

Our Firm Foundation

The Seventh-day Sabbath

Christ Our Righteousness

The Immutable Law of God

The Non-Immortality of the Soul

The Three Angels' Messages

The Sanctuary

Volume 17, Number 1

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That
M O M E N T
of
Terrorism

Are We Prepared?

Suddenly, without warning, our world has changed: September 11, 2001, is now spoken of as a day of infamy. To the leaders, pastors, and laity, I ask, “How will we respond to this crisis?” The spiritual condition of our church is clearly revealed in Revelation 3:14–21. “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Verse 17.

During all the years the church has been boasting of her progress and prosperity in increased members, facilities, institutions and worldwide mission enterprises, the Lord through the Spirit of Prophecy has been rebuking the members of the church for their sins and backslidings: for the loss of their first love which has resulted in lukewarmness and spiritual poverty. The reproof has not been understood or appreciated by those under the Laodicean deception, and, therefore, the Testimonies have been practically set aside and by many, virtually rejected. Not being able to understand the manifest contradiction between the attitude of the church and the prophetic agency of the movement through whom God speaks, the tendency has been to question the authority of the latter and conclude that God’s prophet was altogether too pessimistic.

Here is the reason for the Laodicean deception. The church has mistaken material prosperity for spiritual progress and as evidence of the presence of God and the favor of Heaven. The purpose of the Laodicean message is to correct this false impression and to show that

God reckons genuine prosperity from the viewpoint of spiritual life and growth. Material prosperity will, of course, follow the presence and blessing of God as in apostolic days, but it is the result and not the cause of the divine favor. The history of many ancient and modern false religious movements proves that material prosperity of itself is meaningless. To learn this lesson is one of the greatest needs of Advent people, for on it depends our eternal destiny.

Over twelve million souls are recorded on our church books, but the question we must ask ourselves now is: How many understand the conditions and requirements for salvation—trusting in the merits of Christ’s sacrifice while obeying all known truth without a single compromise?

Listen to a warning from God by our prophet Ellen White: “The work has been extended so that it now covers a large territory, and the number of believers has increased. Still there is a great deficiency, for a larger work might have been accomplished had the same missionary spirit been manifested as in earlier days. Without this spirit the laborer will only mar and deface the cause of God. The work is really retrograding instead of advancing as God designs it should. Our *present numbers* and the extent of our work are not to be compared with what they were in the beginning. We should consider what might have been done had every worker consecrated himself, in soul, body, and spirit, to God as he should have done.” *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 420. (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.) “But in some

respects the work has deteriorated. While it has grown in extent and facilities, it has waned in piety.” *Testimonies*, vol. 7, 217.

“I was shown that if God’s people make *no efforts* on their part, *but wait* for the refreshing to come upon them and *remove their wrongs and correct their errors*; if they depend upon that *to cleanse them from filthiness of the flesh and spirit*, and fit them to engage in the *loud cry* of the *third angel*, they will be *found wanting*. The refreshing or power of God comes only on those *who have prepared themselves* for it by doing the work which God bids them, namely, *cleansing themselves* from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, *perfecting holiness* in the fear of God.” *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 619.

Those who are waiting for the latter rain to prepare their characters for heaven will be lost. There will come a time very soon when God will no longer answer the prayers of those remaining in the condition of Laodicea; they will be spewed out: “To those who are indifferent at this time Christ’s warning is: ‘Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.’ Revelation 3:16. The figure of being spewed out of His mouth means that He cannot offer up your prayers or your expressions of love to God. He cannot endorse your teaching of His Word or your spiritual work in anywise. He cannot present your religious exercises with the request that grace be given you.” *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 408.

We pray that this special edition of *Our Firm Foundation* will help our dear people—laity and pastors—prepare for eternity. May God now bless and help each seeker for truth. ❀

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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That M O M E N T of Terrorism

Russell Standish

New York City
8:45 A.M.
September 11, 2001.

What meaning did that moment of terrorism have for Seventh-day Adventists? The facts surrounding the terrorist attacks on New York City are well known. The tragedy has been detailed over all forms of media and in all the nations of the earth. We, too, feel a deep sorrow for the bereaved. Murder is always a tragedy.

Our hearts go out especially to the loved ones of the Seventh-day Adventists killed in the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and to the wife and loved ones of the co-pilot, who was married to a Seventh-day Adventist, and who died in the United Airlines crash in Pennsylvania caused by terrorist action. He frequently attended church with his wife.

Beyond this natural sorrow, we must look for the implications of these terrible events and their consequences in the light of prophetic utterances. It is crucial that we know the time in which we live: "But ye, brethren, are not in dark-

ness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness." 1 Thessalonians 5:4-5.

Clearly, Satan – not God – inspired these vicious atrocities. However, "God has a purpose in permitting these calamities to occur. They are one of His means of calling men and women to their senses." *Last Day Events*, 28.

Surely, *it is time*, time long overdue, to prepare our souls in God's power to serve Him wholeheartedly.

Sister White's Prophecy

A large number of Seventh-day Adventists have been directed to study the remarkable fulfillment of a prophecy enunciated by Sister White in 1904. It is found in *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 11-17. Since some recipients in third-world countries do not possess this book, and since many around the world have read only the small portion found in the book *Last Day Events*, I will quote a larger portion of this prophecy from *Testimonies*, vol. 9, pages 12 and 13:

"Justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and

equity cannot enter.' Isaiah 59:14. In the great cities there are multitudes living in poverty and wretchedness, well-nigh destitute of food, shelter, and clothing; while in the same cities are those who have more than heart could wish for, who live luxuriously, spending their money on richly furnished houses, on personal adornment, or worse still, upon the gratification of sensual appetites, upon liquor, tobacco, and other things that destroy the powers of the brain, unbalance the mind, and debase the soul. The cries of starving humanity are coming up before God, while by every species of oppression and extortion men are piling up colossal fortunes.

"On one occasion, when in New York City, I was in the night season called upon to behold buildings rising story after story toward heaven. These buildings were warranted to be fireproof, and they were erected to glorify their owners and builders. Higher and still higher these buildings rose, and in them the most costly material was used. Those to whom these buildings belonged were not asking themselves: 'How can we best glorify

God?’ The Lord was not in their thoughts.

“I thought: ‘Oh, that those who are thus investing their means could see their course as God sees it! They are piling up magnificent buildings, but how foolish in the sight of the Ruler of the universe is their planning and devising. They are not studying with all the powers of heart and mind how they may glorify God. They have lost sight of this, the first duty of man.’

“As these lofty buildings went up, the owners rejoiced with ambitious pride that they had money to use in gratifying self and provoking the envy of their neighbors. Much of the money that they thus invested had been obtained through exaction, through grinding down the poor. They forgot that in heaven an account of every business transaction is kept; every unjust deal, every fraudulent act, is there recorded. The time is coming when in their fraud and insolence men will reach a point that the Lord will not permit them to pass, and they will learn that there is a limit to the forbearance of Jehovah.

“The scene that next passed before me was an alarm of fire. Men looked at the lofty and supposedly fire-proof buildings and said: ‘They are perfectly safe.’ But these buildings were consumed as if made of pitch. The fire engines could do nothing to stay the destruction. The firemen were unable to operate the engines.

“I am instructed that when the Lord’s time comes, should no change have taken place in the hearts of proud, ambitious human beings, men will find that the Hand that had been strong to save will be strong to destroy. No earthly power can stay the Hand of God. No material can be used in the erection of buildings that will preserve them from destruction when God’s appointed time comes to send retribution on men for their disregard of His law and for their selfish ambition.”

The entire prophecy merits careful study. Many have not noticed that the chapter heading is: “The Last Crisis.” Whether Sister White selected the title or not, I do

not know, but surely the subsequent consequences of that terrorist attack are ominous.

Let us examine some of the early consequences:

I. Rapid Declaration of War

President Bush rapidly declared war against an enemy which is as elusive as it is evil—**terrorism**. Of course, many times before, nations have declared war on terrorism. Yet

What we have learned is just how rapidly nations of various faiths on every continent can be marshaled into a united alliance to do the will of the United States.

this was different. It went far beyond the call for stricter security measures.

In times of crisis, national leaders need cool heads in order that wise decisions can be made. This declaration of war, made the day after the attack, (reported in *The Australian*, September 13, 2001), was supported by all but one member of Congress. The President received 24 standing ovations during his speech on the matter to the joint session of Congress, and the opinion polls showed that 70% of Americans supported the declaration of war. *Sidney Daily Telegraph*, September 19, 2001.

2. Worldwide Support of United States Foreshadows Revelation 13

The incredible speed with which the nations of the world rallied around the American banner was an eye opener to students of Revelation 13. In this crisis, the United States demonstrated that its word is almost law throughout the world. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates severed diplomatic relations with Afghanistan. Nations long thought to be hostile to America—such as China and Russia—joined the coalition for war. We do not know at this time, of course, whether this worldwide crisis will eventually culminate in the Sunday law and the universal death decree.

What we have learned, however, is just how rapidly nations of various faiths on every continent can be marshaled into a united alliance to do the will of the United States when an impediment to security and prosperity is identified. This fact confirms to the devout student of Scripture that everything is in place for the United States to exert its prophesied role in end-time events.

3. Financial Boycott Supported

When President Bush, understandably, commanded American financial institutions to cease all dealings with terrorists and their organizations (*Melbourne Age*, September 26, 2001), he did not request the financial organizations of other nations of the world to follow suit; he made it clear that any of them that did not comply would be cut off from all business with the world’s largest economy—the United States. The following day, the Group of Seven—the richest nations of the world—complied.

Revelation 13:17 foretells of a worldwide economic boycott against faithful Sabbathkeepers. Once more, I emphasize that we do not know whether our present crisis will eventually generate this prophesied event, but we have learned how the United States can effectively exert control over international fiscal policies—surely a prerequisite for the introduction of an economic boycott of the faithful followers of Christ when the United States is thus disposed.

The *Australian* of September 26, 2001, noted that President Bush’s order broadens the Treasury Department’s authority to penalize uncooperative foreign banks. It also reported the following threat of the

White House spokesman, Ari Fleischer: "The signal being sent is: if you (foreign financial institutions) don't (cease dealing with the finances of terrorists), we're prepared to take action against your financial interests."

4. Liberty Jeopardized

Another alarming consequence of the terrorist acts against New York City and Washington, D.C., has been the sentiment that "Americans are

executive order (EO 13223) calling the Ready Reserves of the Armed Forces to active duty.

"For constitutional attorney William J. Olson, alarm bells started ringing: 'This is just the beginning,' he told *World Net Daily*. 'I am certain that the proclamation and executive order by the president are the first of a series of executive orders that are likely to be issued as the administration identifies the powers it wants to invoke.' "

a considerable amount of time to be adopted by other nations. However, now we can discern that the final movements *could really be rapid ones* and that many nations may adopt those laws in a matter of a few days, if urged to do so by the United States.

Let us review, in the light of the New York City tragedy, the divinely set forth scenario of the withdrawal of religious liberty, economic boycott, and the introduction of the death decree: "In accidents and calamities by sea and land, in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the pestilence. These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous. Destruction will be upon both man and beast." *The Great Controversy*, 589–590.

What will be the response to this terrible carnage when nations are destroyed economically, and many lives are lost?

"And then the great deceiver will persuade men that those who serve God are causing these evils. The class that have provoked the displeasure of Heaven will charge all their troubles upon those whose obedience to God's commandments is a perpetual reproof to transgressors. It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced; and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublemakers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity." *Ibid.*, 590.

In his video, *Prophecy and the New Times* (1997), Ted Flynn, the Roman Catholic devotee of Mary, reported that in an apparition "Mary" stated that terrible disasters were about to strike America. "She" stated that

Liberty and security are not mutually incompatible. However, governments typically remove liberties on the pretext that the measure is essential for national survival.

determined to try [to win the war] even if it means sacrifice and loss of civil liberties." *Melbourne Age*, September 19, 2001.

Many are stating that if America wants full liberty, then it cannot expect security. If it desires security, then the citizens must be prepared to forfeit some of their liberties. "Attorney General John Ashcroft said the Justice Department would ask Congress for greater power to detain non-US citizens (and) wiretap telephone calls." *Australian*, September 18, 2001. Certainly this is a serious breach of civil liberties.

The *World Net Daily*, September 27, 2001, warned: "With Congress hotly debating whether to grant sweeping police powers to federal law enforcement agencies in the name of combating terrorism, two attorneys who have studied presidential directives in depth are concerned that civil liberties will take a beating from the executive branch as well as from the legislative—and no one would realize it until it was too late.

"On September 14 President Bush, responding to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon three days earlier, issued a proclamation declaring a state of national emergency and reinforced it the same day with an

Liberty and security are not mutually incompatible. However, governments typically remove liberties on the pretext that the measure is essential for national survival in times of peril; unthinking citizens frequently accept these measures. Many Germans, when their prosperity was ruined in the late 1920s and early 1930s, accepted Adolf Hitler's abrogation of many liberties in return for his promise of prosperity and national greatness. As a consequence, a massive war ensued; millions lost their lives, and German cities were reduced to ashes.

A Prototype of Revelation 13

In examining the four matters discussed above, we can discern a prototype of the events prophesied in Revelation 13:15–17. Of course, these events are not the fulfillment of that prophecy, but they do demonstrate the astounding rapidity with which America can obtain the acquiescence of most of the nations of the world—irrespective of the religion of their citizens—to her policies and plans when a serious threat to security and prosperity is identified around the world.

In the past we have imagined that the enforcement of the Sunday law by the United States would take

they were the result of sin and that the only solution was for Americans to return to God. The solution offered was to close all shops on Sunday; to ban sporting events on Sunday, to attend Mass and Confession, and to say the Rosary.

Make no mistake about it, such deceptions of Satan will play a pivotal role in turning secular mankind to religion. But they will not sanctify the soul. Yet a religious zeal will ensue. How easily this will generate Sunday laws as a perceived means of regaining divine favor! Such religious zealots, unsanctified in heart, will not hesitate to persecute faithful Sabbathkeepers in a vain effort to restore security and prosperity.

The legal precedents have already been set. The Supreme Court of the United States ruled in 1961, by an eight-to-one decision, that Sunday laws do not violate the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which guarantees religious liberty. (See Warren Johns, *Dateline Sunday, USA*, Pacific Press 1967, 119-159.) Furthermore, in 1990 the Supreme Court, by a five-to-four majority vote, in the case *Smith versus the State of Oregon*, "went far beyond the case and declared that when religious rights clash with the government's need for uniform rules, the court will side with the government." *Los Angeles Times*, April 18, 1990.

All is ready for the fulfillment of Revelation 13:15-17.

End-time Prophecies

The terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C., have demonstrated how fragile are our own security and well-being. It has also highlighted the remarkable reliability of Sister White's prophetic utterances. At a time when the greatest attacks have been leveled against the veracity of the Spirit of Prophecy within our own church, God has dramatically reminded us of how accurate were His revelations to His servant. To ignore this lesson would be to imperil our own salvation. The quotation from *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 12-13, was far from an isolated one.

My youngest son, James, is Director of Legislative Affairs in the General Conference. His post involves liaising with members of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Senate, and White House aides. He and Lincoln Steed, the editor of *Liberty Magazine*, were studying the prophecies of Sister White together, as their offices are located next to each other.

They were puzzled by a Spirit of Prophecy statement which reads: "In the night I was, I thought, in a room but not in my own house. I was in a city, where I knew not, and I heard *expression after expression*. I rose up quickly in bed, and saw from my window large balls of fire. Jetting out

'Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars.' 'Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.' Matthew 24:6-8. While these prophecies received a partial fulfillment at the destruction of Jerusalem, they have a more direct application to the last days." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 753.

Sister White saw the conditions of today with great accuracy: "The nations are in unrest. Times of perplexity are upon us. Men's hearts are failing them for fear of the things that are coming upon

Men's hearts are failing them for fear of the things that are coming upon the earth. But those who believe in God will hear His voice amid the storm, saying, "It is I; be not afraid."

were sparks, in the form of arrows, and buildings were being consumed, and in a very few minutes the entire block of buildings was falling and the screeching and mournful groans came distinctly to my ears." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11, 361.

Since both men felt that the term "expression after expression" did not make a lot of sense, and since this was a diary entry, Lincoln requested that the White Estate reexamine Sister White's handwriting. It was found that her words had been accidentally mistranscribed. Sister White was in her late 70s when she wrote that statement, and her handwriting was no longer perfectly clear. She had actually written "explosion after explosion." I am sure that that phrase will be corrected in future editions of her books and in future CD-ROMs. How clearly God revealed the last-day events to His servant!

We present four further statements by Sister White which are relevant to the New York tragedy: "Christ, upon the Mount of Olives, rehearsed the fearful judgments that were to precede His second coming:

the earth. But those who believe in God will hear His voice amid the storm, saying, 'It is I; be not afraid.'" *Last Day Events*, 19.

"The plagues of God are already falling upon the earth, sweeping away the most costly structures as if by a breath of fire from Heaven. Will not these judgments bring professing Christians to their senses? God permits them to come that the world may take heed, that sinners may be afraid and tremble before Him." *Ibid.*, 28.

"Men will continue to erect expensive buildings, costing millions of money. Special attention will be called to their architectural beauty and the firmness and solidity with which they are constructed, but the Lord has instructed me that despite the unusual firmness and expensive display, these buildings will share the fate of the temple in Jerusalem." *Ibid.*, 112.

Worse Times Coming

Even worse times are ahead: "The tempest is coming, and we

Continued on page 30

The Beginning of Sorrows



Bill Humeniuk

In Matthew 24:3, the disciples questioned Jesus about the signs of His coming. At that time Jesus described some of those signs: deceptions, wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes. Then Jesus said, “But the end is not yet. . . . All these are the *beginning of sorrows*.” Verses 6, 8. See also Mark 13:5-9, Luke 21:8-12. (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.) Luke brings out in verse 11: “Fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.” I trust that you will read these scriptural passages prayerfully, seriously, and watchfully, for “the end of all things is at hand.” 1 Peter 4:7.

Recently, for the first time, I realized that things are no longer the same in our world, in our beloved church, or in my own life. Henceforth, changes will occur whether we like it or not; therefore, changes must occur in my own life—in all of our lives—in order to prepare for the end, which will bring translation to God’s faithful people, the 144,000.

In times past I regularly cleared security at my hometown airport in Louisville, Kentucky, within two or three minutes, but the other day it took me 25 minutes! Had things changed?—You better believe they had! That really made me think seriously about my life, resolving to

make spiritual preparations, by God’s grace, as I never have before.

I want to review with you some counsel and some scenes that were shown to Ellen White by the Holy Spirit for God’s people in these final hours: “The scenes which are soon to crowd upon us would at the last come *very suddenly* and *swiftly*, as represented in the words of Scripture: ‘The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.’

1 Thessalonians 5:2. . . .

“I was shown that many of our own people were *asleep* in their sins. . . .

“I beheld the *fearful scenes* that lie just before us; I was *alarmed* at the outlook.” *Selected Messages*, book 3, 113-114.

Romans 13:11 says, “Knowing the time, that now it is *high time* to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.” As I reviewed the fearful scenes that have transpired in the last few months, and the actions taken by our government, I, too, was alarmed at the outlook. Are you? Or are you asleep? Are we still living the same today as we did yesterday?

“Unless you arise to a *higher, holier state* in your religious life, you will *not* be ready for the appearing of our Lord.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 717. “Only those who have been *diligent students* of the Scriptures and who have received the love of the truth will be shielded from the powerful

delusion that takes the world captive.” *The Great Controversy*, 625.

“Pray, my brethren, *pray* as you have never prayed before. We are *not prepared* for the Lord’s coming. We need to make thorough work for eternity.” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, 1173.

“Those who place themselves under God’s control, to be led and guided by Him, will catch the *steady tread* of the events ordained by Him to take place.” *Testimonies*, vol. 7, 14.

However, as these events are unfolding, remember they are only the “beginning of sorrows.” This is the hour to prepare for much greater events—such as the latter rain, and the close of probation. God is giving His people a wake-up call: “Prepare, for I love you. I want you to join *Me* for eternity.” Listen to the Holy Spirit in the following quotations:

In A.D. 70 “not one Christian perished in the destruction of Jerusalem. Christ had given His disciples warning, and all who believed His words watched for the promised sign.” *The Great Controversy*, 30. (You can read about this sign in Luke 21:20-21.)

Ellen White stated: “I saw that we should not put off the coming of the Lord. Said the angel: ‘*Prepare, prepare*, for what is coming upon the earth.’ ” *Maranatha*, 97.

“*Prepare! Prepare!* should be sounded in the ears of the people.

For the great day of God's wrath is coming. . . . Preachers and people who believe the third angel's message should set a holy, lively example. Their conversation and actions should show that they are looking for the appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, 197.

"God has revealed what is to take place in the last days, that His people may be *prepared* to stand against the tempest of opposition and wrath." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 452.

"The work of the people of God is to *prepare* for the events of the future, which will soon come upon them with *blinding force*." *Country Living*, 10.

"But now time is almost finished, and what we have been years learning, they [those converts among the last to embrace the truth] will have to learn in a few months." *Early Writings*, 67. What an exciting time to be alive! By God's grace may we be ready for what is coming upon this world with *blinding force*!

As you read this special issue, will life continue to be the same for you, or will you study, pray, work, and watch as never before to be *prepared*?

Remember, not one Christian perished in Jerusalem. Why?—They were prepared, and they fled in a moment's notice as events began to unfold. Read about it in *The Great Controversy*, 17–

is very near. God's people should be preparing for what is to break upon the world as an *overwhelming surprise*." *Child Guidance*, 555.

"I see the necessity of *making haste* to get all things ready for the crisis." *Country Living*, 21.

"Get ready, get ready, get ready." *Early Writings*, 119.

What an exciting time to be alive! By God's grace may we be ready for what is coming upon this world with blinding force!

38, in the chapter entitled, "The Destruction of Jerusalem." That chapter alone should stir our hearts to prepare.

"Transgression has almost reached its limit. Confusion fills the world, and a *great terror* is soon to come upon human beings. The end

My dear people, the cry of the Holy Spirit is appealing to this final generation of God's people: *Prepare and get ready!* What are you and I doing at this late hour as events unfold, as warning after warning is given? By God's grace prepare; I plead with you to prepare. ❄

Winter Convocation, February 7-10: *Prepare to Meet Thy God*

We feel the urgency to have a Winter Convocation here at Hope for the first time ever! The barn, which is *fully heated*, has been cleaned out and will be *ready* to hold 150 people.

Do you feel the urgency? Come and join with God's people.

Calvin Dence, who served as a missionary in South America for many years, will be our guest speaker on the topic of health and *natural remedies*. Also speaking will be Ron Spear, Bill Humeniuk, and several other Hope International staff. This is a *must* for all of God's people!

Some rooms on campus are available for \$20 a day, plus \$5 for each additional person. They are on a first-come-first-serve basis. If you have an R.V., we have room for you to park, but no service hook-ups. A motel is available in Eatonville with rooms at a special, reduced rate

of one queen bed (up to 2 people) for \$47 per night, or two queen beds (up to 4 people) for \$55 per night.

Call us to make a reservation, and ask for Gwen Richter.

Feb. 7, Thursday	7:00 p.m.	John Korponay
Feb. 8, Friday	9:00 a.m.	Jesse Ramirez
	10:30 a.m.	Calvin Dence
	2:00 p.m.	Harvey Steck
	7:00 p.m.	Calvin Dence
Feb. 9, Sabbath	9:00 a.m.	Calvin Dence
	11:00 a.m.	Ron Spear
	2:30 p.m.	Calvin Dence
	4:30 p.m.	Bill Humeniuk
Feb. 10, Sunday	7:00 p.m.	Calvin Dence
	9:00 a.m.	Calvin Dence

September 11 Triggers Ominous Effects

Wall of Separation of Church and State Damaged

News Item: “Despite Supreme Court guidelines that say mandatory prayer cannot be conducted at public schools, some students, teachers and administrators around the nation have momentarily bypassed constitutional concerns, praying openly at assemblies, in classrooms and at sporting events, asking God for support and protection. . . .

“But this revival has not gone uncontested. . . .”

According to Barry Lynn, who heads the Washington-based Americans United for Separation of Church and State: “I do think that some schools are considering patriotism and religion the same thing, acting as if you cannot be patriotic unless you are also conventionally religious,” he said. “That is a major fallacy. . . .”

“Former California Rep. William F. Dannemeyer, who leads Americans for Voluntary School Prayer, strongly disagrees. The heightened spiritual awareness fuels his call for a constitutional amendment to restore prayer in schools. He says the time couldn’t be better for congressional leadership from both parties to respond.” *The Washington Times*, October 8, 2001.

Heightened Religious Interest

News Items: “Many churches and mosques were swamped after Sept. 11. . . . Jim Cymbala, pastor of the Brooklyn Tabernacle, described the Sunday following the attacks this way: ‘We put people in the lobby, the overflow areas, the choir risers. The lines were down the block.’ Clergy countrywide had similar experiences. Sixty percent of all Americans attended some kind of memorial, and Bible sales rose 27%. However, the new impulse isn’t

sticking with everyone. Gallup polls taken Sept. 21 and 22 suggested that weekend church and synagogue attendance rose only 6% (compared with, say, 20% after President Kennedy was shot). . . .

“On Sept. 22, as Attorney General John Ashcroft warned that Boston might be attacked next, 15,000 Christians knelt on the asphalt of City Hall Plaza in a display of Christian repentance. . . . Many conservative Christians are speculating about the Apocalypse, and sales of the apocalyptic book series *Left Behind* are booming.” *Time*, October 8, 2001.

Speaking of the churches that were open in the largely closed down area of Chicago’s central city, “Those buildings were packed—churches that ordinarily saw about 150 worshipers now fit over 700. Memorial services and interfaith vigils marked every town’s mourning. . . . Media outlets covered religion as less of a trend than a necessity. . . . After the attacks, all services became interfaith.” *National Catholic Register*, September 30–October 6, 2001.

Religious Leaders Call for National Repentance

News Item: “An appeal has been issued to pastors and leaders from a wide array of ministry and denominational heads for American Christians to repent in the light of the Sept. 11 terrorism attacks. They say the tragedy is a reflection of the country’s ‘crumbling foundation’ and that ‘we need to plead with God to forgive us.’

“Signers of the statement include Bill Bright (Campus Crusade for Christ), James Dobson (Focus on the Family), Thomas Trask (Assemblies of God) and Pat Robertson (Christian Broadcasting Network, CBN).” *ReligionToday.com*, September 24, 2001.

Americans Willing to Give Up Some Civil Liberties

News Item: “Of those surveyed [in a statewide poll by *The Dallas Morning News*], 37 percent said they would forgo ‘a lot’ of their personal freedoms and 41 percent would curb ‘some’ of their freedoms. About 14 percent would give up a little freedom to boost their safety. About 7 percent would not give up any freedoms, according to the survey.” *DallasNews.com*, September 18, 2001.

Prejudice Fuels Violence in America

News Item: “The Council on American-Islamic Relations counts more than 600 ‘incidents’ since Sept. 11 victimizing people thought to be Arab or Muslim, including four murders, 45 people assaulted and 60 mosques attacked. Thousands were intimidated into not going to work, their mosques, their schools.” *Time*, October 1, 2001.

Report Given to UN Urges Agreed Response to Religious Extremism

News Item: “A United Nations expert has urged the development of agreed principles to respond to the growing trend in religious extremism, according to a report released today at UN Headquarters in New York.

“The report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Abdelfattah Amor, documents an ‘increase in extremism affecting all religions, whether Islam, Christianity, Judaism or Hinduism.’ . . .

“Responding to this trend, the Special Rapporteur recommends that ‘in the face of this ever-growing and all pervasive menace to peace that breaks up society and poses a particular threat to vulnerable groups (women and minorities), the international community should

Project USA



Project USA is a call to awaken America with the law of God. Here at Hope International we are advancing forward. The law of God will be the final issue for the whole world.

We have been instructed that newspapers are one of the channels that we are to use to reach people with God's last warning: "Men will misrepresent the doctrines we believe and teach as Bible truth, and it is necessary that wise plans should be laid to secure the privilege of inserting articles into the secular papers; for this will be a means of awakening souls to see the truth." *Evangelism*, 129.

You have probably seen the above newspaper advertisement in our November-December 2001 Newsletter. To date, we have placed the ad in **over 1.5 million newspapers**, and **more than 250 people have responded** with requests for a free copy of the book *Final Conflict* (selected chapters from *The Great Controversy*), Bible studies, or other materials. Praise the Lord!

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react firmly, combating it in particular through the elaboration and adoption of a baseline of commonly accepted rules and principles of conduct and behaviour towards religious extremism.' " *UN News*, October 4, 2001.

Religion Blamed for Sept. 11 Terrorism

News Item: "The founder of the United Religious Initiative, a movement that seeks to become the dominant religious voice at the UN, blamed religion for the September 11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington.

"At a Wednesday meeting at the UN Church Center, the Episcopal Bishop of San Francisco, William E. Swing, asserted that the hijackers did not hold a corrupted version of Islam because religions—all religions—are guilty of fostering terrorism. 'There is a lot of terror and violence in a lot of scripture. There has to be a critique of that. We have to hold the religions' feet to the fire for the violence and terror within them.'" *CWNews.com*, October 12, 2001.

A Mixture of Patriotism and Church

News Item: "The American flag has replaced the cross as the most visible symbol in many churches across the country since the Sept. 11 terrorists attacks, according to the Dallas, Texas, News. This hasn't set well with some Christians, who say faith transcends nationality so the flag has no place in sanctuaries. However, others say the show of patriotism is a much-needed comfort." *ReligionToday.com*, October 15, 2001.

End-Time Perspective

September the 11th, and the weeks following that day, demonstrate and remind us how quickly the world around us can change. We are reminded that the closing scenes will be rapid ones. How quickly the wall of separation of church and state can be breached and the Constitution set aside!

A national emergency can quickly turn many to seek spiritual answers. Unfortunately, the apostate churches will be largely appealed to for these answers, and they will comfort the people with a mixture of truth and error—thereby strengthening their influence among the populace.

Today religious leaders are proclaiming that if the nation repents of its sins, God's blessings and protection will be returned to it. In the future, a similar cry will be raised up, and a Sunday law will be proclaimed as a way to help bring the nation back to an allegiance to God.

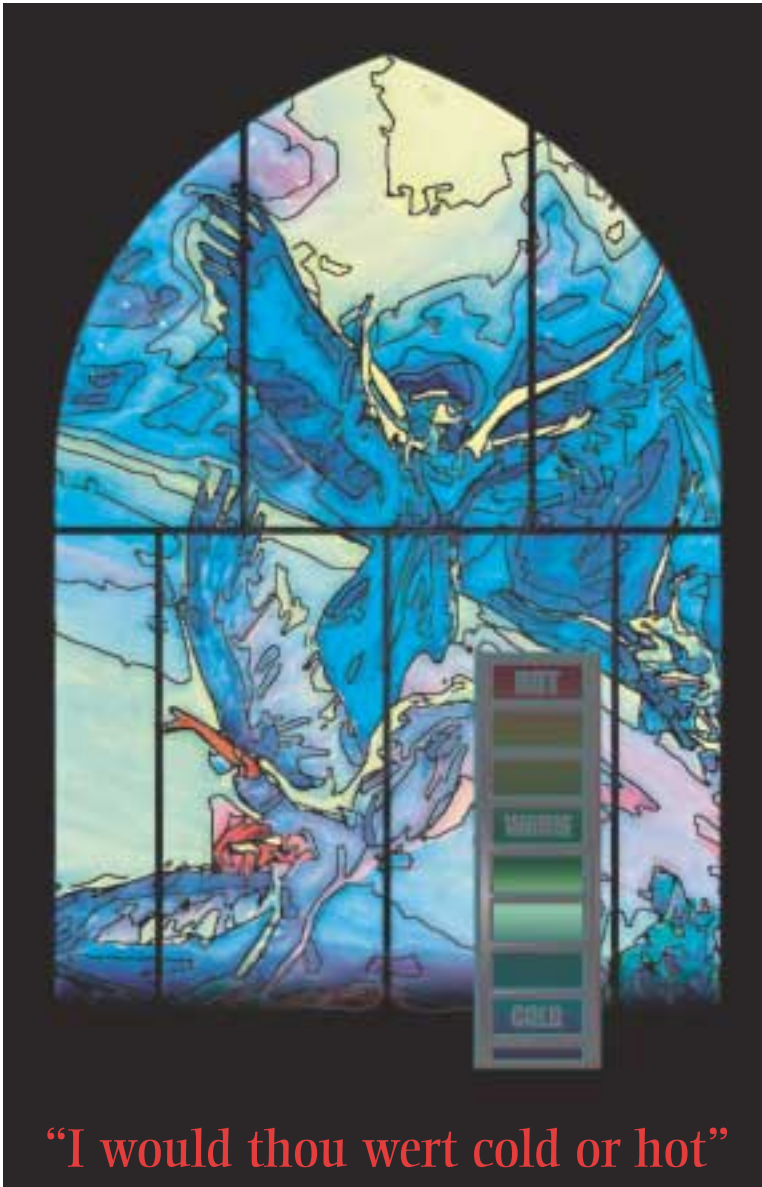
Today, without the promptings of leaders, some Americans are venting their anger upon innocent Moslems, and even those who appear to be Moslems. There will come a day when the leaders will help foment and direct the anger of the people against God's command-keeping people, who will be blamed for the nation's crisis.

At present, how willing is the nation to give up some of its constitutional freedoms in exchange for greater security! Tomorrow how easily the constitutional protections will be removed that would prevent this country from speaking like a dragon, setting up an image to the beast, and persecuting God's Sabbathkeeping people! See Revelation 13:11-17.

Today it is more easily seen how tomorrow the United States will be the driving power behind the worldwide worship of the beast and the persecution of those who will not accept its mark. It is easy to see the significance of the United Nations organization's potential role in these closing scenes.

I pray that God's professed people will view these recent dramatic events as a wake-up call demonstrating how easily these scenes can be changed and become the final closing ones. May our allegiance to God be strengthened today in preparation for the day when it will be considered patriotic to join in the persecution of God's faithful remnant people. ✨

The Laodicean Church



“I would thou wert cold or hot”

This testimony, written over 100 years ago, we believe applies to the church today. This is the only counsel, if taken to heart, that will arouse our church from fatal and carnal security, and cause a true revival of the faith.

The Editors

The message to the church of the Laodiceans is a startling denunciation, and is applicable to the people of God at the present time.

“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor

hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Revelation 3:14–17.

The Lord here shows us that the message to be borne to His people by ministers whom He has called to warn the people is not a peace-and-safety message. It is not merely theoretical, but practical in every particular. The people of God are represented in the message to the Laodiceans as in a position of carnal security. They are at ease, believing themselves to be in an exalted condition of spiritual attainments. “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with

Ellen G. White

goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.”

What greater deception can come upon human minds than a confidence that they are right when they are all wrong! The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, yet honest in that deception. They know not that their condition is deplorable in the sight of God. While those addressed are flattering themselves that they are in an exalted spiritual condition, the message of the True Witness breaks their security by the startling denunciation of their true condition of spiritual blindness, poverty, and wretchedness. The

testimony, so cutting and severe, cannot be a mistake, for it is the True Witness who speaks, and His testimony must be correct.

It is difficult for those who feel secure in their attainments, and who believe themselves to be rich in spiritual knowledge, to receive the message which declares that they are deceived and in need of every spiritual grace. The unsanctified heart is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Jeremiah 17:9. I was shown that many are flattering themselves that they are good Christians, who have not a ray of light from Jesus. They have not a living experience for themselves in the divine life. They need a deep and thorough work of self-abasement before God before they will feel their true need of earnest, persevering effort to secure the precious graces of the Spirit.

God leads His people on step by step. The Christian life is a constant battle and a march. There is no rest from the warfare. It is by constant, unceasing effort that we maintain the victory over the temptations of Satan. As a people we are triumphing in the clearness and strength of the truth. We are fully sustained in our positions by an overwhelming amount of plain Scriptural testimony. But we are very much wanting in Bible humility, patience, faith, love, self-denial, watchfulness, and the spirit of sacrifice. We need to cultivate Bible holiness. Sin prevails among the people of God. The plain message of rebuke to the Laodiceans is not received. Many cling to their doubts and their darling sins while they are in so great a deception as to talk and feel that they are in need of nothing. They think the testimony of the Spirit of God in reproof is uncalled for or that it does not mean them. Such are in the greatest need of the grace of God and spiritual discernment that they may discover their deficiency in spiritual knowledge. They lack almost every qualification necessary to perfect Christian character.

They have not a practical knowledge of Bible truth, which leads to lowliness of life and a conformity of their will to the will of Christ. They are not living in obedience to all God's requirements.

It is not enough to merely profess to believe the truth. All the soldiers of the cross of Christ virtually obligate themselves to enter the crusade against the adversary of souls, to condemn wrong and sustain righteousness. But the message of the True Witness reveals the fact that a terrible deception is upon our

God and which will give clear discernment of spiritual things and detect sin. These attainments are more precious than the gold of Ophir.

I have been shown that the greatest reason why the people of God are now found in this state of spiritual blindness is that they will not receive correction. Many have despised the reproofs and warnings given them. The True Witness condemns the lukewarm condition of the people of God, which gives Satan great power over them in this waiting, watching time. The

I have been shown that unbelief in the Testimonies of warning, encouragement, and reproof is shutting away the light from God's people.

people, which makes it necessary to come to them with warnings, to break their spiritual slumber, and arouse them to decided action.

In my last vision I was shown that even this decided message of the True Witness had not accomplished the design of God. The people slumber on in their sins. They continue to declare themselves rich and having need of nothing. Many inquire: Why are all these reproofs given? Why do the Testimonies continually charge us with backsliding and with grievous sins? We love the truth; we are prospering; we are in no need of these Testimonies of warning and reproof. But let these murmurers see their hearts and compare their lives with the practical teachings of the Bible, let them humble their souls before God, let the grace of God illuminate the darkness, and the scales will fall from their eyes, and they will realize their true spiritual poverty and wretchedness. They will feel the necessity of buying gold, which is pure faith and love; white raiment, which is a spotless character made pure in the blood of their dear Redeemer; and eyesalve, which is the grace of

selfish, the proud, and the lovers of sin are ever assailed with doubts. Satan has ability to suggest doubts and to devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue, a mark of intelligence in them, to be unbelieving and to question and quibble. Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and a teachable spirit, and all should decide from the weight of evidence.

Eternal life is of infinite value and will cost us all that we have. I was shown that we do not place a proper estimate upon eternal things. Everything worth possessing, even in this world, must be secured by effort, and sometimes by most painful sacrifice. And this is merely to obtain a perishable treasure. Shall we be less willing to endure conflict and toil, and to make earnest efforts and great sacrifices, to obtain a treasure which is of infinite value, and a life which will measure with that of the Infinite? Can heaven cost us too much?

Faith and love are golden treasures, elements that are greatly wanting among God's people. I have been shown that unbelief in the Testimonies of warning, encouragement, and reproof is shutting away the light from God's people. Unbelief is closing their eyes so that they are ignorant of their true condition. The True Witness thus describes their blindness: "And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

Some young men start out with no real sense of the exalted character of the work. They have no privations, hardships, or severe conflicts to meet, which would call for the exercise of faith. They do not cultivate practical self-denial and cherish a spirit of sacrifice. Some are becoming proud and lifted up, and have no real burden of the work upon them. The True Witness speaks to these ministers: "Be zealous therefore, and repent."

Those who are reproved by the Spirit of God should not rise up against the humble instrument. It is God, and not an erring mortal, who has spoken to save them from ruin. Those who despise the warning will be left in blindness to become self-deceived. But those who heed it, and zealously go about the work of separating their sins from them in order to have the needed graces, will be opening the door of their hearts that the dear Saviour may come in and dwell with them. This class you will ever find in perfect harmony with the testimony of the Spirit of God.

Very many feel impatient and jealous because they are frequently disturbed with warnings and reproofs which keep their sins before them.

Ministers who are preaching present truth should not neglect the solemn message to the Laodiceans. The testimony of the True Witness is not a smooth message. The Lord does not say to them, You are about right; you have borne chastisement and reproof that you never deserved; you have been unnecessarily discouraged by severity; you are not guilty of the wrongs and sins for which you have been reproved.

Faith in the soon coming of Christ is waning. "My Lord delayeth his coming" is not only said in the heart, but expressed in words and most decidedly in works. Stupidity in this watching time is sealing the senses of God's people as to the signs of the times. The terrible iniquity which abounds calls for the greatest diligence and for the living testimony, to keep sin out of the church. Faith has been decreasing to a fearful degree, and it is only by exercise that it can increase.

Revelation 3:19. Some of them are so lifted up in pride that they are really a hindrance and a curse to the precious cause of God. They do not exert a saving influence upon others. These men need to be thoroughly converted to God themselves and sanctified by the truths they present to others.

The True Witness declares that when you suppose you are really in a good condition of prosperity you are in need of everything. It is not enough for ministers to present theoretical subjects; they should also present those subjects which are practical. They need to study the practical lessons that Christ gave His disciples and make a close application of the same to their own souls and to the people. Because Christ bears this rebuking testimony, shall we suppose that He is destitute of tender love to His people? — Oh, no! He who died to redeem man from death, loves with a divine love, and those whom He loves He rebukes. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." But many will not receive the message that Heaven in mercy sends them. They cannot endure to be told of their neglect of duty and of their wrongs, their selfishness, their pride and love of the world.

In the rise of the third angel's message those who engaged in the work of God had something to venture; they had sacrifices to make. They started this work in poverty and suffered the greatest deprivations and reproach. They met determined opposition, which drove them to God in their necessity and kept their faith alive. Our present plan of systematic benevolence amply sustains our ministers, and there is no want and no call for the exercise of faith as to a support. Those who start out now to preach the truth have nothing to venture. They have no risks to run, no special sacrifices to make. The system of truth is made ready to their hand, and publications are provided for them, vindicating the truths they advance.

Very many feel impatient and jealous because they are frequently disturbed with warnings and reproofs which keep their sins before them. Says the True Witness: "I know thy works." The motives, the purposes, the unbelief, the suspicions and jealousies may be hid from men, but not from Christ. The True Witness comes as a counselor: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Revelation 3:18-21.

I was shown that God has laid upon my husband and me a special work, to bear a plain testimony to His people, and to cry aloud and spare not, to show the people their

transgressions and the house of Israel their sins. But there is a class who will not receive the message of reproof, and they raise their hands to shield those whom God would reprove and correct. These are ever found sympathizing with those whom God would make to feel their true poverty.

The word of the Lord, spoken through His servants, is received by many with questionings and fears. And many will defer their obedience to the warning and reproofs given, waiting till every shadow of uncertainty is removed from their minds. The unbelief that demands perfect knowledge will never yield to the evidence that God is pleased to give. He requires of His people faith that rests upon the weight of evidence, not upon perfect knowledge. Those followers of Christ who accept the light that God sends them must obey the voice of God speaking to them when there are many other voices crying out against it. It requires discernment to distinguish the voice of God.

Those who will not act when the Lord calls upon them, but who wait for more certain evidence and more favorable opportunities, will walk in darkness, for the light will be withdrawn. The evidence given one day, if rejected, may never be repeated.

Many are tempted in regard to our work and are calling it in question. Some, in their tempted condition, charge the difficulties and perplexities of the people of God to the Testimonies of reproof that we have given them. They think the trouble is with the ones who bear the message of warning, who point out the sins of the people and correct their errors. Many are deceived by the adversary of souls. They think that the labors of Brother and Sister White would be acceptable if they were not continually condemning wrong and reproofing sin. I was shown that God has laid this work upon us, and when we are hindered from meeting with His people and from bearing our testimony and counteracting the surmisings and jealousies of the

unconsecrated, then Satan presses in his temptations very strongly. Those who have been ever on the questioning, doubting side feel at liberty to suggest their doubts and to insinuate their unbelief. Some have sanctimonious and apparently conscientious and very pious doubts, which they cautiously drop, but which have tenfold more power to strengthen those who are wrong, and to lessen our influence and weaken the confidence of God's people in our work, than if they came out more frankly. These poor

And again: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." Then comes the promise: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

The people of God must see their wrongs and arouse to zealous repentance and a putting away of

This message must be borne to a lukewarm church by God's servants. It must arouse His people from their security and dangerous deception in regard to their real standing before God.

souls, I saw, were deceived by Satan. They flatter themselves that they are all right, that they are in favor with God and are rich in spiritual discernment, when they are poor, blind, and wretched. They are doing the work of Satan, but think they have a zeal for God.

Some will not receive the testimony that God has given us to bear, flattering themselves that we may be deceived and that they may be right. They think that the people of God are not in need of plain dealing and of reproof, but that God is with them. These tempted ones, whose souls have ever been at war with the faithful reproofing of sin, would cry: Speak unto us smooth things. What disposition will these make of the message of the True Witness to the Laodiceans? There can be no deception here. This message must be borne to a lukewarm church by God's servants. It must arouse His people from their security and dangerous deception in regard to their real standing before God. This testimony, if received, will arouse to action and lead to self-abasement and confession of sins. The True Witness says: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot."

those sins which have brought them into such a deplorable condition of poverty, blindness, wretchedness, and fearful deception. I was shown that the pointed testimony must live in the church. This alone will answer to the message to the Laodiceans. Wrongs must be reproofed, sin must be called sin, and iniquity must be met promptly and decidedly, and put away from us as a people. *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 252-260.

"What astonishing deception and fearful blindness had, like a dark cloud, covered Israel! This blindness and apostasy had not closed about them suddenly; it had come upon them gradually as they had not heeded the word of reproof and warning which the Lord had sent to them because of their pride and their sins. And now, in this fearful crisis, in the presence of the idolatrous priests and the apostate king, they remained neutral. If God abhors one sin above another, of which His people are guilty, it is doing nothing in case of an emergency. Indifference and neutrality in a religious crisis is regarded of God as a grievous crime and equal to the very worst type of hostility against God." *Ibid.*, 280-281. ❀

Curse Ye Meroz

"In vision I saw two armies in terrible conflict. One army was led by banners bearing the world's insignia; the other was led by the bloodstained banner of Prince Immanuel. Standard after standard was left to trail in the dust as company after company from the Lord's army joined the foe and tribe after tribe from the ranks of the enemy united with the commandment-keeping people of God. An angel flying in the midst of heaven put the standard of Immanuel into many hands, while a mighty general cried out with a loud voice: 'Come into line. Let those who are loyal to the commandments of God and the testimony of Christ now take their position. Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters. Let all who will come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.'

"The battle raged. Victory alternated from side to side. Now the soldiers of the cross gave way, 'as when a standardbearer fainteth.' Isaiah 10:18. But their apparent retreat was but to gain a more advantageous position. Shouts of joy were heard. A song of praise to God went up, and angel voices united in the song, as Christ's soldiers planted His banner on the walls of fortresses till then held by the enemy. The Captain of our salvation was ordering the battle and sending support to His soldiers. His power was mightily displayed, encouraging them to press the battle to the gates. He taught them terrible things in righteousness as He led them on step by step, conquering and to conquer.

"At last the victory was gained. The army following the banner with the inscription, 'The commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus,' was gloriously triumphant. The soldiers of Christ were close beside the gates of the city, and with joy the city received her King. The kingdom of peace and joy and everlasting righteousness was established."

Testimonies, vol. 8, 41-42.

Ron Spear

Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter a song: arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam. . . . Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the LORD, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty." Judges 5:12, 23.

The sin of Meroz is that they did not come up to the help of the Lord. Today, in this final generation, the history of the ancient church is being repeated.

"Satan's snares are laid for us as verily as they were laid for the children of Israel just prior to their entrance into the land of Canaan. We are repeating the history of that people. Lightness, vanity, love of

ease and pleasure, selfishness, and impurity are increasing among us. There is need now of men who are firm and fearless in declaring the whole counsel of God; men who will not sleep as do others, but watch and be sober." *Testimonies, vol. 5, 160.*

The Sin of the Ancient Church

The sin of the ancient church was disregarding the expressed will of God. The children of Israel followed the ways of men and rejected God's way (His plans and His commandments). They were in open rebellion and insubordination. Their punishment was forty years of wandering in the wilderness:

"For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out

ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration, and strife among the Lord's professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years.

"We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel; but for Christ's sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action." *Evangelism, 696.*

God was willing to cut His work very short in righteousness soon after 1844, if the church had been

willing to experience the third angel's message—justification by faith:

“Had Adventists, after the great disappointment in 1844, held fast their faith, and followed on unitedly in the opening providence of God, receiving the message of the third angel and in the power of the Holy Spirit proclaiming it to the world, they would have seen the salvation of God, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts, the work would have been completed, and Christ would have come here this to receive His people to their reward.” *Selected Messages*, book 1, 68.

The long delay, caused by the church's insubordination to God's commands and authority has brought us into the wretchedness of the final stages of the Laodicean condition, which is described in Revelation, chapter three, as “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” —and if we do not repent, the curse of Meroz will be laid upon the unfaithful leaders, pastors, and laity. Like Meroz, they have refused to come to the help of the Lord in the great controversy's final crisis.

A Message Rejected

What is the reason for the deplorable apostasy of Laodicea?—It is the rejection of the righteousness by faith message brought to the church in 1888. The rejection of that message, given by Elders Waggoner and Jones, and Ellen G. White in the 1880s and 1890s, was, in reality, a rejection of the Holy Spirit. We are told by Inspiration that God wanted to take the church into the Promised Land shortly after 1844 if they had received the third angel's message in verity, which is justification by faith. See *Evangelism*, 190; *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 450.

This message is that God has the power to keep us from sinning—a truth which is believed to be an impossibility by many in Adventism today. Christians will accept that this power can help the abandoned sinner and degraded outcast to overcome his debauchery, but they will not accept that this power is

sufficient to enable them to overcome their own lustful thoughts and evil tempers. Notice what God says to us:

“The strongest bulwark of vice in our world is not the iniquitous life of the abandoned sinner or the degraded outcast; it is that life which otherwise appears virtuous, honorable, and noble, but in which one sin is fostered, one vice indulged.” *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, 94.

“By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the

the people who will give God's special message to the world at the end of time. See *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 978–979. When the messages are presented as they should be, it will be by those in whom the character of Christ has been perfectly formed. See *Christ's Object Lessons*, 69. The seal of the living God will have been impressed upon their souls. They will have settled into the truth intellectually and spiritually so that they cannot be moved. See *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, 1161. They will be among those who weep between the

These messages will be proclaimed throughout the world by a people who are living Jesus' life with His love, His faith, His righteousness, and His power.

likeness of Christ.” *Testimonies to Ministers*, 506.

“We can overcome. Yes; fully, entirely. Jesus died to make a way of escape for us, that we might overcome every evil temper, every sin, every temptation, and sit down at last with Him.” *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 144.

Notice, dear friends, the evidence is overwhelming that we have continued to reject the experience God wanted His church to accept in 1888—the message of righteousness by faith.

Three Great Misunderstandings

There are three great misunderstandings in Adventism today. They are: (1) misunderstandings of the three angels' messages, (2) misunderstandings of the cleansing of the sanctuary of Daniel 8:14, and (3) misunderstandings of the Spirit of Prophecy.

1) The Three Angels' Messages: There is a lack of understanding concerning the three angels of Revelation 14:6–12 among the remnant people of God in this time of the end. These angels symbolize

porch and the altar for the sins of the world and of the church. They will cry unto the Lord as did the prophets of old: “Spare thy people, O LORD.” Joel 2:17. See *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 266–267; *ibid.*, vol. 5, 209–210.

The 144,000 must stand with these wonderful truths before the whole world, against great opposition and persecution, and in the face of death. The character of God will be vindicated by their words, actions, and living testimony. They are the real remnant. When the character of Christ is found in His people, these messages will be proclaimed throughout the world by a people who are living Jesus' life with His love, His faith, His righteousness, and His power.

2) The Cleansing of the Sanctuary: “For more than half a century the different points of present truth have been questioned and opposed. New theories have been advanced as truth, which were not truth, and the Spirit of God revealed their error. 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." *Evangelism*, 224.

Jesus, our High Priest, cannot cleanse the Most Holy Place until He has a people who have the experience of the cleansing of their own souls. Leviticus, chapter 16, plainly states that both the sanctuary and the people were cleansed, according to the type, by the special services of the Day of Atonement. Numerous other Bible passages show that the cleansing performed

but she also makes the following significant application:

"The Jewish tabernacle was a type of the Christian church. . . . The church on earth, composed of those who are faithful and loyal to God, is the 'true tabernacle,' whereof the Redeemer is the Minister. God, and not man, pitched this tabernacle on a high, elevated platform.

"This tabernacle is Christ's body, and from north, south, east, and west He gathers those who shall help to compose it. . . . A holy tabernacle is built up of those who receive Christ as their personal Saviour. . . . Christ is the Minister of the true tabernacle, the High Priest of all who believe in Him as a personal

truth are not fighting against the instrument, but against God. 'It is not the instrument whom you slight and insult, but God, who has spoken to you in these warnings and reproofs.' 'It is hardly possible for men to offer a greater insult to God than to despise and reject the instrumentalities that He has appointed to lead them.' " *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 680.

So to disregard light is to reject it. Korah, Dathan and Abiram rejected the prophet Moses. The 250 leaders also rejected the prophet. See Numbers 16:35. Remember they were leaders, and they led the church into apostasy and rebellion. Their end was destruction, and 14,700 church members perished with them. See verse 49. This is an example of what Ellen G. White calls "open rebellion, which becomes incurable and ends in destruction," *Ibid.*, 672.

"The watchmen are responsible for the condition of the people." *Ibid.*, 235. Leadership and the ministry to a large degree are ignoring and disregarding the instruction God has given to His people in this last generation. This is the cause to a great extent of the condition of Laodicea today.

One of the primary ways that the leadership has lead the people to disregard the Spirit of Prophecy is by insinuating that the writings of God's last-day prophet are somehow less inspired or of lesser significance than the words given to prophets in ancient times and recorded in the Bible. However, there are no differing degrees of Inspiration. Ellen G. White's writings are either from God or from the devil:

"God is either teaching His church, reproofing their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work . . . bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The *Testimonies* are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil." *Ibid.*, vol. 4, 230.

"The Holy Spirit traced these truths upon my heart and mind as indelibly as the law was traced by

"There is no halfway work in the matter. The Testimonies are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil."

in the heavenly sanctuary includes a cleansing of the saints. Study Malachi 3:1-3 with *The Great Controversy*, 424-426.

"Christ is cleansing the temple in heaven from the sins of the people, and we must work in harmony with Him upon the earth, cleansing the soul temple from its moral defilement." *Review and Herald*, February 11, 1890.

"We are in the Day of Atonement, and we are to work in harmony with Christ's work of cleansing the sanctuary from the sins of the people." *Ibid.*, January 21, 1890.

Daniel 8:14 refers to the cleansing of the new covenant sanctuary which is brought to view in Hebrews 8:1-2:

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man."

Not only does Ellen White refer to this as the sanctuary in heaven,

Saviour." *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 931.

Today many in Adventism have rejected the sanctuary message as being insignificant. However, I believe that our slothfulness in the study of the sanctuary—in all its varied and important ramifications—is what has been responsible for the misunderstanding by many regarding the difference between perfection and perfectionism.

3) The Spirit of Prophecy: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." Joshua 1:8.

While we have not officially rejected the Spirit of Prophecy as a church, many of us are guilty of disregarding the counsel of God given through the prophet:

"If God has given me a message to bear to His people, those who would hinder me in the work and lessen the faith of the people in its

the finger of God, upon the tables of stone." *Colporteur Ministry*, 126.

Let us remember that God dealt differently with Moses and with John the Baptist than He did with any other prophet until Ellen G. White. Observe the following statements:

"If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" Numbers 12:6-8.

"But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." Matthew 11:9-10.

Consider these statements written by Sister White: "During the discourse [at Battle Creek, October 2, 1904], I said that I did not claim to be a prophetess. Some were surprised at this statement, and as much is being said in regard to it, I will make an explanation. Others have called me a prophetess, but I have never assumed that title. I have not felt that it was my duty thus to designate myself. Those who boldly assume that they are prophets in this our day are often a reproach to the cause of Christ.

"My work includes much more than this name signifies. I regard myself as a messenger, entrusted by the Lord with messages for His people. . . .

"My commission embraces the work of a prophet, but it does not end there. It embraces much more than the minds of those who have been sowing the seeds of unbelief can comprehend." *Selected Messages*, book 3, 74.

So as Moses and John the Baptist were more than prophets, so also was the role of Ellen G. White in the remnant church. I believe, without question, that her writings, which

encompass the entire spectrum of Christian living, justify this statement.

The End of Time

Without a question, we are now in the last minutes of this world's history, and of the history of the church. The greatest evidence of this is not what is happening in the world, but rather what is happening

As we introduce the message to Laodicea we must accept the fact that we, the church leadership, pastors, and laity, are now, and have been since 1888, insubordinate to God. The righteousness by faith experience which the other angel of Revelation 18 came down to give to God's people was rejected by the leadership, and subsequently by the people. How much longer will we

The sin of Meroz was that they refused to come up to the help of the Lord. The sin of Laodicea is that we have a form of godliness, but the power is not among us.

in our church. The devil's last deception—his last attack upon the church—is to make of no effect the Spirit of Prophecy. Let us read the following:

"Satan is . . . constantly pressing in the spurious—to lead away from the truth. The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' Proverbs 29:18. Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony.

"There will be a hatred kindled against the Testimonies which is satanic. The workings of Satan will be to unsettle the faith of the churches in them, for this reason: Satan cannot have so clear a track to bring in his deceptions and bind up souls in his delusions if the warnings and reproofs and counsels of the Spirit of God are heeded." *Selected Messages*, book 1, 48.

Disregarding the Spirit of Prophecy will lead to the rejection of it, which will carry the modern Korahs into Babylon. "One thing is certain: Those Seventh-day Adventists who take their stand under Satan's banner will first give up their faith in the warnings and reproofs contained in the Testimonies of God's Spirit." *Ibid.*, book 3, 84.

delay Christ's coming by our lukewarm condition?

"Let everyone who claims to believe that the Lord is soon coming, search the Scriptures as never before; for Satan is determined to try every device possible to keep souls in darkness, and blind the mind to the perils of the times in which we are living. Let every believer take up his Bible with earnest prayer, that he may be enlightened by the Holy Spirit as to what is truth, that he may know more of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent. Search for the truth as for hidden treasures, and disappoint the enemy." *Selected Messages*, book 1, 362.

We are still here after more than one hundred years because we continue in our rebellion—the Laodicean condition. Let us not now continue to excuse ourselves with our supposedly great membership statistics. The bottom line is, How many of us have the character of Jesus perfectly reproduced in us so that God can send the fourth angel of Revelation, send the latter rain, and cut His work short in righteousness? The sin of Meroz was that they refused to come up to the help of the Lord. The sin of Laodicea is that we have a form of godliness, but the power is not among us—in the latter rain. Our worldliness, our rebellion, is the same as was that of Meroz. ❖



The First Beast of Revelation 13

Colin Standish

Have you ever wondered whether the little horn, the man of sin, the son of perdition, the antichrist, the beast of Revelation 13, Babylon, the beast of Revelation 17, and the woman ‘riding on the beast,’ are all synonymous terms? Are they all referring to the same end-time power?

We could enumerate at least 81 criteria that identify the best of Revelation 13 as the Church of Rome. It would be tedious to trace all 81 criteria in a brief account such as this, and it is not necessary. Some of the 81 criteria, if taken in isolation, could apply to other entities besides the Papacy. For example, the criterion: “And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them” (Revelation 13:7), certainly is applicable to the Roman Catholic Church. Estimates of those destroyed by its vengeance range from 50–120 million people. Yet that text could justifiably be applied to Communism, to Emperor Nero, to Emperor Diocletian, or to others as well.

Let us, therefore, examine just those criteria which can be applied to the Roman Catholic Church and it alone. We will notice Daniel’s

precise description of the little horn power:

“Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. . . . And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And 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.” Daniel 7:19–20, 24–25.

A number of criteria are presented in these verses. We will highlight three of these: The first one is that the little horn arose out of the 10 horns of the fourth beast, representative of Imperial Rome.

These 10 horns are the 10 kings (kingdoms) which arose in Europe as the Roman Empire disintegrated. The second criterion is that the little horn would uproot three of the other horns so that it could emerge. The third criterion upon which we wish to focus is that this power would continue for the mysterious period of “a time, and times and the dividing of time.” Daniel 7:25.

The first 2 criteria are disposed of easily. History attests that ten nations of Western Europe replaced the Roman Empire upon its fall. These nations—with their modern-day descendants shown here in parentheses—were the Alemanni (Germans), Anglo-Saxons (English), Burgundians (Swiss), Franks (French), Heruli, Lombards (Italians), Ostrogoths, Suevi (Portuguese), Vandals, and Visigoths (Spanish). We will take a closer look at this a little later.

How Long Is “A Time”?

Now let us examine the third criterion—that which appears to be an imprecise and nonspecific period of the little horn’s era of dominance. We are plainly told that the little horn has dominion for a time, times, and the dividing of time. The

Complete Oxford Dictionary, defines the term “time” as used in Daniel 7 as being “a space of time generally understood to be a year.”

Accepting the *Oxford Dictionary’s* definition, which later we will determine is consistent with Scripture, then a time equals one year. Clearly, times means a number of years, but how many? Two? Three? Five? Ten? The dividing of time refers to a fraction of a year. However, we do not yet have sufficient evidence to determine that fraction. Providentially, the same period is cited seven times in Scripture. We can promptly solve the fraction of a year delineated as the “dividing of time,” for two of the remaining passages refer to this period in similar terminology designating it as “time, times, and an half” (Daniel 12:7), and “a time, and times, and half a time.” Revelation 12:14.

Manifestly, the fraction of a year is one-half. We can also discern “the meaning of times” by reference to two parallel terms for the same period. This term for the total period is “forty and two months.” Revelation 11:2; 13:5. It should come as no surprise to learn that the same period used in describing the little horn power of Daniel 7 is also specified in Revelation 13 in describing the beast power, for they are synonymous symbols.

Now by a matter of simple mathematics we are able to learn that the “times” of Daniel 7 represents two years, for the “time” represents 12 months and the “dividing of time” equals 6 months. Thus the remaining period of “times” must amount to 24 months in order that the total equal 42 months.

360 or 365 Days?

But we are faced with yet another question: How many days are there in each of these 42 months? The Jews used equal months of 30 days with 360 days per year. Is this “time” a Jewish year, or is it a solar year which contains 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 46 seconds? Another question is, can we be certain

that there were 30 days in a Jewish month? Does Scripture so testify?— Yes, it does. Referring to the flood in the time of Noah we are told:

“In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.” Genesis 7:11.

Thus the flood commenced on the 17th day of the second month. The waters abated precisely five months later:

“And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth

itself—it is a period of 1,260 days. The Bible also assists us in discovering the interpretation of this period of Daniel’s prophecy. The prophet Ezekiel was a contemporary of Daniel. Indeed, Ezekiel refers to Daniel three times in his prophecy. See Ezekiel 14:14, 20; 28:3. In his prophetic book he states:

“I [God] have appointed thee each day for a year.” Ezekiel 4:6.

Furthermore, the application of that principle in the time prophecies of Daniel has proven to be accurate.

Thus the Scripture prophesied that the little horn/beast power would be dominant for 1,260 years.

Is this “time” a Jewish year, or is it a solar year which contains 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 46 seconds?

day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.” Genesis 8:4.

How many days were involved in this five-month period? God provides us with the answer:

“And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.” Verse 3.

Thus the five-month period consisted of exactly 150 days—30 days per month.

To further confirm this fact, the period mentioned in Daniel 7 is found in two other passages of Scripture in addition to the five already quoted. Both of these refer to the period as:

“A thousand two hundred and threescore days.” Revelation 11:3; 12:6.

Since a score is 20, the period specified is 1,260 days. This concurs with the fact that 42 months of 30 days equals 1,260 days.

Precisely 1260 Years

The Bible is a magnificent book! It surely is its own interpreter. What appeared to be a baffling time period of “a time and times and the dividing of time” has been elucidated by the Word of God

There have been many mighty empires upon earth. The Roman Empire was dominant for about 500 years; the British Empire for two or three hundred years; and other empires for lesser times. Apart from the Papacy, only the Holy Roman Empire approached this duration of time. It commenced with the coronation of Charlemagne in A.D. 800 by Pope Leo III, and then it was dissolved when Emperor Francis II abdicated the throne in 1806—a period of 1,006 years, 254 years short of the 1,260-year period.

Before we move on to verify the fact that the Papacy did dominate Europe for precisely 1,260 years, and that three of the ten nations which arose out of the decline of the Roman Empire were uprooted, let us note the tremendous Biblical scholarship of two of the early church fathers in the conclusions they drew concerning the rise of antichrist. We do not, of course, base the exposition of Scripture upon the writings of humans, but, nevertheless, the insights of these two men were outstanding:

Tertullian (A.D. 155–222) wrote of the Roman Empire: “whose

separation into ten kingdoms will bring on antichrist." This is an exceptional understanding! During the life of Tertullian the Roman Empire was powerful, and its demise could not have been predicted. But, clearly, Tertullian was a man of Scripture, and he believed God's Word. Further, he had correctly linked the little horn of Daniel 7 with the antichrist of 1 John, chapters 2 and 4, and 2 John.

Cyril of Jerusalem (A.D. 315-386) stated: "There shall arise, at the same time, ten kingdoms of the Romans at different places indeed, the reigning all of them at the same time. After them the eleventh will be antichrist,

defeat and expulsion of the Ostrogoths from Rome. Papal politico-religious authority was now fully established for the first time. Thus the year A.D. 538 marks the commencement of Papal dominance in Europe.

It is significant that Pope Virgilius was the first pope who was not canonized. This, no doubt, was due to the secular nature of his past, for the popes had earlier been invested with the title Pontifex Maximus—the Supreme Pontiff.

But which three nations were uprooted by the rise of the papal power? Earlier we listed the ten kingdoms which supplanted the

"In 1797 Napoleon Bonaparte imposed the Treaty of Tolentino on the Pope. . . . In the next year [1798] General Berthier, Napoleon's chief of staff, seized Rome and established the Roman Republic. On the grounds that the Pope's preserve in Rome might provoke a counter revolution, the French ordered Pius VI to leave the Vatican. He was escorted to Sienna, and then across the Alps to France." *Collins Encyclopedia* 1990, subject "Papacy."

Pope Pius VI was desperately ill in 1797. His physicians expected his death that year, but he recovered. Napoleon was awaiting his death in order to abolish the Papacy. Had the Pope died that year, the prophecy would have been inaccurate by one year. However, God does not deal in approximations. The deadly wound was inflicted in 1798 when the Pope was taken captive. Pius VI died in captivity in 1799. Understanding the matter, Joseph Rickeby in his book, *The Modern Papacy, Vol. 3, Lecture 24*, p. 1, stated:

"Half Europe thought Napoleon's veto would be obeyed and that with the Pope the Papacy was dead."

Healing the Deadly Wound

Scripture describes this demolition of the Papacy as "the deadly wound." But while men believed the Papacy had received a fatal blow, our all-seeing God knew otherwise:

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast." Revelation 13:1-3.

Notice that this beast inculcated into its system all the evil of Greece (the leopard beast of Daniel 7:6),

History attests to the certain fulfillment of prophecy.

*Did the Papacy continue to assert power for
1,260 years?—Indeed it did!*

who through magical wickedness, will seize the power of the Romans."

Cyril also united Daniel 7 with 1 John and 2 John. Like Tertullian, he recognized the fourth beast of Daniel 7 as the Roman Empire, following the first three beasts, which symbolized Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece, respectively.

The fall of the Roman Empire is dated at A.D. 476. The Emperor was situated in Constantinople. In 533 Emperor Justinian, rather inconsequentially at the time, declared the Bishop of Rome to be "the first rank of all bishops." But Pope John II (533-535) was totally paralyzed by the Ostrogoth's conquest of Rome. There was no manner in which he could exercise this vested preeminence, which had settled the long-running rivalry for that honor between the Bishops of Rome and Constantinople. His successor, Agapetus I (535-536), in his brief stay in the post, was equally prevented from seizing the authority granted. So, too, was Pope Silvanus (536-537). But in A.D. 538 the recently crowned Pope Virgilius (537-555) seized the power with the

Roman Empire and noted the races represented in modern Western Europe. Three of those nations have no representation today in Europe. Incredibly, one of those nations is the Ostrogoths who were sufficiently powerful up to A.D. 538 that they occupied Rome. Yet God's Word is absolutely certain. Did the Heruli, the Ostrogoths, and the Vandals vanish in the wake of the rise of papal power in Europe in the sixth century A.D.? We quote the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1990 edition. Under the subject 'Heruli' this authority states: "The mid-sixth century they vanished from history." Of the Ostrogoths the same source states that they were "extinct before 554." Finally, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* records the fact that the Vandals "maintained a kingdom . . . from 429-524."

The End of the 1260 Years

History attests to the certain fulfillment of prophecy. Did the Papacy continue to assert power for 1,260 years?—Indeed it did! Yet Napoleon Bonaparte was determined to demolish the Papacy.

Medo-Persia (the bear beast of Daniel 7:5), and Babylon (the lion beast of Daniel 7:4), all of which had defied the God of heaven. But God foresaw that the apparent deadly wound would be healed. For precisely 1,260 years (538–1798) the beast power had ruled supreme. It was not yet to be totally destroyed.

Indeed, the healing process was commenced only two years after the Pope's arrest and one year after his death. Military reverses in 1800 caused Napoleon to recall the battalion of troops in Rome under the command of his brother, Joseph Bonaparte. Shortly thereafter, the cardinals returned and elected Pope Pius VII. The Papacy was weak and impotent, but a thread of life was restored. Incredibly, Napoleon then invited the Pope to crown him Emperor. However, impulsively at the last moment, Napoleon grasped the crown out of the Pope's hands and crowned himself, but he did bestow upon the Pope the two massive and magnificent porcelain candlesticks, eight feet in height, which had lighted his throne during the coronation ceremony in Notre Dame Cathedral. This gift is still on display in the Vatican Museum.

The road to the restoration of the Papacy has been a rocky one. In 1870 Garibaldi, in uniting the various states of Italy, wrested the papal states from Vatican control. The Papacy had lost its last vestige of temporal sovereignty. But in 1929 sovereignty was restored to the Papacy by Benito Mussolini, the Prime Minister of Italy, when he signed the Concordat with the Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal de Gaspari, according political independence to this territory, formally a part of Italy, an area of 108 acres (just over 40 hectares). The *San Francisco Chronicle* announced the event with the following headline:

"Heal Wound of Many Years—Vatican At Peace With Italy After Many Years."

While the Vatican is the smallest nation upon earth, it has diplomatic relations with more nations than any other country. Its influence and popularity has risen to the point where one cannot even discern the

scar of the deadly wound. In truth, all the world is wondering after the beast in a manner never before attained by the Papacy. Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, Moslems, and, of course, Protestants, are tracking to the Vatican in honor of the Pope and his papal system. His visits to non-Christian nations, such as India, Singapore and Thailand, have drawn record crowds as citizens struggled to catch a glimpse of him. His power is so great that *Time* magazine (February 24, 1992) credited him with bringing down Communism through his vast intelligence system of prelates, priests, and faithful laity. This system of the Vatican is still in place in the great majority of nations upon the earth.

Oriental History. He subsequently studied at Oxford, and Hebrew University in Jerusalem. From 1958 to 1964 he served in Rome, where he was a close associate of the renowned Jesuit Cardinal Augustin Bea and Pope John XXIII. He now lives in New York City." Malachi Martin, op. cit.

His book commences with these startling words:

"Willing or not, ready or not, we are all involved in an all-out, no-holds-barred, three-way global competition. Most of us are not competitors, however. We are the stakes. For the competition is about who will establish the first one-world system of government that has ever existed in the society of nations. It is about who will hold

While the Vatican is the smallest nation upon earth, it has diplomatic relations with more nations than any other country.

A Quest for Global Power

But does the Vatican have designs upon world leadership?—Indeed, it does! In his classic work, *The Keys of This Blood* (Touchstone, New York, 1991), Dr. Malachi Martin, now deceased, outlined the inner aims of the Papacy. Dr. Martin was no minor figure in the Catholic world and in the world at large. He was a Roman Catholic priest who had served in the Vatican, and had an intimate knowledge of its inner workings. Highly regarded in his own church, his book lists his background as follows:

"Malachi Martin, eminent theologian, expert on the Catholic Church. Former Jesuit and professor at the Vatican's Pontifical Biblical Institute, is the author of the national best-sellers: *Vatican*, *The Final Conclave*, *Hostage to the Devil* and *The Jesuits*. He was trained in theology at Louvain. There he received his doctorates in Semitic Languages, Archaeology, and

and wield the dual power of authority and control over each of us as individuals and over all of us together as a community; over the entire six billion people expected by demographers to inhabit the earth by early in the third millennium." Ibid. 15.

Dr. Martin made it clear that the three competitors for world supremacy are the Vatican, Western Capitalism, led by the United States, and Communism. He leaves *no* doubt that he is convinced that the Vatican will emerge the victor. In this view he is supported, as we have seen, by Scripture. Had Dr. Martin written his book a couple of years later, undoubtedly he would have declared that Communism no longer posed a serious threat to the other two "competitors." But we shall see that Scripture reveals that the Vatican and the United States, rather than being competitors, are embracing the role of collaborators in this move toward global dominance. And make no mistake, this global

dominance will be of a most compulsory nature. As Dr. Martin states:

“The competition is all-out because, now that it has started, there is no way it can be reversed or called off. No holds are barred because, once the competition has been decided, the world and all that’s in it—our way of life as

Bishops, revealed his long-standing dream of a continent united on Christian (Roman Catholic) principles, from the Atlantic to the Urals, from the Mediterranean Sea to the North Pole.

The *Singapore Straits Times*, January 6, 1992, in an article extracted from the *London Financial Times*, entitled “Pope Hopes to

least hope of effectively challenging Rome’s will, her settled doctrines, and her usurped ecclesiastical authority.

Peregrine Worsthorpe, Editor of the prestigious *London Sunday Telegraph* (August 25, 1991), astutely summed up the situation in Europe—the prototype for globalism. He wrote:

“It is [in] the movement towards federalism of the Common Market . . . that the Pope may see the greatest possibility for an increase in Catholic political power since the fall of Napoleon, or since the Counter-Reformation. The Common Market itself started under the influence of Catholic politicians. . . . If European federalism triumphs, the EC (European Community) will, indeed, be an empire. It will lack an emperor, but it will have the Pope.”

It is a small wonder that Worsthorpe entitled his article: “Now, a Holy European Empire?” If the Vatican could topple Communism in Eastern Europe, as asserted quite correctly, in an article by *Time*, February 24, 1992, entitled “Holy Alliance,” then it is indeed ready to conquer the world.

Clearly, the Vatican is not only well positioned, but it has a full strategy in place to fulfill the prophecy of Revelation 13. We are in the last days! Only the plain Word of Scripture and our adherence, in God’s power, to its precepts, can keep us faithful to our Lord and His truth.

The first beast of Revelation 13 is the Papacy. No other nation has ruled for 1,260 years. None other has received a deadly wound that has been so comprehensively healed. All the world today is wondering after the Papacy and giving deference to it! It arose from Imperial Rome. In its rise, three powerful nations were utterly obliterated.

Rome, and Rome alone, fulfills, or will fulfill, every one of the criteria of the beast power. Most of the criteria have already been precisely fulfilled. We can confidently anticipate the fulfillment of the rest. ❖

“By the millennial standards of the Holy See, Pope John Paul II is in a hurry to stamp the imprint of the Church on the fast-changing events in Europe.”

—*Singapore Straits Times*

individuals and as citizens of the nations . . . our educational systems and our religions and our cultures; even the badges of our national identity, which most of us have always taken for granted—all will have been powerfully and radically altered forever. No one can be exempted from its effects. No sector of our lives will remain untouched.” *Ibid.*, 15.

This is globalism at its zenith! It embodies aims for a global government, a global economy, a global educational system, a global religion, and a global culture. In order to enforce each of these aims, a global legal system would be required.

One glance at the European Union, which Lars Bergquist, Swedish ambassador to the Vatican, described as a Catholic organization, in an article written to encourage Sweden’s 1995 entry into the European Union, indicates that the continent of Europe is the arena of experimentation for each of these aims. Bergquist’s article, which was entitled, “The Way to the European Community Is Via Rome,” appeared in *Stokholm’s premier newspaper, Syd Svenska Dagbladet*, October 16, 1991.

Shortly after, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, November, 1991, reported that John Paul II, speaking in St. Peter’s Basilica to 137 European

Capitalize On the Fall of Communism,” reported:

“By the millennial standards of the Holy See, Pope John Paul II is in a hurry to stamp the imprint of the Church on the fast-changing events in Europe.”

The European Union’s plunge into the unified currency in January 1, 1999, was a huge step toward central fiscal control of the continent. Already 11 sovereign nations of Europe—Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain—have embarked on the course which will see their traditional currencies discarded and replaced by the Euro currency on July 1, 2002. Denmark, Greece, Sweden, and the United Kingdom are expected to join them shortly. It should not escape our attention that these 4 hesitating nations are non-Roman Catholic. Of the 5 predominately non-Roman Catholic nations in the European Union, only Finland was among those which initially joined the European Monetary Union.

The International and the European Courts of Justice are gradually welding a unified legal system, while the ecumenical movement is fast moving toward a Christianity which will be totally dominated by Rome. No other church in Christendom stands the

THE TIMES OF TROUBLE



Ralph Larson

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. Daniel 12:1.

In volume 4 of the *Spirit of Prophecy*, as well as in several other places, Sister White makes the following statement: "Before His crucifixion the Saviour explained to His disciples that He was to be put to death, and to rise again from the tomb; and angels were present to impress His words on minds and hearts. But the disciples were looking for temporal deliverance from the Roman yoke, and they could not tolerate the thought that He in whom all their hopes centered should suffer an ignominious death. The words which they needed to remember were banished from their minds; and when the time of trial came, it found them unprepared. The

death of Jesus as fully destroyed their hopes as if He had not forewarned them. So in the prophecies the future is opened before us as plainly as it was opened to the disciples by the words of Christ. The events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble, are clearly brought to view. But multitudes have no more understanding of these important truths than if they had never been revealed. Satan watches to catch away every impression that would make them wise unto salvation, and the time of trouble will find them unready." *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, 412.

By giving us this plain statement of the clarity with which future events are laid before us, Sister White reveals several things to us: First and foremost, the unfailing love of God—He wants each of us to be saved and has provided every possible means to make that a reality. Second, she reveals to us the error made by the disciples in failing to heed Christ's warnings so that we will not make the same error.

If we are to heed this warning and make ourselves ready for Christ's soon return, we must make every effort through a study of God's Word to understand "the events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble." Please note that Sister White referred to "events"—meaning more than one event. What from a distance appears to be singular, such as a line of utility poles or the rails of a train track converging in the distance, gains greater definition as one draws nearer. What initially appeared as one single object turns out to be a series of objects. So it is with events, and so it is that the time of trouble that Daniel referred to thousands of years ago, because of his great distance from the actual time of occurrence, appeared as one time of trouble. However, as we draw nearer to that point, we are able to discern separation into distinct units those events which were previously obscured by distance.

By a study of the writings of Ellen White we are able to divide closing events into four periods: a time of preparation; the “little time of trouble”; a time of tremendous calamities; and Jacob’s time of trouble. Each period has characteristics that will enable God’s people to discern what is taking place.

I: The Preparation Time

This first period, the end of which we are now rapidly approaching, has at least four identifiable characteristics. The one that we will examine first is the building of an invincible faith by those whose names will not be blotted out of the book of life.

to prepare for the day of God. If any neglect the preparation, and heed not the faithful warnings given, they will be without excuse.” *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, 135.

“That faith which will live through the time of trouble must be daily in exercise now. Those who do not make strong efforts now to exercise persevering faith will be wholly unprepared to exercise that faith which will enable them to stand in the day of trouble.” *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, 125.

Note that this time of preparation is a time of spiritual preparation—not carnal preparation. The only physical preparation that we are to make is to become as healthy as

are rejecting one of the means which God has granted them to promote spiritual as well as physical life. They are placing themselves where they will be exposed to the delusions of Satan.” *Counsels on Health*, 454.

As a necessary part of that spiritual preparation, the saints will be tried and tested in order to develop the kind of character they must have to pass through that narrow gate into the kingdom of heaven: “Count it all joy when ye fall into diverse temptations.” James 1:2. Why?—Because trials and temptations are God’s way of molding us into Christ’s likeness.

“The purification of God’s people cannot be accomplished without suffering. God permits the fire of affliction to consume the dross, to separate the worthless from the valuable, in order that the pure metal may shine forth. He passes us from one fire to another, testing our true worth. True grace is willing to be tried. If we are loath to be searched by the Lord, our condition is one of peril. God is the refiner and purifier of souls. He places us in the heat of the furnace, that the dross may be forever separated from the true gold of Christian character. Jesus watches the test. He knows just what fire of temptation and trial is needed to purify the precious metal, in order that the radiance of divine love may be reflected.” *Review and Herald*, April 10, 1894.

The second characteristic of this first period is a time of spiritual preparation, during which the process of the purification of character is completed, when God prepares a people who will perfectly reflect Christ’s character. On page 263 of *This Day with God* we are given one of the clearest descriptions of Christ’s character contained in inspired writings outside of the Decalogue. It is incumbent upon us as professed followers of Christ to strive through the power of Christ working in us to develop this same character:

“Christ never murmured, never uttered discontent, displeasure, or resentment. He was never disheart-

“Those who do not make strong efforts now to exercise persevering faith will be wholly unprepared to exercise that faith which will enable them to stand in the day of trouble.”

Sister White addresses this strengthening of faith by God’s people in several places: “The servants of Christ are to prepare no set speech to present when brought to trial for their faith. Their preparation is to be made day by day, in treasuring up in their hearts the precious truths of God’s Word, in feeding upon the teaching of Christ, and through prayer strengthening their faith; then, when brought into trial, the Holy Spirit will bring to their remembrance the very truths that will reach the hearts of those who shall come to hear. God will flash the knowledge obtained by diligent searching of the Scriptures, into their memory at the very time when it is needed.” *Last Day Events*, 69; *Maranatha*, 255. (Emphasis supplied by author unless otherwise noted.)

“That season of distress and anguish will require an effort of earnestness and determined faith that can endure delay and hunger, and will not fail under weakness, though severely tried. The period of probation is the time granted to all

possible by strict adherence to the principles God’s servant has given us in the health message.

“The Lord has shown me in vision, repeatedly, that it is contrary to the Bible to make any provision for our temporal wants in the time of trouble. I saw that if the saints have food laid up by them, or in the fields, in the time of trouble when sword, famine, and pestilence are in the land, it will be taken from them by violent hands, and strangers would reap their fields. Then will be the time for us to trust wholly in God, and He will sustain us. I saw that our bread and water would be sure at that time, and we should not lack, or suffer hunger.” *Maranatha*, 181.

“God has placed it in our power to obtain a knowledge of the laws of health. He has made it a duty to preserve our physical powers in the best possible condition, that we may render to Him acceptable service. Those who refuse to improve the light and knowledge that have been mercifully placed within their reach

ened, discouraged, ruffled, or fretted. He was patient, calm, and self-possessed under the most exciting and trying circumstances. All His works were performed with a quiet dignity and ease, whatever commotion was around Him. Applause did not elate Him. He feared not the threats of His enemies. He moved amid the world of excitement, of violence and crime, as the sun moves above the clouds. Human passions and commotions and trials were beneath Him. He sailed like the sun above them all. Yet He was not indifferent to the woes of men. His heart was ever touched with the sufferings and necessities of His brethren, as though He Himself was the one afflicted. He had a calm inward joy, a peace which was serene. His will was ever swallowed up in the will of His Father. Not My will but Thine be done, was heard from His pale and quivering lips." See also *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 3, 427–428.

The third characteristic of this first period of spiritual preparation is that the people of God will place their possessions upon the altar so that they are available for use in the cause of Christ. "Houses and lands will be of no use to the saints in the time of trouble, for they will then have to flee before infuriated mobs, and at that time their possessions cannot be disposed of to advance the cause of present truth. I was shown that it is the will of God that the saints should cut loose from every encumbrance *before the time of trouble comes*, and make a covenant with God through sacrifice. If they have their property on the altar, and earnestly inquire of God for duty, He will teach them when to dispose of these things. Then they will be free in the time of trouble, and have no clogs to weigh them down." *Counsels on Stewardship*, 59–60.

The fourth and final characteristic of the period of spiritual preparation, in this first period of end-time events, is that we trust the Lord, recognizing and accepting the fact that some of our loved ones will be laid in the grave, especially the very young: "The Lord has often in-

structed me that many little ones are to be laid away *before the time of trouble*. We shall see our children again. We shall meet them and know them in the heavenly courts. Put your trust in the Lord, and be not afraid." *Child Guidance*, 566.

2: The "Little Time of Trouble"

Period two occurs immediately before the close of probation. This is the short period of time that Adventists have customarily called the "little time of trouble," though that term occurs nowhere in Sister

ensues — when God's people will flee to secluded havens, some with the aid of angelic intervention. In *Bible Commentaries*, vol. 7, 968, Sister White makes this statement: "And I saw famine, pestilence and sword, nation rose against nation, and the whole world was in confusion." This is an intense period of time when big events are happening and people are making decisions affecting their eternal destiny!

Prophecy gives us a very clear sequence of end-time events. There need be no confusion or misunder-

But in the near future, when Christ comes, sorrow and sighing will be forever ended. Then will be the Christian's summer.

White's writings. There is no distinct boundary between period one and period two, but during period two some very significant things happen: The latter rain will fall, and during the final phase of period two, the seventh-day Sabbath will be preached with the great power of the Holy Spirit. God's people will be sealed, and Satan's people will receive the mark of the beast. "Just before we entered it [the time of trouble], we all received the seal of the living God." *Maranatha*, 243.

3: Great Calamities

Period three occurs after the close of probation. Therefore, there is a very distinct, discernable break between periods two and three: Probation is open; probation is closed. When period three begins, the plagues will start to fall as the four angels will loose the four winds; there will be fire, famine, and earthquakes throughout the land. But none of the faithful will die.

4: Jacob's Time of Trouble

Things are so chaotic on a worldwide level that period four is set in motion: The death decree is given, and the time of Jacob's trouble

standing about what will happen or in what order it will happen — although *when* it will happen is very clearly hidden from us. But because God loves us, He gives us ample evidence to enable us to recognize these events *when* they occur.

"This earth is the place of preparation for heaven. The time spent here is the Christian's winter. Here the chilly winds of affliction blow upon us, and the waves of trouble roll against us. But in the near future, when Christ comes, sorrow and sighing will be forever ended. Then will be the Christian's summer. All trials will be over, and there will be no more sickness or death. 'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.' Revelation 21:4." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 3, 107.

Let us, therefore, keep our eyes open, with one eye fixed firmly on God's Word and the other on world events. And let us be like Jacob, who, during the time of his trouble, realized his weakness and unworthiness, yet trusted in the faithfulness of God to fulfill His promises. ❀



Initiative & Mercy

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

Initiative is another character quality important for Christians. Initiative means that our children notice something that needs to be done, and then they make the decision themselves to do it without being asked. Initiative is a form of self-government. The following are several areas of family life in which initiative can be developed:

An Apology

We teach our children to apologize when they have wronged others. If they have harmed a sibling, we take them to their brother or sister and say, "Now, I want you to say that you are sorry," and so they say, "I am sorry." But often no real change of heart has taken place, and they don't take any initiative in the matter.

What if, instead, we were to talk to the child and try to help him understand why he should apologize? Ask questions that make him look at himself—such as: "What have you done to your sister? What do you think about that? How do you feel about that?"

After you have worked through all the reasons and excuses, pray

with and for your child, encouraging him to go and do what is right. Help the child so that he knows right from wrong and sees the importance of forgiveness. Then he will go on his own to tell the other child: "I am sorry." Pray for the Holy Spirit to soften your child's heart so he will learn to do well and to take the initiative to make amends when he has done wrong.

Personal Devotions

Personal worship helps our children to develop initiative. You can help your children begin to have personal devotions by making it interesting for them and by helping them find devotional material that is relevant to them. If they can read, find them books—Spirit of Prophecy books or books out of the Bible—that are particularly interesting or desirable for them, and then encourage them to read the books. I have found it helpful to read the same material in my own private time, and then later in the day we can talk practically about what we are learning. This helps the children to take pleasure in what they are studying, and then to have the

initiative to go back the next day and study more. Teaching initiative helps to train our children's eyes and hearts for what really needs to be done.

Surprises

Initiative can be learned and motivated by helping our children think of kind things that they can do for others. Say to your child: "Honey, today I want you to do one surprise for Daddy." This builds in the child's mind a self-motivation to initiate something on his own that he can do to benefit another person. We have found *surprises* to be a fun and effective way to show initiative, and then after a time our children do surprises for different ones without anyone even suggesting it.

A Scriptural Example

Where do we find initiative discussed in the Scripture? The word "initiative" is not found there, but the character trait is certainly displayed in the lives of several Bible characters. One story that comes to my mind that clearly illustrates initiative is the account of David and Goliath, found in

1 Samuel 17:17-50. David was sent by his father to visit three of his older brothers and take them food. When he arrived, Israel and the Philistines were already set up in battle array. However, when the giant Goliath came up and defied Israel and their God, all the men of Israel fled. They were scared.

David saw the situation, and, led by the Spirit, he responded immediately: "David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine." Verse 32. David showed initiative. He was not prompted by anyone that he should take on the giant, but he was led by God through His still, small voice that makes known His will to the conscience. This is how God communicates with us today, and it is how to hear and respond to His voice in teaching our children to learn initiative.

Mercy

Mercy, simply defined, is tolerance and tenderness. It is giving and forgiving, more than what is expected, to the one who has wronged us, or to the one who is in need. Micah 6:8 tells us: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Cultivating mercy is teaching our children forgiveness and consideration for others who do not understand things as we do, or who do not live or look like we do. We help them to understand that, although others may be different than we are, we still love and encourage them and seek to help them turn their hearts over to Jesus. Our goal is not to make people become like ourselves, but to encourage people to become like Christ. And the wonderful result is that as we come into union with Christ, we will come into unity and harmony with one another. Mercy is a vital key to having that experience.

Many people are very inconsiderate of others who are in some way different from themselves. Children,

in turn, treat other children badly if they look poor, if they have a handicap, or if their skin is a different color. Being inconsiderate is a trained characteristic, because children naturally have a large measure of mercy. However, as they grow they learn biases and prejudices from the adults in their lives.

Mercy is not a difficult character trait to cultivate in young children. Do we have to beg our child to forgive us?—Absolutely not. They are abundant in mercy and forgiveness. Yet there is something else that we can do to cultivate mercy, and that is not to allow our children to sulk and pout. When we allow our children to express a pouting spirit, we are actually destroying the natural mercy that God has placed in their hearts. When their wills are crossed, instead of being merciful towards the one who crossed them, they begin to develop a spirit against them—an unforgiving or a rebellious spirit.

This is something that we have worked on diligently in our own family. When the will of one of our children is crossed, and he begins to sulk and pout, we immediately deal with the problem. We say: "Honey, you are not happy, and it is because you are thinking only of yourself. We love you very much, and, therefore, we cannot allow you to pout." We encourage the child to understand why his will is being crossed and how he is being selfish, and then we encourage him to surrender his will to God. Sometimes we pray silently, and sometimes we pray with our child; for it is only the power of God that can give him the grace to truly surrender his will to our heavenly Father. However, if the child chooses to hold on to that spirit, then it is necessary that there be consequences for the child's choice, to help him understand that the way he is choosing is not the right way. We might say: "You are so unhappy! We cannot allow you to be part of what we are going to do as a family right now—because that is what you have chosen." Be firm and ask the Lord to give you grace to help your

child learn this important character trait. Without it, he will become a selfish and inconsiderate young person and an unhappy, unforgiving adult.

If you think about it, it is a lack of mercy, or consideration, that causes much of the trouble in marriages, homes, work places and in relationships in general. God is calling to us individually to cultivate the characteristic of mercy in our hearts and homes. Are we willing to respond to His mercy to change our stubborn hearts and help us to cultivate mercy, by precept and example, in our children?

Next month we will discuss how to cultivate orderliness. ✚



Cultivating Christian Character in Children

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Continued from page 7

must get ready for its fury by having repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord will arise to shake terribly the earth. We shall see troubles on all sides. Thousands of ships will be hurled into the depths of the sea. Navies will go down, and human lives will be sacrificed by millions. [This already happened during World War I, and World War II, and it could happen again.] Fires will

of thousands of cities, now almost given to idolatry." *Evangelism*, 29.

How Will We Respond?

While God is holding back the winds of strife, let us work with greater diligence and sacrifice for our Lord.

"In the great closing work we shall meet with perplexities that we know not how to deal with, but let us not forget that the three great Powers of heaven are working, that a Divine Hand is on the wheel, and

Pacific Record, September 29, 2001, the editor expressed the opinion that "caution is also needed in any attempt to link this event (the September New York and Washington D.C. terrorist attacks) of terrorism with Ellen White's comments about burning sky scrapers in New York, something seen many times in the past century."

An associate director of the General Conference Biblical Research Institute stated that "the tragic events surrounding the September 11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington should not be interpreted as an expression of God's anger against America . . . we must simply acknowledge that they were the result of the presence of evil in the world." *Adventist News Network*, quoted in the *South Pacific Record*, October 6, 2001. Readers should reread the quotation from *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 12-13, quoted near the commencement of this article, and draw their own conclusions.

God has provided what is needed for our preparation for the sealing. At the awesome moment when so very soon each of us will stand before the judgment bar of God, only those following God's way of sanctified living will receive Christ's inestimable advocacy. Brothers and sisters, let no foolish worldliness in our lives prevent our salvation. Discard all winds of doctrine, all of which have been crafted by Satan to prevent us from reaching our heavenly home. May all thought of self be yielded to Christ, for salvation is worth our all!

"My dear brethren and sisters, let the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ be in your minds continually and let them crowd out worldly thoughts and cares. When you lie down and when you rise up, let them be your meditation. Live and act wholly in reference to the coming of the Son of man. The sealing time is very short, and will soon be over. Now is the time, while the four angels are holding the four winds, to make our calling and election sure." *Early Writings*, 58. ❀

Since Scripture informs us that the winds of strife will be released after the 144,000 are sealed, we surely must be very close to the sealing of the living.

break out unexpectedly, and no human effort will be able to quench them. The palaces of earth will be swept away in the fury of the flames. Disasters by rail will become more and more frequent; confusion, collision, and death without a moment's warning will occur on the great lines of travel. The end is near, probation is closing. Oh, let us seek God while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near!" *Messages to Young People*, 89-90.

"In the last scenes of this earth's history, war will rage. There will be pestilence, plague, and famine. The waters of the deep will overflow their boundaries. Property and life will be destroyed by fire and flood. We should be preparing for the mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for them that love Him." *Last Day Events*, 24.

"The end is near, and every city is to be turned upside down every way. There will be confusion in every city. Everything that can be shaken is to be shaken, and we do not know what will come next. The judgments will be according to the wickedness of the people and the light of truth that they have had." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 1, 248-249.

"O that God's people had a sense of the impending destruction

that God will bring His purposes to pass." *Ibid.*, 65.

"I asked my accompanying angel the meaning of what I heard, and what the four angels were about to do. He said to me that it was God that restrained the powers, and that He gave His angels charge over things on the earth; that the four angels had power from God to hold the four winds, and that they were about to let them go; but while their hands were loosening, and the four winds were about to blow, the merciful eye of Jesus gazed on the remnant that were not sealed, and He raised His hands to the Father and pleaded with Him that He had spilled His blood for them. Then another angel was commissioned to fly swiftly to the four angels and bid them hold, until the servants of God were sealed with the seal of the living God in their foreheads." *Early Writings*, 38.

Since Scripture informs us that the winds of strife will be released after the 144,000 are sealed (Revelation 7:1-3), we surely must be very close to the sealing of the living.

Curiously, many Seventh-day Adventists see little significance for the end-time scenario of Revelation 13 in the recent events in New York and Afghanistan. In the South

letters to the editor

Have a letter to share?

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

Thank God for your ministry spreading the three angels' messages to the world in these perilous days. As we look out and see the signs that are fulfilling before our eyes, we know that Christ's coming is just before us. May we be ready to go home with Him. I thank God that I am a member of a church that upholds the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy as our guides. Our pastor is a man of God's choosing who will stand and preach the message that has been given to God's church for these times.

Enclosed is my gift to help in the mission effort in Ghana, Africa. May God continue to bless and uphold your ministry for Him.

MT, New York

From Overseas

I am a nurse working at — hospital and also an elder of the Seventh-day Adventist church. Being an elder at a church situated at a very fast-growing point I am kindly asking for most of the books written by Mrs. Ellen G. White so that I will be able to help myself and the flock I am leading. The people of God are to be fed with the Word of God—hence the importance of having the word of the moment. If possible send me some books with health information also.

May the Lord bless you in the great work you are doing. Also pray for our fast-growing church.

MR, Zimbabwe

Our disabled association members are really congratulating you for the efforts and time you are taking to publish wonderful magazines/books which are enlightening people worldwide of the coming of our Good Lord.

One day, while seated under a tree discussing issues about our disability, an unknown person just threw one Hope magazine to us and left. Each one of us wanted to read it, so we all started scrambling for it. After reading it, we were all amazed/surprised of certain things which are happening in the world today.

Please, kindly, send some booklets to us such as: a) *Earth's Final Warning*, b) *Rome's Arraignment of Sabbath Breakers*, c) *Immortality of the Soul & Spiritualism*, and d) *National Sunday Law* and/or any other booklets. Thank you very much.

RM, Zambia

I am very delighted to write these humble words to you. The main aim of writing you is that I was a sinner but now I have taken Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour who died on the cross of Calvary to clean our sins away. I want to spread the gospel to my town and everywhere in Ghana.

I want to let them change their lives for Christ to save them but I don't have Bibles and books to spread the gospel of God to His peoples. I want to give them books and Bibles to read. Please, if you give me the Bibles and books to share with my friends and to spread the news of our Saviour who died for us and other peoples, I will thank you, and God will bless you. I will end here with much greetings and love.

CD, Ghana

I humbly put forward into your custody the request of inspiration books as "*The Great Controversy*" and other books for our crusades. We are telling the public the truth in the Bible, and most importantly telling them our faith and the controversy that exists between Sabbath and Sunday worshippers.

I am requesting a package on behalf of my church at — which has embarked on a massive campaign. We have initiated a number of outdoor programmes, i.e. crusades, gifts to people in the form of books, literature week, etc.

The books which you have already provided—*The Great Controversy*, *The Desire of Ages*, and so on—have made our doctrines accessible to more people. On the other hand, I also need copies of inspiration books in my library to equip me as an Evangelist and leader.

Currently my church has the best organized men and women leading our

crusades. By virtue of our hard work and highly patronizing we have been recommended the best organized church and crusade in the — area.

We want to uphold our strong image until the battle is ended. Your support to us today will go a long way to help us achieve our goal and spread the gospel to all people and places.

IN, Ghana

I would like to send warm gratitude to the entire staff of Hope International for the work you are doing of feeding the flock of God with the present truth of the 1888 message which many Adventist organizations reject. My first time to meet your magazine called *Our Firm Foundation* was when it was dumped on my potato farm. I didn't know where it came from or who dumped it there. I collected it and found it had been rained on and that it was missing some pages. I started reading it on the spot. I came to learn that God will use any way to give His selected ones the message of the last warning. What I will say after reading it, your efforts are really blessed of God. It is you, now, whom God is using to present the message to do His will. Never give up, keep going on!

The main theme of writing you is to request free Bible Studies. I have come to learn that surely we are living in the last days, and the end will come soon. I am deeply heaven bound, but where to get assistance has been a problem. I am also a medical missionary practicing natural remedies of herbs. I have one utterance which I am using: "Use natural herbs to heal the natural body."

Keep on enlightening God's children around the world, seeing that the Laodicean church is blind, naked, miserable and wretched. Brethren, I have seen marvelous things from your publication that are not presently being taught by the church or by any other denomination. Please send me *Our Firm Foundation*—even the old ones. Also, if you have books or booklets about herbs, please send those also.

OO, Kenya

Feeling Sick?

[sick and tired]

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[maybe just a little wasted]

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

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