



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 20, Number 7

July 2005

*The Power of
Pentecost*



The End Is Come

In the sacred book of Ezekiel, chapter 7, the prophet of the Lord is given a message for the leaders of the church: "Now is the end come upon thee, and I will send mine anger upon thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense upon thee all thine abominations." Verse 3.

The wrath of God will soon be poured out upon all who are unrepentant for their wickedness.

Chapter 7 precedes chapter 8, in which are revealed the abominations of the church—its wickedness and its insubordination to God's great plan in the gospel commission. Chapter 8 should be studied carefully, for it precedes chapter 9, the sealing chapter.

The Lord's messenger places before church leaders and laity a solemn picture of the final phase of the six thousand years of this great controversy. I urge you to prayerfully read *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 208–211, for in this passage God paints a prophetic picture of the Seventh-day Adventist people in the end time.

As we search our hearts for the signs of backsliding, insubordination, and apostasy, we are told by God that we would pass through the very same experience as the church in Christ's day:

"The trials of the children of Israel, and their attitude just before the first coming of Christ, have been presented before me again and again to illustrate the position of the people of God in their experience before the second coming of Christ—how the enemy sought every occasion to take control of the

minds of the Jews, and today he is seeking to blind the minds of God's servants, that they may not be able to discern the precious truth." *Selected Messages*, book 1, 406. See also *Selected Messages*, book 1, 387; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 75–76, 160, 217.

We are in insubordination, according to *Evangelism*, 696, and God has mercifully sent a pointed testimony to be given to His church:

"According to the light that God has given me in vision, wickedness and deception are increasing among God's people who profess to keep His commandments. Spiritual discernment to see sin as it exists, and then to put it out of the camp, is decreasing among God's people; and spiritual blindness is fast coming upon them. The straight testimony must be revived, and it will separate those from Israel who have ever been at war with the means that God has ordained to keep corruptions out of the church. Wrongs must be called wrongs. Grievous sins must be called by their right name. All of God's people should come nearer to Him and wash their robes of character in the blood of the Lamb. Then will they see sin in the true light and will realize how offensive it is in the sight of God. . . .

"Our only safety is to be shielded by the grace of God every moment, and not put out our own spiritual eyesight so that we will call evil, good, and good, evil." *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 324.

The abominations of Ezekiel chapters 7–9 are before us. Certainly these abominations

included Sabbath-breaking, which Jesus reproved in His day as well.

We must ask ourselves today, are we keeping the Sabbath according to Isaiah 58:13–14?

"If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."

Only those that keep the Sabbath now will keep it with Jesus in Heaven. Ezekiel's warning was presented to the leaders of the church, but because of their insubordination they went into 70 years of captivity.

God used the king of Babylon to punish the leadership in Ezekiel's day. We are told by Sister White that we are repeating the history of the Jews. Should we not expect God to do the same today if we also remain unrepentant?

God help us now to bring revival and reformation to our beloved church while probation still lingers! ✨



Ron Spear, author and revivalist, has served the church for over 50 years, in both denominational and self-supporting lines, as a missionary, union department secretary, evangelist, pastor,

Field Secretary for the Review and Herald, and editor of Our Firm Foundation.



Our Mission

It is the mission of Hope International and the editors of *Our Firm Foundation* to clearly present Christ and His truth. The days remaining for this world are few, and we must work 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

Executive Editor: Ron Spear
Executive Director: Joe Olson
Managing Editor: Harvey Steck
Bookstore Manager: Celeste Morais
Layout: KHPtech.com

Our Firm Foundation is published monthly by:



Hope International
P.O. Box 220
Knoxville, IL 61448 USA

Phone: (309) 343-1844
Monday–Thursday: 8:00AM–5:00PM
Friday: 8:00AM–12:00PM
(All times are in the central time zone.)
Fax: (309) 343-3721
Email: office@hopeint.org
Web: <http://www.hopeint.org>

About Hope International

Hope International is a lay ministry founded, supported, and operated by Seventh-day Adventists to assist the Seventh-day Adventist church in the proclamation of the Everlasting Gospel in every way that is consistent with the principles of God as revealed in Inspiration.

Invitation to Writers

We are accepting article-length manuscripts (750 to 3000 words) for possible publication in *Our Firm Foundation*. We prefer that submissions be neatly typed, submitted either as a computer file or on paper. Please address all correspondence to Editors, *Our Firm Foundation*, PO Box 220, Knoxville, IL 61448, or by email to editorial@hopeint.org.

Subscription Information: See page 29

Shipping & Sales Tax: See page 29

Copyright © 2005 Hope International

Content credited in this publication is the property of its respective owner(s), and is licensed or used with permission. Other items are the property of Hope International.
Cover Illustration: Gustav Doré

4 The Power of Pentecost

Clark Floyd

God is looking for a people to finish this work. Will you be among that people?

7 Revelation, Inspiration and Ellen White, Part 1

Russell and Colin Standish

Subtle errors that undermine the authority of Inspiration.

10 The Parable of the Fig Tree

Joe Olson

Will souls who are hungry find the nourishment they need?

12 True Worth

Ellen G. White

What makes you of great value in the sight of God?

15 What, In The Name Of God, Are We Doing?

Wallace Boddy

Have we succumbed to purpose-driven delusions?

18 How to Bring Our Church Back, Part 2

Vance Ferrell

The experiences of Isaiah and Elijah illustrate important steps for a successful reformation

21 Neglected Duties

Ellen G. White

What is our duty as the signs tell us of Christ's soon coming?

Editorial

page 2

Glimpses of the Pioneers

page 24

News Watch

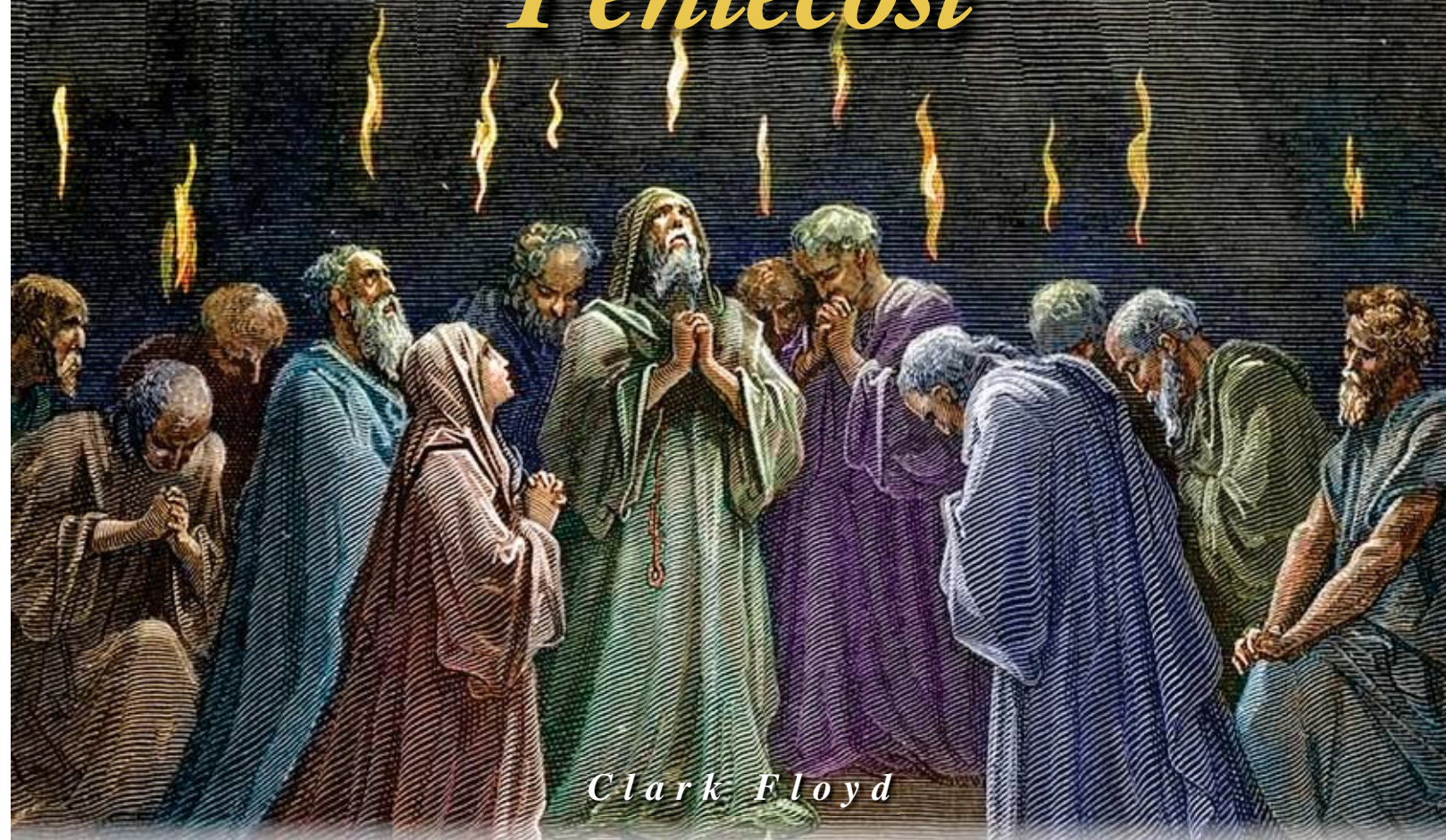
page 26

Letters to the Editor

page 31

Hope International does not solicit tithes; however, we are a tithe-worthy organization and accept tithes. We use the tithe only for the gospel ministry. Donations designated "Gospel Ministry" will be considered tithe.

The Power of Pentecost



Clark Floyd

“A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” John 13:34–35.

Jesus had witnessed the discord that ran among His disciples. He had seen the various disciples striving for the highest place in His kingdom. He had seen more self love among them than love for one another, but He also knew that their hearts could be touched. He had given them the example of a loving servant in the communion service, and now He tells them how they

will be recognized as His disciples, “if ye have love one to another.”

But they still didn’t get it. Self needed to be conquered. “We can receive of heaven’s light only as we are willing to be emptied of self. We cannot discern the character of God, or accept Christ by faith, unless we consent to the bringing into captivity of every thought to the obedience of Christ. To all who do this the Holy Spirit is given without measure.” *The Desire of Ages*, 181.

Christ gave them much counsel after the communion service as recorded in the gospel of John, chapters 14, 15 and 16. Peter’s denial of Christ, and the other disciples fleeing from the mob were still ahead.

In John 17, Jesus prays fervently for these disciples. “I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were and thou gavest them me. . . . I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. . . . And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. . . . Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. . . . Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou,

Illustration: Gustav Doré

Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." Verses 6–23. All emphasis added.

Fifty days later this prayer was partially fulfilled: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all *with one accord* in one place." Acts 2:1. And thus the Holy Ghost was able to be poured out upon the disciples so that God's work could go forward. A miracle of miracles had taken place—the differences in personalities among these disciples had been set aside and they were able to come into one accord.

"Jesus prayed that His followers might be one; but we are not to sacrifice the truth in order to secure this union, for we are to be sanctified through the truth." *Review and Herald*, April 12, 1892. "Christ calls for unity. But He does not call for us to unify on wrong practices." *Selected Messages*, book 1, 175.

"There have of late arisen among us men who profess to be the servants of Christ, but whose work is opposed to that unity which our Lord established in the church. They have original plans and methods of labor. They desire to introduce changes into the church to suit their ideas of progress and imagine that grand results are thus to be secured. These men need to be learners rather than teachers in the school of Christ." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 238.

As we near Christ's Second Coming, the Loud Cry of the fourth angel is soon to go forth—the time when the Holy Ghost will be poured out in His fullness. Again the prayer of Christ rings out, "that they may be one, even as we are one." "Neither pray I for these alone (the

disciples), but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."

This was not a plea for an ecumenical movement based on compromise, but a plea for those who believe in and follow the present truth of the three angels' messages to crucify self and come into unity, that the work for this time can be finished.

"Union is strength; division is weakness. When those who believe present truth are united, they exert a telling influence. Satan well understands this. Never was he more determined than now to make of none effect the truth of God by causing bitterness and dissension among the Lord's people." *Ibid.*, 236.

How is it in your life? Do you get easily upset if someone doesn't do or say things as you think they should? What is it going to take for us to come into one accord?

Again, as with the disciples, it seems impossible for such unity to take place, as division seems to be a by-word. People who once worked together in various ministries have gone their separate ways, not because of major theological differences, but because of personality differences and lack of allowing for differences in minor areas. Satan has to be joyful over these divisions, for he knows that the Holy Ghost cannot be poured out for the finishing of the work until God's people come again into one accord.

"We cannot afford now to give place to Satan by cherishing disunion, discord, and strife." *Ibid.*

Is self a bigger part of our lives than we care to admit? Why can't we get along? Why do we get so easily agitated with one another? How is it in your life? Do you get easily upset if someone doesn't

do or say things as you think they should? What is it going to take for us to come into one accord? Again, our unity must be based on truth, but the truth needed is salvational truth—other areas of discord need to be set aside. Ellen White had to counsel the brethren in regard to certain non-salvational issues (such as "the king of the north," "the daily," and others) to not become separated in regard to them.

Unity will be achieved when we love Jesus with *all* of our heart and our neighbor as our self. Self will be lost sight of. Our outward life will be a confession of Christ in our hearts.

"He who would confess Christ must have Christ abiding in him.

He cannot communicate that which he has not received. The disciples might speak fluently on doctrines, they might repeat the words of Christ Himself; but unless they possessed Christlike meekness and love they were not confessing Him. . . .

"Men may deny Christ by evilspeaking, by foolish talking, by words that are untruthful or unkind. They may deny Him by shunning life's burdens, by the pursuit of sinful pleasure. They may deny Him by conforming to the world, by uncourteous behavior, by the love of their own opinions, by justifying self, by cherishing doubt, borrowing trouble, and dwelling in darkness." *The Desire of Ages*, 357.

"The first disciples went forth preaching the Word. They revealed Christ in their lives. And the Lord worked with them, 'confirming the



word with signs following.' Mark 16:20. These disciples prepared themselves for their work. Before the day of Pentecost they met together, and put away all differences. They were of one accord. They believed Christ's promise that the blessing would be given, and they prayed in faith. They did not ask for a blessing for themselves merely; *they were weighted with the burden for the salvation of souls.* The gospel was to be carried to the uttermost parts of the earth, and they claimed the endowment of power that Christ had promised. *Then it was that the Holy Spirit was poured out,* and thousands were converted in a day.

"So it may be now. Instead of man's speculations, let the Word of God be preached. *Let Christians put away their dissensions,* and give themselves to God for the saving of the lost. Let them in faith ask for the blessing, and it will come. The outpouring of the Spirit in apostolic days was the 'former rain,' and

glorious was the result. But the 'latter rain' will be more abundant. Joel 2:23." Ibid., 827.

"Our effort should be to answer Christ's prayer for His disciples, that they should be one." Testimonies, vol. 9, 196.

God is looking for a people to finish this work. Brothers and Sisters, will you be among that people? Paul has admonished us in the second chapter of Philippians, "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Verses 1-5.

"The world is against us, the popular churches are against us, the laws of the land will soon be against us. If there was ever a time when the people of God should press together, it is now. God has committed to us the special truths for this time to make known to the world." Ibid., vol. 5, 236.

And in Psalm 133, God has said through David, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Verse 1.

In Ephesians 4, Paul speaks of God's provision, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: *till we all come in the unity of the faith,* and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, *unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*" Verses 11-13.

"Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.

"It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, (2 Peter 3:12, margin). Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain." *Christ's Object Lessons, 69.*

Brothers and Sisters, things in the world are being set up for the final events. Let us do our part to hasten the coming of Jesus! ❀



Clark Floyd resides in Leicester, North Carolina. He is a board member and a speaker for Hope International.

Revelation, Inspiration and Ellen White, Part 1



Russell and Colin Standish

In various areas of Australia and New Zealand, Elders' Summits were conducted, entitled "Revelation, Inspiration and Ellen White." On Sabbath, June 19, 2004, an Elders' Summit was conducted by the Victorian Conference from 2 PM to 7 PM. The guest speakers were Dr. Ray Roennfeldt, Chairman of the Theology Department, Avondale College, and Dr. Graeme Bradford, Theology Department, Avondale College.

Sometime prior to the Elders' Summit the Victorian Conference pastoral staff were reported to have been "blessed by the teaching of Drs. Ray Roennfeldt and Graeme Bradford."¹

The article recounted the nature of the meeting of the theologians with the Conference pastors:

"They shared valuable insights on inspiration and the prophetic ministry of Ellen White, a ministry they both treasure.

"This was a foretaste of what elders will share at the Elders' Summit, on June 19, from 2 PM to 7 PM."²

"When England does declare war ..."

The aim of these Summits was enunciated: "With a large volume of negative material available on the internet, pastors and elders are in need of having credible answers to be able to give to members. The Summit will provide many of those answers. Also, if you are familiar with the video, 'The Spirit Behind the Church,' you will find the Summit very helpful."³

The video, "The Spirit Behind the Church," which Russell viewed in 2000, was produced by a Protestant organization. It featured a number of former Seventh-day Adventist ordained ministers, who used the time provided them in reviling our beloved church, its precious truths and the inestimable gift of the Spirit of Prophecy. Their fidelity to Scripture and God's law may be gauged by the knowledge that some of these men were pastoring Sunday-keeping churches. Their accusations against the Spirit of Prophecy were shallow, and in a large part they were simply ineptly

re-echoing nineteenth-century charges which have long since been answered.

One charge laid was that Sister White had falsely prophesied that England would enter the American Civil War. Superficially read, Sister White's words can be misconstrued to mean that which is alleged. Writing in 1862, during the Civil War (1861–1865), Sister White declared, "When England does declare war, all nations will have an interest of their own to serve, and there will be general war, general confusion." *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 259.

That there was an expectation that Britain may enter the Civil War on the side of the South, is an indisputable historical fact:

"He [Jefferson Davis—1808–1889, President of the Confederate States of America] hoped that within twelve months at most Britain and France would come to his aid."⁴

Once more the question is raised, Was Sister White simply echoing this expectation which was never fulfilled? The answer again

is, Absolutely not! When the entire paragraph in which she made the statement concerning England is read in detail, it is evident that Sister White was speaking conditionally, not prophetically. Notice the conditional words of Sister White:

“England is studying whether it is best to take advantage of the present weak condition of our nation, and venture to make war upon her. She is weighing the matter, and

be general war, general confusion.” Ibid.

Once more we see the use of a conditional clause—“but *if* England thinks it will pay.”

The British Prime Minister in 1862 was the Third Viscount Henry John Temple Palmerston (1784–1865), seventy-eight years of age. There is no doubt that he was pleased with events which led to the Civil War, for “his own opinion led him rather to desire than to

When the entire paragraph in which she made the statement concerning England is read in detail, it is evident that Sister White was speaking conditionally, not prophetically.

trying to sound other nations. She fears, *if* she should commence war abroad, that she would be weak at home, and that other nations would take advantage of her weakness.” Ibid. All emphasis added.

Here we notice the adverbial clause of condition in this passage—“*if* she should commence war abroad.” We continue this paragraph up through the sentence which detractors of Sister White cite as error:

“Other nations are making quiet yet active preparations for war, and are hoping that England will make war with our nation, for then they would improve the opportunity to be revenged on her for the advantage she has taken of them in the past and the injustice done them. A portion of the queen’s subjects are waiting a favorable opportunity to break their yoke; but *if* England thinks it will pay, she will not hesitate a moment to improve her opportunities to exercise her power and humble our nation. When England does declare war, all nations will have an interest of their own to serve, and there will

avert the rupture of the [American] union.”⁵

It is plain that Sister White was correct in her record of the contemporary history of which she then wrote. We have, also, documented the conditional framework in which she penned her words, “When England does declare war . . .” Then how may we reconcile her words within a single paragraph—“If . . .,” “If . . .,” and “When . . .”? The resolution is quite simple. We must understand the full meaning of the English word, “when.”

First, let us note that *The Heritage Illustrated Dictionary*⁶ provides one definition of *when* to be *if*.

Sometimes we use the word *when* to mean *whenever*, or *if*. It is clearly this use of the word *when* that Sister White intended, as confirmed by the conditional nature of the previous sentences. *The Oxford Reference Dictionary* defines *whenever* as “at whatever time.”⁷

We commonly use *when* in the sense of *if*. We, ourselves, have no plans to visit the Antarctic Continent. However we would state that “When we do go to Antarctica,



we would like to observe the wildlife there.” And we would. But it is almost certain that we will never visit that continent. People commonly use words such as “When I can find time, I’d like to write my memoirs.” This is not said in an assurance that they will accomplish this desire, rather it is conditional upon finding the free time to do so.

Even Scripture uses the word *when* to mean *if*. Jeremiah is translated to have said, “*when* ye shall enter into Egypt: and ye shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; and ye shall see this place no more.” Jeremiah 42:18.

Of course, all of Judah did not go into Egypt during Jeremiah’s lifetime, nor at any subsequent time. Even when taken into captivity by Babylon, they did see Judah again after the restoration. If the previous verses are read, we see that the preposition *if* is used, certifying the conditional nature of this prophecy. See Jeremiah 42:10, 13, 15.

It is a pity that when the first fifteen minutes of the video, “The Spirit Behind the Church,” was shown at the Victorian Conference Summit, it was stopped at the point where the accusation was made that Sister White erred in stating that Britain would enter the American Civil War. No explanation of this false allegation was offered during the Elders’ Summit. At best this negligence planted seeds of doubt in the minds of attendees concerning the veracity of the Servant of the Lord’s writings.



Does Scripture Contradict Itself?

Dr. Ray Roennfeldt spoke first at the Elders' Summit. His presentation could best be characterized by the words, "What Scripture is Like." We quote from a transcript of an audiotape of the presentation which was presented to us.

During his discourse, which was largely confined to Biblical "errors," Dr. Roennfeldt took issue with Paul's statements concerning women—that they should remain silent in the church, that man was made in God's image and that woman was made in man's image and Paul's statement that man was created first. Dr. Roennfeldt cited no Biblical references for his complaints, but we believe he was referring to 1 Corinthians 14:34 and 11:7-9.

Dr. Roennfeldt then posed a question which he followed with a "defense" of Paul's words, clearly indicating his belief that they were contrary to other parts of the Bible. We quote verbatim from his presentation:

"Is Paul contradicting Scripture? No, I don't think he is. He's arguing like a rabbi would argue. He's arguing just like a Jewish rabbi would argue. And a Jewish rabbi would argue, 'Now this argument is not really up to scratch, but it's a good argument.' That's how rabbis actually argued. . . .⁸ I'm just saying what Scripture is like."⁹

To assert that Paul's inspired writings consisted of some statements which did not "really come

up to scratch," but he used them anyway because they were good arguments, and to say that he was only writing like a Jewish rabbi, surely is thoroughly offensive to any man or woman who treasures the Holy Word of God. Rather than correctly representing Scripture, Dr. Roennfeldt's statement may reflect the thinking and strategy of some theologians (rabbis) of the era of the Second Coming.

References:

- ¹ *Intraviv* – Victorian Adventist Church News, May, 2004, 2.
- ² *Ibid.*
- ³ *Ibid.*
- ⁴ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1963 edition, vol. 1, 732.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 17, 159.
- ⁶ American Heritage Publishing Co. Inc., New York, 1973
- ⁷ Oxford University Press, Oxford, England, 1996.
- ⁸ The ellipsis was inserted because Dr. Roennfeldt broke off his train of thought and did not complete a sentence he had

God's principles of faith, written under inspiration by Him, do not contain slick phrases meant to cover up weak arguments and make invalid points.

We emphatically declare that Scripture is *not* like that! It does not use passages which do not bear divine veracity (that don't "really come up to scratch"); it ever possesses the hallmark of divine truth. That a peal of laughter burst forth from not a few of the attendees when those words were spoken, suggests that the general tenor of the lecture was that in which the sacredness of Scripture was not considered. Paul was privileged to author fourteen of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament. God's principles of faith, written under inspiration by Him, do not contain slick phrases meant to cover up weak arguments and make invalid points.

Writing from New Zealand on March 28, 1893, Sister White aptly described that which our theologians are setting themselves to achieve.

"Those who trust in their intelligence he [Satan] will make believe that they can correct the Scriptures. You are going to meet this infidelity in high places." *Upward Look*, 101. ✠

Concluded next month.

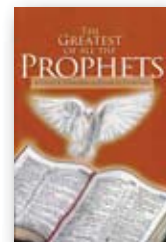
commenced. We all occasionally do this in spoken presentations. For the record, the entire words omitted were, "Now a few years ago the Scripture started saying."⁹ Transcript of audiotape, Elders' Summit, Melbourne, June 19, 2004.

Russell Standish, speaker and author, writes from Australia, where he directs Remnant Herald.

Colin Standish, president of Hartland Institute, writes from Rapidan, Virginia.

This article was selected from portions of chapter 11 of *The Greatest of All the Prophets*, by Russell and Colin Standish. Portions of this chapter have been omitted due to space limitations.

You may purchase this book from Hope International for \$16.99 plus shipping & handling (see page 29). In Australia you may purchase the book from Remnant Herald, PO Box 175, Kalorama 3766 for \$20 (Australian) plus postage.





The Parable of the Fig Tree

Joe Olson

“Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.” Matthew 21:18–19.

“Christ’s act in cursing the fig tree had astonished the disciples. It seemed to them unlike His ways and works. Often they had heard Him declare that He came not to condemn

the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. They remembered His words, ‘The Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.’ Luke 9:56. His wonderful works had been done to restore, never to destroy. *The disciples had known Him only as the Restorer, the Healer.* This act stood alone. What was its purpose? they questioned.

“God ‘delighteth in mercy.’ ‘As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked.’ Micah 7:18; Ezekiel 33:11. To Him the work of destruction and the denunci-

ation of judgment is a ‘strange work.’ Isaiah 28:21. But it is in mercy and love that He lifts the veil from the future, and reveals to men the results of a course of sin. The cursing of the fig tree was an acted parable.” *The Desire of Ages*, 582. All emphasis supplied.

“The Lord was hungry. *He represented a people hungering for fruit that they ought to have had, but did not receive from an apparently flourishing fig tree. The spiritual necessities were not supplied to satisfy the people whom Christ had pledged His life to save by His grace and righteousness.*” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, 1096–1097.

Our “spiritual necessities” are things for our spiritual blindness, our nakedness, our need for Christ’s robe of righteousness.

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

This was not a parable in the sense that Jesus sat down and talked to the people in symbols to give them an illustrative example. The day before, multitudes had shouted hosannas from the rooftops as Jesus rode into Jerusalem. The scripture says “all the city was moved.” See Matthew 21:9–10.

Then Jesus cleanses the temple. Miracles are wrought, the blind receive their sight, the lame are made whole, and the scripture says the “chief priests and scribes,” . . . “were sore displeased,” and they complained to Jesus. Jesus responded to them by quoting scripture, and then He left the temple and Jerusalem. Verses 12–17.

“Jesus spent the entire night in prayer, and in the morning, while returning again from Bethany, He passed a fig-orchard. He was hungry, ‘And seeing a fig-tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon; and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said

unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever. And his disciples heard it.' Mark 11:13–14.

"It was not the season for ripe figs, except in certain localities; and on the elevated height of Olivet it might truly be said, 'the time of figs was not yet.' *It is the nature of the fig tree that before the leaves open the growing fruit appears*; so it would follow that upon a tree covered with leaves one would expect to find well matured figs. The tree which Jesus saw was *beautiful to look upon*, but upon a thorough searching of its branches, He found that its appearance was *deceitful*, for it bore 'nothing but leaves.'" *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, 17.

In *The Desire of Ages*, Ellen White is more to the point: "It was a *mass of pretentious foliage, nothing more*." Page 581.

Hungry People

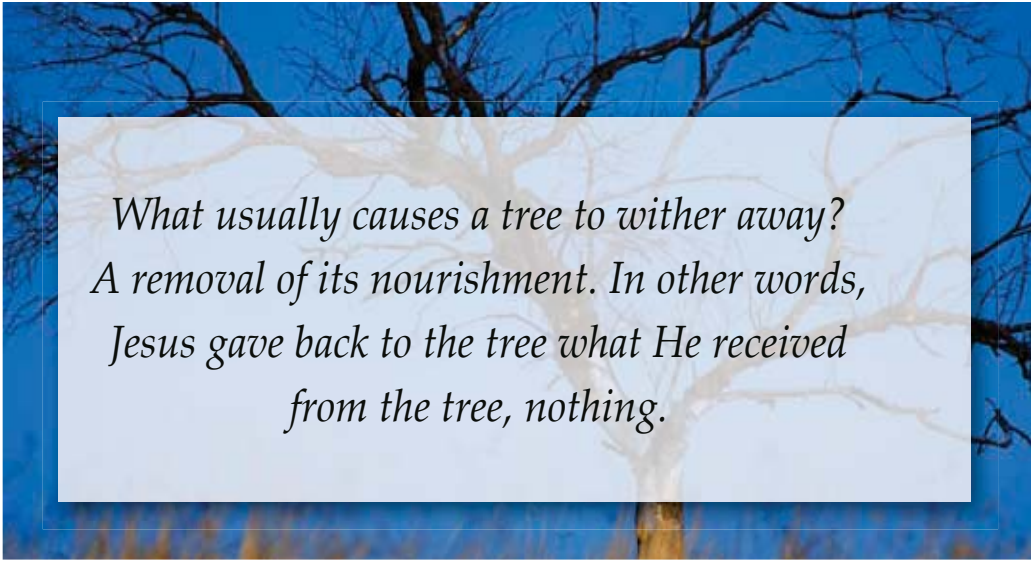
Now, we read that Christ represented a people hungering for fruit, or food—spiritual food. But there is no food on *this* fig tree, and it *should* have had fruit!

"The other trees in the fig orchard were also destitute of fruit; but their boughs were leafless, therefore they raised no expectations and caused no disappointment. *These leafless trees represented the Gentiles*, who made no boasts of superior piety. In them the words of the scripture finds an application, 'the time of figs was not yet.'" *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, 18.

We are told that no fruit was expected on the leafless trees, but those that had leaves—those that boasted superior piety—should have fruit equal to the claim.

Now, who was it that was praising God as Jesus rode into Jerusalem? The Jewish multitude—the regular church members. Who came into the temple to Jesus after He cleansed it? The blind and lame—those who sensed their need and wanted Jesus' help.

Who *should* have been the first to recognize Jesus for who He really was? The scripturally learned—the



*What usually causes a tree to wither away?
A removal of its nourishment. In other words,
Jesus gave back to the tree what He received
from the tree, nothing.*

scribes, the priests, the leadership. If they took the responsibility to be the teachers in Israel, was it not their duty to search the Scriptures to know when the Messiah should come and how to recognize Him?

Matthew 21:15 says that the "chief priests and scribes *saw* the wonderful things that he did." They *saw* the miracles, the blind receiving sight, the lame walking; yet, instead of being the first to acknowledge Jesus for who He was, they were "sore displeased."

They were barren trees, trees without nourishment—trees with leaves, but without the corresponding fruit. Jesus represented a spiritually hungry people, and when He came where there should have been nourishment or food, He found none.

Are We Being Fed?

Are *we* finding food where we expect to find it? When *we* see the leaves on the tree, do we find the needed spiritual nourishment from the teachers in Israel, or are we disappointed? That is a question that each one must decide for himself.

Let me add, we are in no way singling out any group of people. This question is applicable to conference leaders and teachers, lay leaders and teachers, self-supporting leaders and teachers, reform church leaders and teachers, and so on; it cuts across the entire spectrum of Adventism. Are we being *fed*? It should go without saying that being fed indicates a *wholesome, nourishing, filling diet*—not

error, or even *milk* on a consistent basis.

And we must not stop with leadership. We are individually responsible for feeding others, are we not?

Cursing the Tree

Jesus represented the people hungering, and when He found no food, He cursed the barren tree. If He represented the people when He was looking for food, did He not represent the people when He cursed the tree? When Jesus should have received strengthening sustenance, and was denied, what did He do? Did He say, maybe there will be something worth eating later? Did He suggest digging around it and fertilizing it? Did He even just walk away? No, He cursed it. What happened when He cursed it? The scripture says it "withered away."

What usually causes a tree to wither away? A removal of its nourishment. In other words, Jesus gave back to the tree what He received from the tree, nothing. Is that scripturally sound?

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For *with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again*." Luke 6:38; see also Matthew 7:2; Mark 4:24.

The "cursing" was a just recompense for what He received.

continued on page 30...



True Worth

Ellen G. White

In His Word the Lord has shown what man may become if connected with the Source of all wisdom. The soul of every one is precious. All heaven is interested in the plan of salvation, and its power is waiting our demand. We may choose wisely, and through Christ become more precious in the sight of God than the golden wedge of Ophir, or we may become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal; but if we do choose to degenerate, we shall become wholly worthless, and lose heaven with all its riches.

Character cannot be bought with gold; it does not come to us by accident. Character is earned by individual effort through the merits and grace of Christ. It is formed by hard, stern battles with self. Conflict after conflict must be urged against hereditary tendencies. We shall have to criticize ourselves closely, and allow not one unfavorable trait to remain uncorrected, unreformed.

If the character is left to be molded as chance may direct, it will become deformed and unlovely. There are in every one weak points

that need to be strengthened; for Satan will take advantage of every unguarded spot. The question to be settled is, Will you follow the light God has given? If you would do so, close the door against your own suggestions, desires, and doubts. Temptations will thicken about your pathway; but the Lord will be nigh to you if you call upon Him in sincerity.

Cultivate Strict Honesty

Stand fast in the strength of Jesus. Swerve not from the right to gain any one's friendship or to avoid difficulty. Christians can afford to be straight-forward, and firm as a rock to principle. All the excellence of character we attain will be gained in moving in this straight line. Be kind and considerate to others; but at the same time be frank and sincere; for the Lord despises dissembling. Never allow the gold of character to be dimmed with the dross of earthly, corruptible metal. The standard of the world is not the criterion for the Christian. Reputation, property, everything earthly, may be sacrificed; for this will not lessen our value in the heavenly records; but principle must be preserved.

Truthfulness and frankness should be ever cherished by all who claim to be followers of Christ. God and the right should be the motto. Deal honestly and righteously in this present evil world. Some will be honest when they see that honesty will not endanger their worldly

interests; but all who act from this principle will have their names blotted out of the book of life.

Strict honesty must be cultivated. We can go through the world but once; we cannot come back to rectify any mistakes; therefore every move made should be with godly fear and careful consideration. Honesty and policy will not harmonize; either policy will be subdued, and truth and honesty hold the lines of control, or policy will take the lines, and honesty cease to direct. Both cannot act together; they can never be in agreement. When God makes up His jewels, the true, the frank, the honest, will be His chosen ones, His treasures. Angels are preparing crowns for such; and light from the throne of God will be reflected in its splendor from these star-gemmed diadems.

Solemn Heart-Searching

These things will bear thoughtful consideration—close, critical examination. With your Bible in your hand, study its claims with earnest prayer that you may never be self-deceived. We are now living in an age when the question is asked, “When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” Luke 18:8. In this age of degeneracy, where we are surrounded with moral pollution, God’s people are to form characters for heaven. This work is to go on daily.

We are in the investigative judgment; and the work for the time is solemn, heart-searching. The duty devolves upon every one to consider, to watch, and to pray. You are not bidden by the Lord to examine your neighbor’s heart. Let your investigative powers be put to work to discover what evil is lurking in your own heart, what defects are in your character; what work needs to be done in your own home. Parents are responsible for the souls of their children; they are accountable for the mold of character they give them. They will, if they realize their duty, work most earnestly for their

own salvation and for the salvation of their children. When parents are careless in their own ways, and in regard to the character and deportment of their children, they lose the favor of God. But every family that will seek God with humiliation and prayer will be doing the work that is essential for eternal salvation.

Satan is working diligently and most successfully to put his selfish stamp upon the characters of even professed Christians, and many are becoming narrow in their ideas of duty and obligation. They are degenerating, and receiving a stamp of character which is offensive to God. Self-love and unholy passions occupy the citadel of the soul. To those who are professedly keeping

of doctrine blow them hither and thither. Science, falsely so-called, is wearing away the foundation of Christian principle; and those who once were in the faith drift away from the Bible landmarks, and divorce themselves from God, while still claiming to be His children. But are they?—No; no. The relation they sustain to God is truly represented in Matthew 7:22–23: “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

Christ is our Pattern. Separated

Those who once were in the faith drift away from the Bible landmarks, and divorce themselves from God, while still claiming to be His children. But are they? —No; no.

the law of God, but are daily transgressing its holy principles, let me say, Search, O search and see how little reverence you have for eternal things, how little love for devotion.

The proving time has come, and angels are watching the development of character. How many, since they have professed Christ, have changed for the better? My brother, my sister, are you becoming more and more like Jesus, who is pure, holy, undefiled? Can your associates see in you the likeness of Christ? Can they see that you maintain in your dress, in your conversation, your daily life, the simplicity of your Master?

Study God’s Word

Many know so little about their Bibles that they are unsettled in the faith. They remove the old landmarks, and fallacies and winds

from God, leaning to their own understanding, men become fools; and yet in their own estimation, and in the estimation of others, they are often the wisest of men. Their sayings are eagerly caught up, repeated, extolled, and adopted, while the utterances of the living God, who made heaven and earth, are disregarded because not in harmony with their ideas of science.

Could these once see themselves as God views them, how soon their attitude would change, how soon the godless prating would cease, how ashamed they would be of their boasting and their vanity; how their vain imaginations would change. Their corrupt hearts, roving on the enemy’s ground, can find no happiness, no peace.

We are not safe in trusting in ourselves. Unless divested of the robes of our own wisdom and self-



righteousness, and clothed with Christ's robe of spotless purity, we shall be in infinite peril. We shall not appear of half the value in our own estimation when we view Jesus in His matchless charms.

The ambition of every soul should be to make straight his paths, that the feet of others may not be led astray. But the care and anxiety with many is to shape their course to be admired by men. The highest effort of their mental powers is directed to this end. They speak and act that they may float upon the tide of popularity.

should not aim to receive the applause of the world, but to render honor to Him who is worthy of the heart's best and holiest affections. This is a worthy ambition, and it brings the highest reward; for God has promised, "Them that honor me I will honor." 1 Samuel 2:30.

O how much the Spirit of Christ is needed by every one who has any interest or acts any part in the work of God! God would have every one make the most of his own talents and opportunities. Brethren, show your appreciation of the gifts of God by putting them to a wise

so-called, would lead them to reason away the very foundation of true religion. It has so confused their senses that the testimony of the Spirit and Word of God is questioned. Doubts are entertained because they cannot harmonize these with their views of science and natural principles. Thus they enter the wilderness of unbelief, and make shipwreck of their faith. The truth as it is in Jesus, in its simplicity, would have proved an anchor to them; but they have broken away from the stronghold, and drifted about, beaten by the winds and waves of unbelief.

It is the duty and privilege of all to use reason as far as man's finite faculties can go; but there is a boundary where man's resources must cease. There are many things that can never be reasoned out by the strongest intellect, or discerned by the most penetrating mind. Philosophy cannot determine the ways and works of God; the human mind cannot measure infinity. Jehovah is the fountain of all wisdom, of all truth, of all knowledge.

There are high attainments that man can reach in this life through the wisdom that God imparts; but there is an infinity beyond that will be the study and the joy of the saints throughout eternal ages. Man can now only linger upon the borders of that vast expanse, and let imagination take its flight. Finite man cannot fathom the deep things of God; for spiritual things are spiritually discerned. The human mind cannot comprehend the wisdom and power of God. ✠

Review and Herald, December 29, 1896.



Ellen G. White, 1827–1915, received the spiritual gift of prophecy, and the fruits of her life and work accord with the biblical tests of a true messenger of God. To this day, her counsels are an incalculable blessing to God's people around the world.

Photo: © Photos.com

There are many men of noble qualities whom God would use in His cause; but the bewitching power of Satan has been cast over them like a spell.

There is no dependence to be placed upon this class; for they will betray sacred trusts, if by so doing they can serve their own interests. They study their own purposes so intently that they have no time for the study of God's Word. The day of retributive judgment is coming on apace, and it will find them unprepared.

Fear and Honor God

What value can Christians place on the praise and flattery of men who have no reverence for God nor love for His truth? The honor of such persons is of no worth. We

use, with an eye single to His glory. Self must not gain the mastery. Hide yourself in Jesus, and let the precious Redeemer appear as the One altogether lovely, the chiefest among ten thousand. You must become a partaker of the divine nature if you would escape the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Danger of Shipwreck

There are many men of noble qualities whom God would use in His cause; but the bewitching power of Satan has been cast over them like a spell. Science, falsely

What, In The Name Of God, Are We Doing?

Wallace Boddy

Deception is the greatest threat today to our beloved church. Our Saviour warned us repeatedly about strong, overpowering deceptions that would come. The Apostle Paul has forewarned us in unmistakable terms to “put on the whole armor of God.” Ephesians 6:11.

Stripped of all the easy verbiage in its inviting deception, the bottom line of every heretical teaching that Satan is advancing through our ranks—and there are many—is the idea that one can remain in his sins and be saved when Jesus comes. What a monumental and successful fraud Satan has employed when he can use the willing mouthpieces of some of our trusted pastors, teachers and leaders to deceive us! On all sides, a colossal confusion of religious rubbish is attacking the most cherished truths of God’s last-day Remnant church. “Rebellion and apostasy are in the very air we breathe.” *Selected Messages*, book 2, 58.

Seducing Spirits

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving

heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” 1 Timothy 4:1; see also 2 Timothy 3:13.

A conspicuous example of just one “seducing spirit” being blatantly promoted in our very midst by our own leadership is the odd obsession with Romish ecumenism. Our pastors and teachers are being sent to the “power churches” of Babylon to be taught how to worship and how to “grow a church” at the feet of such men as Bill Hybels, the pastor of Willow Creek Community Church in Chicago, and Rick Warren, pastor of the Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California and author of the book, *The Purpose Driven Life*.

We Have the Truth

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has been blessed with the most wonderful, incontrovertible truths that have ever in history been entrusted to man.

“I saw that God has given His servants the truth so clear, so plain, that it cannot be resisted. Wherever they go, they have certain victory. Their enemies cannot get round the convincing truth. Light has been shed so clear that the servants of

God can stand up anywhere and let truth, clear and connected, bear away the victory.” *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 129.

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house [church], neither bid him God speed: for he that bideth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.” 2 John 1:9–11.

Straight From Babylon

Rick Warren’s message is straight from Babylon. Our pastors are given great draughts of the wine of Babylon when we send them with our blessing to the churches and universities of Babylon.

Something is terribly wrong when a perennial Sabbath-breaker who teaches men to willfully disregard this most sacred demand of God’s law is selected by Seventh-day Adventist leadership to be an instructor, counselor and indoctrinator, if you please, to God’s Remnant Church. Shall a man willingly go *into* Babylon to gain

strength and wisdom to call men out of Babylon?

What, in the name of God, are we doing?

Some Seventh-day Adventist church leaders have directed that 40 days be set aside and that *The Purpose Driven Life* be taught to our members in our churches. In some churches members were even provided a free copy of the book. (When was a free copy of a Spirit of Prophecy book ever given to every

will only be finished when you get to heaven or when Jesus returns. At that point, whatever unfinished work on your character is left will be wrapped up." So, there we have it. According to Rick Warren, we need not concern ourselves with reflecting the character of Christ. At His coming, Jesus will miraculously clean us up and make us fit for heaven. And *this* is what some of our leaders want our pastors and members to believe?

Shall a man willingly go into Babylon to gain strength and wisdom to call men out of Babylon?

church member and 40 days set aside to study and absorb it into the spiritual life?)

Can you believe that!

Purpose-Driven Problems

A careful review of the book shows that the author, from the start, sets out to try to define the Christian life, falsely assuming that God approves of everything he plans and does.

I have read *The Purpose Driven Life*, and I can tell you that the tangled babblings of this man fall miserably short of heavenly counsel when compared to the pure words of counsel on living the Christian life given through the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, including the marvelous book, *Steps to Christ*.

His book addresses important subjects with man's ideas, leaving them biblically unresolved. Any emphasis on forsaking and overcoming all known sin is ignored.

On page 177 of the book, on the subject of developing Christ's character, Warren says, "Your spiritual transformation in developing the character of Jesus will take the rest of your life, and even then it won't be completed on earth. It

The Lord's messenger repeatedly tells us that if we will enter heaven, God promises we can and must experience complete victory over sin in this earthly life as we exercise our wills and petition His power: "The character you bear in probationary time will be the character you will have at the coming of Christ. If you would be a saint in heaven, you must first be a saint on earth. . . . The work of transformation must be done now." *The Adventist Home*, 16. See also *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 466; vol. 4, 429; Revelation 22:11.

The thrust of Rick Warren's book is not converts to Jesus Christ. His popularity and fame come, not from apparent spiritual indignation toward sin and its eternal costs. No, that would never, ever be popular. The book is about what attracts large numbers of nominal Christians, *big numbers*, at any cost, whatever it takes. Music, entertainment, coffee and donut rooms, and the "beach hut" for young people are among nine different venues that draw many of the 19,000 members of his church. God and His truth is definitely not what it's about. It's about *you* and *your* "felt needs"; the end justifies the means.

Obsessed with Numbers

When Seventh-day Adventist pastors are sent by the hundreds to learn how to grow the numbers, many return excitedly speaking to their churches about growing a one-thousand-member church. Their conference leaders whose enthusiasm for this emphasis on numbers is a misplaced compulsion have obviously lost sight of the main purpose of our ministry—to work for the genuine conversion and salvation of as many souls as possible. If we pursue our mission, the numbers will take care of themselves. We exult to see our beloved church grow and the message go "like fire in the stubble" as a result of our fidelity to His counsel, but how can God bless our disloyalty?

No doubt, many who are reading this article (and others) have observed pastors and evangelists impetuously baptizing certain people who were not truly ready for membership in the Remnant Church. Numbers! Numbers! Numbers! How shameful that our beloved church is allowed to be so abused and abominated for men's selfish purposes. Heaven must be in mourning at our duplicity.

It is the initiates into the church, the numbers in millions, about which we repeatedly congratulate ourselves. Rarely do we mention, though, the great numbers who are exiting out the back door.

Compromised and Diluted

When unconverted persons who bring in the wine of Babylon are accepted into our midst, one disturbing result is that the message of God's prophetic gift is compromised, diluted, and even openly denied. Many of our pastors whose advanced degrees were obtained in the liberal seminaries of Babylon find willing acceptance of the "New Theology," which is the same rubbish you can hear at Rick Warren's church.

Rick Warren's message to other pastors is to minister to the "felt



needs" of *the people*. He teaches our pastors to preach messages based not on what *God* wants His people to hear, but on what *they want to hear*. "Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits." Isaiah 30:10. Such are very comfortable, thank you, to resist any reproof. They want a form of godliness without the power thereof. See 2 Timothy 3:5.

As a result of accepting such poor counsel and ignoring the wealth of God-given truth we have, our basic message and our established truths are rarely taught from our pulpits. Concerned Adventists will often ask, "When did you last hear the third angel's message preached from the pulpit?"

Speaking of Power Churches, Robert Klench of the 21st Century Church puts it this way: "It is imperative that unbelievers are brought into the church. Otherwise, the process of continual change cannot begin. There must be an *antithesis* [unbelievers] present to oppose the *thesis* [believers], in order to move towards *consensus* [compromise], and move the believers away from their *moral absolutism* [resistance to false worship]. *If all members of the church stand firm on the word of God, and its final authority in all doctrine and tradition, then the church cannot and will not change.*" Such a candid statement clearly shows where this lethal doctrine, which is inevitable for the churches

of Babylon, would lead God's last-day Remnant Church—into the arms of Rome.

Rick Warren . . . teaches our pastors to preach messages based not on what God wants His people to hear, but on what they want to hear.

Rick Warren likes to describe his church as "The flock that likes to rock." He likes to exult, "our music is loud, very loud." He says that every type of music is good just as long as it contains Christian words.

The goal in this convoluted church is said to be "unity"; the idea that we are here to worship God *our way*, and our way only. Forget those old worn-out ideas of obedience and character perfection. Just come and join the wild celebration. It is made clear to every member that if you will not conform and unite fully with us, then you will be asked to just leave the system.

"Be Ye Not Unwise"

God forbid that His Remnant Church should now be joining up in any way with this daughter of Babylon, adopting and praising her methods when we should be teaching them God's message for these last days. Paul exhorted us

to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. . . . Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." Ephesians 5:11, 17.

"Now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." Romans 13:11–12.

We must now realize that the men who have set themselves up as watchmen and who are promoting counterfeit church-growth methods

in those awesome times are blind, ignorant, sleeping dumb dogs that will not bark, shepherds that cannot understand, pastors and leaders who are afraid or unwilling to stand up for the truth of God. See Isaiah 56:10–11.

Let us now fearlessly hoist our banners high and become the pure people of God described in exhilarating terms in Solomon's Song 6:10: "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?"

It is God's pure church, without spot or blemish.

Dear friends, Jesus pleads, "Let us be about our Father's business." ❧



Wallace Boddy writes from Alabama and is a life-long Seventh-day Adventist, retired businessman, and ardent defender of the truth.



How to Bring Our Church Back, Part 2

Vance Ferrell

What must we do to experience that unity in spirit and in truth that Christ longs to see in His church? Whether or not you consider yourself a church leader, you can be an influence to help bring the church back to its historic beliefs, standards, and practices.

Last month we began considering our need to take the steps of personal repentance and prayer before we can lead others to repentance. —Editors.

Our church is in a crisis, and God is calling you just now to clearly stand for the right in the midst of that crisis! You must teach and urge right principles; you must warn of impending dangers; you must seek to lead the people back to God in repentance and forsaking worldliness and sin.

The Example of Isaiah

In Isaiah 6, when God called Isaiah to a similar work, he felt overwhelmed with a sense of his personal inadequacy. But God strengthened him, step by step, as he moved forward. Did Isaiah fully succeed? Although many refused to abandon their cherished sins, Isaiah obeyed the call of Heaven, and that was what counted! Right where

you are, in your sphere of influence, God is today calling you to help bring the church back to its historic beliefs, standards, and practices. Even if you do not succeed by your efforts to bring those around you back to God, you are doing what He wants you to do.

As you yield yourself in deepest humility of soul, dedicating yourself anew to Him and putting away your own sins, God will renew your heart and strengthen you with a resolve to move forward in the doing of His will!

Individually, and with your spouse, open the inspired books—the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. Share the messages with your children. The messages are plain and abundant. They are so encouraging. Read them morning and evening, and you will understand! Only as you read God's Word can you be aware of the extent of the crisis within our church, and its cause. Only then can you understand what you must do to meet it.

As you continue praying, you will recognize your duty at this time in history, and you will be strengthened to fulfill the will of God for your life.

My friend, is this not what you want with all your heart? You want to please God, you want to live with Him forever!

The almost overmastering temptation to remain silent amid the increasing deluge of worldliness entering the church must be resisted. You must make your decision to be a man or woman of God who will stand as a rock for the right. The situation in our church today demands it. God requires it.

When called, how eagerly Isaiah responded, "Here am I; send me!" Isaiah 6:8. Oh, how God values men and women who are willing to obey Him fully! who are willing to do what He tells them to do!

I want to be like Isaiah! I believe you want to be like him too!

And what was the work given to Isaiah?

First, he was to speak against what was being done wrong: "The prophet's duty was plain; he was to lift his voice in protest against the prevailing evils." *Prophets and Kings*, 308.

Second, he was to teach the people how to live right: "Throughout his lifetime he must be a patient, courageous teacher." *Ibid.*, 309.

And what would be the result of his work?

“The divine purpose finally accomplished, the full fruitage of his efforts, and of the labors of all God’s faithful messengers, would appear. A remnant should be saved. That this might be brought about, the messages of warning and entreaty were to be delivered to the rebellious nation.” Ibid.

So it will be today. Working together, leaders and members may bring our denomination back to obedience to God’s requirements through the enabling grace of Christ. God’s Word explains the steps which must be taken in order to do it.

But even if we do not appear to succeed to the degree that we would prefer, you and I will have done our duty in this matter, just as Isaiah did! In the process of trying to stem the tide of evil, we will have helped many people and saved our own souls!

Calling the Church to Repentance

Earnest prayer to God for ourselves leads to earnest prayer for others and a deep concern to help them also to return to obedience to God’s Word. That was the **next step**, followed by the leaders in the ancient church, in bringing the people back to obedience to God and His Word.

The call to repentance must be sounded! But it must be based on a continual study of God’s Inspired Writings. They alone can guide you in giving the right call, in the right way.

“As Elijah saw Israel going deeper and deeper into idolatry, his soul was distressed and his indignation aroused. . . . Unbelief was fast separating the chosen nation from the Source of their strength. Viewing this apostasy from his mountain retreat, Elijah was overwhelmed with sorrow.” Ibid., 119–120.

“The word of faith and power was upon his lips, and his whole

life was devoted to the work of reform. His was the voice of one crying in the wilderness to rebuke sin and press back the tide of evil.” Ibid., 119.

Elijah’s work began with earnest prayer for God’s church in his time. But some today may object that only a prophet is to reprove sin! Others declare that no one today should reprove any sin! But that is not the teaching of God’s Word.

“If wrongs are apparent among His people, and if the servants of God pass on indifferent to them, they virtually sustain and justify the sinner, and are alike guilty

be on the side of faithful and plain dealing with sins which easily beset the people of God. Especially in the closing work for the church, in the sealing time of the one hundred and forty-four thousand who are to stand without fault before the throne of God, will they feel most deeply the wrongs of God’s professed people.” Ibid., 266.

God is warning us that we must rouse ourselves and take action at this time in history. We have earnest work to do.

“Those who walk in the light will see signs of the approaching peril; but they are not to sit in quiet,

Working together, leaders and members may bring our denomination back to obedience to God’s requirements through the enabling grace of Christ.

and will just as surely receive the displeasure of God; for they will be made responsible for the sins of the guilty.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 265–266.

Oh, my friend, what a solemn responsibility! Continuing with the quote:

“In vision I have been pointed to many instances where the displeasure of God has been incurred by a neglect on the part of His servants to deal with the wrongs and sins existing among them. Those who have excused these wrongs have been thought by the people to be very amiable and lovely in disposition, simply because they shunned to discharge a plain Scriptural duty. The task was not agreeable to their feelings; therefore they avoided it. . . .

“The true people of God, who have the spirit of the work of the Lord and the salvation of souls at heart, will ever view sin in its real, sinful character. They will always

unconcerned expectancy of the ruin. . . . They should realize that it is their duty to labor diligently to save others, looking with strong faith to God for help. ‘The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.’ James 5:16. . . .

“The little company who are standing in the light will be sighing and crying for the abominations that are done in the land. But more especially will their prayers arise in behalf of the church because its members are doing after the manner of the world.

“The earnest prayers of this faithful few will not be in vain. When the Lord comes forth as an avenger, He will also come as a protector of all those who have preserved the faith in its purity and kept themselves unspotted from the world. It is at this time that God has promised to avenge His own elect which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them.” Ibid., vol. 5, 209–210.



Here are three more short quotations about God's people in this hour of earth's history:

"The people of God are sighing and crying for the abominations done in the land. With tears they warn the wicked of their danger in trampling upon the divine law." *Ibid.*, 474.

"The class who do not feel grieved over their own spiritual declension, nor mourn over the sins of others, will be left without the seal of God." *Ibid.*, 211.

"The day of God's vengeance is just upon us. The seal of God will be placed upon the foreheads of those only who sigh and cry for the abominations done in the land. Those who link in sympathy with the world are eating and drinking with the drunken and will surely be destroyed with the workers of iniquity. 'The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.' 1 Peter 3:12." *Ibid.*, 212.

Those are very solemn passages. And they are written for us today, as the final crisis draws near.

In the day of judgment, when the record books of heaven are opened, none of us want the following comment to be written after our names: "His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and

they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter." Isaiah 56:10–11.

I am ashamed to tell you . . . that sometimes there are bad people in the church. The men in the above passage are called "watchmen" and "shepherds"; so they must be church leaders. We have here a picture of influential people, on one level or another, who—while refusing to speak up when wrongdoing is being done—instead focus their attention on only two things: how they can avoid doing what their position requires them to do, and what they can get for themselves. That is what the Bible verse says! It also says that they chose not to understand the real needs of the church. Read the words in Isaiah 56:10–11 again. We dare not let that be our experience today!

So this call for repentance—a call for the people to return to God—is, after personal prayer and the study of God's Word, the next step that God would have you, as a leader, take in seeking to bring the church back to Him!

You will not come to ruin if you do this! We are always blessed when we obey God and fulfill His will for our lives. In this work, God will help you. He will strengthen you.

The Message of Isaiah 58

"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew My

people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1.

We are told that the entire chapter of Isaiah 58 contains a special message for our church today. In greater detail, it helps explain the Laodicean message of Revelation 3:14–21:

"My brethren, you need to study more carefully the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah. This chapter marks out the only course that we can follow with safety. . . .

"Set their danger before them. Tell them of the sins they are committing, while at the same time they pride themselves on their righteousness." *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, 1149.

My brethren, this duty is difficult, but it is God's message to you right now. The needed changes can only be done successfully amid much personal prayer. Regardless of what may be the level of leadership you hold in the church, in humility of heart, you *must* take hold of the work God requires of you—and you must do it resolutely. ✨

Vance Ferrell writes from Tennessee, where he operates his ministry Pilgrim's Rest.

Next month we will consider the vital steps of putting away sin, restoring God's Word to its rightful place of authority, and instructing others in the truth.



This article was taken from *Bringing It Back*, 12–21. You may order this book from Hope International for \$1.95 each. Quantities of 10 or more: 99¢

each; cases of 24: 80¢ per book. Please see page 29 for shipping and sales tax information.

Neglected Duties



Ellen G. White

God's people are called to aggressive warfare, not against one another, but against the armies of the enemy. Never are they to relax their vigilance. Never are those who claim to be Christ's disciples to feel at ease in their church capacity, content to do nothing to rescue fallen human beings, and win them back to their loyalty. Heavenly angels are constantly ascending and descending between heaven and earth, engaged in unselfish service for humanity. Where are the men and women who will unite with these heavenly messengers?

Think of what God has done for you! When you were perishing out of Christ, did not the warning

message come to you, convincing you of sin, and arousing you to repentance? Did not Christ reveal Himself to you as a sin-pardoning Saviour? And in the light and warmth of your first love, were you not filled with a longing to impart to others the grace that gave you newness of life?

Do not allow your zeal for soul saving to decrease. You have become Christ's helping hand, and you are to work earnestly for those whom before your conversion you looked upon with indifference. Remember that they are in as favorable a condition as you were to be brought to repentance, and that their salvation may be of higher value to the church than was yours.

Grudge not earnest, tender words and kindly deeds.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:16. Open the windows of the soul heavenward, that the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness may shine into your hearts. Fresh grace to impart will be given to those who keep their souls in the love of God. Duty and sacrifice are precious to them, because of their love for Christ's purchased possession.

Those who are truly converted are eager to communicate the knowledge of God. They feel the strength of the cords that bind men and women to Christ in loving,

faithful service. Once they had no interest in sinners; now they are united with Christ, and they are bound up in love with His heritage. The heart once frozen by selfishness is melted by the influence of the Spirit. They rejoice that sinners are accepted in the Beloved.

Let the soldiers in Christ's army remember that while they are under His banner, they can never be con-

feeling content to do nothing, making no use of the Word you hear, and often criticizing the ministers. Go to work, helping on the right hand and on the left. Visit your neighbors in a friendly way, and become acquainted with them. Use every favorable opportunity, in cooperation with the heavenly agencies, to draw them under Christ's banner.

We are living in the time of the end, a time crowded with events in process of fulfillment, all working to bring about that great day when Christ shall be revealed in the clouds of heaven.

quered; for angels from heaven are fighting beside them. And let them remember also that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Ephesians 6:12.

What are our orders?—
"Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." Verses 13–18.

The Lord Has Work for You

This is the work to which you are called. It is not for you to sit and listen to discourse after discourse,

Those who do not take up this work, those who act with the indifference that some have manifested, will soon lose their first love, and will begin to censure, criticize, and condemn their own brethren.

The Lord has a work for every one to do. As God's people act their part with faithfulness, the light will shine forth, extending farther and farther, from neighborhood to neighborhood. In places nigh and afar off there will be revivals and conversions. The light and power of the message will be seen and felt.

Let there be no indifference; for we are living amid the perils of the last days. Each one must act his part in extending and enlarging the kingdom of God. Every effort made by the human agent to cooperate with the Holy Spirit prepares him to accomplish the work God has been fitting him through His grace to do.

God desires His people to use all their talents in His service. He wants them to labor for those outside the fold. He wants them to improve their capabilities, that they may become wise unto salvation, and by contemplating their duty to



Him and to their fellow men, learn to help others.

Workers are to be trained who will train and educate others. Thus the good work will go forward, and whole communities will be blessed. Men and women will be brought into the fold at the eleventh hour, and if they are earnest and faithful, the Lord will accept them and work through them. As they put on Christ, their minds are filled with the treasures of heavenly truth, which they give to others, to be given by them to still others.

We are living in the time of the end, a time crowded with events in process of fulfillment, all working to bring about that great day when Christ shall be revealed in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. The last years of probation are fast closing. The signs of the times—the wars and rumors of wars, the strikes, murders, robberies, and accidents—tell us that the end of all things is at hand.

Who can doubt the truth of the prophet's words. "The wicked



shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand”? Daniel 12:10. Many of the inhabitants of the world have given themselves into Satan’s control. They cooperate with him, helping him to carry out his plans against the government of God. Under his guidance, men have lost their horror of bloodshed and murder.

Satan himself stands at the head of his army, striving with all his power to perfect the force over which he rules, that he may wreak his vengeance on God’s people. Knowing that his time is short, he has come down with great power, to work against all that is good. In the Scriptures, he is represented as walking up and down as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. He fills the minds of his instrumentalities with hatred against God and with an intense desire for revenge.

The Last Conflict

Determined to efface the image of God in man, Satan works with an intensity of effort to hide God from

view. Not openly does he work, but secretly, mingling error with truth, so seeking to bring confusion and distress. But in proportionate power God works to counteract Satan’s plans and to bring to light his hidden purposes. When the enemy has seemed to be gaining a signal victory over righteousness, God has been working with mighty power in behalf of His people.

earth are in bitter revolt against the God of heaven. They are filled with hatred against those who serve Him, and soon, very soon, will be fought the last great battle between good and evil. The earth is to be the battlefield—the scene of the final contest and the final victory. Here, where for so long Satan has led men against God, rebellion is to be forever suppressed.

God’s people are to bear a bold, decided testimony for the truth, unfolding the purposes of God by the witness of pen and voice.

The stress of great temptation is already upon us. We are now to unite with one another in doing the work that Christ did when He was upon this earth. We are to be one in Christ. Thus we are to show our faithfulness to God, to our Redeemer, and to all who are born into His kingdom. Among the people of God there is to be no dissension, no controversy, no warfare against one another.

Satan’s strong efforts against good, that terrible hatred of his agencies against God’s agencies, emphasize the need of union and harmony among the forces of righteousness. We have no time to wrestle and contend among ourselves, no time to work on suppositions, or cherish prejudices. It is too late for this, brethren; for Christ is at the door.

A terrible conflict is before us. We are nearing “the battle of the great day of God Almighty.” Revelation 16:14. That which has been held in control is to be let loose. The angel of mercy is folding her wings, preparing to step down from the throne, and leave the world to the control of Satan. The principalities and powers of

God’s people are to bear a bold, decided testimony for the truth, unfolding the purposes of God by the witness of pen and voice. In place after place, they are to proclaim the message of God’s Word. By converted, sanctified, holy men and women the message of warning is to be proclaimed, that the prayer may be answered, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” Matthew 6:10.

All heaven is in activity, and the angels of God are waiting to cooperate with those who will devise plans by which the souls for whom Christ died may hear the glad tidings of salvation. Angels who minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, are saying to every true saint, “There is work for you to do. Go, stand and speak to the people all the words of this life.” See Acts 5:20. ✽

Review and Herald, May 13, 1902.



Ellen G. White, 1827–1915, received the spiritual gift of prophecy, and the fruits of her life and work accord with the biblical tests of a true messenger of God. To this day, her counsels are an incalculable blessing to God’s people around the world.



The Little Paper, Part 1

Virgil Robinson

A solitary figure trudges along the dusty road connecting Rocky Hill with Middletown. The man is James White, “that dauntless man of God,” on his way to the printer. In his pocket is something very precious—material for the first issue of the paper, *Present Truth*.¹

James was to make that trip on foot many times. After the material for each paper was typeset at Charles Pelton’s print shop he would go from Rocky Hill to Middletown to indicate any changes necessary before it was printed.

In late July James drove up to the Belden home in Belden’s horse and buggy, which he had borrowed for the occasion, with one thousand copies of the eight-page *Present Truth*.

The first edition of that little paper was off the press!

The papers were laid out on the floor and the little group in the house, with many prayers and tears, called down Heaven’s blessing on the leaflets and prayed that the Holy Spirit would speak through those papers to the readers, guiding them into the truth. James and Ellen, Clarissa Bonfoey, and perhaps some of the Beldens, folded and addressed the papers. It was a time-consuming task to address the papers by hand, but for the workers it was a joyful task.

The following morning James placed the papers ready for mailing in his old carpetbag and took them to the Middletown post office.²

A few days later, on July 28, a second son was born to James

and Ellen White. They named him James Edson—James, after his father, and Edson, perhaps after Hiram Edson, the pioneer farmer-preacher of western New York.

James received a hearty response from the readers of the papers. They wanted to see *Present Truth* continued. The flock was hungry, and this was spiritual food for their souls. The first number was quickly followed by three others. Readers generously sent in money so that the work might go on. James was thus able to pay Mr. Pelton the cost of printing the first four numbers, reported to be \$64.50. Realizing that he and Ellen might soon be called on to travel again, he wrote constantly, often far into the night. His articles dealt with such subjects as the advent of Christ, the

judgment, the three angels' messages, and similar topics. . . .

Shortly after James and Ellen arrived at Topsham, Ellen told James they were needed in Paris, Maine. The Lord had shown her that serious trouble was there. So, with Stockbridge Howland they journeyed the 60 miles to Paris.

Paris was the home of the Stevens, the Stowell, and the Edward Andrews families—all stalwart and strong in the faith. It was also plagued by some of the wildest fanatics in New England, and Elder and Mrs. White were directed to go to Paris to check this spirit. One fanatic was F. T. Howland (no relation of Stockbridge), who tried to break up a meeting the Whites held with the Paris group.

As Stockbridge Howland rose from prayer the Spirit of God rested upon him. Pointing his finger at F.T. Howland, he said in a voice of authority, "You have torn the hearts of God's children and made them bleed. Leave this house, or God will smite you." The fanatic leaped to his feet, grabbed his hat, and fled.

A spirit of reformation and revival swept over the company. Heartfelt confessions were made, and long-standing differences vanished. . . .

The believers, who had ceased holding meetings of any kind for more than a year, now began anew to meet regularly. . . .

There is no clear record of the travels of James and Ellen White during the fall of 1849. But it is known that they traveled widely, visiting the scattered believers in New England and New York.

As Ellen White had predicted, money began to come in to meet the expense of printing the paper. And although there were discouraging moments connected with it, and the going was slow at first, it was a success from the beginning. Letters began to come from new families who were accepting the message the paper presented. Many were earnest Christian people of good

judgment, whose lives served as a testimony to their faith. Lights began springing up all over New England. How long would it be before that light would circle the earth as Ellen White had predicted? . . .

November found them in Volney, New York, where they attended a conference. After visiting other places they decided that for the present their work was in New York State, so resolved to make their home in Oswego, which was a rapidly growing center of Adventist influence. They rented a house, borrowed furniture from some believers, and James began to write and publish. . . .

One thing James was firmly decided upon. No longer would he and his wife be the only major contributors to the paper. He had written to Joseph Bates and other workers, inviting them to furnish him with articles for the paper. In the fifth number James also invited subscribers to write in concerning their experiences or thoughts on some Bible topic. Each paper also contained an invitation to readers to send a contribution to help meet the expenses of getting out *Present Truth*.

On both points James met with disappointment. The quick response with funds that came after his appeal in Number 1 was not repeated. For two months there had been no paper, and interest had fallen off. Nor was he very successful in securing articles for it.

James received his most crushing disappointment in a letter written by Joseph Bates. Bates wrote that he felt a paper should not be published.³ Bates no doubt believed it was better to prepare a tract or pamphlet dealing with some vital truth, print 2,000 or 3,000 copies, carry them into the field, and scatter them everywhere.

Bates's attitude was too much for Elder White. The oldest and most influential Sabbathkeeping minister felt he was on the wrong track! In a letter James wrote shortly afterward

he announced he was giving up the paper "forever."⁴

His "forever" lasted a very short time. Ellen was given a vision and shown many things in regard to the paper.

"I saw that God did not want James to stop yet, but he must *write, write, write, write*, and speed the message and let it go."

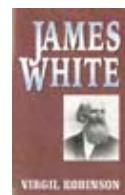
With fresh courage, James White picked up his heavy burden.⁵ For the remainder of that winter of 1849–1850, and into the spring of 1850, *Present Truth* came regularly from the Oswego press until Number 10 had appeared. Individuals began writing for the paper, and as new converts were made they sent James money to meet printing costs. He was solidly committed to the publishing work. From then on, for the most part, the name of James White would fly from the masthead of denominational periodicals, but this never prevented his traveling freely from place to place, visiting churches and, later, attending camp meetings. He loved public work, and no one could ever accuse him of burying himself in an editorial office. ✠

To be continued.

Virgil Robinson was the great-grandson of James and Ellen White on his mother's side and the great-grandson of William Farnsworth (one of the first Seventh-day Adventists) on his father's side.

References:

- ¹ *Footprints of the Pioneers*, 107.
- ² *Ibid.*, 107, 108.
- ³ *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists*, vol. 1, 200.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, 201.
- ⁵ *Life Sketches* (1888), 265.



This article was taken from Virgil Robinson, *James White*, 59–63. This book is available from Hope International for \$11.99 plus shipping and sales tax (see page 30).



Oh, let us today be so close to Jesus that He will give us “words in due season.”



Photo ©PhotoDisc

The Cost of Fear

News Item: “Cox is one of approximately 14.8 million American adults who suffer from irrational fears of a particular situation, object, or experience. Today, anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness in the United States, afflicting 13.3 percent of adults. . . .

“New treatments are important because the cost of fear to society, in terms of medical costs and lost productivity is staggering. A 1999 study documented that the annual cost of anxiety disorders in the United States (in 1990, the most recent numbers available) was about \$42.3 billion, or \$1,542 per American.” *U.S. News & World Report*, December 6, 2004, 68.

End-time Perspective: This is but the beginning of sorrows, and we have the answer to their fears!

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.” Isaiah 26:3. “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.” 1 John 4:18. “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.” John 14:1.



Photo ©Photos.com

\$154 Billion

News Item: “\$154 Billion: Amount Americans spent on prescription drugs in 2004.” *World* January 1/8, 2005, 55.

End-time Perspective: “When drugs are introduced into the system, for a time they may seem to have a beneficial effect. A change may take place, but the disease is not cured. It will manifest itself in some other form. . . . Oh, how much that poisonous drug cost! If it did not cost the life, it cost quite too much.” *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4a, 135.

“God has formed laws which govern our constitutions, and these laws which He has placed in our being, are divine, and for every transgression there is affixed a penalty, which must sooner or later be realized. The majority of diseases which the human family have been, and still are suffering under, they have created by ignorance of their own organic laws. They seem indifferent in regard to the matter of health, and work perseveringly to tear themselves to pieces, and when broken down, and debilitated in body and mind send for the doctor and drug themselves to death.” *The Health Reformer*, October 1, 1866.

Some will listen when we present how to take care of the body naturally. We must be educated to be able to give them the natural treatments. Take advantage of our school which will start soon!



Photo ©Corel

Troubling Trend

News Item: “A new study of church growth among the 42,000-plus churches in the Southern Baptist Convention, the nation’s largest Protestant denomination, found 70 percent of them have ‘plateaued’ or are declining. It is a 20-year trend that has disturbed many SBC leaders. The study, based on statistics for 1998 to 2003, classified 30.3 percent of churches as growing, 45.8 percent as plateaued, and 23.9 percent as declining—an increase of 6 percent from an SBC study for 1978 to 1983.

“But ‘growing’ can be misleading, says study leader Bill Day of New Orleans Baptist Seminary. He said 1,409 churches in the growing category reported no baptisms in 2003, and some others have a member-to-baptism ratio of as much as 1,100 to 1.” *World*, December 4, 2004, 41.

End-time Perspective: Even Spiritual Babylon is reporting that

they are not keeping members, in spite of all their use of movies, dramas, skits, puppet ministries, etc. Why? What is the problem?

“The *truth* draws men together.”
The Upward Look, 104.

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”
 John 12:32.

The problem is that the truth as it is in Jesus is not being presented. If it were, the church would grow instead of decline. We had better be careful in our own churches that we don't fall into the same trap! Games, entertainment, social events—none of these are part of Christ's methods. The *truth* draws. *Jesus lifted up* draws.



Photo ©PhotoDisc

Does Your Doctor Care?

News Item: “Cardiologists now routinely put people on a low-salt diet to control high blood pressure, knowing it doesn't work for as much as half the population. Even if it doesn't work, it can't hurt, and the doctor, after all, isn't the one giving up hotdogs.” *Newsweek*, January 17, 2005, 47.

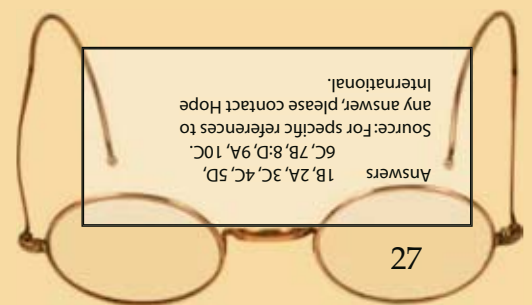
End-time Perspective: It doesn't work for as much as half the population? When this news gets to more and more people, maybe then people will start looking for “alternative” ways to help themselves. ✠

Contributor Joe Olson

Historical Footnotes

“We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.” — E. G. White, *Life Sketches*, 196. Many today have neglected to study the history and people that made up the early days of the Advent movement. To help encourage interest in Adventist history, we have put together questions about people and events of our past. Our goal is to spark faith, and *further study* into “the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.”

- How many students did the first Madison nursing class have?
 - 15
 - 5
 - 10
 - 25
- Who taught the first nursing class at Madison?
 - Mother Druillard
 - Edith Wade
 - A.T. Jones
 - Dr. Newton
- What was the original name of Southern Adventist University?
 - Southern Missionary College
 - Lodi Academy
 - Graysville Academy
 - Oakwood Academy
- When did the first church school start?
 - 1863
 - 1868
 - 1853
 - 1844
- In what state did the first church school start?
 - Maine
 - New Jersey
 - Ohio
 - New York
- Who was the first teacher at the first church school?
 - Rachael Oaks
 - Mrs. George Amadon
 - Martha Byington
 - Goodloe Bell
- Who was the prominent physician from Hinsdale Sanitarium that originated the idea of Madison College?
 - Dr. A. T. Jones
 - Dr. David Paulson
 - Dr. E. A. Sutherland
 - Dr. Henry Brown
- What SDA School is listed in *Ripley's Believe It or Not*, February 16, 1939?
 - Southern Missionary College
 - Walla Walla College
 - Loma Linda
 - Madison College
- Who was the first President of Loma Linda?
 - Warren E. Howell
 - George Knapp Abbott
 - W. A. Ruble
 - John Allen Burden
- Who compiled the first Seventh-day Adventist song book used in Sabbath Schools across America?
 - Henry C. Wright
 - James White
 - James Edson White
 - John Harvey Kellogg



Answers 1B, 2A, 3C, 4C, 5D, 6C, 7B, 8-D, 9A, 10C.
 Source: For specific references to any answer, please contact Hope International.

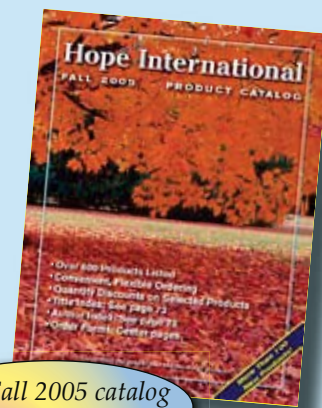
New Publications

available from the Hope International Bookstore

The following items represent a much larger selection available from Hope International. If you would like a **free catalog**, please give us a call or drop us a line, and we will be happy to send you one. *You will be pleased to see that prices have been slashed on most items!* You may also browse online at www.hopeint.org.

Order line: 1-800-468-7884

Please see page 29 for shipping and sales tax information.



The Fall 2005 catalog is on its way to you!

General

Ferrell, Vance

Biblical Defense, A

Critics have attacked the foundations of our sanctuary beliefs in Daniel and Hebrews. This book presents 40 studies from the book of Daniel and 70 studies from the book of Hebrews that reveal how solidly the bedrock of our historic faith has been laid.

Paperback, 368 pages, 2003, **Ask about great quantity prices!*
BEFV-BDEF \$3.99

Defending the Spirit of Prophecy

Was Ellen G. White guilty of plagiarism? Have her books been tampered with? What is the purpose of the Spirit of Prophecy? How were we given our doctrinal positions? Includes answers to these questions and more.

Paperback, 270 pages, 2004, **Ask about great quantity prices!*
BEFV-DSPR \$3.99

Ferrell, Vance / Archbold, Edgar E., M.D. / Cherne, Harold M., M.D.

Natural Remedies Encyclopedia, The

As disease increases and conventional treatments fail, this book is a welcome assistance to the world's need of caring for and treating the body according to God's plan. Take advantage of the tremendous amount of work that has been done to make this beautiful volume that deals with everything from coughs to cancer!

Hardcover, 840 pages, 2004
BEFV-NREN \$64.99

Standish, Colin D. / Standish, Russell R.

Adventism Vindicated

At a time when God is looking for a pure people with a pure gospel, this book is designed to protect us from the ditches of legalism on the one hand and

the "new theology" (or antinomianism) on the other hand.

Paperback, 141 pages, 1998
BESC-AVIN \$8.99

Two Beasts, Three Deadly Wounds, and Fourteen Popes

This book focuses on the two curious beasts of Revelation 13—one of which received a deadly wound in one of its heads which is now so well healed that there remains virtually no trace of the scar.

Paperback, 331 pages, 2001
BESC-TBTD \$14.99

White, Arthur

Ellen G. White (6-Volume Biography)

This six-volume biography of God's special messenger is also a history of the first 70 years of the SDA Church. The author, a grandson of Ellen White, uses family and personal anecdotes to add depth and authenticity.

Hardcover, 6 Volumes, 1982
BEWA-EGWB \$64.99

Spirit of Prophecy

White, Ellen G.

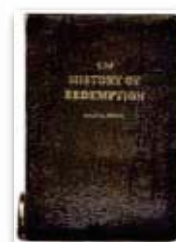
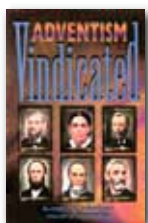
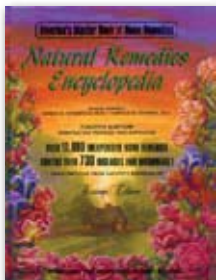
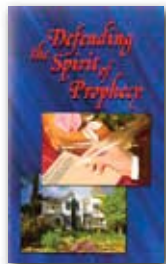
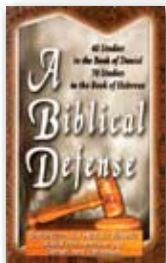
History of Redemption, The

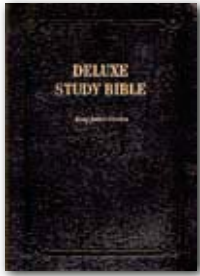
You can get eight books (PP, PK, DA, MB, COL, AA, GC, and SC) that give inspired illumination on the stories of the Bible—in one durable leather binding. A convenient companion for your Bible!

Genuine Leather, 1423 pages, 2004, MIDSIZE, 6 in.(w) x 8.8 in.(h), ZIPPER
BEWE-HRMZ \$42.99

Genuine Leather, 1423 pages, 2004, SMALL, 5.3 in.(w) x 7.8 in.(h), NO Zipper
BEWE-HRSN \$33.99

Genuine Leather, 1423 pages, 2004, SMALL, 5.5 in.(w) x 8.2 in.(h), ZIPPER
BEWE-HRSZ \$35.99





Bible Study

God's Word

Deluxe Study Bible, The

The *Deluxe Study Bible* is a perfect companion for the serious Bible student. Contains commentary from the Spirit of Prophecy, inline Scripture cross-references, S.O.P. scriptural index, and concordance.

Leather-bound, Black, KJV, 1620 pages, 2000

BEGW-SBSD \$39.99

Outreach

Ferrell, Vance

National Sunday Law Crisis

There is a crisis coming on this earth. Thinking men everywhere recognize it, but few understand its exact nature. Laws are being made that will bring that crisis, and life in our land will never be the same again when it arrives.

Paperback, 112 pages, 2000, *Ask about great quantity prices!

BEFV-NSLC \$2.99

Video

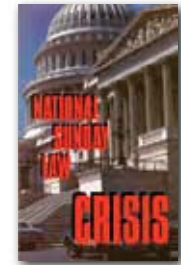
Veith, Walter J.

Genesis Conflict, The

Walter Veith was once an evolutionist himself, and he answers many of the common arguments we hear today. In these six powerful presentations you will see how the rocks and fossils reveal evidence of the Genesis flood.

6 DVD discs, more than 6 hours

DEVW-GCON \$64.99



Truth Matters

This power-packed presentation of Bible truths unmask the deceptions of Earth's last days. It is an excellent tool to use to share with others the Seventh-day Adventist message for the world.

21 DVDs, more than 30 hours

DEVW-TMAT \$189.99

Life At Its Best

A complete presentation on the nutritional principles, and benefits involved in a vegan diet. Also discusses the harmful impact of drugs, tea, and coffee, food additives, meat, and dairy products.

5 DVD discs, more than 7 hours

DEVW-LAIB \$54.99

Genesis Conflict, The / Truth Matters / Life At Its Best (Complete Set)

Save almost \$60 by purchasing this set of all of the above 32 presentations by Walter Veith.

32 DVDs, more than 43 hours!

DEVW-GCTM \$249.99

Audio Books

White, Ellen G.

Prophets and Kings

The next in the Conflict of the Ages series following *Patriarchs and Prophets*, this book covers the history of God's people from the reign of King Solomon to just prior to the First Advent of Jesus.

17 Audio CDs

CEWE-PKIN \$74.99

MP3 CD

MEWE-PKIN \$39.99



Subscription, Shipping, and Sales Tax Information

Subscription Information

United States: US \$18.75 per year
Canada and Mexico: US \$23.75 per year
Foreign (Surface Mail): US \$23.75 per year, (shipped quarterly)
Foreign (Air Mail): US \$60.00 per year
Large Print Edition: US \$29.95 per year
Audio Edition: US \$36.00 per year
Foreign Audio and Large Print Editions: Please inquire regarding postage.

Subscription Assistance

We strive to keep our subscription prices as low as possible. We want this material to be available to all. If your finances cannot meet the requested amount, please send whatever you can. Those desiring to assist in providing subscriptions for individuals with limited funds should send a gift marked "Subscription Assistance" to Hope International. Your donations are tax deductible.

Shipping, Sales Tax, Currency

For all products advertised in this publication (unless otherwise noted):

- **USA destinations:** Please add 15% shipping plus US \$3.00 handling.
- **To Canada:** Please add 20% shipping plus US \$4.00 handling.
- **To other destinations:** Please add 30% shipping plus US \$5.00 handling.
- If actual shipping charges are greater, you will be billed the difference.

Sales tax: Illinois residents, please add 6.5%. Washington state residents, please add 7.8%.
All money received must be in US funds, drawn on US banks.



...continued from page 11

So, Jesus is being consistent with what He teaches.

But wait! Maybe only Jesus can withhold the nourishment; only Jesus can “curse” the tree?

Matthew 21:20–21 tells us what happened after Jesus cursed the tree:

“And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away! Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, *ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree*, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.”

Jesus specifically says that we will *indeed* do this—the cursing of the fig tree—and more!

We are also instructed in the Scriptures to “not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.” 1 Timothy 5:18.

If the ox is treading out the corn, feed it. If someone is laboring, pay him. But what if the ox is *not* treading out the corn? What if he does nothing but *take* the nourishment you provide, but you receive *nothing*, or very little, in return? The same with the laborer, how long will you provide for the

laborer who is not returning to you what is due?

As we noted earlier, Jesus represented the *people* looking for nourishment, needing spiritual food. If the *people* are not being fed, are *they* to continue to “feed the tree?” If they are receiving little, should they in turn provide little back, or keep feeding the “ox” full rations?

Or, should we ask the ox—or the unworthy laborer—what he thinks? Do *we* have any responsibility here?

Here is a quote from the *The Kress Collection*, 120: “The churches must arouse. The members must awake out of sleep and begin to inquire, *how* is the money which we put into the treasury *being used*? The Lord desires that a *close search* be made. Are all satisfied with the history of the work for the past fifteen years? Where is the evidence of the co-working with God? Where has been heard throughout the churches the prayer for the help of God? Where has been heard throughout the churches the prayer for the help of the Holy Spirit? Dissatisfied and disheartened, we turn from the scene.”

“It would be poor policy to support from the treasury of God those who really mar and injure His work, and who are constantly *lowering the standard* of Christianity.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 553.

Our Responsibility

Now let us carry this one step further. We know that God will render unto every man according as his work shall be. Will God Himself continue to support *us* if *we* refuse to give the message a certain sound? Are *we* as accountable as the minister or the person in leadership if *we* do not give those who are dying for a lack of truth the message?

“In every age there is given to men their day of light and privilege, a probationary time in which they may become reconciled to God. But there is a *limit* to this grace. Mercy may plead for years and be slighted and rejected; but there comes a time when mercy makes her last plea. The heart

becomes so hardened that it ceases to respond to the Spirit of God. Then the sweet, winning voice entreats the sinner no longer, and reproofs and warnings cease. That day *had come* to Jerusalem.” *The Desire of Ages*, 587.

Now don’t miss this application to us:

“The Jewish nation was a symbol of the people of *all* ages who scorn the pleadings of Infinite Love. The tears of Christ when He wept over Jerusalem were for the sins of *all* time. In the judgments pronounced upon Israel, those who reject the reproofs and warnings of God’s Holy Spirit, may read their *own condemnation*.”

“In this generation there are *many* who are treading on the same ground as were the unbelieving Jews.” Ibid.

Today, praise God, there is good news! *Mercy still lingers a little longer!*

“Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he *turn* from his sin, and *do* that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, *without committing iniquity*; he shall surely live, he shall not die. *None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him*: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live.” Ezekiel 33:14–16.

“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, *choose you this day whom ye will serve*; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” Joshua 24:15.

In the parable of the fig tree, it is our *choice* whether we will bear fruit to the glory of God, or be barren trees. It is our *choice* to *feed* the fruitful trees and to deny sustenance to the unfruitful ones. May God give us the wisdom to know what to do, and how to do it, is my prayer. ✨



Joe Olson serves as the executive director and chairman of the board of Hope International. He also travels as an international speaker.

Letters to the Editor



Time is so short! Please appropriate this check where it is most needed. I pray for blessings on all of your endeavors. May we each be faithful in the little tests each day, that we may stand strong in tougher tasks forthcoming!

PW, North Carolina

I love the *Our Firm Foundation*. A thank you to all who contribute time and effort.

VB, California

We are still excited about this wonderful message. It is thrilling when one gets to hear the undiluted truth. It has changed each of us who came about what we experience in our churches and we are asking God to show us what to do. Please pray with us to find a place for worship.

VW, Illinois

God bless you all. It is *so good* to be back on your mailing list again. Thank you for the magazine. Keep up the good work.

RE, Tennessee

I just wanted to let you know that I can't wait to get your magazine each month. It reminds me of the old *Review*. I try to wait until Sabbath afternoon to read it. It is so uplifting to me!

SC, Pennsylvania

I want to thank you for your *Hope International* magazine. We started receiving it a

couple years ago, and I find it a very interesting pamphlet to read. We are so tired of all the "garbage" that is happening in our beloved SDA church, and to hear of what is happening. Being able to read good sound articles is a blessing.

YB, Oregon

With joy I can share with you that the Lord made it possible for me to attend your camp meeting in British Columbia. I want to thank you for all the labor you took on yourselves to make it possible. I treasured every meeting.

It seems to me that I came out of this camp meeting with a clearer spiritual eyesight and a greater determination to press on to know the Bible more deeply. I also drew strength from all the fellowship with dear brethren and sisters that were there. That was my first camp meeting in more than 20 years.

I think I am beginning to understand more clearly what is happening in the church. Otherwise I might have sought refuge in some reformed movement. But I perceive that this is not a solution.

It makes me sad to see all this error mixed in with truth. To meet you has been very encouraging and strengthening. You cling to the early Seventh-day Adventist message and do not leave this church helpless and in confusion. You do take your

stand and warn. What a blessing!

I know this is the way we all should walk in. May the Lord strengthen you to keep clinging to truth!

May you all be richly blessed and always stay close to Jesus. I will certainly be praying for you all and for our leaders, especially during the General Conference that is coming. May we all be faithful and true to Him who has called us into His marvelous light.

US, British Columbia

Thank you so much for your faithfulness to God and His cause. Thank you for *Our Firm Foundation*. Also, thank you for your prayers for two sisters who argue and fight with each other, yet who profess to love the Lord. Please pray for the healing of the breach that Satan has caused to come between them.

AF, California

I sure praise God for the wonderful *Our Firm Foundation* magazine. God bless your workers and writers—I don't know where I would be without them. Praise God!

RP, Utah

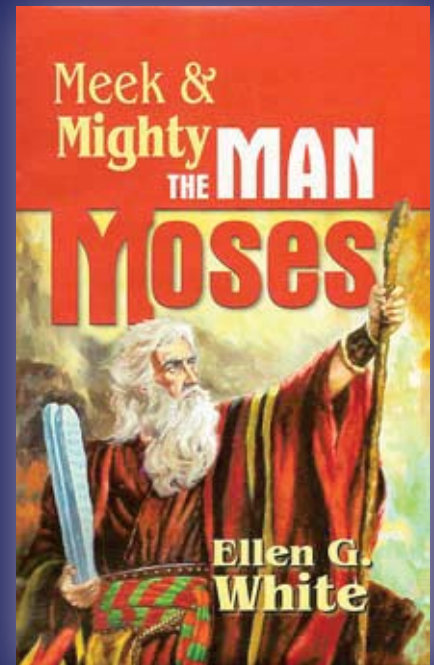
I received a sample copy of your magazine and liked what I read. I am looking forward to more.

LL, Missouri

Meek and Mighty, the Man Moses

Meek and Mighty, the Man Moses is a compilation of Ellen G. White's writings on the life of this Biblical hero, Moses. As you trace the life experiences of this extraordinary man, you will find lessons to be learned from not only his successes but also his failures. Moses was no perfect man, but he led a life of complete service to Christ and is counted among the great leaders of Christianity.

This compilation is taken from a series on the life of Moses in *The Signs of the Times*, along with complimenting excerpts from *Patriarchs and Prophets*. The chapters are short and are excellent for personal study or worship groups.



Paperback, 148 pages, 2005
Product code BEWE-MMMM
Price \$9.99 each*

*Please see page 29 for shipping and sales tax information.

"Moses was a type of Christ. He received the words from the mouth of God, and spoke them to the people. God saw fit to discipline Moses in the school of affliction and poverty, before he could be prepared to lead the armies of Israel in their travels from Egypt to the earthly Canaan. The Israel of God who are now passing on to the heavenly Canaan have a Captain who needed no earthly teaching, as did Moses, to perfect Him for the work of a divine Teacher and Leader to guide His people into a better and heavenly country. He manifested no human weakness or imperfection; yet He died in order to obtain an entrance for us into the promised land. Moses pointed the people forward to Christ." *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, 343.



Hope International
P.O. Box 220
Knoxville, IL 61448

Change Service Requested

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
NW Mail Services