



Our Firm Foundation

Volume 16, Number 9

September 2001

The Bible As Our Study Book

The Seventh-day Sabbath

Christ Our Righteousness

The Immutable Law of God

The Non-Immortality of the Soul

The Three Angels' Messages

The Sanctuary

Go Forward!

Although I am still traveling back and forth between my home in Kentucky and Hope International, my wife Becky and I were able to conduct another vegetarian cooking and health seminar at the Louisville, Kentucky, Seventh-day Adventist First Church during one of my recent visits back home. The attendance was the second largest of our seminars in the last five-and-a-half years. There were about 58 people in attendance each night, with about 50 non-Adventists. The average attendance at our seminars is usually about 35, with hardly any Seventh-day Adventists present.

The pen of Inspiration, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has instructed us over and over again to proclaim the three angels' messages.¹ As I contemplated these messages, I realized that Ellen White told us, "Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, 'It is the third angel's message in verity.'"² She also stated, "The message of Christ's righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other to prepare the way of the Lord. This is the glory of God, which closes the work of the third angel."³

But then I found an interesting statement in *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 486: "The health reform, I was shown, is a part of the third angel's message. . . . I saw that we as a people must make an *advance move* in this *great work*. . . . God's people are not prepared for the loud cry of the third angel. They have a work to do for

themselves which they should not leave for God to do for them." (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.) Please read the whole passage for yourself and realize its importance for this last generation. "Health reform is one branch of the great work which is to fit a people for the coming of the Lord. It is as closely connected with the third angel's message as the hand is with the body."⁴

My dear people, we are so careless in our eating habits, even though we are vegetarians. Health reform is part of the third angel's message, but do you see—it must start with us to prepare us for the giving of the loud cry message of the third angel. Are you prepared? How many of us continue to eat refined foods, sugar, fats, and dairy, which together make a class of food that "beclouds [our] intellects and stupefies [our] moral sensibilities."⁵ How can we advance in this great work? The Holy Spirit tells us, "I am instructed to say to health reform educators: Go forward. The world needs every jot of the influence you can exert to press back the tide of moral woe. Let those who teach the third angel's message stand true to their colors."⁶

My dear people, God is talking to all of us. While apostasy, heresies, and all manner of winds of doctrine exist in the church, while some among us proclaim that the church is becoming a sister of Babylon—that is not the third angel's message! The third angel's message is "the righteousness of Christ," and the health

reform message is included in it. But this message must begin with us.

"Much of the prejudice that prevents the truth of the third angel's message from reaching the hearts of the people might be removed if more attention were given to *health reform*. When people become interested in this subject, the way is often prepared for the entrance of other truths. If they see that we are intelligent with regard to health, they will be more ready to believe that we are sound in Bible doctrines."⁷

Becky and I can attest to that fact. While we present the health reform message, people listen more intently to our doctrinal points.

My dear people, it is time for *total health reform*.

"The light God has given on health reform is for our salvation and the salvation of the world."⁸

Let us join hands and receive our marching orders: "GO FORWARD!" ✚

Yours in Christ,
Bill Humeniuk
Board Chairman

REFERENCES:

- ¹ See *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 118; *The Great Controversy*, 604; *Selected Messages*, book 2, 118; *Early Writings*, 277.
- ² *Evangelism*, 190.
- ³ *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 19; see also *Testimonies to Ministers*, 91-92.
- ⁴ *Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, 9.
- ⁵ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 486.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 9, 113.
- ⁷ *Counsels on Health*, 452.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 479.

About Hope International . . .

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

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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Audio subscription: (2 cassettes per month) US \$60 per year. For foreign audio and large print subscriptions, please inquire regarding postage.

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The Bible As Our Study Book

Ellen G. White

God calls upon teachers to behold the heavens and study the works of God in nature. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." Psalm 19:1-3. Shall we not commit to memory the lessons nature teaches? Shall we not open the eyes of our senses and take in the beautiful things of God? We would do well to read often the nineteenth psalm, that we may understand how the Lord binds up His law with His created works.

We cannot make too much of the Bible as a lesson book in our schools. "Verily, verily," Christ declared, "Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. . . . I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." John 6:32-33, 35.

Can we find any textbook for our schools filled with such deep and earnest declarations as the Word of the living God? Then why should this Word be laid aside for the writings of infidel authors? What more precious book could be placed in our schools than that which teaches us how we may inherit eternal life? The lessons of Bible history should be kept before the students, old and young, that those who have no love for God and no interest in spiritual things may become interested, and learn to love the Word.

The Word of God contains all necessary information. Writing to Timothy the apostle Paul says: "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the

man of God may be perfect, thoroughly [perfected, margin] furnished unto all good works." 2 Timothy 3:14-17.

Christ declares, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." John 6:44-45. Christ is the Center of all true doctrine. All true religion is found in His Word and in nature. He is the One in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered, and the teacher who learns from Him finds a safe anchorage.

All that the mind can grasp is opened before us in the Word. This is our spiritual food. We are to contemplate the wonderful works of God, and repeat the lessons learned from them to our children, that we may lead them to see His skill, His power, His grandeur, in His created works.

What a God is our God! He rules over His kingdom with diligence and care, and He has built a hedge—the Ten Commandments—about His subjects, to preserve them from transgression. In requiring obedience to the laws of His kingdom, God gives His people health and happiness, peace and joy. He teaches them that the perfection of character He requires can be attained only by becoming familiar with His Word. The psalmist declares, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." Psalm 119:130.

It is written in the prophets: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee." Isaiah 54:11-14. "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Jeremiah 31:33-34. "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." Isaiah 2:3.

The Old Testament Scriptures were the lesson Book of Israel. When the lawyer came to Christ with the question, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"—consider this question, for the answer is for everyone who asks a similar question—the Saviour said, "What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." Christ said, "Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." Luke 10:25-28.

This knowledge is essential for every student in our schools. If there were not another text in the Bible,

this statement carries sufficient light and knowledge and assurance for every soul. The lawyer had answered his own question, but, willing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "Who is my neighbour?" Verse 29. Then by the parable of the Good Samaritan Christ showed who is our neighbor, and gives us an example of the love we should manifest toward those suffering and in need. The priest and Levite, whose duty it was to minister to the needs of the stranger, passed by on the other side.

At the conclusion of the narrative Christ asked the lawyer, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise." Verses 36-37.

What pure, excellent language is found in the Word of God! What elevating, ennobling principles!

There are practical lessons in the Word of God, lessons that Christ would have teachers and parents present to their children in the home and in the school. That Word teaches living, holy principles, which prompt men to do unto others as they would have others do unto them, principles which they are to bring into the daily life here, and carry with them into the school above. This is the higher education. No learning of human origin can reach these heights, for they reach into eternity, and are immortalized. The altar and the plough are the experiences for all who seek eternal life.

We know altogether too little of the greatness of the love and compassion of God. Let students put to the stretch the faculties of their mind, that they may comprehend such chapters as the forty-fifth of Isaiah, which should be placed in form, and brought into our schools

as valuable studies. They will be better than romance or fable. Why have our schools been so dependent upon books which tell so little of the city we claim to be seeking, whose Builder and Maker is God?

Our lesson books should contain the loftiest themes of thought. Heaven is our home. Our citizenship is above, and our lives must not be devoted to a world which is soon to be destroyed. We need the Word of God revealed in living characters. What pure, excellent language is found in the Word of God! What elevating, ennobling principles!

The question has been asked, Shall you have no study book but the Bible? I answer, Take the Bible as a study book, and see if you are not filled with the love of God. Your heart may be barren, your intellect feeble, but if you will prayerfully

study the Word of God, light will flash into your mind. God works with every diligent student. Teachers who will learn from the great Teacher will realize the help of God as did Daniel and his fellows. The record states of these youth, "As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. . . . And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm." Daniel 1:17, 19-20.

I could refer to chapter after chapter of the Old Testament Scriptures that contain precious encouragement. These Scriptures are

a treasure house of precious pearls, and you all need them. How much time is spent by intelligent human beings in horse racing, cricket matches, and ball playing! But will indulgence in these sports give men a desire to know truth and righteousness? Will it keep God in their thoughts? Will it lead them to inquire, How is it with my soul?

All the powers of Satan are set in operation to hold the attention to frivolous amusements, and he is

wonderful things God's hand has made, let your proud, foolish heart feel its dependence and inferiority. As you consider these things, you will have a sense of God's condescension. "The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel." Psalm 147:2. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not

study in our schools? The Word of God contains instructive lessons, given in reproof, in warning, in encouragement, and in rich promises. Would not such food as this be meat in due season to the youth?

In an assembly where the school question was being discussed, the question was asked, Why has not appropriate matter for reading and lesson books been selected and compiled? Why has not the Word of God been extolled above every human production? Have you thought that a better knowledge of what-saith-the-Lord would have a deleterious effect on teachers and students? There was a hush in the assembly, and self-conviction came upon students and teachers. Men who had considered themselves wise and strong saw that they were weak and lacking in the knowledge of that Book which concerns the eternal destiny of the human soul.

The speaker took from the hands of the teachers those books which they had been making their study, some of which had been written by infidel authors and contained infidel sentiments, and laid them on the floor. Then he placed the Bible in their hands, saying, You have little knowledge of this Book. You know not the Scriptures nor the power of God. When you have taken your students through the course of study you have followed in the past, they will have to unlearn much that they have learned, and this they will find a more difficult work. Objectionable things have taken root in their minds like weeds in a garden, and some will never be able to distinguish between right and wrong. The good and the evil are mingled in their work. The faces of men will be uplifted to be believed and the theories of men to be exalted. They repeat for doctrine a little truth with which is woven the judgments and sayings and doings of men. This will be given as food to the youth, who will never know the way of life as long as they depend on such instructors.

By every teacher in our schools the only true God is to be uplifted. The prayer of Christ for His dis-

The Word of God contains instructive lessons, given in reproof, in warning, in encouragement, and in rich promises. Would not such food as this be meat in due season to the youth?

gaining his object. He is interposing his devisings between God and the soul. God calls men to look upon the heavens. "Lift up your eyes on high," He says, "and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might." Isaiah 40:26. We are not merely to gaze upon the heavens; we are to consider the works of God. He would have us study the works of infinity, and from this study learn to love and reverence and obey Him. The heavens and the earth with their treasures are to teach the lessons of God's love, care, and power.

Satan will manufacture his diversions that men may not think about God. The world, filled with sport and pleasure loving, is always thirsting for some new interests. And how little time and thought are given to the Creator of the heavens and the earth! God calls upon His creatures to turn their attention from the confusion and perplexity around them, and admire His handiwork. The heavenly bodies are worthy of contemplation. God has made them for the benefit of man, and as we study His works, angels of God will be by our side to enlighten our minds and guard them from satanic deception. As you look at the

return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed." Isaiah 45:22-24.

How terrible it is when the acknowledgment of God is not made when it should be made! How sad to humble one's self when it is too late! Why, oh, why, do not men heed the invitation? The psalmist said, "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, thy face, LORD, will I seek." Psalm 27:8. The whole of this psalm is excellent, and should be placed in the reading and spelling lessons of the classes. The twenty-eighth, twenty-ninth, and seventy-eighth psalms tell of the rich blessing bestowed by God upon His people, and of their poor returns for all His benefits. The eighty-first psalm explains why Israel was scattered. They forgot God, as the churches in our land are forgetting Him today. Read the eighty-ninth, ninetieth, ninety-first, ninety-second, and ninety-third psalms. My attention has been called to these matters. Shall we not consider the Word of the Lord? These things were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come, and should they not be the objects of

ciples was: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." John 17:3-8.

This is the work God has given to every teacher. As educators you have not that knowledge that comes from God. Had you this knowledge, your whole being would proclaim the truth of the living God to a world dead in trespasses and sins. You know not the message God has

given for this time. You are as blind men leading the blind. Students leave the school with a false education, which it takes them years to unlearn. The past has shown that both teachers and students know very little in regard to the message which should be proclaimed at this time. Should the third angel's message be proclaimed in all its lines to many who profess to be educated, it would not be understood by them. Human theories and wisdom are exalted, and men are becoming too wise to follow a plain "Thus saith the Lord." I read from a certain writer, "The old theology of Old Testament Scripture has been left a long way behind by the teachings of Jesus Christ. The ethics of the Old Testament fall far short of the holiness of the New." But it was He who gave to the New Testament its sacredness that spoke the lessons of the Old Testament.

The first page of the periodical for our youth bears the pictures of men, with a footnote explaining that the publishers have received permission to place them there. Books and

papers that contain little of present truth are exalted. When the hearts of converted men are filled with the great and awful truths that are living issues for this time, they will understand the deep importance of the message they are to bear to a perishing world. But many of the watchmen are asleep. The day of the Lord is right upon us. As a thief it is coming, with stealthy, muffled tread, and it will take unawares all who are not watching. God pity the people when the watchmen are asleep.

Who among our teachers are awake, and as faithful stewards of the grace of God are giving the trumpet a certain sound? Who are voicing the message of the third angel, telling the world to make ready for the great day of God? The message we bear to the world has the seal of the living God. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are to be combined in the work of fitting up a people to stand in the day of the Lord. ✨

Manuscript Releases, vol. 13, 260-268.



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.

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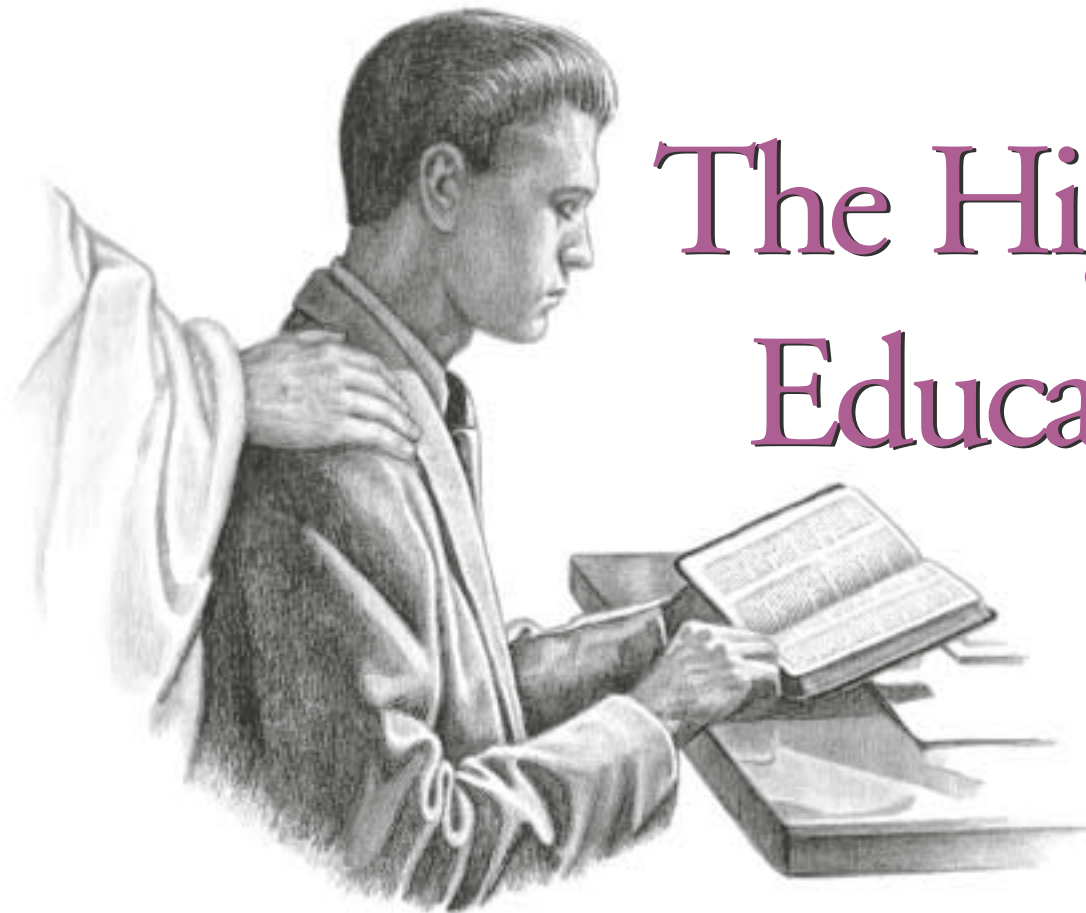
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The Higher Education

Ellen G. White

I desire that we shall know the very path we are to travel, the very grace we are to receive, in order that we may obtain our life insurance policy in the kingdom of God. "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." 2 Peter 1:1-9.

How many there are that forget. They forget that they were baptized, to rise out of the water to live in the likeness of Christ's resurrection.

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." Verse 10. Every one of us can make our election sure, or we can make it a failure. "If ye do these things, ye shall never fall." If we live on the plan of addition, God will work for us on the plan of multiplication.

The one who appreciates the Word of eternal life will be a most diligent worker. He is to work out

his own salvation with fear and trembling. Why the fear? you say. Why the trembling? — Lest he shall in some way make crooked paths for his feet. He is to place himself in such a position that he can keep his eyes fixed on Jesus. He is to behold Him and His character. Those who do this live on the plan of addition, not the plan of subtraction.

"Add to your faith." You have faith in Jesus Christ as your Saviour. All should have faith in Him as a Saviour. We are to work in accordance with that faith. We show our faith by working, by keeping our eyes fixed on the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. See Philippians 3:14.

He who beholds Jesus, realizing what He is to us and what we are to Him, will be diligent. He will live on the plan of addition, adding to his faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly

kindness charity. This is a process of growth. He who cooperates with Christ will not be found tomorrow where he is today. Every day he will follow on to know the Lord, that he may know that His going forth is prepared as the morning. Of those who live in this way it will be written at last, "Ye are complete in him." Colossians 2:10.

We are to work not merely for our own souls, but for the souls of all with whom we are connected. Parents are to keep before them the point to which they should work—the perfection of the characters of their children. They are to strive earnestly to perfect the characters of their children, because the future immortal life will show the result of the work they have done. Those parents who educate their children aright, weeding out every unruly trait, are fitting them to become missionaries for Christ in truth, in righteousness, in holiness. He who in his childhood does service for God, adding to his faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity, is fitting himself to hear the words, "Child, come up higher; enter the higher school." Do you think we shall not learn anything there? We have not the slightest idea of what will then be opened before us. With Christ we shall walk before the living waters. He will open before us the beauty and glory of nature. He will show us what He is to us and what we are to Him. There are lessons we do not know now that we shall know hereafter.

The education that is to be given in our families is this: The child that lives the life of Christ, studies the character of Christ, the child who is prayed with and prayed for, will be prepared to enter the higher grade.

Can we suppose that parents who have neglected or indulged their children, letting them, because it is easier, follow their own way, stand on the same footing as parents who have followed the will and way of God? Churches have been

troubled by the defective characters of parents and the defective characters of their children. What have they been bringing to the foundation?—Only wood, hay, and stubble. They may be saved and their children may be saved, because they have at last awakened to their defects; but will they be regarded in the same light as are those whose lives have been devoted to the service of Christ? As one star differeth from another star in glory, so it will be with the saints in light.

It means everything to us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. God works in us, to will and to do of His good pleasure. If we let Him work He will work. Our reward in heaven above depends on our daily walk and conversation here below. We can be Christians

transform the character, restoring the image of God in the soul. This is the education which will strengthen and fortify the mind against the deceptive whisperings of the adversary of souls, and enable us to understand the voice of God. It will fit the learner to become a coworker with Jesus Christ, dispelling the moral darkness and bringing light and knowledge into the world. It is the simplicity of godliness—our passport from the preparatory school of earth to the higher school above.

Higher education is found in the words spoken by our Lord and Saviour, the Great Teacher sent by God. Having stood in the councils of God, the elements of truth from the least to the greatest were always familiar to His mind. All the trea-

True education embraces not merely a training of the intellect, but is a symmetrical development of all the powers—physical, mental, and moral.

here. And to be a Christian it is not necessary that we live in depression, mourning because we cannot have our own way. If we are Christians indeed, Christ is formed within, the hope of glory. This brings a light into the chambers of the mind and the soul-temple which nothing can put out. We need religion in the soul. We need to carry out the principles of true godliness.

True education embraces not merely a training of the intellect, but is a symmetrical development of all the powers—physical, mental, and moral. It is the inculcation of those ideas which will impress the mind and heart with the knowledge of God the Creator and Jesus Christ the Redeemer. It should ever be kept before the students in our schools that higher education is an experimental knowledge of the plan of salvation, and that knowledge is secured by earnestly and diligently searching the Scriptures. Such an education will renew the mind and

sures of Heaven were included in the gospel, and were given to Him to bestow upon the fallen race, that every soul might receive the help needed to break the chain which bound him a slave to sin, and to become free in Christ Jesus. He spoke with the power and authority of a divine oracle, and with a knowledge that He was unfolding truth of the highest magnitude—even the words of eternal life.

God's appointments and grants in our behalf are without limit. The throne of grace is itself the highest attraction, because occupied by One who permits us to call Him Father. But the Lord Jehovah did not deem the principle of salvation complete while invested only with His own love. By His own appointment He has placed at His altar an Advocate clothed in His nature. As our Intercessor, His office work is to introduce us to God as His sons and daughters. Christ intercedes in behalf of those who receive Him. To

them He gives power, by virtue of His own merits, to become members of the royal family – children of the heavenly King. And the Father demonstrates His infinite love for Christ, who paid our ransom by His blood, by receiving and welcoming Christ’s friends as His friends. He is satisfied with the atonement made. He is glorified by the incarnation, the life, death and mediation of His Son.

This is the science of salvation, the science of true godliness, the true science of all education which the student can take with him into the higher grade – the courts above. That which Heaven deems important in

fitted to become a companion of the saints in light.

Centuries ago, when enshrouded in the pillar of cloud, Christ, through Moses, instructed the Israelites how they were to teach their children, Moses received, direct from God, the lessons he was to give to the people. “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” Deuteronomy 6:6-7. “Keep therefore and do them; for this is

Christ is the greatest Teacher, the greatest Benefactor upon whom the world will ever look. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is the Light of the world, ascending the firmament of truth and shining in clear, distinct rays. Should He withdraw His beams, the world would be shrouded in eternal darkness. He contemplated the situation of the world. He saw that eternal interests were involved in the choice man should make – an immortal crown for the overcomer, unhappiness and eternal ruin for those who should neglect the higher education – the science of salvation. He rejoiced in the anticipation of doing for His followers more than they could ask or think. He came to our world to mold character and give mental power. His mission to earth was to shed abroad the bright beams of true education, that our pursuits and aims in this life might not be misapplied and lost; for we may carry with us all the treasure of knowledge which gives us a fitness for the life that measures with the life of God.

All who learn the science of salvation must be submissive students in the school of Christ, that the soul-temple may be the abiding place of the Most High. If we would learn of Christ we must be emptied of every proud possession, that He may imprint His image upon the soul. It was because of a close connection with the living God that Daniel received true education, and knowledge, and understanding and wisdom. By abiding in Christ, by doing His will, by simple faith in His Word, even the unlearned may have this knowledge. To these humble, trusting ones the Lord Jesus reveals that all knowledge not perverted by the wisdom and sayings of men leads heavenward.

The teachings of Christ were of an entirely practical nature. By the use of parables He brought the eternal future to view. Some were afraid of His searching truths; others who listened to His teachings came to Him privately and sought an explanation. This was the desire that Christ wished to arouse, that

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submissive students in the school of Christ, that the soul-
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all education is that kind of knowledge which has been revealed from eternity, and which enters into the purposes of God, expressing His mind and revealing His glory. To obtain this education is the study of the angels of God and of all the heavenly intelligences. The themes which should absorb our attention in this life, and which will demand study throughout the eternal ages, are so momentous that they not only supersede the discoveries of man, but engross the undivided attention of the only begotten Son of God.

This education can be gained only from a study of God’s Word. It will ennoble and expand the intellect, and strengthen the spiritual powers. It will enlarge the narrow confines of human scholarship, and present before the mind a far deeper knowledge to be obtained through a vital connection with God. It will bring every student who is a doer of the Word into a broader field of thought, and will secure to him a wealth of learning which is imperishable. Without this knowledge it is certain that man will lose eternal life; but, possessing it, he will be

your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.” Deuteronomy 4:6.

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. . . . And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant.” Exodus 34:27-28. In giving this remarkable instruction to Moses, God taught that His chosen people should be the repository of truth for the whole world. There can be no higher education than this; none more pure or none more precious for all mankind.

If our youth obtain that knowledge they will be able to gain all the rest that is essential; but, if not, all the knowledge they may acquire from the world will not place them in the ranks of the Lord. They may gather all the knowledge that books can give and yet be ignorant of the first principles of that righteousness which could give them a character approved of God.

He might give them more definite instruction. None will come in vain to Christ to inquire for a clearer knowledge of truth, for He has declared, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." John 7:17. Those who have yielded their will to God are receiving a training in Christ's school to do all the justice possible to His divinity. Those who study His Word, with hearts opened to receive the impressions made by the Holy Spirit, will not complain that they cannot see clearly the meaning of His Word. He will unfold to them the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and these mysteries will be understood by the heart that longs to know the truth. A heavenly light will shine into the soul-temple, and be revealed unto others as the bright shining of a lamp on a dark path. When the mind is not clear it is the privilege of all to go to the Great Teacher and ask Him, who uttered those mysterious truths, to enlighten the understanding. In Christ's name our petitions ascend to the Father. He intercedes in our behalf, and the Father lays open all the treasures of His wisdom and grace for our appropriation, to enjoy and to communicate to others.

The message of deliverance is granted to all. We are to wear Christ's yoke and bear His burden. What is redemption? It is that process by which the soul is trained for heaven, and it requires something higher, something more divine than the mere knowledge of books. This training means a knowledge of Christ; it means emancipation from ideas, from habits and practices that have been gained in the school of

Satan and lead us to the Cross of Calvary, that we may become active, devoted, loyal workers for the cause of truth.

The truths contained in the Scriptures are grand, elevating, uplifting, ennobling. If the lost image of God is restored during probationary time, these truths must be cherished. They are graced with such simplicity that they could not have originated in any human mind.

The truths contained in the Scriptures are grand, elevating, uplifting, ennobling. If the lost image of God is restored during probationary time, these truths must be cherished.

the Prince of Darkness. The soul must be delivered from habits and practices which are opposed to loyalty to God. In this life we are to learn submission to the divine will, or we shall not be able to enter into the kingdom of heaven. True religion enables a man to overcome stubbornness, pride, selfishness, worldly ambition, questioning, and unbelief. There is grace and strength in Christ to enable us to rise above the alluring, infatuating temptations of

A Sower from a higher world went forth to sow the seeds of truth. Only this higher phase of education is able to prepare students for the higher life—the highest grade in the highest school, where, with Christ and God as Teachers, we shall throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity learn how best to magnify and glorify God's name. ✠

The Australasian Union Conference Record, July 12, 1899.

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Jesuit Futurism or Protestant Historicism

Steve Wohlberg

Modern Christianity has largely forgotten the importance of the Protestant Reformation of the 1500s.

For almost a thousand years, Europe had been ruled by the iron hand of Rome. Christianity was largely permeated with superstition. Faith in Jesus Christ, heartfelt appreciation for His love, and a simple trust in His death on the cross, were almost unknown. The truth about grace, full forgiveness, and the free gift of eternal life to believers in the Son of God, had been buried under a mass of tradition. Then Martin Luther arose in Germany. After a period of tremendous personal struggle, Luther began teaching justification by faith in Jesus Christ rather than by reliance on “creature merits,” or any human works. See Romans 1:16; 3:26, 28; 5:1.

Eventually, Martin Luther turned to the prophecies. He read about the “little horn,” the “man of sin,” and the “beast”; and the Holy Spirit spoke to his heart. Finally, he saw that these prophecies applied to the Roman Catholic Church! At the risk of losing his life, Luther preached and wrote to an astonished people that Papal Rome was indeed the Antichrist of Bible prophecy. This

dual message of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ apart from works, together with the message that Papal Rome is the Antichrist, changed the course of history.

“There are two great truths that stand out in the preaching that brought about the Protestant Reformation. . . . The just shall live by faith, not by the works of Romanism, and the Papacy is the Antichrist of Scripture.’ ”¹ It has been said that the Reformation discovered Jesus Christ, and in *His light it discovered Antichrist*. This Spirit-filled movement shook the world!

“From the first, and throughout, that movement [the Reformation] was energized and guided by the prophetic word. Luther never felt strong and free to war against the Papal apostasy till he recognized the pope as antichrist. It was then that he burned the Papal bull. Knox’s first sermon, the sermon that launched him on his mission as a reformer, was on the prophecies concerning the Papacy. The reformers embodied their interpretations of prophecy in their confessions of faith. . . . All of the reformers were unanimous in the matter, even the

mild and cautious Melancthon was as assured of the antipapal meaning of these prophecies as was Luther himself. And their interpretation of these prophecies determined their reforming action. It led them to protest against Rome with extraordinary strength and undaunted courage. It nerved them to resist the claims of the apostate Church to the utmost. It made them martyrs; it sustained them at the stake. And the views of the reformers were shared by thousands, by hundreds of thousands. They were adopted by princes and peoples. Under their influence nations abjured their allegiance to the false priest of Rome. In the reaction that followed, all the powers of hell seemed to be let loose upon the adherents of the Reformation. War followed war: tortures, burnings, and massacres were multiplied. Yet the Reformation stood undefeated and unconquerable. God’s word upheld it, and the energies of His Almighty Spirit. It was the work of Christ as truly as the founding of the Church eighteen centuries ago; and the revelation of the future which He gave from heaven—that prophetic book with which the Scripture closes—was one of the mightiest instruments employed in its accomplishment.”²

In 1545, the Catholic Church convened one of its most famous councils in history – the Council of Trent. It continued for three sessions, ending in 1563. One of the main purposes of this Council was for Catholics to plan a counterattack against Protestantism, also known as the Counter-Reformation. Up to this point, Rome’s main method of attack had been blatant – burning Bibles and heretics. Yet this warfare only convinced Protestants that Papal Rome was indeed the Beast that would “make war with the saints.” Revelation 13:7. Therefore a new tactic was needed – something less obvious. This is where the Jesuits come in.

On August 15, 1534, Ignatius Loyola founded a secret Catholic order called the Society of Jesus, also known as the Jesuits. “Jesuit priests have been known throughout history as the most wicked political arm of the Roman Catholic Church. Edmond Paris, in his scholarly work, *The Secret History of the Jesuits*, reveals and documents much of this information.”³ At the Council of Trent, the Catholic Church gave the Jesuits the specific assignment of destroying Protestantism and bringing people back to the Mother Church. This was to be done not only through the Inquisition and torture, but also through theology.

At the Council of Trent, the Jesuits were commissioned by the Pope to develop a new interpretation of Scripture that would counteract the Protestant application of the Bible’s antichrist prophecies to the Roman Catholic Church. Francisco Ribera (1537–1591), a brilliant Jesuit priest and doctor of theology from Spain, took on the challenge. Like Martin Luther, Ribera read the prophecies about the Antichrist, the little horn, the man of sin, and the beast. But he came to different conclusions than Luther did. He decided that the prophecies applied, not to the Roman Catholic Church, but to one diabolical figure at the end of time. This viewpoint quickly became the official Roman Catholic position on the Antichrist.

“In 1590, Ribera published a commentary on the Revelation as a counter-interpretation to the prevailing view among Protestants which identified the Papacy with the Antichrist. Ribera applied all of Revelation but the earliest chapters to the end of time rather than to the history of the Church. Antichrist would be a single evil person who would be received by the Jews and would rebuild Jerusalem.”⁴ “Ribera denied the Protestant Scriptural Antichrist (see 2 Thessalonians 2) as seated in the church of God –

the little horn, the man of sin, the Antichrist, the Beast, and the Babylonian Harlot of Revelation 17, all apply to the developing history of Christianity and to the ongoing struggle between Jesus Christ and Satan within the church, culminating at the end of time. Historicism sees these prophecies as having a direct application to Papal Rome – a *system* whose doctrines are a denial of the New Testament message of free salvation by grace through simple faith in Jesus Christ. Historicism was the viewpoint of the Protestant

At the Council of Trent, the Catholic Church gave the Jesuits the specific assignment of destroying Protestantism and bringing people back to the Mother Church.

asserted by Augustine, Jerome, Luther and many reformers. He set on an *infidel Antichrist, outside the church of God.*”⁵ “The result of [Ribera’s] work was a twisting and maligning of prophetic truth.”⁶

Another brilliant Jesuit scholar, Cardinal Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621) followed Francisco Ribera. Between 1581 and 1593, Cardinal Bellarmine published his “Polemic Lectures Concerning the Disputed Points of the Christian Belief Against the Heretics of This Time.” “The futurist teachings of Ribera were further popularized by an Italian cardinal and the most renowned of all Jesuit controversialists. His writings claimed that Paul, Daniel, and John had nothing whatsoever to say about the Papal power. The futurists’ school won general acceptance among Catholics. They were taught that antichrist was a single individual who would not rule until the very end of time.”⁷ Through the work of these two tricky Jesuit scholars, a brand new baby was born named “Jesuit Futurism.” In fact, Francisco Ribera has been called the Father of Futurism.

Before we go much further, let us define some terms. *Historicism* is the belief that Biblical prophecies about

Reformers. In direct opposition to Historicism was the Jesuit viewpoint of *Futurism*, which basically says, “The Antichrist prophecies have nothing to do with the history of Papal Rome; rather, they apply to *only one sinister man* who comes at the end.”

Thus Jesuit Futurism sweeps 1,500 years of prophetic history under the proverbial rug by inserting its infamous *gap*. The *gap* theory teaches that when Rome fell, prophecy stopped, only to continue again at the time of the Rapture. Thus the ten horns, the little horn, the Beast, and the Antichrist *have nothing to do with Christians today*. According to this viewpoint, no prophecies were fulfilled during the Dark Ages.

For almost 300 years after the Council of Trent, Jesuit Futurism remained largely inside the crib of Catholicism. But the Jesuits planned for this baby to grow and *be adopted by Protestants*. The adoption process began in the early 1800s.

As I share some of the highlights, I want to clarify that many of the people I will mention were (and are) genuine Christians. But it is possible for a Christian to unknowingly become a channel for error. Someone can be used by both Jesus Christ

and the devil. Consider Matthew, chapter 16, about how Jesus told Peter that God was blessing him as he shared his faith in Christ (see verses 15–17), but just a few minutes later, Peter yielded to temptation and Satan spoke through him (see verses 21–23)! This proves that a Christian can be used by both God and Satan within a short space of time. I call this the Peter Principle.

Dr. Samuel Roffey Maitland (1792–1866), a lawyer and Bible scholar, became a librarian to the Archbishop of Canterbury. He likely discovered Ribera’s commentary in the library, for in 1826 he published

ing the one-man Antichrist idea, Irving went a step further. Somewhere around 1830, he began to teach the unique idea of a two-phase return of Christ, *the first phase being a secret rapture prior to the rise of the Antichrist*. Where he got this idea is a matter of much dispute. Journalist Dave MacPherson believes Irving accepted it as a result of a prophetic revelation given to a young Scottish girl named Margaret McDonald.⁹ In any case, the fact is, Irving taught it!

In the midst of this growing anti-Protestant climate in England, there arose a man by the name of John Nelson Darby (1800–1882). A

Rapture. Thus, in spite of all the positives of his ministry, Darby followed Maitland, Todd, Bellarmine, and Ribera by incorporating the teachings of Futurism into his theology. Darby visited America six times between 1859–1874, preaching in all of its major cities and planting the seeds of Futurism in American soil. The child of the Jesuits was growing up.

One important figure in this drama is Cyris Ingerson Scofield (1843–1921), a Kansas lawyer who was greatly influenced by the writings of Darby. In 1909, Scofield published the first edition of his famous Scofield Reference Bible. In the much-respected footnotes of this Bible, Scofield injected large doses of Futurism. Through the Scofield Bible, the Jesuit child reached young adulthood. The doctrine of a future Antichrist was becoming firmly established inside 20th-century American Protestantism.

The Moody Bible Institute and the Dallas Theological Seminary have strongly supported the teachings of John Nelson Darby, and this continued to fuel Futurism’s growth. Then in the 1970s, Pastor Hal Lindsey, a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary, released his blockbuster book *The Late Great Planet Earth*. This 177-page volume brought Futurism to the masses. *The New York Times* labeled it “The number one best-seller of the decade.” Over 30 million copies have been sold, and it has been translated into over 30 languages. Through *The Late Great Planet Earth*, the child of Jesuit Futurism became a man.

Then came *Left Behind*. In the 1990s, Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins took the future, one-man antichrist idea of Hal Lindsey, Scofield, Darby, Irving, Newman, Todd, Maitland, Bellarmine, and Ribera, and turned it into “The most successful Christian-fiction series ever” according to *Publishers Weekly*. Hal Lindsey’s book, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, was largely theological, which limited its appeal, while *Left Behind* is a sequence of highly imaginative novels, “overflowing with suspense, action, and adven-

. . . a definite “Romeward movement was already arising, destined to sweep away the old Protestant landmarks, as with a flood.”

a widely read book attacking the Reformation and supporting Ribera’s idea of a future, one-man Antichrist. For the next ten years he continued his anti-Reformation rhetoric. As a result of his zeal and strong attacks against the Reformation in England, Protestantism there received a crushing blow.

Next came James H. Todd, a professor of Hebrew at the University of Dublin. Todd accepted the futuristic ideas of Maitland, publishing his own supportive pamphlets and books. Then came John Henry Newman (1801–1890), a member of the Church of England and a leader of the famous Oxford Movement (1833–1845). Newman became a full Roman Catholic soon after publishing a pamphlet endorsing Todd’s futurism, and later became a highly honored Cardinal. Through the influence of Maitland, Todd, Newman, and others, a definite “Romeward movement was already arising, destined to sweep away the old Protestant landmarks, as with a flood.”⁸

Then came the much-respected Scottish Presbyterian minister Edward Irving (1792–1834). Accept-

ing the one-man Antichrist idea, Irving went a step further. Somewhere around 1830, he began to teach the unique idea of a two-phase return of Christ, *the first phase being a secret rapture prior to the rise of the Antichrist*. Where he got this idea is a matter of much dispute. Journalist Dave MacPherson believes Irving accepted it as a result of a prophetic revelation given to a young Scottish girl named Margaret McDonald.⁹ In any case, the fact is, Irving taught it!

In the midst of this growing anti-Protestant climate in England, there arose a man by the name of John Nelson Darby (1800–1882). A brilliant lawyer, pastor, and theologian, he wrote more than 53 books on Bible subjects. A much-respected Christian and a man of deep piety, Darby took a strong stand in favor of the infallibility of the Bible in contrast with the liberalism of his day. Darby’s contribution to the development of evangelical theology has been so great that he has been called The Father of Modern Dispensationalism. Yet John Nelson Darby, like Edward Irving, also became a strong promoter of a Pre-Tribulation Rapture followed by a one-man Antichrist. In fact, this teaching has become a hallmark of Dispensationalism.

Dispensationalism is the theory that God deals with mankind in major dispensations or ages. According to Darby, we are now in the “Church Age” until the Rapture. After the Rapture, the seven-year period of Daniel 9:27 will supposedly kick in, and this is when Antichrist will rise up against the Jews. John Nelson Darby laid much of the foundation for the present removal of Daniel’s 70th week from the rest of the prophecy, applying it to a future Tribulation after the

ture," a "Christian thriller," with a "label its creators could never have predicted: blockbuster success" (*Entertainment Weekly*). The much-respected television ministries of Jack Van Impe, Peter and Paul Lalonde, and Pastor John Hagee, have worked together to produce *Left Behind: The Movie*. The entire project has even caught the attention of *The New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*, resulting in an interview of LaHaye and Jenkins on *Larry King Live*. The *Left Behind* books have been sold in countless stores.

I believe the producers of *Left Behind* and the leaders of these television ministries are genuine Christians, doing their best to influence people for the Kingdom. God is using them, just like He spoke through Peter when he firmly confessed his faith in Christ. See Matthew 16:15–17. Remember the Peter Principle? There is much in *Left Behind* that God can use to influence people for Jesus Christ. But *Left Behind* is teaching the very same Jesuit Futurism of Francisco Ribera and hiding the real truth about the Antichrist. Through *Left Behind*, the floodgates of Futurism have been opened, unleashing a massive tidal wave of false prophecy that is now sweeping over America.

The theological foundation for the entire *Left Behind* series is the application of the seven years of Daniel 9:27 to a future period of Tribulation. Who was one of the very first scholars to slice Daniel's 70th week away from the first 69 weeks, sliding it down to the end of time?—It was Francisco Ribera! "Ribera's primary apparatus was

the seventy weeks. He taught that Daniel's 70th week was still in the future. . . . It was as though God put a giant rubber band on this Messianic time measure. Does this supposition sound familiar? This is exactly the scenario used by Hal Lindsey and a multitude of other current prophecy teachers."¹⁰

As we have seen, this gap idea originated with the Jesuits, and it is now blinding millions to what has gone before and to what is happening now inside the church. "It is this GAP theory that permeates futurism's interpretation of all apocalyptic prophecy."¹¹

Jesuit Futurism has now become a seven-foot, 300-pound boxer with spiked gloves. With an apparently all-powerful punch, it has almost knocked Protestant Historicism entirely out of the ring. "Futurism . . . fuels the confusion of dispensationalism. The futuristic school of Bible prophecy came from the Roman Catholic Church, specifically her Jesuit theologians. . . . However, the alternative has been believed for centuries. It is known as *historicism*."¹²

Dear friend, Jesuit Futurism is at war with the Protestant Reformation by denying its application of prophecy to the Vatican. "The futurist school of Bible prophecy was created for one reason and one reason only: to counter the Protestant Reformation!"¹³ Jesuit Futurism is at war with the prophecies of the Word of God itself! It originated within the Roman Catholic Church itself, making it the very doctrine of Antichrist! And when Christian ministries and movies like *A Thief in*

the Night, Apocalypse, Revelation, Tribulation, and Left Behind: The Movie proclaim an Antichrist who comes only after the Rapture, what are they really doing? I shudder even to say it. They are sincerely and unknowingly teaching the doctrine of Antichrist!

Now you understand *why* truth has been left behind. ✨

Condensed from *Truth Left Behind*, 63–81.

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Is It Biblical?

Harvey Steck



The sanctuary truth has been one of Satan's special objects of attack ever since it was first presented. If he could cause Adventists to doubt the validity of 1844 as the correct date for the beginning of the investigative judgment, he could bring into question the complete sanctuary truth, destroying one of the unique pillars of the church and disturbing at least one other pillar: "An acceptance of the truth concerning the heavenly sanctuary involved an acknowledgment of the claims of God's law and the obligation of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment."¹

Despite Satan's attempts to sow seeds of doubt concerning our position, we have reason to be confident: "As the great pillars of our faith have been presented, the Holy Spirit has borne witness to them, and especially is this so regarding the truths of the sanctuary question. Over and over again the Holy Spirit has in a marked manner endorsed the preaching of this doctrine. But today, as in the past, some will be led to form new theories and to deny the truths upon which the Spirit of God has placed His approval."²

In fact, God has provided us with much evidence *in the Scriptures* that we may show the world with certainty that the investigative judgment began in 1844.

Paul Studied the Prophecies

The Bible tells us clearly of a judgment of men; but when are we to expect this event? Paul looked forward to this judgment: "He hath appointed a day, in the which he *will* judge the world in righteousness," "the day when God *shall* judge the secrets of men." Acts 17:31; Romans 2:16. He spoke to Felix of a "judgment *to come*." Acts 24:25. (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.) Paul recognized a judgment yet in the future, a judgment *after* the cross. He understood better than many today the prophecies of Daniel 2, 7, 8, and 9.

Daniel 2 provides the foundation for the following prophecies: We are shown the kings or kingdoms of Babylon (gold), Medo-Persia (silver), Greece (bronze), Rome (iron), Europe and the mixing of church and state (iron/clay), and God's kingdom (stone).

A Threefold Sequence

Daniel 7 presents four beasts—the lion, the bear, the leopard, and the terrible beast. Again, the four kingdoms represented are: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Note especially the parallel between the fourth kingdom seen in Daniel 2 and the fourth beast. The fourth kingdom is strong, represented by iron. It breaks all things in pieces (2:40), and becomes divided (2:41). The fourth beast is "strong exceedingly," strong as iron, and it devours and breaks in pieces, and is finally divided into 10 horns (7:7).

Now, note the order of the following three events which come after the introduction of the fourth beast:

"I considered the horns, and, behold, [1] there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit. . . . [2] The judgment

was set, and the books were opened. . . . And [3] there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him." Daniel 7:8–10, 14.

Four kingdoms arise, the little horn emerges from the fourth kingdom, judgment takes place, and, finally, God sets up His everlasting kingdom. As we will see, this same sequence of events: (1) the little horn, (2) a judgment scene, and (3) God's kingdom being established, appears two more times in Daniel 7:

"I beheld, and [1] the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until [2] the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and [3] the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." Verses 21–22.

"And [1] he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But [2] the judgment shall sit, and [3] they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end." Verses 25–26.

Since these verses are presenting events in chronological order, we are shown a judgment which must take place *after* the four kingdoms and the little horn, and *before* God sets up His kingdom.

Who Is the Little Horn?

Whom does this little horn represent, and when does it rule? The answers to these questions will help determine the timing of the judgment, which takes place after the little horn. Daniel gave several identifying marks. That these marks referred to the papal power was expounded upon by Luther, Knox, and many other reformers. This understanding is supported throughout the Spirit of Prophecy. Therefore, let us compare some of the marks given with what we know of the history of the Catholic Church:

Daniel: The little horn came up out of the beast. *History:* The papal aspect of Rome grew out of pagan Rome and used the power of the state to enforce its decrees.

Daniel: Three of the first 10 horns were uprooted at the appearance of this little horn. *History:* Three nations of Arian belief—the Vandals, the Heruli, and the Ostrogoths—were subdued, the last of which was conquered in A.D. 538.

Daniel: The little horn had a mouth speaking great things against the most High. (Compare with 2 Thessalonians 2:4.) *History:* The Catholic Church assumes infallibility, professes to forgive sins, pro-

"A. We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday." Peter Geiermann, *The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine* (1957 ed.), 50.

Daniel: The saints were given into his hand until a time, times and the dividing of time, or three-and-a-half years (1260 days). See Daniel 8:14.

History: When we consider these 1260 days as prophetic, a day for a year, we see an exact fulfillment in the 1260-year reign of the Papacy. The greatest resistance to it was overthrown in A.D. 538, and for 1260 years it crusaded against God's people. In 1798 the Papacy received a

We are shown a judgment which must take place after the four kingdoms and the little horn, and before God sets up His kingdom.

fesses to open and shut heaven and to be higher than all the kings of the earth. It attempts to preempt God's authority by giving "indulgences" for sin. It claims that "all the names which are attributed to Christ in Scripture, implying His supremacy over the church, are also attributed to the pope." Bellarmine, *On the Authority of Councils*, book 2, chapter 17.

Daniel: The little horn sought to "wear out the saints of the most High." *History:* Under the forms of the crusades and the Inquisition, millions of Christians were martyred, including the Albigenses, the Waldenses, the Lollards, the Bohemians, and the Huguenots.

Daniel: The little horn thought to "change times and laws." *History:* The Catholic Church defied the authority of the Ten Commandments by claiming the power to command the change of observance from Sabbath to Sunday. The following is from a Catholic catechism:

"Q. Which is the Sabbath day?

"A. Saturday is the Sabbath day.

"Q. Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?

tremendous blow when the French general Berthier took the pope captive.

Again, as in Daniel 7, we see a little horn power portrayed in Daniel's vision recorded in Daniel 8. Here Medo-Persia appears first (8:3–4, 20), then comes Greece (8:5–8, 21–22), the little horn emerges (8:9–12, 23–25), and then follows the announcement of the cleansing of the sanctuary (8:13–14, 26).

Why Not Antiochus Epiphanes?

Some commentators suggest that Antiochus Epiphanes fulfilled the specifications of the little horn in Daniel 8. This assertion, however, requires a stretching of the term "fulfillment" for at least three reasons:

First, (in verse 23) the little horn was to emerge "in the latter time of their kingdom." The Seleucid dynasty ruled from 311 B.C. to 65 B.C. Antiochus' reign was from 175 B.C. to about 164 B.C., quite near the middle, about 135 years from the beginning, and 100 years from the end—hardly "in the latter time of their kingdom."

Second, the 2300 days given in Daniel 8:13–14 should indicate the length of time that Antiochus desecrated the temple or persecuted the Jews. “On the fifteenth day of the month Kislev in the year 145 [B.C.], ‘the abomination of desolation’ was set up on the altar. Pagan altars were built throughout the towns of Judaea; incense was offered at the doors of houses and in the streets. . . . On the twenty-fifth day of the month they offered sacrifice on the pagan altar which was on top of the altar of the Lord.” 1 Maccabees 1:54–55, 59, NEB. Three years later, “early on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month, the month Kislev, in the year 148 [B. C.], sacrifice was offered as the law commands on the newly made altar of burnt-offering. On the anniversary of the day when the Gentiles had profaned it, on that very day, it was rededicated, with hymns of thanksgiving, to the music of harps and lutes and cymbals.” 1 Maccabees 4:52–54, NEB. Neither 2300 literal days (six years, four months, twenty days) nor the 1150 days that are made by pairing the evenings and mornings to make full days fit this historical period of three years (1080 days) since even the shorter of the two suggested “fulfillments” is two months too long.

Third, the ram was “great” (8:4), the he-goat became “very great” (8:8), and the little horn “waxed exceeding great” (8:9), and the little horn waxed *greater* than the ram and the he-goat. It represents a power stronger than the previous two powers. Antiochus, whose reign was near the middle of some 20 kings of the Seleucid empire, can hardly be considered as being stronger than the two previous kingdoms – Medo-Persia and Greece.

Daniel 8 Parallels Daniel 7

Other commentators have noticed that this horn of Daniel 8 has many similarities to the horn in the vision of Daniel 7. Both are identified with the same little horn symbol (7:8; 8:9). Both were little, and became great (7:8, 20; 8:9). Both persecuted the saints (7:21, 25; 8:10, 24). Both extend until the time of the end – the iron of the vision in Daniel 2 extends until the time of the end in the mixture of iron and clay (7:25–26; 8:17). And both will be supernaturally destroyed (7:11, 26; 8:25).

As can be seen in the accompanying table, the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8 directly parallels the heavenly judgment in Daniel 7. This judgment of Daniel 7 and the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8 are, therefore, the same event, and they must take place after 1798 (when the little horn received its great blow). Such a correlation is meaningful when we realize that, for the Jews, the Day of Atonement, the day the sanctuary was cleansed, was truly a day of judgment, a day of final repentance, a day on which was determined who shall live and who shall die.

When Do the 2300 Days Begin?

So far, we have seen that the judgment must take place after 1798 and before God sets up His kingdom. But, even though we are told that 2300 days must pass before the sanctuary is cleansed and the judgment takes place, we have yet to find the starting point. When do the 2300 days begin?

We find another time prophecy in Daniel 9 for which we have a definite starting point, but that is no

help in determining the beginning point for the 2300 days of Daniel 8 – unless chapters 8 and 9 can be linked together in some way. However, there are, in fact, several reasons to connect chapters 8 and 9.

The vision of Daniel 2 receives an explanation in Daniel 2. Likewise, the vision of Daniel 7 is completely explained in Daniel 7. However, the vision in chapter 8 is *not* fully explained – Daniel is told, “shut thou up the vision,” before the angel explains the time element of verse 26 – the “evening and morning.”

Now, notice the two different Hebrew words which are translated “vision” in Daniel 8: “In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision [*hazon*] appeared unto me. . . . And I saw in a vision [*hazon*].” Verses 1–2. But, speaking of the unexplained time element at the close of the chapter, Daniel writes, “And the vision [*mareh*] of the evening and the morning which was told is true. . . . And I was astonished at the vision [*mareh*], but none understood it.” Verses 26–27.

Gabriel was commanded to “make this man to understand the vision [*mareh*]” (verse 16), but, by the end of the chapter, Daniel still did not understand it. Then Gabriel, “whom I had seen in the vision [*hazon*] at the beginning” (9:21), returned to give a more complete explanation. He said, “therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision [*mareh*].” Verse 23. Gabriel points back to the 2300 days – an unexplained time prophecy – and immediately establishes the beginning point of a prophetic period of seventy weeks. Verse 24. It is clear that this seventy-week period of Daniel 9 is related to the 2300 days of Daniel 8, but do we know how?

Daniel 2	Daniel 7	Daniel 8
Babylon (gold)	Babylon (lion)	
Medo-Persia (silver)	Medo-Persia (bear)	Medo-Persia (ram)
Greece (bronze)	Greece (leopard)	Greece (he-goat)
Rome (lion)	Rome (terrible beast)	Rome (little horn)
	Heavenly Judgment	Cleansing of the Sanctuary
Second Coming (stone)	Second Coming (saints possess the kingdom)	

The historic Adventist position has been that the Hebrew word translated “determined” in Daniel 9:24 should be understood to mean “cut off from.” Is this so?

There are three other more common Hebrew words often translated “determined” which Daniel could easily have used. Why would he use such an obscure word for a common concept? We face a difficulty here, since there is no other Biblical use of this word for comparison. In the Jewish writings of the Mishna, however, this same Hebrew word is used 28 times—either as a verb referring to *cutting off* parts of animals for sacrifices or as a noun meaning that which is *cut off*. The same Hebrew word is used twice in reference to a judge issuing a decision or decree, and it is used once in reference to the decree itself. This evidence strongly indicates the correctness of the several translators who have interpreted Daniel 9:24 to mean “seventy weeks have been *cut off* upon thy people.”

Literal Time or Prophetic Time?

It is easy to show from the history of Christ’s ministry and the stoning of Stephen that the seventy-weeks prophecy was a day-for-a-year prophecy, beginning at Artaxerxes’ decree to rebuild Jerusalem in 457 B.C. and extending 490 years to A.D. 34. But if the seventy weeks are to be cut off, they must be taken from another time period. They must be cut off from the 2300

days which were not explained in Daniel 8. In that case, then, the 2300 days must also represent 2300 years, for if they were literal days (as some would assert), they would represent 6 years, 4 months, 20 days—far short of 490 years. How can 490 years be cut off from less than six-and-a-half years?—Not possible. Thus, as the linking of the eighth and ninth chapters indicates, the 2300 days must be prophetic days

Where Is the Sanctuary?

Now that we have determined that the cleansing of the sanctuary began in 1844—at the end of the 2300 days—we must ask the question, Where is the sanctuary that needs cleansing? Since the literal earthly sanctuary lost its significance at the death of Christ, it only makes sense to look above to the heavenly sanctuary (see He-

How can 490 years be cut off from less than six-and-a-half years?

representing 2300 literal years. Still the question remains, Should the 490 years be cut off from the beginning of the 2300 years, or from the end?

If the seventy weeks were cut off from the end of the 2300 days, it would necessarily mean that the 2300 days would end in A.D. 34. Their beginning would then be in 2267 B.C., about eighty years after the flood. Not to mention the fact that this would put the cleansing of the sanctuary long before the emergence of the little horn.

The other alternative is to cut off 490 years from the beginning of the 2300 years. It is a simple process to subtract 490 years from 2300 years, leaving 1810 years. Adding 1810 years to A.D. 34, we arrive at 1844.

brews 8:5; 9:11), which was prefigured by the earthly. There we see Christ beginning His ministry in the Most Holy Place, where as our High Priest He makes an atonement for His people.

Thus we see that the Lord has provided the evidence necessary that we may have confidence as we present to the world the sanctuary truth as it is in the Scriptures. By using the same sources that William Miller had at his disposal—nothing more than the Bible and the Bible only—in the light of well-established history, we still arrive at the conclusion that the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary began in 1844. ✠

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¹ *The Great Controversy*, 435.

² *Evangelism*, 224.

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Honesty and

Kindness

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

An important characteristic that we must help our children develop is courage. True courage means that you can face a difficult task, a dangerous or painful situation, and do the right thing—regardless of the fear that arises in your heart. Joshua 1:9 says, "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." When our children are brought into situations in which it would be easy to compromise, true courage will allow them to be truthful and honest—to stand for what they know God would have them to do. This courage is not boastful or arrogant; it is a quiet resoluteness and decisiveness.

Our family recently had an opportunity to develop this character trait. We were visiting a church where we had never been before, and soon after we took our seats, to our surprise, some of the church members said, "Why don't you come up and share special music with us?" Although we had never met these people before, and they did not know that we enjoy singing praises to our Lord, we went up in front and shared a song with them. While we sang, several young people in the audience made foolish, ugly

faces—belittling, demeaning, and vulgar expressions—at our children. It took courage for them to keep their minds on what they were singing and still sing from the heart in the face of such peer pressure. That is an example of courage for the youth.

Courage is needed in situations like my son Josiah had a couple of years ago. We were traveling on an airplane, and on this occasion we had been unable to get seats together for all of our family. Josiah was sitting alone, between two strangers, doing his schoolwork. His English lesson instructed him to look up some Bible verses and write about what he had read. The obvious temptation he faced was, "It is not really popular to read your Bible on an airplane. You can just do your math now, and then finish this English lesson later." We have all faced these kinds of temptations. But instead of taking the easy, popular course, he responded to the influence of the Holy Spirit and reached into his case, taking out his Bible, and started to read the verses. This required a surrender, a choice, and it took courage. He was willing to show that he was not ashamed of God's Word, and the businessman in the seat beside him took notice of that. If he had done the easy thing and just picked up a magazine, or turned to a different subject, the man

in the seat next to him would have paid no attention. However, because he showed true courage, they were able to have a profitable conversation on spiritual things, and God was able to use Josiah as a witness.

Do you know that it takes courage sometimes to do things—even in play—that are not comfortable or familiar to our children? I am not a good swimmer, but I enjoy snorkeling because I can breathe under water and see all the beautiful sea life that God has made. The first time we took our children snorkeling, the surf was rough and intimidating for our children, who had not yet learned to swim well. The first time a wave came over the top of the snorkel and filled it up with water, it would have been easy to think about giving up. However, with perseverance we helped our children gain confidence and taught them how to use the snorkel, floating with the waves. As a result, they all overcame their fear, and now they love to snorkel!

We can develop courage in our children in many ways. It is needed in their work. It is needed in difficult situations when they know what God is calling them to do. Yet it would be much easier to follow the majority. The virtue is not in standing alone; it is in standing for Christ. May the Lord help us to have the

courage we need, and utilize the grace He provides to help our children grow in this important area.

Cultivating Kindness

“Above all things, parents should surround their children with an atmosphere of cheerfulness, courtesy, and love. A home where love dwells and where it finds expression in looks, in words, in acts, is a place where angels delight to dwell. Parents, let the sunshine of love, cheer, and happy content enter your own hearts, and let its sweet influence pervade the home. Manifest a kindly, forbearing spirit, and encourage the same in your children, cultivating all those graces that will brighten the home life. The atmosphere thus created will be to the children what air and sunshine are to the vegetable world, promoting health and vigor of mind and body.

“Gentle manners, cheerful conversation, and loving acts will bind the hearts of children to their parents by the silken cords of affection and will do more to make home attractive than the rarest ornaments that can be bought for gold.”¹

Everyone likes to be treated kindly, including our children. How important it is that we cultivate this precious grace in our children’s hearts. True kindness is tenderness and understanding, showing sympathy and thoughtfulness to others—regardless of how they treat us.

If you smile at me, and I smile back, that is easy. If you say a nice word to me, and I say a nice word back to you, that takes no special effort. Showing true kindness means that we respond to evil with good. We teach our children to return a kind word when someone speaks unkindly to them, and to treat even those who have hurt them with love.

In the home we can look for many ways to show kindness. One of the ways our family has done this is to look for ways to lighten the load of Mother. Sometimes when I go to town and my children are at home, I will write a duties list of my

expectations for them in school, and then I almost always put at least one “surprise” at the bottom of the list. When my children see the word “surprise,” they think about something nice that they can do for me or for our home to make it happier, neater, cleaner or more orderly. When I get home from town, they send me on a hunt to find what they did as a surprise. I have to look hard sometimes to find what they have done, but those little surprises have encouraged and cultivated kindness in our home.

We also encourage our children to look for kind things to do for each other. Sometimes one of our children may make someone else’s bed as a surprise. One may offer to help a brother or sister finish their chores. They may choose a particular music tape to listen to that they know is their sibling’s or parent’s favorite. They are learning how to show kindness when it is unexpected and not requested.

True kindness forgives others—even when they have not asked for forgiveness. Many parents allow their children to hold grudges against someone else—against a brother or sister or against father—because he has crossed the will of the child. They do not deal with the unhealthy attitude that is extinguishing kindness in the home. We must help our children realize the importance and blessings found in forgiveness so that they can be set free from the negative feelings, which if left unchecked will grow to produce a bitter harvest. We can teach them through the example of Jesus, who when He was suffering on the cross at the hands of evil men, prayed, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” Luke 23:34.

God’s Word gives us this wonderful counsel that will so bless our homes if we follow it: “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” Ephesians 4:31-32.

When we show kindness toward our children we demonstrate more clearly the true character of God. By our example we motivate them to be sensitive and kind toward others.

Kindness shown daily does much to help win the hearts of our children and to keep their hearts tender toward us as parents, their siblings, and others.

As we give ourselves in true surrender to Christ, He will guide us and empower us to personalize this kindness where it is needed most—in the home. ✝

Next month we will discuss how to cultivate meekness.

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¹ *The Adventist Home*, 426-427.



Cultivating Christian Character in Children

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The Pope Urges Bishops to Confront Growth of "Sects" in Latin America

News Item: "Pope John Paul II called religious sects a 'serious problem' in predominantly Roman Catholic Latin America and urged the region's bishops to reevangelize their flocks.

"'Resolute pastoral action is necessary to face this serious problem,' the Pope told bishops belonging to the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, which met in Rome earlier this spring. . . .

"'You well know how important the presence of evangelizers can be,' he said, 'because where priests, nuns or laity tied to the apostolate are at work, the sects do not prosper.'" *Christianity Today*, May 21, 2001.

End-Time Perspective: The dragon is "wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed." Revelation 12:17. Pray for God's people and work in Latin America.

President Bush Courts the Catholic Vote

News Item: "While Washington roils about energy policies and economic plans, it is the Republican Party's growing campaign for the support of Catholics—nearly 23 percent of the U.S. population and 26 percent of the total vote last November—that is emerging as one of the biggest, if least told, political stories of the Bush era. . . .

According to Bush's chief political strategist Karl Rove, "'They are very sympathetic to compassionate conservatism.' Adds White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card: 'Their core values are consistent with and reflected by the values of the president. They are generally swing voters, and they are important constituencies in important states.' . . .

"The GOP campaign for Catholics is being waged on many fronts. White House aides discuss issues and strategy with rotating groups of

conservative Catholics from around the country every week. . . . The Republican National Committee has named Catholic 'team leaders' in a dozen cities to bring more Catholics into the GOP, and RNC leaders plan to add more teams soon.

"When the president travels, he often meets privately with senior members of the Catholic clergy. . . . In March, Bush attended the dedication of the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center in Washington, D.C., and hosted 60 cardinals, bishops, and other Catholic leaders at the White House. . . .

"The potential for growth, GOP strategists argue, now comes from Catholics, rather than from Protestant evangelicals and fundamentalists, who are already solidly Republican. In some states, such as Oregon and Wisconsin, a relatively small gain among Catholics would have shifted the outcome there to Bush." *U.S. News & World Report*, May 28, 2001.

End-Time Perspective: "Protestants have tampered with and patronized popery; they have made compromises and concessions which papists themselves are surprised to see and fail to understand. Men are closing their eyes to the real character of Romanism and the dangers to be apprehended from her supremacy." *Great Controversy*, 566.

Compulsory Shintoism Rising in Japan

News Item: "Since the enthronement of the new emperor in 1990, nationalism reminiscent of the old style, pre-war militaristic Shintoism is on the rise in Japan. . . .

"Local governments in Japan have tightened their demands for teachers and students to participate in flag and anthem ceremonies—something that amounts to idol worship for a Christian. Teachers refusing to cooperate have suffered pay cuts, been transferred to isolated locations, or fired. The lines between the Japanese State and the Shinto religion are becoming increasingly blurred." *Religion Today*, May 21, 2001.

Presbyterians Head to Rome

News Item: "Fifteen delegates from the Presbyterian Church USA traveled to the Vatican in late March for three days of meetings with Catholic officials. The talks concluded with a private audience with Pope John Paul II. At the end of the conference, they issued a joint statement pledging to work toward an agreement on the doctrine of justification, mutual recognition of baptisms, and the lifting of the mutual condemnations that stem back to the Reformation. In dialogues that began last year, the Presbyterian Church USA is attempting to come to an agreement with Rome over the office of the papacy." *Christian News*, May 21, 2001.

End-Time Perspective: "The Protestant churches are in great darkness, or they would discern the signs of the times. The Roman Church is far-reaching in her plans and modes of operation. She is employing every device to extend her influence and increase her power in preparation for a fierce and determined conflict to regain control of the world, to re-establish persecution, and to undo all that Protestantism has done." *Great Controversy*, 565–566.

Decline of Christianity in England Alarming

News Item: "Christian leaders in England say figures on church attendance—including Anglicans, Catholics, Baptists, Methodists and Pentecostals—are alarming. . . .

The survey figures compiled by statistician Peter Brierley "showed that Sunday churchgoing nationally had fallen from 11.7 percent in 1979 to 7.5 percent in 1998. Breirley warned that the churches faced virtual extinction if the trend continued. . . .

"The figures show. . . that the overall decline has been huge. He said: 'The main reason is the drastic drop in child attendance. In 1979 there were 1.4 million children in church. Today there are 700,000. The Church is bleeding to death.'" *Religion Today*, May 30, 2001.

Religious Persecution World-wide

News Items: "The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom . . . report condemned what it termed violations of religious freedom in China, Sudan, Afghanistan, North Korea, Iran, Iraq, and Indonesia, as well as other nations. . . .

"China . . . has expanded its crackdown on unregistered religious groups in the last year, the report said, and has tightened its control on unofficial religious organizations." Additionally, "the report said, 'government control over the official Protestant and Catholic churches has increased.' . . .

"One of the most sharply criticized countries was Sudan, where religious freedom is threatened by an overall worsening humanitarian situation, the commission said. . . .

"The commission wrote that religious freedom in North Korea 'is nonexistent . . . The government has imprisoned religious believers and apparently suppresses all organized religious activity except that which serves the interests of the state.'

"Since July 1999, there have been reports of torture and execution of religious believers [in North Korea], including between 12 and 23 Christians on account of their religion.'" *CNN.Com*, April 30, 2001.

"Delegates attending an International Religious Liberty Association (IRLA) conference in Bermuda passed a resolution March 16 condemning religious freedom violations, focusing in particular on the situation in the central Asian country of Turkmenistan.

"The resolution criticizes the republic of Turkmenistan for 'banning the holding of religious services both in churches and in private homes,' and says the government has 'demolished religious buildings' and 'destroyed religious materials possessed by many of these religious associations.'

"The resolution says 'adherents of religious congregations attending religious meetings have been arrested, interrogated, and forced to sign documents agreeing never to

meet again with fellow believers' and that 'religious leaders have been arrested for conducting religious services, incarcerated, and threatened with long imprisonment and even death for carrying out their religious duties.'" *Adventist Review*, May 10, 2001.

"For the last two years sectarian violence has wracked the Moluccas islands. The Indonesian government estimates that 5,000 to 6,000 people have died in the fighting, and 500,000 people have been displaced from their villages after their homes and churches were reduced to rubble. . . .

"In the Moluccan islands of Seram, Bacan and Buru, 4,000 Christians have reported being forced to convert to Islam. . . .

"Defectors from North Korea report that practice of any other religion [than Communist ideology] results in punishment, including imprisonment in concentration camps." *Insightmag.com* (C. Edwards).

"Afghanistan's radical Islamic Taliban militia is seeking a religious edict to make it mandatory for the country's non-Moslem citizens to wear symbols to distinguish them from their Moslem compatriots. . . .

"Maulvi Mohammad Wali, minister for the Department for the Promotion of Virtue and Suppression of Vice, otherwise known as the religious police, told AIP [Afghan Islamic Press] it was necessary that Moslems and non-Moslems be unlike in Afghanistan. . . .

"Also, non-Muslims have no right to practice their religion in open places. They should worship inside their proper places,' Wali said." *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, May 21, 2001.

Record of Bible Characters Found

News Item: "The names of four men who appear in the Bible have been found etched on ancient relics discovered in Israel. Four document seals dating to the seventh century B.C. were discovered engraved with the names of prominent figures featured in the Book of Jeremiah. . . .

"The front and back of a seventh century B.C. seal" have . . . "the inscription '[Belonging] to Baruch son of Neriah the scribe.' As a scribe of the Prophet Jeremiah, Baruch, the son of Neriah, is mentioned no less than thirty-two times in the Bible. He played a crucial role in the life and activities of the Prophet, and is considered one of the main sources of the Book (Jer. 36:4).

"Indeed, the document seals found in excavations in Israel contained the names and titles of Baruch son of Neriah, Jerahmeel son of King Jehoiakim, Seraiah, another son of Neriah, and Gmaryuhu, the son of Shaphan, a royal scribe (Jer. 32:12, 36:26, 51:59-61 & 2 Kings 22:3-10).

"The imprints are made of clay," says [Biblical historian Prof. J.] Cohen. "They were used as official seals for rolled papyrus documents bound with string.'

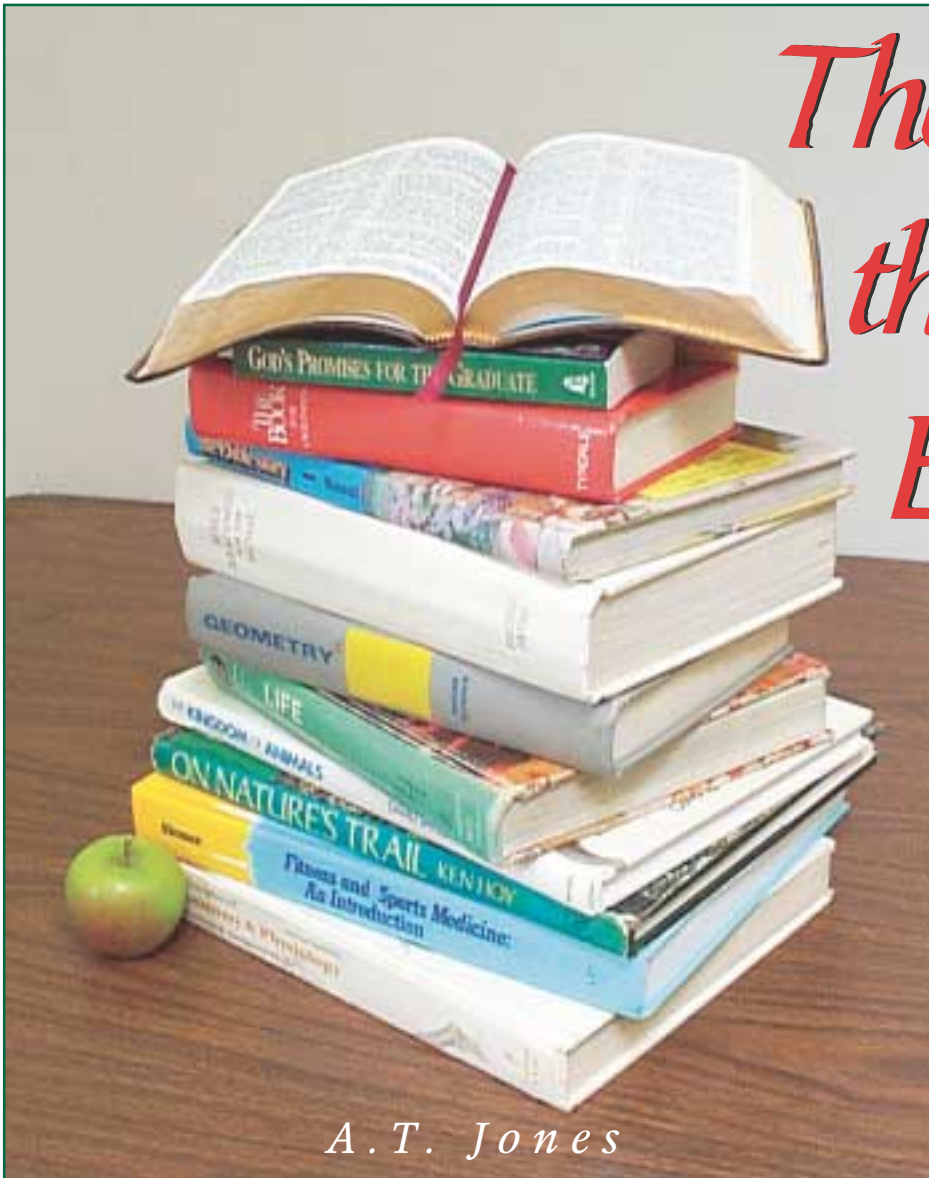
Regarding the seal of Gmaryuhu son of Shaphan, "this is likely referring to Gmaryahu, son of Shaphan, the scribe, who held an office, 'in the upper court at the gate of the House of the Lord' (see Jer. 36:10).

"A seal bears the inscription, '[Belonging] to Seraiah son [of] Neriah.' Seraiah son of Neriah, the brother of Baruch, held an office at the court of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah. The Book of Jeremiah (51:59) records that he accompanied the king to Babylon to pay homage to Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 51:64).

"The Bible records that Jerahmeel, 'the son of the king,' " "was ordered by his father to find and detain the Prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 36:26).

"While these seals do not add much to our understanding of biblical times,' says Cohen, 'they do give us a feeling of personal contact with characters who figure so prominently in the Bible.' Concludes the historian: 'We now have four more pieces of evidence to add to a large collection of findings which lend historical credibility to the Bible.'" *ChristianNewsToday.com* (B. Hartman, *Christian.edu*, *Jerusalem Christian Review*, Vol. 10, Issue 3). ✠

The Place of the Bible in Education



A. T. Jones

Whatever is not Christian, is not becoming to Christians. A Christian education is the only education that can possibly be becoming to Christians. In Christian education the Book of Christianity must be preeminent. The Bible is the Book of Christianity.

The purpose of Christian education is to build up Christians. Nothing that is not Christian can ever properly be brought into the education of a Christian, anymore than can anything that is not Christian be properly brought into any other phase of the life of the Christian. Therefore, the Book of Christianity—the Bible—must be the standard of Christian education; it must be the test of everything that enters into the education of a

Christian; and it must supply all that is needed in the education of the Christian. And this contemplates education in the highest, broadest, and best sense—the all-round, practical development of the individual, mentally, physically, and morally.

It has been, and it is, too much supposed that Christianity has to do only with a sort of spiritualized existence, apart from the real occupations and practical things of life. This will never do. Christianity belongs in the deepest sense as a vital working force, in all that ever rightly can go to make up the sum of human life upon the earth. And Christian education is true to its name and profession only when it demonstrates this all-pervading

power of Christianity as a vital element in all that can properly enter into the course of human life.

It cannot be denied that the life of Christ is the demonstration of Christianity. He is the model Man: the Pattern of what every man must be to be a perfect Christian. And it is certain that Christ in human flesh demonstrating the Christian life on earth, put Himself in vital connection with every true relationship of human life upon this earth. He came into the world an infant; He grew up from infancy to manhood, as people in this world do; He met all that human beings in this world meet as they grow up; He met all the vicissitudes and experiences of human life, precisely, as to the fact, as all people meet them; for “in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren.” Hebrews 2:17. He was “in all points tempted like as we are” (Hebrews 4:15); and He worked as a carpenter with Joseph, until the day of His showing unto Israel in the active work of His preaching, healing, ministry. And He was just as much the Saviour of the world when He was sawing boards and making benches and tables, as He was when He was preaching the Sermon on the Mount. And this demonstrates that Christianity just as truly and as vitally enters into the mechanical or other affairs of everyday life as it does into the preaching of the divinest sermon that was ever delivered.

And yet, in all this Jesus was only the Word made flesh. The Word of God, in written form, was in the world before Jesus came in the flesh; but through the blindness and hardness of the hearts of men, that Word was not allowed to manifest itself truly in the flesh. He came that this might be allowed. In Him, the Word that was here before He came, was made flesh, and dwelt among men, as the model Man. Since, then, Jesus was the Word made flesh, nothing appeared in His life on earth, that was not already in the Word. And since that which He was in the flesh was only what the Word was that was here before He came, it is certain that it was by the Word of God, through the Spirit of God, that He was made to be what He was, in the flesh. And this demonstrates that the Word of God, the Bible, the Book of Christianity, contains that which will completely educate mankind in an all-round, symmetrical life; and that no education is Christian that does

not enter vitally into all the occupations and affairs of human life upon the earth.

The life of Christ, therefore, as it appeared upon the earth—that life being only the expression of the Word of God—causes to stand forth clearly and distinctly the great truth that the Bible, the Book of Christianity, is the greatest educational element, the

the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

This is the position which the Word of God occupied as an educational factor in the view of Christianity in ancient time, and this estimate is grandly echoed by that eminent Christian—the morning star of Christianity in

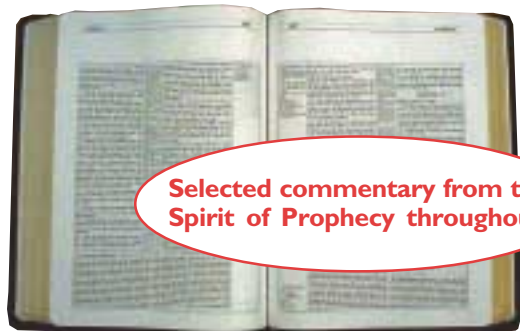
The Bible, the Book of Christianity, is the greatest educational element, the greatest educational agency, the greatest educational Book, in the world.

greatest educational agency, the greatest educational Book, in the world. It is therefore true, that in the Word of God, the Bible, is “hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3), as truly as in Him, who in the flesh was but the expression of that Word. Accordingly, the Word of God is given, in order “that

modern times—John Wycliffe: “There is no subtlety, in grammar, neither in logic, nor in any other science that can be named, but that it is found in a more excellent degree in the Scriptures.” ✚

A. T. Jones, *The Place of the Bible in Education*, 5-8.

The Study Bible



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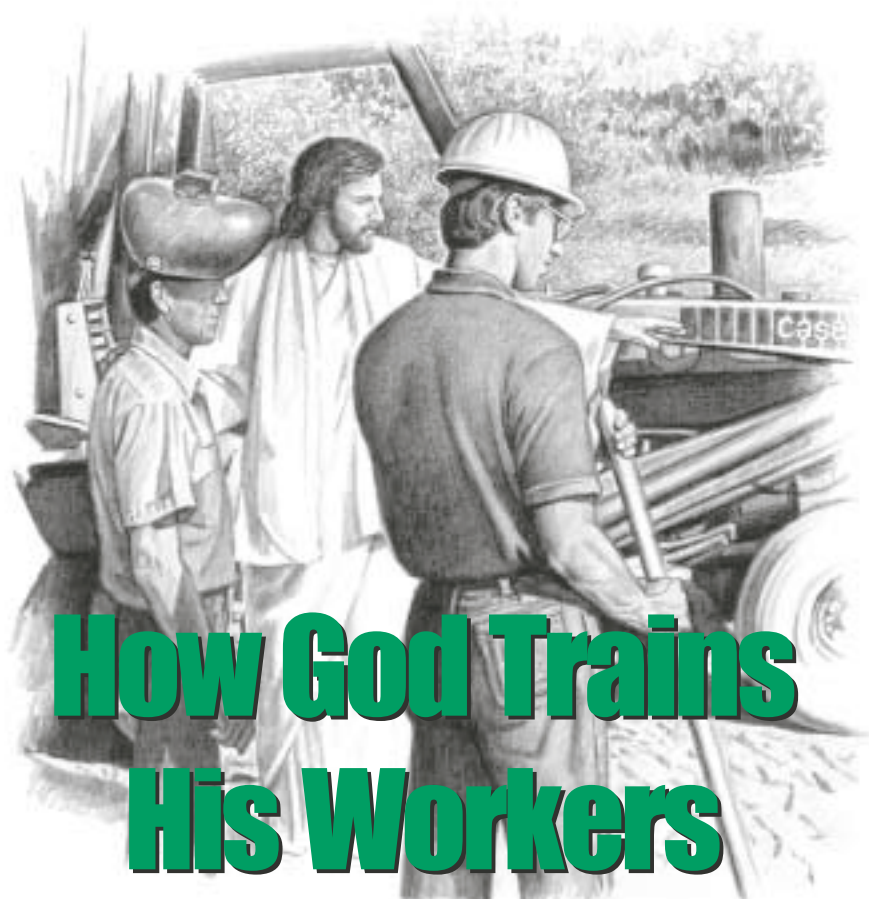
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See page 3 for shipping and sales-tax information.



How God Trains His Workers

Ellen G. White

Christ has given to every man his work, and we are to acknowledge the wisdom of the plan He has made for us by a hearty cooperation with Him. It is in a life of service only that true happiness is found. He who lives a useless, selfish life is miserable. He is dissatisfied with himself and with everyone else.

True, unselfish, consecrated workers gladly use their highest gifts in the lowliest service. They realize that true service means to see and to perform the duties that God points out.

There are many who are not satisfied with the work that God has given them. They are not satisfied to serve Him pleasantly in the place that He has marked out for them, or to do uncomplainingly the work that He has placed in their hands.

It is right for us to be dissatisfied with the way in which we perform duty, but we are not to be dissatisfied with the duty itself, because we would rather do something else. In

His providence God places before human beings service that will be as medicine to their diseased minds. Thus He seeks to lead them to put aside the selfish preferences which, if cherished, would disqualify them for the work He has for them. If they accept and perform this service, their minds will be cured. But if they refuse it, they will be left at strife with themselves and with others.

The Lord disciplines His workers, so that they will be prepared to fill the places appointed them. He desires to mold their minds in accordance with His will. For this purpose He brings to them test and trial. Some He places where relaxed discipline and over-indulgence will not become their snare, where they are taught to appreciate the value of time, and to make the best and wisest use of it.

There are some who desire to be a ruling power, and who need the sanctification of submission. God brings about a change in their lives, and perhaps places before them

duties that they would not choose. If they are willing to be guided by Him, He will give them grace and strength to perform the objectionable duties in a spirit of submission and helpfulness. They are being qualified to fill places where their disciplined abilities will make them of the greatest service.

Some God trains by bringing to them disappointment and apparent failure. It is His purpose that they shall learn to master difficulty. He inspires them with a determination to make every apparent failure prove a success.

Often men pray and weep because of the perplexities and obstacles that confront them. But if they will hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end, He will make their way clear. Success will come to them as they struggle against apparently insurmountable difficulties; and with success will come the greatest joy.

Many are ignorant of how to work for God, not because they need to be ignorant, but because they are not willing to submit to His training process. Moab is spoken of as a failure because, the Word declares, he "hath been at ease from his youth . . . and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel . . . therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed." Jeremiah 48:11.

Thus it is with those whose hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong are not purged from them. Their hearts are not cleansed from defilement. They were given opportunity to do a work for God, but this work they did not choose to do, because they wished to carry out their own plans.

The Christian is to be prepared for the doing of a work that reveals kindness, forbearance, longsuffering, gentleness, patience. The cultivation of these precious gifts is to come into the discipline life of the Christian, that when called to service by the Master, he may be ready to exercise the energies of heart and mind in helping and blessing those who are ready to die. ❀

Manuscript Releases, vol. 8, 422-424.

The Word of God

How to mark your Bible and be ready to share your faith

“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 back of your Bible, write the study title, the code, and the first reference. This month’s entry would appear as follows: **The Word of God (WG) 2 Timothy 3:16.**

- 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!

In this issue of *Our Firm Foundation*, you will find several articles about the importance of God’s Word. What is the Word? Why is it so important in our lives? What can it do for and in us? This study should give you some answers!

Study Title: The Word of God — Code: WG

1 Thessalonians 2:13 — The Bible is not the word of men; it comes from God.

2 Timothy 3:16 — The Word serves many purposes.

Psalms 33:6 — God’s Word has creative power! See also 2 Peter 3:5.

Psalms 12:6 — Nothing can be more pure than silver refined that much!

Psalms 119:103 — The only thing sweeter than honey!

Job 4:4 — God’s Word supports us in trouble.

Psalms 119:130 — It gives us light. See verse 105.

Job 22:22 — We are to receive the Word into our lives.

Jeremiah 15:16 — The Word is to be our food.

Job 23:12 — We should put it before temporal food.

John 5:39 — It contains the Words of eternal life.

Matthew 13:3-9

Matthew 13:18-23 — What kind of soil is in your heart?



For more information on Bible marking, or for a selection of other studies, go to www.biblemarking.com or refer to “Mark Your Bible!” in the August 2001 issue of *Our Firm Foundation*.

Lessons From the Past

Elder F. Wilcox

Several years ago I visited, in the suburbs of London, the church and home of John Wesley, the great apostle of Methodism. It was interesting to climb up into the pulpit and to stand for a moment in the place where this man of God had preached to his congregation. I visited his humble home a short distance from the church. It is preserved quite the same as he left it when he passed away. On the second floor, I saw the little prayer room where Wesley, day after day, had sought God's blessing upon his ministry. The guide, evidently sensing my desire, passed on, and I knelt in the room and asked God to give power to my ministry, and to

bless the church of which I was a member.

As I went my way, I could but contrast the large, fashionable, worldly Methodist Church of today with the humble people of John Wesley's time. But in saying this, I recognize that in the Methodist Church, as in every other church, there are many sincere, earnest Christians. However, we wonder whether John Wesley, if he were alive, would not feel called to preach a reform to the church of which he was the founder.

And then my meditation led me further. I reviewed the humble beginnings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. And naturally the

question came, Will the church of which I am a member follow in the path of other religious movements, lose its original simplicity, and as it increases in membership become worldly and indifferent to its high and holy calling in Christ Jesus? Sad to say, this has been the experience of nearly every religious movement through the centuries. It was the experience of Israel of old.

Israel of Old

When Moses and Joshua and the elders who saw the mighty workings of God in behalf of His people had passed from the stage of action, a new generation arose who placed a new mold upon the church of that

day. This is clearly stated in the second chapter of Judges:

“The people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old.” Judges 2: 7–8. “And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim.” Verses 10–11.

Had Israel of old remembered the admonition of Moses, their great leader, in that remarkable discourse he gave just before his death, recorded in the book of Deuteronomy, they would not have relapsed into idolatry:

“All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers. And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.” Deuteronomy 8:1–2.

Israel failed to remember the mighty workings of God in their behalf and the way He had led them through the years of their history. Forgetting this, they wandered into paths of their own choosing. Again and again the Lord raised up judges, mighty men of God, to turn the people back into the path of righteousness. But repeatedly they reverted to the ways of their own natural hearts.

Feasting and Making Merry

During the reigns of David and Solomon the kingdom reached the pinnacle of its glory. But in later years Solomon became the leader in another great apostasy. This apostasy, like other apostasies before it, and those which followed, did not

overtake the church in a day. Little by little, unconsciously at first, the hearts of the people turned away from God. This single sentence in the fourth chapter of First Kings speaks volumes:

“Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry.” Verse 20.

In their prosperity they forgot God. In their enjoyment of creature comforts, which should have turned their minds in gratitude toward the divine Giver, they became self-

tian church. Little by little the work of spiritual disintegration proceeded, until the climax of apostasy was reached in the Dark Ages which succeeded. Then there came the call of God to Wycliffe, Luther, Zwingli, and others, to a new experience. The light of the gospel preached by these mighty men of God dispelled in large measure the darkness, and the church was again brought back into the light of gospel truth. Reformers like Wesley, Whitefield, Bunyan, Fox, and others, continued this work of reform.

There is needed today, as greatly as was needed in the days of Luther, a great message of reform. The hearts of men need to be turned from the worship of their own gods to the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ.

centered. Their great objective in life was eating and drinking and making merry. May God save His church today from such an experience! The day of material prosperity is always the day of spiritual danger, both to the church as a whole and to each individual member.

The ministry of the Lord Jesus while on earth, followed by the work of the apostles, developed a comparatively pure church. The apostolic church was represented in the vision given to the apostle John by a rider seated on a white horse going forth conquering and to conquer. But, sad to say, the experience of Israel following the death of Joshua became the experience of the apostolic church. God commended this church for its sacrifice and toil, for its loyalty under testing trial, but added: “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent.” Revelation 2:4–5.

The apostles and early disciples had scarcely retired to their graves before their children, with converts from the heathen world, came forward and remodeled the Chris-

Spiritual Degeneracy Today

But as we look out into the Christian world today, we see the elements of spiritual disintegration rapidly enfeebling the church again. The subversive teaching of Modernism is doing its deadly work. The church has joined affinity with the world. Many of the members have become “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.” 2 Timothy 3:4. The high and holy standards by which it sought to gauge its conduct in the past have been lowered. Its teaching has been modified to better suit this modern age. By many, the Word of God is discredited as divine revelation. The vicarious sacrifice of Christ is no longer counted necessary. Man is seeking to become his own saviour. This untoward situation, this condition of spiritual degeneracy, of worldliness, of apostasy, has not taken possession of all. In every denomination today there is a remnant of godly men and women who recognize these trends and whose hearts are grieved over the sad condition which exists. Some there are, including noble men in the ministry, who are crying out against these dangerous tendencies.

There is needed today, as greatly as was needed in the days of Luther, a great message of reform. The hearts of men need to be turned from the worship of their own gods to the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ. And God has such a message. As He warned Sodom and Gomorrah of its impending doom, as He sent Jonah to proclaim the destruction of Nineveh, as John the Baptist was raised up to prepare the way of the Lord at His first advent, so God has a message for this generation, a message of the coming judgment, a message of the end of the world, a message of warning to men and women to break with their sins and flee for refuge to the Lord Jesus Christ if they would be saved in the day of His coming. It is the message Seventh-day Adventists have been giving through the years, a message which they expect to give even until probation days are closed. Will they prove true to the message?

This is a question which we do well to consider. No one of us can answer the question for any of our brethren and sisters. But each one may well consider the question as relates to his own individual

experience. The church as a whole can prove true to this high and holy mission only as the individual member proves true by taking Christ as his one and only Example.

If Israel of old had heeded the admonition given by the prophet of God to remember the way the Lord had led them, how different would have been their history. A similar admonition was given by the messenger of the Lord to this people some time before her death. She declared: "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history." *Life Sketches*, edition 1915, 196. May God grant that we shall not forget, either God's leading in our history or the message of truth He has committed to us. And let us remember that this message is given to us, not to selfishly enjoy, but to pass on to others. As we minister to others, we shall come to know God more fully ourselves.

"A Christian woman went to her pastor greatly troubled about her Christian experience. She told him that religion had lost all its meaning

and glow. Prayer had become a drudgery, and worship was dull. The common causes of neglect and misdemeanor did not seem to apply; so there was no need for rebuke or argument. This pastor took out a card, wrote the name and address of a family upon it, handed the card to the woman, and said: 'I wish you would visit this address. I need your advice in dealing with these needy people.'

"Some time later the pastor met the woman and inquired into her religious problem. 'It's all cleared up,' she said. 'You see, I visited that family and began to work with them, and it seemed that my trouble just vanished. We have arranged for the daughter to go to school, and the father has work.' She had found God while ministering to human needs." *Glenn W. Palmer* ✨

F. M. Wilcox, *The Early and Latter Rain*, 39-46.

Elder Francis Mclellan Wilcox served the Seventh-day Adventist Church as editor of the *Review and Herald* for over 30 years.

THE BATTLE FOR THE MIND

by Lloyd and Leola Rosenvold

During the past 30 years, there has arisen among Seventh-day Adventists a movement of people who claim to have power to cast out demons through exorcism. Along with this is the "messenger" movement, in which many claim to receive heavenly messages for the remnant church. When these people claim Biblical authority for their activities, how can we know that these manifestations are from God? *The Battle for the Mind* takes this question seriously, examining the Scripture to discern truth and error.

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letters to the editor

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We pray that the Lord will continue to bless all of you and your ministry. All of us need to hear truth-filled messages, especially as we get so close to the end of all things. The enemy of our souls is doing all he can to deceive us.

You are in our prayers. We ask that you remember us in your prayers.

We would like to receive your Present Truth Monthly tape. We know your messages will be a great blessing to those who listen to them.

JL, Missouri

I am an inmate incarcerated in Oregon. I am a regular reader of your publication *Our Firm Foundation*. The volunteers that come to this prison from the Seventh-day Adventist Church usually bring us copies of this wonderful magazine. I truly enjoy reading it, and I devour each and every article, because they are filled with present truth for our time. After reading the Letters to the Editor section, my heart was touched with the plight of our brothers in Christ overseas pleading for Bibles and other literature to feed their growing hunger for the truth which surely is the 'Bread of Life.' I would like to help you to provide for this much needed cause.

I'm only saddened that I cannot do more for them. Please accept my humble gift of ten dollars to help your organization send materials to places like Malawi and Ghana. I only earn forty-seven dollars a month here in prison, but I really don't need all that to meet my needs, as the good Lord Jesus does provide.

DP, Oregon

I am one of the persons who volunteered to take 10 names and mail books and Bibles to requests from Africa.

I wanted to let you know that this has been a very great blessing to me! It has been a great joy to my heart to do one small part, to help others in their search for truth! After some of my requests were reached by the

people, I received a few more from others whom they had given my name and address to.

So far my husband and I have been able to send 10 Bibles, 63 Spirit of Prophecy or *National Sunday Law* books, and 17 other materials such as tapes and magazines.

If you still need someone to answer those requests, I am willing to take 2 per month.

May God continue to bless all His workers whoever, and wherever they are!

BC, USA

From Overseas

I greet you and all involved in the work of our Saviour. Having heard of the number of people you have assisted, I was propelled to write to you in the name of our Saviour.

We have a work to do here on earth; the message has to reach the world and the laymen must proclaim the end time message. But brothers, I am troubled in spirit seeing how the message is suffering, especially in the church.

This is why I request you to send me even an already used Spirit of Prophecy Library.

These books are not found in our book centers. If there is any, they are so expensive that I fail to meet the prices. I am sure the Lord will speak to you over that matter. My spirit is burning as I see the end time being wasted.

I feel, in Christ, I have a duty to act, and I don't believe I need to speak to you over that. Brothers, God is at work; please assist if possible with any second-hand materials available. I am thirsty for nothing but the Word of God. Please, kindly pass my tender and warm greetings on to all those busy working in the vineyard.

May God bless every article of work.

CS, Zambia

I am very glad to write to you this letter. Please, I am a Christian, but I

want to be a very good Christian, intent on growing spiritually. What I know is that before you can grow spiritually you have to pray and read more so that you can fight against the devil.

Please, because of this I have started to open up a small Christian library in my house, but I need your assistance so that I can build the library with more prophetic books about the end time and the world we are living in now. Please, I am counting on you for spiritual growth.

SG, Ghana

I am a Christian teacher, married, and the father of two children. I would very much like to enrich the family and the school with spiritual reading from the gospel.

A friend of mine introduced me to your inspiring publication *Our Firm Foundation*. I have been so blessed by your magazine! It is good to have the truth and the messages up-to-date of what is going on in the church and in the world.

We are on a very limited income and really cannot afford to purchase Holy Bibles, E.G. White's inspired books, and other tracts.

I am therefore kindly requesting some Holy Bibles, Spirit of Prophecy books, and any other religious materials that would enhance our spiritual understanding.

Your generosity toward this cause will be appreciated gratefully.

May God richly bless you!

KA, Ghana

Thank You!

A big "thank you" to all who have sent donations marked "Literature Assistance." It is only with the help of you, our supporters, that we can answer these calls for help. There are still many requests that we must sadly pass by due to a lack of funds, so we encourage you to prayerfully consider how you can give sacrificially to help those who are not blessed with the abundant light that so many of us have.

Editors

Feeling Sick?

[sick and tired]

No Energy?

[maybe just a little wasted]

Taking those Pills just to keep on Going?

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

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