

Our Firm Foundation

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The Seventh-day Sabbath

Christ Our Righteousness

The Immutable Law of God

The Non-Immortality of the Soul

The Three Angels' Messages

The Sanctuary

How to keep the Sabbath





Clark Floyd

Two Ditches

The one main reason that Hope International and *Our Firm Foundation* were established so many years ago and continue to exist today is to see as many Seventh-day Adventists and other true seekers in God's kingdom as possible. We want the people to find Jesus as the true center of their lives and to have the Bible first and then the Spirit of Prophecy as their only sources of doctrine.

Recently construction crews have been working on the curvy mountain road that leads to our driveway in the beautiful mountains of western North Carolina. They have been cleaning out the ditch on one side of the highway. On the other side of the highway is a railing that provides a barrier to prevent driving off the steep mountainside.

God has provided the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy as railings to keep us out of the ditches that run down both sides of our pathway to heaven. "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matthew 7:14.

Among Seventh-day Adventists, there are some folks who teach that Jesus came in the nature of Adam before the fall and therefore is not really like us. The end of this teaching is a fatal deception that we cannot be like Jesus and that we cannot overcome sin even through the power He alone can provide—we will be sinning until Jesus comes. These folks ignore the many statements of Ellen White and the Bible to the contrary and misuse statements such as those found in the Baker letter.

The Bible says, "For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham [not of Adam before the fall]." Hebrews 2:16. Ellen White says, "In taking upon Himself man's nature in its fallen condition, Christ did not in the least participate in its sin." *Selected Messages*, book 1, 256.

Usually outside the structure and in the ditch on the other side of the road are the feast-day keepers, the Shepherd's Rod, the no-Holy Spirit, and other teachings that lead the mind away from the three angels' messages.

Ellen White has written many statements in regard to the passover, one of which follows: "While the institution of the Passover was pointing backward to the miraculous deliverance of the Hebrews, it likewise pointed forward, showing the death of the Son of God before it transpired. In the last passover our Lord observed with His disciples, He instituted the Lord's Supper *in place of* the passover, to be observed in memory of His death. No longer had they need of the passover, for He the great antitypical Lamb was ready to be sacrificed for the sins of the world. Type met antitype in the death of Christ." *The Youth's Instructor*, May 1, 1873. All emphasis supplied.

The Shepherd's Rod emphasize among other teachings, Ezekiel 9 and the slaughter weapons that will be used to kill apostate Seventh-day Adventists before the final close of probation. Ellen White states that the apostate Seventh-day Adventists "will fall in the general destruction of all the wicked

represented by the work of the five men bearing slaughter weapons." *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 267. That general destruction of the wicked is through the seven last plagues.

The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy have many statements in regard to the Holy Spirit existing and being the third person of the Godhead.

We are told, "Men will arise with interpretations of Scripture which are to them truths, but which are not truth. The truth for this time God has given us as a foundation for our faith. He Himself has taught us what is truth." *Selected Messages*, book 1, 161. "The Work that the Lord has given us at this time is to present to the people the true light in regard to the testing questions of obedience and salvation—the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ." Page 165. These truths are found in the three angels' messages.

"Anything that the enemy can devise to divert the mind from God's Word, anything new and strange that he can originate to create a diversity of sentiment, he will introduce as something wonderfully important." Page 163.

God is looking for a people that will stay on the "straight and narrow," that will use His guardrails—the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy—to stay out of the two ditches. May God help you to be that people! 📖



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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*

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ABOUT HOPE INTERNATIONAL

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How to keep the Sabbath

Thy Word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against Thee. Psalm 119:11.

One of the most beautiful themes of Scripture is the message of God's Sabbath. Being raised a Southern Baptist I remember well the time in my life when I learned this precious truth. After more than 30 years I still praise the Lord for bringing me to this message of these last days and giving me the privilege of teaching others how to study and understand His Word.

One thing that has repeatedly come to my attention over the years is this reoccurring question, "How do you keep the Sabbath?" I have heard many different ideas on this subject and most are very enlightening, but generally speaking, the question still arises, "How do I keep the Sabbath?"

Everyone has opinions about different subjects and so do I, but when it comes to matters of spiritual interest I find that the best opinions are those that come from God. After all He is the author of all wisdom, and He has promised that wisdom to us if we will but ask, believing we will receive. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord." James 1:5-7.

When answering questions and sharing thoughts on these matters I typically try to back them up with Scripture. That way there is less

room for argument and far more light on the subject. Let us explore God's plan for keeping His Sabbath.

Cry Aloud

In the book of Isaiah chapter 58 we find a text that is quoted with great regularity on the subject of Sabbath keeping. Verses 13 and 14 are often used to tell us the limits or don'ts of Sabbath keeping. But what if we were to examine the entire chapter in relation to the Sabbath and not just the last two verses? Have you ever thought how unappealing a sandwich would be if you only ate the crust around it? Yet we do this with the Scriptures all the time. We are quick to tell others they are missing so much of the truth by taking verses out of context but are we not also guilty of the same thing at times?

Let us examine the whole chapter of Isaiah 58 and see if we can find more of the do's of the Sabbath and the joys and rewards that God has in store for us there.

As we open the very first verse we are arrested by a cry of alarm: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins."

This is a call of great urgency. Something is terribly wrong! God's people are transgressing His law and are obviously unaware of it. But more importantly the "house of Jacob," His leadership, is committing sin. Now you may ask, "How can someone transgress or break

the law without it being sin?" I like to use the illustration of

speeding in an area where one does not know the speed limit has changed from a higher speed to a lower speed. Though they are breaking the law, they are not knowledgeable of their offence.

According to God in James 4:17, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." We are guilty of sin by our knowledge of it. So obviously God's people are breaking at least a portion of His law without knowledge of it. An attorney friend of mine recently pointed out to me that ignorance of the law does not release us from its obligation and/or consequences. This is why Christ, the innocent victim, had to die in my place. Though this is another issue, it is one subject that overrides all others.

But, "the house of Jacob," God's leadership or ministry is committing known "sin." As we look through the Decalogue it is easy to find one commandment that the majority of the world does not keep faithfully. It just happens to be one of the commandments that God specifically wrote with His own finger to "remember."

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all



Photos © Paul Williams

Lee Forbes

Part 1



that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Exodus 20:8-11.

Outwardly Righteous

Once God makes the command to "cry aloud" and call His people to repentance,

He goes on to describe the shallowness and hypocrisy with which His "people" worship Him. Verse 2 states, "Yet they seek Me daily, and delight to know My ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God."

Notice that their outside appearance is "as a nation that did righteousness." If we stopped with this verse it would appear that this is a faithful people, but appearances can be deceiving. Remember what Christ will say to those who gave lip service but their hearts were not truly His. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 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." Matthew 7:21-23.

Here again is evidence of the importance of not taking Scripture out of context. So now let us look

further at the context of this verse in Isaiah. "Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours." Isaiah 58:3.

Notice the works-oriented attitude of the people. They fast and afflict their souls but feel that God does not notice their piety. But God

faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to Me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain

If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

responds immediately by showing their hypocrisy. Fasting was to be done for a specific purpose, such as to clear the mind to be able to better understand the will of God or to be an instrument through which God could perform a special work. When the disciples were unable to cast out a demon from a man's son, Jesus told them, "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." Matthew 17:21.

Let's look at the whole story: "And when they were come to the multitude, there came to Him a certain man, kneeling down to Him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to Thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered and said, O

of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." Verses 15-21.

Therefore a fast is a time of preparation for a special work but God reveals their hypocrisy in that their focus is not on the purpose of the fast but their own temporal pleasure and profit. God does not stop here though. He continues: "Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high." Isaiah 58:4.

Obviously the people use this recurring "day" of fasting for purposes that are meant to advance their own power, influence, author-

ity and position. God is quick to let them know that their fasting gains them nothing and their prayers go little farther than “to make your voice to be heard on high.”

Finally God’s reprimand becomes specifically directed to the individual relationships of this day of fast. “Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?” Isaiah 58:5. God points out the absurdity of their conduct on this His special day, a day He later says should be a delight. It is Satan’s work to make the Sabbath a drudgery and God hates the influence Satan has on this beautiful memorial of creation.

“It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.” Exodus 31:17. It is also a sign of redemption: “Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you.” Exodus 31:13.

What to Do on Sabbath

Now we come to the beautiful part. This is the part that answers our question in a way that we often miss, “How do we keep the Sabbath?” God says in Isaiah 58:6, “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?”

First of all, in this dark sinful world, the Sabbath is to be a day of liberation. It is God’s will and purpose that every sinful, pernicious habit, thought and action be loosed from us. It is this communion that we are invited to have with God that enables us to have that power of His grace to overcome these things with joy and abundance.

“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am

come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” John 10:10. “The lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:16), are to have no power over the children of God. But this is not a victory that we can gain in our own strength. It can only come through communion with Him.

Next, it is God’s desire to release us from the burdens that we bear giving us freedom to experience the joy of communion with Him and our fellow brethren without the weight of our burdens pressing us down. It is on the Sabbath that we can lay aside every secular care that has had our focus during the week. God is our helper and the Sabbath is His day alone. He bears our burdens of the week “so that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.” Hebrews 13:6.

Our responsibility is to focus on Him and His will for us. “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.” Proverbs 3:5–6.

Now we must go beyond ourselves. It is our job to let the oppressed go free. There are many people in this world that are under tremendous oppression. Arguably the greatest oppression that many face is that of guilt and fear of consequences. When we bring others to a knowledge of Christ He releases them from this bondage. This was His purpose in coming, as well as to restore in man the image of God. “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Hebrews 2:14–15.

The last point in verse 6 of Isaiah 58 at first appears to be an after thought but, as we will see in a moment, it is actually stated this way for emphasis. “To break every yoke” is to break every tendency to direct the lives of others in their relationship with God. It was the practice of the Pharisees to place a yoke of legalistic demands upon the

people to exact obedience to a fierce and sometimes arbitrary God. Christ came as the representative of God and the perfect example of what we should be in our daily walk with Him. “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps.” 1 Peter 2:21.

Christ said, “take My yoke upon you.” Matthew 11:29. It is only His perfect example of humility, love and obedience that we are to follow. We are only to point the wayward soul to the Saviour and share what He has done and shared with us. We are not to put ourselves in a position of dictator or enforcer over the lives of others. Rather we are to live the example of every inspired conviction that God has brought to us and let His Holy Spirit convict the others. For authority comes through the Head which is Christ not through any man no matter his position or title. There is a lot of information in one verse isn’t there! 📖

To be continued.



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Christian Privileges and Duties

Ellen G. White

It is not in the power of earth or hell to compel any one to sin.

It is the privilege of every soul to seek and find peace in Christ. Yet this peace is granted only upon conditions. We must surrender our own ways and wills and plans, and thus put off the grievous yoke which we have bound upon our own necks, and we must take upon us the yoke of Christ, which will bring rest to our souls. "Learn of Me," says the Divine Teacher; "for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." Matthew 11:29-30.

We each need to learn in the school of Christ; and it is because we are not more humble and diligent students that we are so slow to manifest meekness and lowliness of heart. It is only when we cherish these precious graces that peace and rest can abide in the soul. Only the humble and contrite ones find shelter in the promises of God; only these obtain a saving knowledge of the Scriptures, and a rich experience in trusting God and obeying His precepts.

In our own strength we are indeed feeble; but in the strength of our Redeemer we may be strong. In the midst of tumult we may have quietness and peace. We must believe in Him, even though darkness envelop the soul; we must work from principle, rather than from feeling. By this continual, unwavering trust, Satan is baffled and disappointed. Says the psalmist, "Thou through Thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies." Psalm 119:98. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Verse 105.

If we would maintain our fidel-

ity to God, in this time of danger and deception, we must constantly rely upon the power of Christ. We must be often before God in prayer, holding every emotion and every passion in calm subjection to reason and conscience, banishing all unholy imaginings, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. By earnest prayer and living faith we can resist the assaults of Satan, and keep our hearts unspotted from pollution.

The strongest temptation is no excuse for sin. However great the pressure brought to bear upon the soul, transgression is our own act. It is not in the power of earth or hell to compel any one to sin. The will must consent, the heart must yield, or passion cannot overbear reason, nor iniquity triumph over righteousness.

I appeal to you who profess to be followers of Christ to depart from all iniquity. You must do this, if you would represent the truth as it is in Jesus. God wants whole-hearted, thorough-going men. These only can stand the test of the Judgment. If those who have received the light were but true to their trust, what a flood of light would be poured upon the world! But how is it, not only with the members of the church, but with those who stand as ministers of the gospel? Do their habits and experience correctly represent the purity and simplicity of a holy, cross-bearing life?


Sanctified Ministers

The true toilers in the Lord's vineyard will be men of prayer, of faith, of self-denial—men who hold in restraint the natural ap-

petites and passions. These will, in their own lives, give to the world evidence of the power of the truth which they present to others; and their labors will not be without effect. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Psalm 126:6. "And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." John 4:36.

Fellow-workers for Christ, time is short; we have no moments to idle away. Are you watching for souls as they that must give an account, or are you yourselves drowsy, ease-loving, and lukewarm? Have you a living faith? Are you every day increasing in the knowledge of Christ? Do you possess practical godliness, Christian meekness, and deep love for the souls for whom Christ died? Search the Scriptures. Do not depend upon the little knowledge which you already have. Pray for clearer light. Dig for the precious gems of truth as for hid treasure. Thus will you be enabled to bring forth from the storehouse of God things new and old. Matthew 13:52.

In this age of conflicting doctrines, when fables abound, and there is so much sensational preaching on the one hand, and so great formality on the other, it is a difficult matter to arouse the people. Our only hope of success is to reach them through God. We must give evidence of earnestness, zeal, and devotion commensurate to the importance and solemnity of our work. There should be no exaltation of self. We are not



to call attention to the instrument, but to present Christ and the sacred truths that are to test the people of God. If these truths sanctify our own hearts, if they purify and ennoble our own characters, we shall be living epistles, "known and read of all men." 2 Corinthians 3:2.

The ambassadors of Christ must learn where their strength lies. They must themselves drink of the living water, before they can guide others to the fountain. We must learn by experience what it is to lean upon the arm of our Beloved. There is no evil more fatal to the prosperity of the church than the influence of professed teachers and ministers of the gospel who are deficient in Christian experience, in faith, self-denial, self-control, and in the tact and energy essential for skillful warfare.

My brethren, you should be constant learners in the school of Christ, obtaining from the heavenly Teacher precious lessons to impart to others. You have lost much in your labors because you have not constantly felt the necessity of vital connection with God. There is earnest solemn work to do in every branch of the cause of Christ. You need the Spirit and power of God, that your testimony, like a sharp, two-edged sword, may cut to the heart of those who hear.

The faithful witnesses for Christ will keep themselves unspotted from the world. Those who seek to be popular with the world, will not love the testimony of the Spirit of God. They are not sanctified through the truth; and after a brief period of half-hearted service, they will make a decided move toward uniting with the enemies of God. They reject the light, and it is withdrawn from them. In time it will be seen that they are in utter darkness.

Sanctified Congregation

Many retain a form of godliness and a connection with the church, when they bring no strength, help, or blessing to the church. They seek to make the narrow way broad and

pleasant for the multitude to walk in. Such are destitute of spiritual eyesight. They have put out their own eyes, and they stumble at every step. The Word of God has not widened the narrow way; and if the half-hearted and pleasure-loving choose a path where they need not bear the cross or suffer tribulation, they are in a path where the Saviour did not walk.

In all parts of our country, during the summer and autumn, large companies assemble in the tented grove, to worship God and to listen to words of warning and instruction from His servants. Great privileges are afforded by these yearly convocations. The Lord Jesus Himself comes up to the feast. We have a precious opportunity to humble our hearts before God, and to become settled and grounded in the truth. Are these opportunities wisely improved? They will prove to us either a savor of life unto life or of death unto death.

After these seasons are over, and those who met together have returned to their homes, will they be prepared to let their light shine forth to the world? Will their works correspond with the faith which they profess? If we continue to love the world, to have fellowship with the works of darkness, or to find pleasure in unrighteousness, then we have put the stumbling-block of our iniquity before our face, and have set up idols in our hearts. If we do not heed the word of the Lord, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate . . . , and touch not the unclean" (2 Corinthians 6:17), we are in a worse condition than if we had not listened to the words of truth.

The Scriptures clearly set before us the high and holy position which we should occupy as sons and daughters of God. If all who attend the camp meetings would seek earnestly to attain this position, and would receive the spiritual benefit which it is their privilege to receive, they would be prepared to do good when they return home. If the love

of Christ is kindled afresh in their own hearts, if they have drunk anew from the heavenly fountain, their cheerful testimonies and their prayers, sent up in faith, will be as great a help to the church as ministerial labor. The Spirit of God will come into their meetings, and the hearts of believers will say, It is good to be here.

Every church, be it large or small, should be taught not to depend on ministerial labor. Therefore, fellow-Christians, there is the greater need that you kindle your tapers at the divine altar, that the light may shine forth to all around. However weak you may be, you can become a help and blessing to others, if you will keep your own souls in the love of God, and search the Scriptures for a clear understanding of the truth. It is not only your privilege but your duty to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. You may rejoice in a living Saviour, and may show to all connected with you that He is the center of your affections and your hopes.

Principled Christians

Would that all might view this matter of daily, practical Christianity as it has been presented to me; would that they could see what we might be in spiritual power, and what we are because we neglect the light which God has given us! Many will have to combat intellectual slothfulness and spiritual stupor, before they can be a blessing to themselves or to their fellow-men. We are living under the most solemn message of warning ever given to our world. We are altogether too near the closing scenes of this world's history to be inattentive, to occupy a neutral position. It behooves us now to be wide awake, ready for every good work, ready to give a reason for the hope that is in us.

Brethren, you must come closer, closer to the bleeding side of Jesus. Instead of yielding to every passing influence, seek earnestly to

know the truth, and then endeavor to form a character consistent therewith. Seek to be like Christ, meek and lowly of heart, and, like Him, be resolute also; in principle be firm as a rock; be pure, sincere, and holy. Be ever cheerful, humble, grateful. Keep yourselves separate from the spirit and influence of the world. Let not sin find a sanction in your position. Give no occasion for evil-doers even to imagine that they have your sympathies. Let not irreligion find in your lax principles a pretext to excuse itself.

God calls upon you to be zealous and repent of your half-heartedness. Strive to walk wisely, in a perfect way. Begin and end each day with earnest prayer and close self-examination. Compare your life and character with the law of God, mark where its precepts condemn you, and set to work at once to correct the wrong by repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Wash your robes of character, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. Let your words be well chosen. Put away all lightness, trifling, and irreverence.

Opposers of Reproof

Those who really desire to advance in the divine life will cherish every ray of light, and heed every warning given by the servants of God. The Holy Spirit admonishes those who preach the gospel, "Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine." 2 Timothy 4:2. If the Lord has given this command, there is certainly a work of reproofing, rebuking, warning, and correction to be done. Let all be careful, then, how they allow their hearts to rise up against the reproofs of God through His servants; for in so doing they rise up against God.

Like the Pharisees of old, the self-deceived, the self-sufficient, the self-righteous, refuse to be warned. The Lord points out their dangers, but they do not heed His voice. As they assimilate to the world, they become the friends of evil-doers.

While God reprove the transgressor, they feel inclined to excuse and encourage him. Thus they say to the sinner, It shall be well with thee. Such persons call good evil, in that they oppose and denounce those who faithfully deliver the messages of warning and reproof committed to them of God. They call evil good by extolling those who have no reproofs to bear and no warnings to give, who pass along in a careless, indifferent spirit, excusing sin, and by their own course encouraging worldliness and backsliding.

All these are sanctioning a deception which has proved the ruin of many. The blood of souls is upon them. Their course is more offensive to God than is that of the open sinner. Anciently, the Lord always had among His people faithful prophets, whom, He sent to reprove sin. He has never removed these from His church. Those who rise up against warning and reproof, and seek by their jests, their smart speeches, or their deceptions, to make of no effect the plain words of reproof prompted by the Spirit of God, will find, in the great day of final reckoning, an account against them which they will not wish to meet.

Timeservers or Luthers

To be a Christian is to be Christ-like, a man of faith, a man of principle. The Christians most serviceable in the church are those whose convictions are so firm, whose characters are so strong, that nothing can sway them from their faith or deter them from their duty. As a people, we are altogether too much like the world. We are not the separate, holy people that God requires us to be. When we come up to the high standard of God's law, then shall we be indeed the light of the world.

The professed church of Christ has wandered from her privilege, her duty, and her God. Like ancient Israel, she has forsaken the covenant, and joined herself in harmony with the world. Pride, luxury, and

pleasure are invited into the sanctuary, and her holy places are defiled. Those who have pledged their allegiance to God, enjoy the company and spirit of His avowed enemies. Their choice determines their character. "Strong is the Lord God who judgeth" them. Revelation 18:8.

But, thank God, in every age he has had men who were not time-servers, men who would stand firm for the right, and risk all consequences. In the strength of God, Martin Luther fearlessly proclaimed the truths of the Bible. In vain earthly potentates sought to intimidate him. In vain they attempted to break his hold on God, and drive him to seek the favor of the pope or the protection of the emperor at the sacrifice of his faith. His one answer was, "God and the right will triumph."

Neither men nor devils could silence him. Gold, ambition, honors, could not win him from his work of exposing error and declaring truth. In like manner Huss, Jerome, Ridley, and many others, counted not their own lives dear unto themselves that they might keep the testimony of Jesus. Amid torture and flames, amid dungeons and horrible deaths, these faithful standard-bearers held aloft the banner of the cross of Christ.

We also, who are called to stand in these last trying days of peril and conflict, must be willing, for the truth's sake, to sacrifice our ease, our time, our reputation, yea, even life itself. At whatever cost, we must be true to principle and to God. 📖

Signs of the Times, October 4, 1883.



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.

Solving Personal Conflicts

Part 2

David Stramell

Lessons Jesus Taught from the Sermon on the Mount

True conversion is made manifest in the way we treat one another.

TTrue leaders will not let divisions develop and linger among their followers; they will not support division, even if it seems to support their positions. True leaders will possess “tender mercies” (Psalm 51:1) toward all sides. True leaders will strive to lead others to “be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” 1 Corinthians 1:10. They will provide leadership “that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.” 1 Corinthians 12:25. A true leader will “speak forth the words of truth and soberness” in love. Acts 26:25.

Leaders who do not care how they hurt others by their words or actions are not true leaders. Leaders who feel that they have a perfect right to use their authority, regardless of the impact on the feelings of others are not qualified to be leaders. Leaders will care for those who make mistakes, not roast them with criticism and fault finding.

Church leaders should have zero tolerance for allowing misun-

derstanding to exist in their midst. They are especially guilty if they support a party that refuses to reconcile with another.

“Of all the people in the world, reformers should be the most unselfish, the most kind, the most courteous. In their lives should be seen the true goodness of unselfish deeds.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 157.

The norm for disciples should be whole relationships in their families, and social circles—where there is no mutual distrust for each other, no form of rudeness. The Scriptures say, “Let your speech be always with grace” (Colossians 4:6), with kind and pleasant words that brighten and cheer.

Those who harbor animosity or bitterness will pay to the last penny, in their own emotional prison. Often at the point that bitterness is entertained, spiritual life stops. They may hold onto the belief that Jesus is the Savior of the world and the Bible is true, but they will cease to grow in the love and peace of Christ. Their “hearts and minds” are no longer guarded by “the peace of God, which passeth all

understanding.” Philippians 4:7. Instead, their minds dwell on their own wounds, and they become spiritually weak.

The medical expenses for those holding bitterness over long periods of time cannot be estimated. The damage to families and friends that are separated and wounded by hostility is an enormous cost to society.

Conflict Resolution—Jesus’ Way

“When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made [won] and baptized more disciples than John, (though [actually] Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples), He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.” John 4:1–3.

Jesus and John were in the midst of public evangelism. John 3:22–23. People were coming daily in increasing numbers and baptisms were by the hundreds.

One day Jesus heard that the Pharisees observed He was baptizing more disciples than John. Jesus knew that they would use this as a wedge between His ministry and

that of John's. This would create jealousy and break up their unity.

Jesus left Judea for Galilee. He pulled up stakes on His public evangelistic meetings and moved to another location. In His actions, Jesus teaches us it is better to move out of the area than create conflict. We are to "follow peace with all men" (Hebrews 12:14), and "follow after charity" 1 Corinthians 14:1.

This is amazing! Jesus who is the "express image" (Hebrews 1:3) of God and "who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Hebrews 8:1), gave way to another when He could, by all rights, cause John to give way to Him. He deferred to John! For Jesus to leave the area shows the greater serving the lesser unselfishly. Such is the character of God.

Jesus did not baptize because He anticipated conflict would arise. He sought to avoid direct competition, for it was strife for the highest place in which sin was conceived. Isaiah 14. All throughout His life, Jesus sought peace. He said, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God." Matthew 5:9.

Jesus never competitively embarrassed others. He could have excelled in school and sports, but His motto was to "do good" and to help others. He came to make us all winners, and lose "none" John 18:9.

Avoiding Internal Conflicts

Conflict inside families or in the church are a great source of trouble. They breed unbelief and hinder spiritual growth.

Using a modern language, the report would go like this: "The *Judea Daily* reported last week that John baptized 282, whereas Jesus baptized 1,912." From this news cast, the enemies of the ministries of John and Jesus would find weapons to set the two parties against each

other, thus nullifying their ministry. How could they invite sinners to repentance, if contention persisted?

The general lesson is that a Christian must avoid any issue that divides unnecessarily. Most argue over small things, little differences—is that not true?

In this case, jealousy and competition had the potential of creating walls of separation between believers. Those who would have a peaceful spirit will not let rivalry mar their family.

While we are to be loyal to Jesus and truth, we should try to avoid all that may lead to conflict and misunderstanding. For whenever these arise, the results are loss of souls. Whenever circumstances occur that threaten to cause division, we should follow the example of Jesus when He told His disciples, "And whosoever will not receive you, when ye

the leadership sought to "kill Him" John 5:18. Even while they were plotting to kill Him, Jesus attempted to open their minds with reasoning from the Scriptures.

After this, Jesus avoided useless conflict with the leaders at Jerusalem. For a while He restricted His labors to friendly Galilee. John 7:1. After the Feast of Tabernacles He unsuccessfully tried again to appeal to the Jerusalem leadership in a weeklong dialog in John 7 and 8.

At another time in Jerusalem, the leadership surrounded Jesus threatening to stone Him. Jesus attempted to break through their senseless hatred with the question, "Many good works have I shewed you from My Father; for which of those works do ye [want to] stone Me?" John 10:32.

Even after peaceful dialog inviting the leaders to honest inquiry Jesus was not successful, and "they sought to take Him." John 10:39.

To the class who have "blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts," Jesus "did not commit Himself unto them." John 2:24. To the leaders He said, "But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." John 5:42.

"Can the blind lead the blind? Shall they not both fall into the ditch?" Luke 6:39. You cannot follow a leader who is blind from a hardened heart, for both will fall into a ditch.

When a person is not "gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy" (James 3:17), you cannot trust them, for you "know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16). Although they may prove to be untrustworthy we are still to



go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them." Luke 9:5.

When Reconciliation is Impossible

From the very beginning, the teachings of Jesus conflicted with the Jerusalem leadership. After Jesus healed the sick man at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath,



Conflict & Strife



“love” them and “pray for them” Matthew 5:44.

Eventually, after years of effort, Jesus said about the leadership, “Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind.” Matthew 15:14. They had no love for truth. Self-justification kept them from evaluating their own characters. Near the close of the public ministry of Jesus He said, “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.” Matthew 23:38–39.

There are times when our best efforts for peace are persistently rejected. Following the example of Jesus, we must leave them in the hands of God, and go about our business of doing good to others. Yet we must be sure that no bitterness exists in our hearts toward another who has refused our advice or opposed our opinions.

Warring parties permanently damage many families, churches, and schools. One part likes the pastor, and others do not. One group thinks that there should be blue carpeting, and others think that it should be red. Sides are taken and

division occurs. Peace is lost and strife prevails for years after the incident occurred. While in conflict, public worship becomes formal and spiritless.


It is strange that there can be “one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all” (Ephesians 4:4–6), and yet Christians argue and set up sides against each other. How can this happen when Christians have so much in common?

Greatest hindrance

Unresolved disputes are the greatest hindrances to spiritual peace and the return of Christ. It reveals the lack of love for God when we do not have respect for one another. Every feeling of indifference for one another, anything that tends to create serious disagreement, we should try to avoid. We must remove the coldness that exists in our hearts by whatever means possible. The sweet Spirit of God cannot work in this environment. Spiritual backsliding is the result. This sad condition cripples the joy and love of life.

Jesus taught His disciples, even when in the right, they were not to champion themselves at the expense of another. Jesus has set the example: when conflict arises between believers, do not be party to it. Step aside with humility, rather than foster strife.

Jesus could see the future, a time when the “nations” would be “angry” (Revelation 11:18). Most wars are kindled by hatred and jealousy between nations and their leaders. Even more devastating are religious wars that move people to kill one another in the name of God.

Jesus could see that whole churches and families would waste precious resources fighting each other. He saw the spiritual hemorrhage of the young believers whose faith would be spoiled due to the hypocrisy of veteran believers. He saw many lose out on eternal life because they would not forgive those who offended them, yet they would blindly regard themselves as saved. 

To be continued

David Stramell writes from Nevada-Utah Conference where is serving the church as pastor in Fallon Nevada.

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How will the Majority Decide?

John Goodwill

After a successful round through the congressional voting process, President Bush announced the 17th chief justice of the United States: "When a President chooses a Supreme Court justice he is placing in human hands the full authority and majesty of the law. Each member of our highest court holds a position of extraordinary influence and respect, and can hold it for a lifetime. . . .

"I submitted to the Senate a nominee of integrity, deep humility, and uncommon talent. . . . They witnessed, as well, the character of the man; his reverence for the Constitution and laws of our country; his impartiality and devotion to justice; his modesty and great personal decency. . . . As

"Though they may take the oath pledging their loyalty to the state, yet back of this lies the vow of obedience to Rome, absolving them from every pledge inimical to her interests."

Judge Roberts prepares to lead the judicial branch of government, all Americans can be confident that the 17th Chief Justice of the United States will be prudent in exercising judicial power, firm in defending judicial independence, and above all, a faithful guardian of the Constitution."¹

To the unconcerned eye this statement is glowing praise for the new chief of the Supreme Court. But a deeper look into the life of John G. Roberts reveals a man with a devout background in the Catholic faith. According to Wikipedia, he grew up in a devoutly Roman Catholic home, and graduated from a Catholic boarding school. He and his wife are practicing Catholics that "worship at The Church of the Little Flower. This parish is one attended by many Catholic officials in all three branches of government."²

Every religious right website flooded the internet with words denouncing any attempt by the opposition to derail the candidate based on religion. It was stated that under Article VI of the Constitution "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." Thus John G. Roberts was ushered safely through the battlefield and into the Supreme Court rotunda.

Harriet Miers

How quickly things changed. On October 3, 2005, the President announced his choice for the vacant associate justice seat on the Supreme Court: Ms. Harriet Miers. Unbeknownst to him, the choice was to unleash a firestorm of opposition. However the opposition did not come from the common foe, but rather from his own religious, conservative base.

"Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, issued a statement expressing the ambivalence of several groups on the right. 'President Bush has long made it clear that his choices for the U.S. Supreme Court would be in the mold of current justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas,' Perkins said. 'We have no reason to believe he has abandoned that standard. However, our lack of knowledge about Harriet Miers, and the absence of a record on the bench, give us insufficient information from which to assess whether or not she is indeed in that mold.'

"Gary Bauer, 2000 presidential candidate and president of American Values, said, 'The future of the Supreme Court is too important to leave to chance.' . . .

"Some groups on the right flatly opposed Miers's confirmation yesterday. 'We must reject the nomination of Harriet Miers to the Supreme Court,' said Troy Newman, president of the anti-abortion group Operation Rescue. 'Miers is no Thomas or Scalia.' "³

So radical was the opposition within his own party, that President Bush was forced to reconsider his nomination. This act of loyalty to the religious-right party line is revealed in the following editorial:

"The withdrawal by Supreme Court nominee Harriet Miers was an act of damage control by the White House. There was a rebellion on the right that appeared to be threatening the president's ability to govern across a broader range of issues. (Indeed, one of the most stunning things about the failure of the Miers nomination is that it occurred largely because of opposition from within the president's own party, rather than opposition from Democrats.)"⁴

The leaders of the religious right

hailed the withdrawal of Harriet Miers:

“Focus on the Family Action founder and chairman Dr. James C. Dobson issued the following statement today in response to Supreme Court nominee Harriet Miers’ decision to withdraw her name from consideration: ‘I believe the president has made a wise decision in accepting Harriet Miers’ withdrawal as a nominee to the Supreme Court. In recent days I have grown increasingly concerned about her conservative credentials, and I was dismayed to learn this week about her speech in 1993, in which she sounded pro-abortion themes, and expressed so much praise for left-wing feminist leaders.

“When the president announced this nominee, I expressed my tentative support, based on what I was able to discover about her. But I also said I would await the hearings to learn more about her judicial philosophy. Based on what we now know about Miss Miers, it appears that we would not have been able to support her candidacy. Thankfully, that difficult evaluation is no longer necessary.’ ”⁵

The same religious-faction-pushing policy in the United States surely changed the tables on Harriet Miers. These people were the ones denouncing any attempt to prejudice John G. Roberts based

the withdrawal of Harriet Miers, it was seen that she failed to pass the socio-religious litmus test on abortion.

Samuel Alito

Thus the religious-political machine flexed its muscle on the current administration to ensure an ideological majority in the Supreme Court. On October 31, 2005, President Bush announced his replacement for Harriet Miers: Samuel Alito. The fears of past failures to put staunch religious-minded conservatives on the bench have been quelled in this nomination. The stance taken by Alito on the litmus test issue of abortion is clearly expressed by one who surely knows him well: “Alito’s mother shed some light. ‘Of course, he’s against abortion,’ 90-year-old Rose Alito said of her son, a Catholic.”⁶

So what was the response in the inner circle of those directing this country towards the image of the beast?

“Focus on the Family Action founder and chairman James C. Dobson, Ph.D., issued the following statement today about the nomination of Circuit Judge Samuel Alito to the U.S. Supreme Court: ‘We are extremely pleased by President Bush’s selection of Judge Samuel Alito, who has earned the respect of colleagues in both parties for his legal acumen and courtroom demeanor. As a federal judge for the last 15 years, Judge Alito has demonstrated that he understands the role of the judiciary is to interpret existing law in light of the Constitution, not make new law in service to a personal political agenda.

“Perhaps the most encouraging early indication that Judge Alito will make a great justice is that liberal senators such as Harry Reid and Charles Schumer and leftist pressure groups such as People for the American Way and Planned Parenthood have been lining up all day to scream that the sky is falling. Any nominee who so worries

the radical left is worthy of serious consideration. Based on what is now known about Judge Alito, we applaud the president for this outstanding nomination.’ ”⁷

First Majority Catholic Supreme Court

How quickly things have changed! Hidden in this entire Supreme Court confirmation process is a growing fact that is likely to startle the student of prophesy. This fact is presented in the following:

“At the time of Breyer’s appointment in 1994, there were two Roman Catholic Justices, Antonin Scalia and Anthony Kennedy. Later in the 1990s, Clarence Thomas, who had been raised as a Roman Catholic but had attended an Episcopalian church after his marriage, *returned to Catholicism*. This ended over 200 years of Protestant domination of the Court.

“The religion of the nominee has rarely provoked controversy in recent years, with the religious affiliation of Justices appointed since the 1980s barely receiving any comment. However, the promotion of a nominee based on their religious background has been shown to provoke controversy, as was experienced when unsuccessful nominee Harriet Miers was *touted for her Evangelical Protestant beliefs*.

“In 2005, Chief Justice John Roberts became the fourth sitting Catholic Justice, *creating the first Catholic plurality* on the court. On January 31, 2005, Samuel Alito became the fifth sitting Catholic Justice.

“*Catholic Justices now constitute 56% (5 of 9) of the Supreme Court; about 25% of Americans are Catholic. Jewish Justices constitute 22% (2 of 9) of the Court; about 2% of Americans are Jewish. . . . Grouping all Protestant denominations together, including Episcopalians, Protestant Justices constitute 22% (2 of 9) of the Court; 52% of Americans are Protestants, overall.*

on religion—particularly religious convictions based on the right to life, a Catholic stance favored by Evangelicals. But in the wake of



“The last two Democrat-nominated Justices were Jewish, and *five of the last six Republican-nominated Justices either were Catholics or have since become Catholic.*”⁸ All emphasis supplied.

Reformation Day

Ironically, justice Samuel Alito who has now created the new Catholic majority, was proposed by President Bush on October 31, Reformation Day, the traditional birthday of Protestantism.

“Reformation Day is a minor festival celebrated in remembrance of the Reformation, particularly by Lutheran and Reformed church communities. It takes place on October 31 and is an official holiday in many countries. It coincides with Halloween, the eve before All Saints’ Day. ...

“On this day in 1517, Martin Luther posted a proposal to debate the doctrine and practice of indulgences, popularly known as the 95 Theses. This event created a controversy between Luther and those allied with the Pope over a variety of doctrines and practices.”⁹

“The *Disputation of Doctor Martin Luther on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences*, known as the 95 Theses, challenged the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church on the nature of penance, the authority of the pope and the usefulness of indulgences. They sparked a theological debate that would result in the birth of the Lutheran, Reformed, and Anabaptist traditions within Christianity.”¹⁰

On the very day that Martin Luther rebelled against the Mother of harlots, it was announced that very soon the highest court in our land is to be ruled by Catholics.

Speaking as a Dragon

This Protestant nation was founded on the principle of the separation of church and state, for the pilgrims fled from the religious persecution of the Dark Ages. God’s Word reveals a time when this lamb-like nation will again join

forces with the religious power that received a deadly wound. See Revelation 13. The wound has healed and the nation of the free has begun to speak in threatening tones.

One may ask the pointed question: How will a Catholic majority in the Supreme Court decide on issues regarding the separation of church and state? The Constitution states that no law may be made to restrict religious liberty. But what does God’s Word say? Does it not foretell a time when the United States will set up an image to the beast? And when it does, will the highest court in the land have to decide in favor of such a law to promote the form of religion inspired by the beast? Surely the prophet of God has opened our eyes to the events transpiring right before our faces.

“I have been much burdened in regard to movements that are now in progress for the enforcement of Sunday observance. It has been shown to me that Satan has been working earnestly to carry out his designs to restrict religious liberty. Plans of serious import to the people of God are advancing in an underhand manner among the clergymen of various denominations, and the object of this secret maneuvering is to win popular favor for the enforcement of Sunday sacredness. If the people can be

led to favor a Sunday law, then the clergy intend to exert their united influence to obtain a religious amendment to the Constitution, and compel the nation to keep Sunday.” *Review and Herald*, December 24, 1889.

This inspired counsel over one hundred years ago is being fulfilled as we speak. The quotes and facts presented heretofore reveal just that—the way is paved for the image of the beast to be finalized in this hour of earth’s history.

“Protestants have tampered with and patronized popery; they have made compromises and concessions which papists themselves are surprised to see, and fail to understand. Men are closing their eyes to the real character of Romanism, and the dangers to be apprehended from her supremacy. The people need to be aroused to resist the advances of this most dangerous foe to civil and religious liberty.” *The Great Controversy*, 566.

Who are the papists that Protestants have been making concessions to? Looking up papist in the dictionary gives the following





definition: a member of the Roman Catholic Church. Compromises and concessions have been made that even the very faithful to Rome are surprised to see. So is it possible that the five Supreme Court jurists could be faithful papists of Rome?

“Marvelous in her shrewdness and cunning is the Roman Church. She can read what is to be. She bides her time, seeing that the Protestant churches are paying her homage in their acceptance of the false sabbath, and that they are preparing to enforce it by the very means which she herself employed in by-gone days. Those who reject the light of truth will yet seek the aid of this self-styled infallible power to exalt an institution that originated with her. How readily she will come to the help of Protestants in this work it is not difficult to conjecture. Who understands better than the papal leaders how to deal with those who are disobedient to the church?”

“The Roman Catholic Church, with all its ramifications throughout the world, forms one vast organization, under the control, and designed to serve the interests, of

the papal see. Its millions of communicants, in every country on the globe, are instructed to hold themselves as bound in allegiance to the pope. Whatever their nationality or their government, they are to regard the authority of the church as above all other. Though they may take the oath pledging their loyalty to the state, yet back of this lies the vow of obedience to Rome, absolving them from every pledge inimical to her interests.” Page 580.

The power of the beast is beyond our comprehension. From what we are told, this power encroaches on every aspect of our life—all to further the designs of Rome. We must not take the above statement lightly, thinking that these things are too unbelievable. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked.” Galatians 6:7. The One who has spoken the earth into existence, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, is also the One who has given us these words in His Testimony, the Spirit of Prophecy.

These words must be contemplated when considering all the information presented in this update on current topics surround-

ing our religious liberty. “Whatever their nationality or their government, they are to regard the authority of the church as above all other. Though they may take the oath pledging their loyalty to the state, yet back of this lies the vow of obedience to Rome, absolving them from every pledge inimical to her interests.” Will the Catholic majority stand up for the Mother Church upon that fateful day when God’s commandment keeping people stand before the courts of the land? Remember:

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Revelation 12:17.

Only time will tell, but we must not take chances. The signs of the times demand our attention! 📖

John and his wife are God-fearing Christians who serve as missionaries in Mexico.

Notes:

- 1 President George W. Bush, “President’s Remarks at Swearing-In Ceremony of Chief Justice Roberts,” The White House, The East Room, September 29, 2005. www.whitehouse.gov.
- 2 “John Roberts,” Wikipedia. Retrieved April 2, 2006. www.wikipedia.org.
- 3 Charles Babington and Thomas B. Edsall, “Conservative Republicans Divided Over Nominee,” *Washington Post*, October 4, 2005, A11. www.washingtonpost.com.
- 4 Brad Berenson, “Analysis: Miers Withdrawal Was Damage Control,” October 27, 2005, ABC News Internet Ventures. <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/story?id=1255601>.
- 5 Focus on the Family Action, “Dr. Dobson Says Bush Made ‘Wise Decision’ on Miers Nomination,” October 27, 2005. www.focusaction.org.
- 6 David Gregory and the Associated Press, “Bush’s High Court Pick Likely in for a Fight,” NBC, MSNBC and news services, October 31, 2005. www.msnbc.msn.com/id/9874588.
- 7 Focus on the Family Action, “Dobson ‘Extremely Pleased’ by Alito Nomination,” October 31, 2005. www.focusaction.org.
- 8 “Demographics of the Supreme Court of the United States,” Wikipedia. Retrieved April 2, 2006. www.wikipedia.org.
- 9 “Reformation Day,” Wikipedia. Retrieved April 2, 2006. www.wikipedia.org.
- 10 “95 Theses,” Wikipedia. Retrieved April 2, 2006. www.wikipedia.org.

Beware of Shepherd's Rod

Clark Floyd

New truth will never contradict the "old" truths we have already established, nor will it replace the three angels' messages.

They have been to our church more than once. There were two of them, both well dressed, friendly, and seemingly knowledgeable of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. It was interesting that although they arrived in the same vehicle, they sat separately in different parts of the church for the worship service.

One spoke of himself as a Bible worker for Shepherd's Rod, and finally challenged two of us to allow him to make a presentation to us in regard to the 144,000 of Revelation chapter 7, and also the sealing of Ezekiel chapter 9. We finally agreed to listen to him without interruption, if he would give us the same courtesy. We set a future time to do this. He was not available when that date came.

I had encountered other Shepherd's Rod people before this and already had some understanding of their teachings. But as I questioned the two of them, I found out some things I didn't already know or wasn't sure of.

They do have some things right, but this can make them all the more dangerous. They do believe sincerely in all that they teach, and that Houteff, their founder, was truly a prophet in the style of Elijah. They do not believe the Seventh-day Adventist Church is Babylon. They claim to be faithful Seventh-day Adventists with a special warning message. They do not believe in keeping the feast days. They believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead.

In January, 2005, I had an article published in *Our Firm Foundation* on

the interpretation of Zechariah 6. I had received the idea for my article from a tape I had listened to. Later I learned this tape was put out by the Shepherd's Rod. I believe they have a correct understanding of Zechariah 6 because it agrees with the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy in regard to there being two parties in the church in the last days.

But there are many areas in which they are wrong. We need to know the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy well enough to distinguish truth from error. Otherwise we may be drawn in by snares that will eventually lead us in a wrong direction.

In this article I am only going to cover some of the matters our two visitors shared with us either initially or in response to my questions. Hopefully this will help you to know that in reality they conflict with the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy in some of their teachings and that everything must be thoroughly studied before being accepted as Bible truth.

Our visitors stated that the 144,000 mentioned in Revelation 7 and 14 were literal Jews; that they were SDAs with literal Jewish blood of the different tribes mentioned. They stated that since 144,000 is a literal number then the "tribes of the children of Israel" (Revelation 7:4) would also have to be literal for 2 reasons:

- 1 You would not have a symbolic term with a literal number.
- 2 Ellen White and William Miller have a rule for interpreting the Bible that says we need to take everything as it reads unless it

is obviously symbolic language that is used.

I would agree that the 144,000 is a literal number although I have not always believed that it was. But if we accept that you cannot have a literal number with a symbolic term following, we would do away with some of the correct understandings of time prophecies:

- Daniel 8:14 has the literal number "two thousand and three hundred" connected with the symbolic term "days" or "evening mornings" which are not literal days, but symbolic days which stand for "years."
- Daniel 9:24 has "seventy weeks," which equal 490 literal days; but these days are again symbolic for years.
- The numbers in other prophecies (1260) are literal numbers, but "days" are symbolic of years.

Ellen White does state: "A great work can be done by presenting to the people the Bible just as it reads." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 388. But she did not use this rule by itself, nor did William Miller.

- If we presented individual paragraphs just as they read without considering other passages, we might believe in an ever burning hell or that we go to heaven when we die, or other fallacies that other churches teach.
- Therefore a very important additional rule of interpretation can be found in Isaiah 28:10: "For precept must be upon precept, precept



upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." And 1 Corinthians 2:13: "comparing spiritual things with spiritual." This avoids contradiction, for the Holy Ghost does not contradict Himself. Ellen White quotes both of these principles in *Acts of the Apostles*, 206. In *Education* 123, she says: "The most valuable teaching of the Bible is not to be gained by occasional or disconnected study. Its great system of truth is not so presented as to be discerned by the hasty or careless reader. Many of its treasures lie beneath the surface, and can be obtained only by diligent research and continuous effort. The truths that go to make up the great whole must be searched out and gathered up, 'here a little, and there a little.' "

- William Miller states: "To understand doctrine, bring all the scriptures together on the subject you wish to know; then let every word have its proper influence, and if you can form your theory without a contradiction, you cannot be in an error."¹

What are some of the things we know about the literal Jews from Scripture?

- "All Israel have transgressed Thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey Thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us." Daniel 9:11.
- The Jews were given a fixed time of probation to get their act together or no longer be God's people. Daniel 9:24.
- They utterly failed—see Matthew 23:37–38—"Your house is left unto you desolate." See also Acts 7:51–60. When Stephen was stoned, he saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God. When Jesus stands, probation

closes—compare Daniel 12:1.

- "they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Romans 9:6–8
- "There is neither Jew nor Greek: . . . for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Galatians 3:27–29
- "Christ recognized no virtue in lineage. He taught that spiritual connection supercedes all natural connection. The Jews claimed to have descended from Abraham; but by failing to do the works of Abraham, they proved that they were not his true children. Only those who prove themselves to be spiritually in harmony with Abraham by obeying the voice of God, are reckoned as of true descent." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 268.

Therefore comparing Scripture with Scripture, we find that there is no merit in being a literal Jew. So then how do we explain the 144,000 being from different tribes? God recorded details associated with the giving of the names of Jacob's sons, and pointed out why they were called by their respective names. As these names are mentioned in the book of Revelation, where the completion of the work of God on earth is brought to view—the sealing "of all the tribes of the children of Israel"—these names and their meanings must be significant to the remnant church.

Certain names are left out of the list in Revelation 7. This is significant. The names included are not in order of birth, nor in any order that they appeared in the Bible before. This is significant. Could the meaning of the names have a message in regard to the 144,000? Knowing

the answer to this is not essential to salvation, nor do we have to have literal Jewish blood to be among the 144,000.

The issue is not that we will lose salvation by believing some of these things, but these become the most important issues with us rather than the three angels' messages. They make the Sabbath harder to share with others because of the literal Jewish blood issue.

Further problems appear when you add them to other teachings of the Shepherd's Rod, such as our ark of safety is to return to the land of Israel (God is our ark of safety, not some location—see Psalm 91), that the destroying angels of Ezekiel 9 will destroy all apostate SDAs with slaughter weapons after the sealing of SDAs, but before the final close of probation. The slaughter of apostate SDAs will be by the outpouring of God's wrath in the 7 last plagues—not by members of the Shepherd's Rod. Only angels can see the seal, not men. According to the counsel on the Sealing in Testimonies, vol. 5, 205–216, the Shepherd's Rod do teach error, and it is not a group to join or follow.

There are also some other dangers to be aware of. The Shepherd's Rod teach that Jesus will come secretly before He comes openly in the clouds of heaven. They partially base this on Isaiah 66:16, "For by fire and by His sword will the LORD plead with all flesh." They say that because He "pleads" probation must still be open, and therefore He must come before it closes. However, if you check in Strong's Concordance, the word translated *plead* in the King James Bible has a first meaning of "judge" or "pronounce sentence" which would better fit with "fire and sword." Their incorrect interpretation will set people up for the impersonation of Jesus by Satan.

There is also evidence that their supposed prophet, Houteff, contradicts Ellen White although he claimed to agree with her 100%.

Folks, we do not need another prophet or new teachings. We need to better understand and follow what we already have. We need to become more like Jesus. We will have a deeper understanding of the Bible as we study more, but it will not contradict the teachings we have or replace the three angels' messages. Do not be deceived or carried away. Check all teachings closely. Beware of Shepherd's Rod.

P.S. - Two of the Shepherd's Rod members did finally get together with us in November, 2005. This did not include the Bible teacher that had been so insistent on our meeting with him. I shared some of the information that I have included in this article. My friend showed by a power point presentation where Houteff said he agreed with Ellen White 100%, and then showed conflicting statements between the two of them. The reply we received to this was, "you haven't read everything Houteff has written." This did not resolve the conflict. Secondly, I was told by one of these folks that he did not believe that Shepherd's Rod people were the destroying angels of Ezekiel 9, but that he had a friend who thought they were and was gathering weapons together in his home. Apparently Shepherd's Rod people do not all agree with one another. 📖



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Note:

1 *Views of the Prophecies and Prophetic Chronology: Rules of Interpretation*, 20.



Volume 21, Number 6

Although E. G. White has indicated that Ezekiel 9 will be literally fulfilled, you need to look at all of her writings to see what she means by literally. I find that after examining her other writings, she does mean the following: faithful Seventh-day Adventists will be sealed, but not by a single visible man in linen with a writer's inkhorn.

"While Satan has been urging his accusations, holy angels, unseen, have been passing to and fro, placing upon the faithful ones the seal of the living God. These are they that stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having the Father's name written in their foreheads. They sing the new song before the throne, that song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth. 'These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.' Revelation 14:4-5." *Prophets and Kings*, 591.

And as mentioned in the accompanying article, unfaithful Seventh-day Adventists are not slaughtered before the general close of probation by slaughtering angels or men as the Shepherd's Rod would have people believe. "I was shown that the seven last plagues will be poured out after Jesus leaves the sanctuary. Said the angel, 'It is the wrath of God and the Lamb that causes the destruction or death of the wicked.'" *Early Writings*, 52.

"Who are standing in the counsel of God at this time? Is it those who virtually excuse wrongs among the professed people of God and who murmur in their hearts, if not openly, against those who would reprove sin? Is it those who take their stand against them and sympathize with those who commit wrong? No, indeed! Unless they repent, and leave the work of Satan in oppressing those who have the burden of the work and in holding up the hands of sinners in Zion, they will never receive the mark of God's sealing approval. *They will fall in the general destruction of the wicked, represented by the work of the five men bearing slaughter weapons.* Mark this point with care: Those who receive the pure mark of truth, wrought in them by the power of the Holy Ghost, *represented by a mark by the man in linen*, are those 'that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done' (Ezekiel 9:4) in the church. Their love for purity and the honor and glory of God is such, and they have so clear a view of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, that they are represented as being in agony, even sighing and crying. Read the ninth chapter of Ezekiel." *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 267. 📖





The Temptation

Part 1

Two boys, both about fifteen years of age, were employed as clerks in a large grocery store. Walter Hyde was the son of an invalid widow, and his earnings were her only means of support. Andrew Strong was the eldest son of a mechanic who had quite a large family depending upon him for their daily bread.

Both boys were capable and industrious, both were members of the temperance club that had been started in their church. They had but lately been employed in business. Walter and Andrew were good friends; but they had not long been employed in the store before they learned that Mr. Bates, the proprietor, retailed alcoholic drinks.

The two boys talked together upon the wisdom of remaining at a place where liquor was sold. They had nothing to do with the sale of the liquor, but they wondered if they should work where it was sold.

"Let us talk with our folks at home," said Walter, "they will know best. I shall do what my mother says."

"I will ask my father and mother," said Andrew. "I don't know whether they will think that I should leave, but I know they will hesitate to have me lose my job."

"Mother," said Walter Hyde, seating himself beside her easy

chair, "did you know that Mr. Bates sells liquor?"

"Why, no, my son," said Mrs. Hyde, with a startled movement; "does he?"



"Yes, I did not know it for a fact until today. What do you think about my staying there? I don't have anything to do with the liquor department, but it doesn't seem exactly right to stay where it is sold."

For a moment the mother did not answer. Poverty is a hard thing to battle with, and Mrs. Hyde knew only too well what must follow the loss of her son's job. But as she pondered, there came to her mind the memory of a boy she had known in girlhood, a brave, high-spirited lad with the promise of as noble a manhood as lay before her own son. How little a thing had wrecked his hopes and brought him to a drunkard's grave.

"Lead us not into temptation," Matthew 6:13. When could those words be more fitly uttered than now?

"My son, let us pray together," said this Christian mother. Together they knelt in prayer in the cheerful firelight.


"I can answer you now, Walter. I would rather starve than have you exposed to such temptations. You may tell Mr. Bates in the morning that you cannot work for him any longer."

In his home that evening Andrew Strong asked the same question of his parents.

"You said you don't have anything to do with the liquor?" questioned Mr. Strong.

"No, sir; but I am right where it is all the time. I can't help that, if I stay there."

"If we were able to get along without your wages, I wouldn't have you remain another day; but I have so many mouths to feed, and our rent is coming due. If you leave there you may not get another job in a long time. What do you think, Anna," he inquired of his wife; "had the boy better leave?"

Mrs. Strong was worried about money, so she suggested a compromise. "Let him stay a little while," she said, "until we get the rent paid, and meanwhile look up a new job for him. We won't have him remain longer than necessary." 

Find out what happens to the two boys in the next issue.

This story was taken from *Scrapbook Stories*. The book is available from Hope International for \$8.99 plus shipping and sales tax (see page 30 for details).

Photos: © Hemera Photo Objects CD





The Cashew Tree

Portuguese explorers brought the cashew tree, *Anacardium Occidentale*, from its native Brazil to India, Africa, and Asia at the beginning of 1558. Since then, it has been cultivated for food and medicine for over 400 years. During World War II, it became highly prized as a source of valuable oil drawn from its shell.

The cashew nut contains calcium, iron, magnesium, phosphorous, potassium, sodium, zinc, copper and manganese. It also contains some vitamins such as B1, B2, B6, B12, niacin, folic acid, and vitamin E. The false fruit "apple" is called false because, botanically, the nut is the fruit and the "apple" is the receptacle, the portion of the pedicel (flower stem) where the nut is attached. The apple is rich in vitamin C.

Traditionally, in Africa, people use the juice of the false fruit to treat elephantiasis and cashew leaf tea is employed as a common remedy for diarrhea; the bark tea is used as a douche for ladies; and the seeds are used for skin infections. The leaves

and/or the bark is also used in Brazil for eczema, psoriasis, scrofula, dyspepsia, genital problems, and venereal diseases. It is also used to treat bronchitis, cough, intestinal colic, syphilis-related skin disorders and impotence.

The bark of the tree and the leaves extract are used to lower blood sugar. We have been using this extract from the bark and the leaves with positive results in Diabetes type II. It is important to understand that together with the intake of the extract, a change of diet is recommended because our lifestyle plays a critical role in the recovery and maintenance of our health. A vegan diet is highly recommended as the ideal for human beings.

"Grains, nuts, fruits, and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. These foods, prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible, are most healthful and nourishing. They impart a strength, a power of endurance, and a vigor of intellect, that are not afforded by a more complex and stimulating diet." *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 81. 📖

Adapted from: Alfons Balbach and Daniel S. F. Boarim, As Hortaliças na Medicina Natural, Edições Vida Plena, Itaquaquecetuba, SP (Portuguese), 1993.

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Disclaimer:

These articles from Dr. Tony's desk are for educational purposes only and are not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Hope International does not offer medical advice or prescribe the use of diet as a form of treatment for sickness without the approval of a healthcare professional.



Finding the Truth

John N. Loughborough

In last month's story Elder Loughborough dreamed about attending an Adventist meeting and seeing great light on the sanctuary and the two-horned beast of Revelation 13. Soon he was invited to one held by Sabbath-keeping Adventists. He reluctantly went, armed with a list of texts "showing" the Sabbath was abolished. — Editors.

As we went into the room, they were in the midst of a testimony meeting. There were no fanatical, boisterous demonstrations, but calm sensible testimonies wet down with tears. Such a heavenly atmosphere greatly impressed me. Then in stepped Harvey Cottrell from Mill Grove, face beaming with the love of God. "Praise the Lord for His goodness to me. I came here last Thursday anxious to attend the meetings, but spent the whole time in bed with fever. At my request, the brethren followed the rule in James, anointed me with oil and prayed for me, and I am healed. Praise the Lord." With his quiet, simple statement the Spirit of the Lord filled the room. I said to myself, "That is just as it was in my uncle's case." My prejudice was fast yielding to the conviction that these people had the blessing of the Lord with them.

As I looked about the room, I noticed there hung directly in front of me the identical chart I had seen in my dream, and as Elder J. N. Andrews arose to speak, I recognized him, too. He began, "The time announced for the preaching service has come. I had prepared to speak on a certain subject, but during the social meeting, my mind turned to another. It may be the Lord's will for me to speak on the texts which are supposed to teach that the Ten Commandments were abolished at the cross." Elder Andrews did not know who I was. No one had said a word to him since I came in.

Beginning with Colossians, he took my texts one by one, in the exact order in which I had them marked, and straightened them all out to my perfect satisfaction. In examining Colossians, he explained that there are *two* laws, and the moral law of Ten Commandments is eternal, whereas the law of ceremonies pointed to Christ and ceased at the cross. A solemn impression of the Spirit of God came with his presentation. I said to myself, "This is the most consistent of anything I have ever heard on the law question. It will settle the whole thing for me." And it did.

In later presentations Elder Andrews covered the subjects of the two-horned beast, the sanctuary and its cleansing, and the three angels' messages. He took pains to make every point clear. Almost daily, he visited and prayed with us. The Rochester company did much praying also for the interested ones. It was not simply the bare argument in favor of the truth that so deeply moved us as the evident presence of the Spirit which accompanied the presentation of those truths, and broke the fallow ground in our hearts. I could not keep away from the meetings nor resist the powerful arguments presented.

When I accepted the Sabbath truth in September, 1852, I still had appointments for three Sundays for the First-day Adventists. I decided to fill these appointments, but say nothing concerning the new light, for I knew I must be well prepared to defend my position. At each place I told them I would come no more.

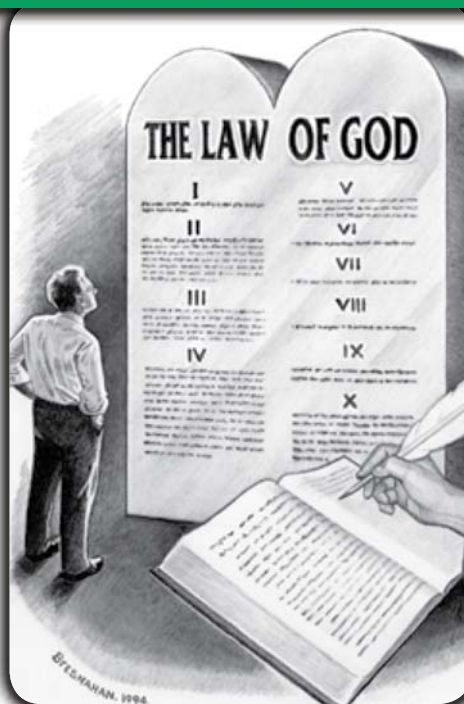
My fourth Sabbath was spent in Rochester. On that day I publicly took my stand with this people for the third angel's message, and handed in an article for the *Review* announcing my change of faith. In the meeting that day I first saw

Elder and Mrs. White. They had been away from Rochester for about three months, traveling by horse and carriage visiting scattered Sabbath-keepers in New England.

This Sabbath meeting was held at 124 Mt. Hope Avenue. The room for religious purposes, place of residence, and printing office of the Review and Herald were all in the same building, and Oswald Stowell was the pressman. At this time he had been suffering very severe attacks of pleurisy and had been given up by the physicians to die. Stowell was in the adjoining room and at the close of the Sabbath service sent in a request for prayer.

After I was introduced to the Whites, they invited me to go in with them for a season of prayer while the rest of the company remained in silent prayer in the meeting room. We bowed by the bedside, and while prayer was being offered, Elder White anointed Brother Stowell in the name of the Lord and he was instantly healed. When we arose from prayer, he was sitting up striking his sides which before had been so painful. "I am fully healed and shall be able to work tomorrow," he said. The same blessing that healed him fell in still greater measure upon Sister White. As Elder White turned to look he said, "Ellen is in vision. She does not breathe while in this condition. If any of you desire to satisfy yourselves of this fact, you are at liberty to examine her."

She was kneeling beside the bed with her eyes open in a far-away look as if gazing intently at some object, not in a vacant stare but in a pleasant, intelligent expression. Her countenance appeared fresh and florid. Though she looked upward, her head would turn from side to side as she seemed to be viewing different objects. It was evident from many tests applied that she was entirely oblivious to anything



transpiring around her. Her hands would move gracefully from time to time.


She remained in vision half an hour or more. While in that condition she spoke words and sometimes distinct sentences; yet by the closest scrutiny, no breath could be discerned in her body. When she came out of vision her first three breaths were like that of a newborn child's first breath.

After she came out of vision, she bore a testimony for that company there assembled. She spoke to me especially, delineating the working of my mind before embracing the truth, even of thoughts which I had expressed to no one. As I heard these things from her lips, I said, "Surely there is a power more than human connected with this vision."

There were eight of us First-day Adventists who accepted the truth under the labors of Elder J. N. Andrews in Rochester. Before the Whites returned from the Eastern tour, one of these persons left the city and traveled on business in Michigan. In relating her vision, Mrs. White told us that she saw a man who, while traveling away from home, had much to say about the law of God and the Sabbath, yet at the same time was breaking one of those commandments. She said

he was a person she had never met, yet she believed she would see him sometime since his case had been unfolded to her. Not one of our company, however, supposed it to be anyone we knew.

About six weeks later, the aforementioned brother returned from Michigan. As soon as Sister White saw him, she said, "This is the man I saw in vision of which I told you." Sister White related to this man in the presence of his wife and several other persons what she was shown, then said, "As Nathan said to David, Thou art the man."

After listening to Mrs. White's rehearsal of his wrong doing, he dropped upon his knees before his wife and with tears said, "God is with you of a truth." Then he made a full confession of how he had been trapped into violation of the seventh commandment at Paw Paw, Michigan, over 500 miles from Rochester. He said this was the first offense of that kind in his life and it would be his last. 



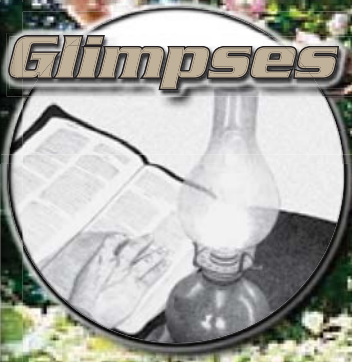
John N. Loughborough, 1832–1924, pioneer evangelist and administrator also served the Lord as a literary evangelist, conference president in several states, foreign missionary, editor of the

Pacific Health Journal, and treasurer of the General Conference. He also authored several books and many articles for denominational papers. He was closely associated with Elder and Mrs. White for over 40 years.



Taken from Miracles in My Life, 19–22. This book is available from Hope International for \$5.99. Please see page 30 for shipping and sales tax information.

Glimpses of the Pioneers



Unwavering fortitude and obedience marked the labors of our pioneers as they trusted in the Lord with all their hearts.

James White: Part 1

Husband Of A Prophetess

I have a message for you." Ellen White addressed these words to hundreds of individuals during her ministry of seventy years. A large percentage of the individuals thus addressed accepted the message.

From time to time these significant words were addressed to Ellen's husband, James. In response to one such message, received in Dorchester, Massachusetts, in December, 1848, James began to print a "little paper." The following years brought crushing discouragements, and more than once he resolved to give up the paper "forever." But these decisions were reversed in response to messages from God through his wife, bidding him go forward in faith.¹ In response, James picked up the burden and pressed forward.

There was no question in James's mind as to the divine origin of Ellen's visions, which were to sustain and support him all through his life. To see her in vision was a fascinating experience to him. He observed the physical phenomena mentioned by Bible prophets—no breath, eyes open, no strength at

first, then a strengthening which enabled her to hold out at arm's length large Bibles on more than one occasion.

Before their marriage, it was a source of satisfaction to James when the Lord told Ellen that she could trust him as he escorted her from place to place. This no doubt had a part in persuading Ellen to accept James' proposal of marriage in 1846.

Naturally, no other individual saw Ellen in vision more times than did her husband. As he listened to her pointed testimonies to individuals after these visions, his faith in their divine origin grew steadily stronger.

James and Ellen were both strong-minded individuals. Both were called by God to fill a crucial place in the church. It is difficult to conceive what James might or might not have accomplished had it not been for his wife's sympathetic encouragement as he set various projects in motion. On the other hand, Ellen needed someone who could not merely offer physical protection as she traveled but who could also put into motion Heaven's plans for the growing church.

Ellen realized the difficult position in which her messages at times placed her husband. It was not easy being married to a prophetess, who in certain ways outranked him.

Concerning their relationship, she wrote: "Sabbath, June 6, 1863, I was shown some things in regard to my husband and myself. . . . I saw that we neither understood the depth and keenness of the heart trials of the other. Each heart was peculiarly sensitive, therefore each should be especially careful not to cause the other one shade of sadness or trial. Trials without will come, but strong in each other's love, each deeply sympathizing with the other, united in the work of God, [we] can stand nobly, faithfully together, and every trial will only work for good if well borne."²

While the doctrines of the as yet unshaped church were being hammered out, Ellen's role was a unique one. As leaders, the primary aim of James White, Joseph Bates, "Father" Stephen Pierce, Hiram Edson, and others, was to discover what the Bible taught. One by one the great doctrines now held by the Seventh-day Adventist Church were reaf-

firmed or established.

Ellen sat through these meetings, which sometimes lasted far into the night or even all night. But she could not grasp the theological topics dealt with. It seems that God caused her to have a mental block so that no one would later be able to make the claim that she influenced the form the doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist Church took. So God had His plan, and He carried it out.

In later years, Ellen wrote:

“During this whole time I could not understand the reasoning of the brethren. My mind was locked, as it were, and I could not comprehend the meaning of the scriptures we were studying. This was one of the greatest sorrows of my life.”³

When those godly scholars came to a point on which they could not agree, or where no solution was forthcoming, Ellen was frequently shown in vision the correct solution. Her statements were then accepted as Heaven inspired, for the men knew that when not in vision she could not understand the matters, and they accepted the revelations as light from Heaven. However, as James pointed out, the doctrines of the church did not come by direct revelation, but by a diligent study of the Scriptures. In this Ellen White concurred:

“I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. . . . God has, in that Word, promised to give visions in the ‘last days’; not for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of His people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth.”⁴

The papers sent out in the summer of 1849 were intended for the “little flock” who were still searching for light, and who were dedicated to keeping God’s commandments and the faith of Jesus, as well as for their Sunday-keeping brethren who had been with them in Advent experiences culminating in 1844. A total of eleven numbers of this paper, the *Present Truth*, were printed in 1849 and 1850. In approx-

imately half of them an article or a letter from Ellen White appeared. An examination of these articles reveals that she frequently used the expressions. “I was shown,” “I saw,” or “It was revealed to me.”

By the time the Whites settled in Paris, Maine, in the late fall of 1850, the religious atmosphere was changing. Memories of the Millerite movement were fading. Evangelists, or messengers as they were more often called, were pushing northward into Canada and westward into the States lying along the Great Lakes. Into the hands of interested persons, these men were placing copies of *Present Truth* and the *Advent Review* that James White was printing.

It was in Paris, Maine, that James had decided to start a paper which he proposed to name the *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*. He intended this to be a missionary paper, furnished to interested persons free, as their names and addresses should be sent in by the traveling messengers.

At the beginning he had one important question to settle. How much should be printed concerning the special mission of his wife, and should her writings be published in the *Review*?

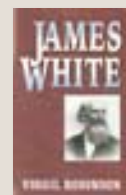
It is not surprising that he should hesitate, and in the end decide against bringing Ellen White or her work into the columns of the church paper.⁵ There would be no problems as far as Adventists were concerned. Most of them had become acquainted with the work and mission of Ellen White as she had toured the churches throughout New England. But what would be the effect on strangers who would not understand her work?

The religious ferment prevailing during the mid-nineteenth century spawned a variety of would-be prophets and spiritual leaders. The Fox sisters were about to introduce modern spiritualism. Joseph Smith had brought forth the Book of Mormon and organized the Church of Jesus Christ of

Latter-day Saints. There were others claiming to receive divine revelations, and promising to bestow eternal bliss upon their followers. So would not a paper containing Ellen’s visions be tossed aside with the words, “Another prophetess! More visions!”

These considerations were weighed and James decided to exclude accounts of Ellen’s visions from the *Review and Herald*. This practice continued for some five years. However, in order that the messages God gave her for the believers might reach them, James brought out in July, 1851, what he called a *Review Extra*,⁶ or a supplement. He planned to publish others, but none appeared. James perhaps felt that there would be time enough after interested persons accepted the main teachings of Sabbath-keeping Adventists to present to them the convincing evidences proving that she was a messenger of the Most High. 📖

The author 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.



This article was taken from Virgil Robinson, *James White*, 116-120.

This book is available from Hope International for \$11.99 plus shipping and sales tax (see page 30).

Notes:

- 1 *Life Sketches*, (1888), 281.
- 2 *Manuscript 1*, 1863.
- 3 *Messenger to the Remnant*, 39.
- 4 *Early Writings*, 78.
- 5 *Messenger to the Remnant*, 51.
- 6 *Ibid.*





Prophet of God?

News Item: “Three years after his first vision, Smith reported that an angel named Moroni, an ancient prophet from the Americas, told him God wanted him to bring forth new scripture—a set of golden plates containing an account of Jesus during a post-resurrection visit to America as well as a history of an ancient Israelite people there.

“His translation, known as the Book of Mormon, gave the sect its nickname and brought him national attention—but still didn’t give him the ‘true church’ he yearned for. In 1829 Smith was visited by resurrected prophets and apostles who, he said, finally conferred on him the authority to re-establish Christ’s church on earth. . . .

“The church’s early converts, many of whom learned about it from missionaries, were sometimes shocked when they met Smith in person. He was uneducated, he lost his temper, he enjoyed power—and perhaps most startling for converts, was the fact that, on occasion, his

ventures failed. Simply put, he didn’t always *seem* like a prophet.

Smith was involved in dozens of lawsuits. By the end of his life, he had accrued some 30 wives, massive debt and hundreds of enemies. ‘I never told you I was perfect,’ he told his followers. ‘But there is no error in the revelations which I have taught.’ That’s a matter of debate. . . .

“No single mormon doctrine has been more controversial than polygamy. Smith said he was commanded by God to take plural wives like Abraham and other Old Testament figures. . . . While some breakaway groups still follow polygamist lifestyles, the LDS Church adamantly opposes the practice. However, LDS doctrine holds that some polygamist marriages will exist in the celestial kingdom, the highest tier of heaven.

“Smith taught that humans (who were spirits in a ‘pre-existence’) come to earth to get a body and to be tested. After death, everyone is placed into one of three kingdoms, depending on his level of righteousness. Those in the highest degree will dwell with God, their families will be eternal and they’ll even become gods themselves—as God did. Lorenzo Snow, fifth LDS prophet, articulated doctrine when he said, ‘As man is, God once was; as God is, man may be.’ ” Elise Soukup, “Mormon Odyssey,” *Newsweek*, October 17, 2005, 56–60.

End-time Perspective: “Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in My name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart.” Jeremiah 14:14.

“Christ warned His disciples:

‘Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? . . . Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.’ Matthew 7:15–20. Here is a test, and all can apply it if they will. Those who really desire to know the truth will find sufficient evidence for belief.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 671.

It is interesting to note that right before God sent a true prophet Satan sent a false one. The very same thing will happen again. Just before the true Jesus Christ comes back, a false one will appear! The Word alone is our safety!



Pediatrician to Parents: You’re Fired!

News Item: “Beyond leaving their child unprotected from infections, parents who reject vaccination because of safety concerns or other reasons face an additional risk: Their pediatrician might fire them. An article in the latest *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine* found that nearly 4 in 10 pediatricians would ask a family refusing all vaccinations to look for another doctor; nearly 3 in 10 said they would do so with parents who rejected even one. Most of them said they would dismiss a family, as doctors prefer to call it, even if the vaccination in question wasn’t one the physician thought was

important to get." Avary Comarow, "Health Watch," *U.S. News & World Report*, October 17, 2005, 52.

End-time Perspective: "There are simple herbs and roots that every family may use for themselves and need not call a physician any sooner than they would call a lawyer." *Selected Messages*, book 2, 279.

There are many good, conscientious, God-fearing physicians. Against these, the comments by Sister White do not refer to. But the point still stands, that those who would refuse you treatment because of your stand on health principles, is another indicator of why we are *all* to learn to be practical medical missionaries!



Fitness and Your Brain

News Item: "In a study published in August, researchers at the University of California, Irvine, tracked 579 people older than 60 for periods of up to 14 years and found that those who consumed the most folic acid—a B vitamin that abounds in leafy green vegetables—were the least likely to develop Alzheimer's. People who got at least 400 micrograms a day, whether from diet or from supplements, enjoyed a 55% reduction in risk. Other studies have shown similar benefits from regular, moderate exercise (30 minutes at least 5 times a week) and from maintaining a healthy weight. ...

"Whatever the mechanisms, the take-home lesson is clear: what's good for your heart is good for your brain. So turn off the TV and go for a walk with a friend. You'll live longer that way—and you'll stay

sharper, too." Stephen K. Feske, M.D., *Newsweek*, October 3, 2005, 54.

End-time Perspective: "All should be acquainted with the special value of fruits and vegetables fresh from the orchard and garden." *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, (1911), 312.

"Fruits, grains, and vegetables, prepared in a simple way, free from spice and grease of all kinds, make the most healthful diet. They impart nourishment to the body and give a power of endurance and a vigor of intellect that are not produced by a stimulating diet." *Ibid.*, (1890), 380.

How did Ellen White know this stuff nearly a hundred years ago? She must have been a *prophet* or something! Do you suppose?



Love Is Real Medicine

News Item: "Fortunately, love protects your heart in ways that we don't completely understand. In one study at Yale, men and women who felt the most loved and supported had substantially less blockage in their coronary arteries. Similarly, researchers from Case Western Reserve University studied almost 10,000 married men and found that those who answered "yes" to this simple question—"Does your wife show you her love?"—had significantly less angina (chest pain). And when researchers at Duke surveyed men and women with heart disease, those who were single and lacked confidants were three

times as likely to have died after five years." Dean Ornish, M.D., *Newsweek*, October 3, 2005, 56.

End-time Perspective: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." 1 Corinthians 13:13.

"Courage, hope, faith, sympathy, love, promote health and prolong life. A contented mind, a cheerful spirit, is health to the body and strength to the soul. 'A merry [rejoicing] heart doeth good like a medicine.' Proverbs 17:22." *Ministry of Healing*, (1905), 241. 📖

Contributor — Joe Olson

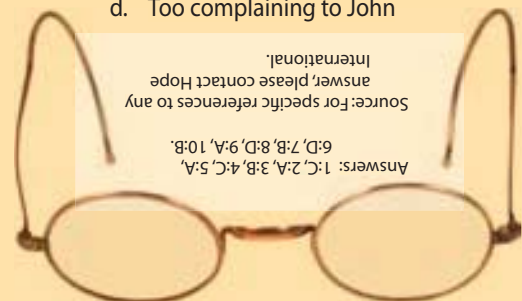


Historical Footnotes

“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.”

- What year did Ellen White receive her first vision about the Civil war?
 - 1844
 - 1858
 - 1861
 - 1888
- What state was she in when she received that vision?
 - Michigan
 - New York
 - Illinois
 - Tennessee
- A “spirit medium” physician boasted that he could bring Ellen White out of a vision “in a minute.” What happened after he was given that opportunity?
 - He repented and was converted.
 - He made a bee-line for the door.
 - He brought her out of the vision.
 - He turned deathly pale and fainted.
- Ellen White wrote a letter to a man in which she said, “My prayer is that you may prove worthy of your name.” What was his name?
 - Moses Hull
 - Elijah Smith
 - Victory Jones
 - Christian Finch
- Sister White wrote a testimony saying some sisters in Caledonia deserved the “severest censure” for what they wore. What were they wearing?
 - Hoop Skirts
 - Short Dresses
 - Men’s Clothing
 - Tight Clothing
- James and Ellen White had lost a child at the turn of 1860. What other close family lost a child as well?
 - The Kelloggs
 - The Andrews
 - The Byingtons
 - The Loughboroughs
- What year did Willie White first see his mother in vision?
 - 1858
 - 1861
 - 1866
 - 1872
- In the vision Ellen White had that Willie was there for, she saw a Civil war battle. Which famous battle was it?
 - The Battle of Pawtucket
 - The Battle of Richmond
 - The Battle of Yorktown
 - The Battle of Manassas
- A new publishing house was built in 1861 and the cost of the building, the hoisting apparatus, cistern and eave troughs, new machinery and fixtures to run the press and tables, shelves, drawers, chairs, stoves, etc. was how much?
 - \$5,000
 - \$15,000
 - \$35,000
 - \$50,000
- Mary Loughborough was warned by Sister White about a behavior she exhibited toward her husband John. What was it?
 - Too penurious with John
 - Too dictatorial to John
 - Too doting upon John
 - Too complaining to John

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



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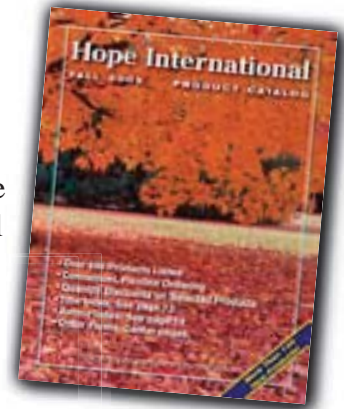


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Children and Youth

Spalding, Arthur, W.

Pioneer Stories

It is good for children to know what their fathers and mothers did, for sometimes that makes a pattern of what the children should do. And that is the reason why this book is written—to tell the children of the pioneers in the second advent movement the beginnings of that movement, and the reasons why they are to carry it on.

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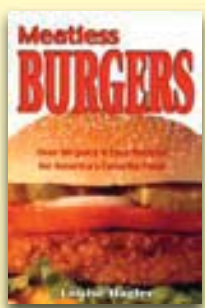
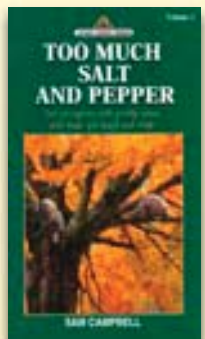
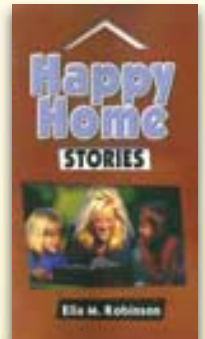
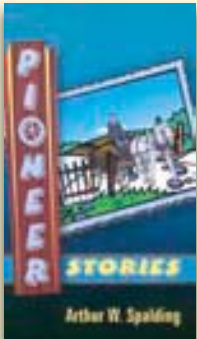
Cookbooks

Hagler, Louise

Meatless Burgers

Find out how to give this classic food exciting new flavor and texture. Louise Hagler uses a wide assortment of grains, beans, and vegetables to transform the ordinary burger into something truly wonderful. These burgers are healthful, easy to prepare, and delicious.

Paperback, 91 pages
BEHL-MBUR \$7.99





Shannon, Nomi

The Raw Gourmet

This is a complete guide to one of the world's fastest-growing nutrition and health movements—the living foods diet. Learn how fresh, non-cooked fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds and grains can boost your vitality without making any sacrifices to your palate.

Paperback, 215 pages

BESN-RGOU \$20.99

Published by Alive Books

Creech, Charles E.

Jewelry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Why?

The question of jewelry among God's people has been a matter of controversy for centuries. This book offers historical and contemporary perspectives on the question of the wearing of jewelry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Paperback, 54 pages

BECC-JISD \$3.99

Published by Morris Publishing



General Books



Cavaness, Rich

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In just one tragic day, men and women across the nation felt the same cosmic shockwave and sensed a new, urgent life-changing need. This book explores five key spiritual lessons uncovered from the horrifying destruction of 9/11.

Paperback, 96 pages

BECR - L911 \$5.99

Published by Amazing Facts

Spear, Ron D.

Rebellion

This book faithfully chronicles the apostasy our church has engrossed itself in.

Paperback, 74 pages, 2003

BESR-REBE \$4.99

Published by Hope International



Waymarks of Adventism

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Paperback, 95 pages, 1999

BESR-WOAD \$4.99

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✉ Thanks for your great magazine, *Our Firm Foundation* which you send to me. It is a true blessing to me.

BS - California

✉ The magazine *Our Firm Foundation* is bread and water to my soul—I need every word.

VB - California

✉ Praise the Lord and thank you for the fine magazine you publish. It is always a joy to receive it each month. May the Lord continue to bless all your staff as you prepare timely messages.

JG - California

✉ Thank you and the work group there, for the workers are few and the work is plenty.

May God bless you all.

HEL - Georgia

✉ I appreciate the magazine, *Our Firm Foundation* and its relevant, for-our-time messages. We need them as never before.

Thank you again for the ministry of Hope International.

JK - Alberta, Canada

✉ I enjoy your magazine, *Our Firm Foundation*, especially since I am no longer able to attend church.

Thank you again and again for your work in Christ.

MH - Nevada

✉ Your magazine, *Our Firm Foundation*, is very refreshing to me. I love the timely messages therein.

I feel blessed by it and would recommend it to anyone seeking to be spiritually fed.

UA - North Carolina

✉ I really appreciate your magazine because it plays a part in awakening us to the reality of the times we are living in through the power of the Word of God.

KS - Tanzania

✉ My wife and I live for the pointed and timely messages published in *Our Firm Foundation*. They are meant to arouse us out of our slumber.

JEF - Alabama

✉ Thank you so much for sending this DVD [of camp meeting messages]. It provided another opportunity to hear the truth one more time.

We appreciate it since at times we are not able to go out to church. This is a very appropriate idea for many others who are shut-ins or ill and are unable to attend regular church services.

May the good Lord bless your effort and ministry. We need to hear more of the message of the last days.

LV - California

✉ Thank you for the messages in the magazines you sent last time, which brought many to Christ and edified the saints. This is a

message of advice and hope relevant to us living in earth's final moments.

DP - Nigeria

✉ *Our Firm Foundation* magazines are so beautiful and attractive and the articles on television and eternity are excellent. I couldn't agree more with the author.

Keep up on the good work.

SW - Alberta, Canada

✉ I really enjoy the magazine *Our Firm Foundation*. It feeds me, spiritually.

BEG - Washington

✉ I am grateful for your ministry and its great and traditional messages. The magazine, *Our Firm Foundation*, is super and I really enjoy the focus of revival and repentance in preparation for the second coming of our Lord. I think that the "Glimpses of the Pioneers" is very good reading.

JS - Wisconsin

✉ You are doing God's work the way He expects His children to do it in the last days.

I am grateful for your service. I am praying for people like you. You all are chosen of God.

ESS - India

✉ I enjoy the historical information about the Seventh-day Adventist church's early history. I especially enjoy the pioneers' commitment to the cause and Mrs. White's writings.

They encourage me and feed me spiritually.

EL - Nevada

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