion. *I guess I never really thought about it before.*

To her relief, Calvin went on. "Please read what the Bible says in John 17:3."

Mrs. Coleman turned to the text and read it out loud. *Of course!* She thought. *What a marvelous text!*

Calvin went on. "When we know God, what do we do? Please turn to 1 John 2:3."

They continued through the Bible study, Calvin asking questions and Mrs. Coleman finding the answers in the Bible. In just a few minutes Calvin closed his Bible. "That's all for today," he announced. "Would you like me to give you another study next Wednesday?"

Another study! Mrs. Coleman hadn't expected that. *But this one had been rather interesting.* "Well, let me see," she answered. "Yes, I think it would be all right for you to come back next Wednesday." She shook Calvin's hand and then saw him to the door.

Two Preachers

The following Wednesday, Calvin gave Mrs. Coleman a Bible study on the subject of salvation. Mrs. Coleman's heart thrilled to hear such beautiful truths presented in such a simple way. When the study was over, Calvin asked, "Shall I come back next Wednesday?"

"Please do," she answered.

For many weeks, Calvin gave Mrs. Coleman a Bible study each Wednesday afternoon. One day, at the end of the study, Mrs. Coleman sat thinking for several minutes.

"Calvin," she said finally, "I thought I knew my Bible pretty well, but you have showed me many new things. I see now that my church isn't following the Bible. How can I join your church?"

A joyful light shone in Calvin's bright eyes. "I'll bring my pastor with me next week," he promised. "He'll tell you what you need to do."

Mrs. Coleman could hardly wait for the week to pass. Finally she heard the familiar knock. When she opened the door, two preachers stood there: a big preacher and a small one.

Baptism

One Sabbath morning a few weeks later, the pastor announced, "We are having a baptism today. I would like to ask the baptismal candidates to come forward."

"I believe," continued the pastor, "that it would be a blessing to all of us to learn how these people found the blessed truth. I am going to ask



each one to briefly tell his or her experience."

A man spoke first. "A colporteur sold me a book. I read it, and I am here today."

Next, a lady spoke. "An Adventist family moved next door to us. We became acquainted, and I am here today."

Then Mrs. Coleman stepped up to the microphone. "Several months ago a young boy came to my house. He asked me if I wanted a Bible study. Although I had been a teacher in a Sunday School class for several years, I was curious to know what he would say. He has been coming to my house every Wednesday since, and I am here today."

A man spoke next. "I had a similar experience. A young boy came by my office every Tuesday afternoon at 3:30 and gave me a Bible study, and I am here today."

A grandmotherly-looking woman testified, "A young boy came by our home every Monday afternoon at 3:30 and gave me a Bible study, and I am here today."

Another lady stepped up and said. "A young boy came to our home every Thursday afternoon at 3:30 and gave us a Bible study, and I am here today."

Still another lady said, "A young boy came to my home every Friday afternoon at 3:30 and gave me a Bible study, and I am here today."

The pastor looked out over the audience. "Is that young boy present this morning?"

Calvin stood up, his face beaming with happiness. "Come right up here to the pulpit," the pastor invited him.

When Calvin reached the front of the church, the pastor shook his hand. "Please tell us how and why you began giving Bible studies," he requested.

"Well, pastor," Calvin replied, "in Sabbath School we've been marking studies in our Bibles. I learned so much! I just thought it was time to pass it on." ❀

Reprinted with permission from *Young Disciple* magazine, vol. 5, #27.

Beneficial Devisings for Evil Surmisings



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

"Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." 1 Peter 3:15. We need to be able to give an answer for our faith. Marking your Bible can give you the edge you need. It takes work, but the rewards are worth all the effort.

We pray that you will be blessed by these studies. As you mark them, may you be encouraged to spend more time in God's Word and to search out the hidden things of God. Always be sure to look for opportunities to share them with others.

The Editors

Bible Marking Directions

- On a blank page in the front or the back of your Bible, write the study title, the code, and the first reference. This month's entry would appear as follows: **Beneficial Devisings for Evil Surmisings (BD) Phil. 4:8.**
- Turn to the first verse and write the code, the comment (if you wish to use the comments), and the next reference beside it. If the comment is long, you can write it at the top or bottom of the page, with an asterisk or the code of the study to refer you to it.
- Turn to the next text and repeat the process until you come to the end. Beside the last text, write the study code and "End."
- Go through the study to check for broken links.
- Share the study with someone!

Human nature being what it is, we have the tendency to surmise evil rather than surmising good. When we hear an evil report, or see something that we think is wrong, the natural tendency for most of us is to put the worst possible construction on it.

However, this is not what God would have us do. He desires that we think the best of others and their actions.

It is relatively easy to put the best construction on things we see or hear that do not directly affect us. But when people do things that hurt us, it is not always easy to think good of them. However, the Bible tells us what we can do to keep our thoughts in submission to Christ:

1BD: Philippians 4:8

Banish the evil thought and choose these thoughts by communion with God.

2BD: Matthew 5:44

Pray for the person.

3BD: Psalm 139:23

Ask God to show me my part of the problem.

4BD: Zechariah 4:6

Pray for God to work in their hearts. It is the Holy Spirit's work to convince and convict—not ours.

5BD: Genesis 50:20

Think of the blessings that have come through this person.

6BD: Matthew 7:7

Ask God for a selfless love for this person.

7BD: Romans 12:21

Begin serving the person.

8BD: 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Be thankful for the trial. ✨



For more information on Bible marking, or for a selection of other topics, go to www.biblemarking.com

letters to the editor

Have a letter to share?

contact editor@hopeint.org or see page 3 for our mailing address.



Just wanted to thank you for the cassette tape and the five *Our Firm Foundation* magazines you sent. May God richly bless your work here in these end times. Keep on keeping on. The best is yet to come.

CW, Florida

We really enjoyed the tape [of the month] and so have our numerous friends we have shared it with. It is very refreshing to know that there are some pastors still speaking out boldly. We only have one church available in our community, and it is quite liberal so we have to turn elsewhere to be fed. Tapes like this one are a real blessing!

EJ, via e-mail

From Overseas

I want to thank you for the good work you are doing preaching the gospel through literature. Keep it up!

I am in need of the materials which you are sending other people. In fact, let me say I am requesting your help and assistance. My area is still an unentered area. Few people know about the Bible truths.

May God bless you through and through as you labor in the Lord's vineyard.

DD, Zimbabwe

I would first like to thank you for sending me the books I requested. My work has been victorious due to them. So far, I have helped many people to become Christians and I made three evangelistic campaigns. In one of them, God blessed me with sixty-three souls who were baptized at the end.

If it can be possible, therefore, please assist me by freely sending me the SDA Bible Commentaries, which I know will help me much. Don't forget to send many pamphlets for people to read. Please send them freely, for our country is very poor.

RB, Malawi

I respectfully wish to thank you so much for sending much of your

magazines entitled *Earth's Final Warning* and *Behold He Cometh*. May the Lord God bless you for devoting your materials in order for your neighbors to receive the true light of God.

Finally, we all here express our wishes to thank God and your department for these truth-filled publications. We hope to receive much more to share.

MB, Ghana

I write to thank you extra much for the vast range of books you sent me. They have helped me make a radical change in my life, not only mine, but also as I give to neighbors and friends, the results are just splendid! I wonder how I could have managed without your wonderful ministry.

I hope and pray your ministry continues to touch the lives of many through your publications. May God abundantly bless all your efforts!

JM, Zimbabwe

I am writing this to you to thank you so much for bringing complete change into my life. I was not aware of the fact that working on Saturday is breaking the commandments of God, and I have resigned from the work I was doing in the mine.

I request your prayers that I may not go back to the mine to break the Sabbath anymore.

TM, South Africa

My friends in Christ, I am very happy for what you did for me so that I can continue with the work of the Lord. Thank you for the Holy Bible and other spiritual books which I am using for teaching the children of God, and the lessons which other teachers and I are using by now. Thank you for the work you're doing for saving the lost souls and may God bless you richly.

I am very busy reading those books you sent me. Please, can you send any other books so that we may come up in Christ? We are very near to go home, where we can stay without any

problem, where we can have our King, where there is no fear at all.

Thank you, and may God bless you more richly as we are preparing to meet Him in the clouds of Heaven.

CM, Kenya

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the parcel of books and magazines you sent to me. Thanks for that special gift. My friends were grateful for the magazines.

The message in the magazines was clear and loud. Surely the antichrist will soon reveal himself and that will be one of the last events in the world's history.

The books have a wonderful message that planet Earth has been given one last Final Warning, and that is to accept the Saviour Jesus and serve Him.

PN, Kenya

I am grateful to have been entered for a subscription. Praise God that He is leading the way! Your *Our Firm Foundation* magazines have proved a great help and surely we need much more of them than ever.

Fortunately, here God's people have started to wake up! The spirit is touching them. Please send us old copies of Spirit of Prophecy books. We are working independently and we are really facing hard times.

N, Kenya

I'm excited! I have found the truth. Not just elements of truth, but full and complete truth in one place! I have been searching for a magazine like this for a long time, and God led me to you and the *Our Firm Foundation* magazine.

I am currently studying theology and finding a lot of the "new theology" to be quite challenging. All I can say is may God bless you! And thank you for the work you are doing — unafraid of man.

I believe that God has called me to a similar ministry to what you are doing. I just wish I were already graduated. Please pray that the next four years will not shake the truth out of me.

PS, Australia

Feeling Sick?

[sick and tired]

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[maybe just a little wasted]

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[no, to cover up the side effects of my *other* prescriptions]

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