

Our Firm Foundation

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You Are *Bought*
With A Price:

The Position &
Responsibility of
a True Educator
Part 2

*A Prisoner in Bonds,
Part 1*

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Editorial

Joe Olson



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

Do We Hate Sin?

And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years....” Revelation 20:2.

“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison....” Revelation 20:7.

Six times the “thousand years” is mentioned in Revelation, and all in chapter 20. Once each time in verses 2 through 7. The first time and the last time specifically refer to Satan being bound. In the first he is bound a thousand years; in the last he is loosed from his bounds after the thousand years.

The other texts here that refer to the thousand years are that the rest of the dead, or the wicked, are not alive for a thousand years and that they cannot be deceived during that time, and that the righteous live and reign with Christ during this thousand-year period.

When I look at it like that, it makes it a lot easier to explain what and how the devil is bound for this one thousand year period. His “prison” is a place where there are no people. It is “bottomless” because there is no end or bottom to it. The people are all gone, both the righteous and the wicked. There is nowhere for him to go to not be bound, so-to-speak, making his “pit” bottomless or endless.

He has spent the last 6,000 years doing nothing but plotting and working against Jesus Christ and His kingdom. Day in and day out, it has been a constant swirl of activity designed to de-

stroy humanity and thereby hurt the Father and Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Now all of humanity is dead or gone. He has actually, at least partially, gotten his wish. He has seen to it that all of humanity--all that he was able to get, anyway--is dead. The only ones still alive are not there, though; they are in heaven with God.

For one thousand years, Satan gets to contemplate what he has done and what the effects have been: utter destruction, utter chaos and complete ruin. **This** is his kingdom and the results of his way. This is what not following God causes. This is what Jesus had been trying to warn not only him but all the unfallen angels and Adam and Eve about. Self and selfishness leads to desolation. It is the **only** end result. Nothing ends up surviving but you, and then you want to die because you are the only one left.

Self leads to a complete and utter miserableness. There is no desire for life, and to die would be a welcome outcome. Our Lord knows this already, but we humans have been learning it for 6,000 years. And how much longer do we need to see the outworking of self and selfish principles? Thankfully, the Lord has given us a little more time to see it.

You see, evil is not just something we do, as in sinning; it is what we are. We must change from being evil to good, unrighteous to righteous. Paul said it another way:

“Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” Romans 8:21.

Paul goes on to say that corrupt, fleshly people cannot be allowed in heaven:

“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” 1 Corinthians 15:50.

Jesus Himself made it very clear about fleshly, or non-spirit-led people:

“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” John 6:63.

Lucifer was “Spirit-led” as long as he listened to and heeded the words of God. The words of God *are* spirit and *are* life. But when we do not heed the words of God, we become satanic or evil. And evil always persecutes the righteous.

“But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.” Galatians 4:29.

Soon however, evil or Satan will be bound. There will be no one to persecute, to tempt, to annoy. Soon his 1,000 years of being alone will begin.

And soon, our ability to choose will be over. Let us choose the right while there is still time, choose to listen to and heed God’s word, to choose God over self, and thereby inherit the kingdom of the righteous!

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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. —*Editor*

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You Are Bought With A Price:

The “Penalty Death”—Part 1

**If Jesus paid the penalty,
then He had to have died
the “penalty death.”**

Barry J. Mellor

“Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts.” Zechariah 13:7.

This is the sword of divine wrath which was to pierce the Sin-bearer and slay the Lamb, God’s “fellow” who became a “man” in order for it to be possible that He could die the death which the law demands. That death is the second death.

Throughout His life on earth, Jesus crucified fallen human nature. All the clamors of fallen human desires and appetites He held in subjection to the principles of the Godhead’s Holy Law. A union of humanity and divinity, He bore our fallen humanity to the cross—having become sin for us.

He was the embodiment of obedience and law-keeping, yet, in becoming sin for us, He bore the full and final penalty for lawbreaking. That penalty is eternal death—often called the second death. Only Jesus could and has come back from that abyss.

Fallen humanity, which had become inclined to serve Satan, is crucified in Jesus. In Jesus we see perfect obedience and a perfect penalty for disobedience—both expressions of God’s character. His law of love and His penalty of justice both hung on the

cross. The cross cancels out neither, just as the cross does not cancel out Jesus. Rather, it draws all men to see God as He really is so that they might turn and be saved, that they might come to know the one true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. Jesus overcame him who has the “power of sin and death.” Jesus overcame death by faith.

Jesus a Unique Creation

In the Baker Letter (*Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 13, p. 19) we have been warned not to make Jesus “altogether such an one as ourselves.” We are “born of the will of the flesh.” Jesus, however, at His incarnation had as His earthly progenitor the Holy Spirit; He was born of a woman, in accordance with the will of God. He was born “with a sanctified human will.” *Signs of the Times*, October 29, 1894. When Jesus was “born of a woman, made under the law” (“under the law” means subject to the law and its penalty), a new creature came into existence such as has never before existed in all of creation. Jesus was a union of humanity and divinity, of creature and Creator. Just as Adam was a unique creation, just so was Jesus. As the second Adam He stands at the head of a totally new line of beings. Jesus, the second Adam,



unlike all previous creations, was not “spoken” into existence; neither was He “formed of the dust,” to then have life breathed into a body of clay. No! Jesus, the totally new and unique being (when He became a man) was “born of a woman,” accepting humanity in its fallen condition. Fittingly scripture refers to Him as the “only-begotten of the Father;” fittingly He is referred to in scripture as the “Son of God” and the “Son of man—a union of humanity and divinity.

**As the second Adam,
He stands at the head of
a totally new line of beings.**



Let us never forget the Holy Spirit's role in Christ's transition to becoming a man. Jesus was born of the Spirit. Jesus spelled out to Nicodemus the condition on which those of us who are born of the 'will of the flesh' can become sons and daughters of God: namely, we have to be 'born again' also of the Holy Spirit. We have to become a union of humanity and divinity. Why?—Because this fallen nature, this "flesh and blood," cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Divinity, on the other hand, "owns" the kingdom of God. (Remember what Jesus promised the victorious redeemed. He promised that He would give them to "sit down on His throne, even as He is set down with His Father on His throne." That is

how closely humanity and divinity will be united throughout eternity).

Jesus had to assume our human nature in order to be able to die! Divinity cannot die. He had to assume our fallen human nature in order to "reach us where we are." Fallen humanity was separated from God; indeed, it is "enmity against God" It "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be;" it is "dead in trespass and sins." In our fallen humanity Jesus "became sin for us." By uniting our humanity to the divinity of the Godhead, Jesus bridged the gulf of separation caused by sin. He bore sin into the grave. Fallen human nature died, never to rise again! Glorified human nature, eternally

united to divinity, rose from Joseph's tomb. Christ's victory was in bearing sin to death, and through death He condemned sin in the flesh. This death cannot be the first death. This has to be the "penalty of the law" type of death—the second death—for sin "shall not rise up the second time."

**Two Depictions of Eternal Death
(both of which answer
to the "penalty.")**

The second or eternal death, which is the penalty of the law, is not always consciously experienced. After the millennium many of the lost will go through extreme rigors of torment as a

reward for the deeds done in the body, and then finally pass under the penalty of the law—the eternal death. Others will go into oblivion without undergoing these torments because of their complete ignorance of things godly.

The First Group

“I saw that some were quickly destroyed, while others suffered longer. They were punished according to the deeds done in the body. Some were many days consuming, and just as long as there was a portion of them unconsumed, all the sense of suffering remained. Said the angel, ‘The worm of life shall not die; their fire shall not be quenched as long as there is the least particle for it to prey upon.’

“Satan and his angels suffered long. Satan bore not only the weight and punishment of his own sins [God’s vengeance], but also of the sins of the redeemed host, which had been placed upon him; and he must also suffer for the ruin of souls which he had caused. Then I saw that Satan and all the wicked host were consumed [the “penalty death”], and the justice of God was satisfied. . . .

“They have died an everlasting death. They are never to have a resurrection. . . .” *Early Writings*, 294-295.

The Second Group

“I saw that the slave master will have to answer for the soul of his slave whom he has kept in ignorance; and the sins of the slave will be visited upon the master. God cannot take to heaven the slave who has been kept in ignorance and degradation, knowing nothing of God or the Bible, fearing nothing but his master’s lash, and holding a lower position than the brutes. But He does the best thing for him that a compassionate God can do. He permits him to be as if he had not been [eternal non-existence], while the master must endure the seven last plagues [obviously still-living slave owners] and then come up in the second resurrection and suffer the second, most awful death.” *Early Writings*, 276.

The above two quotes illustrate two different methods whereby God applies the ‘penalty’ of the law to different groups of sinners. Each of the groups described are law-breakers and have incurred the ‘penalty,’ which is eternal death or non-existence. However, God administers the penalty differently, in

accordance with His divine judgment and wisdom.

The “Penalty Death” versus “Vengeance”

The “penalty death” is not just the return of the breath of life to God Who gave it, but is also the irrevocable termination by God of any sustaining grace, thereby rendering such individual to a state of eternal lifelessness, with any remaining matter to be finally purged with fire so as to leave no physical impurity to continue into the “world made new.” It therefore follows that experiencing the “penalty death” cannot be compared to experiencing the first death (or “sleep”) which is, in fact, only the termination of a probationary lifespan—itsself given in grace by God to Adam’s descendants, that they might have opportunity to choose life.

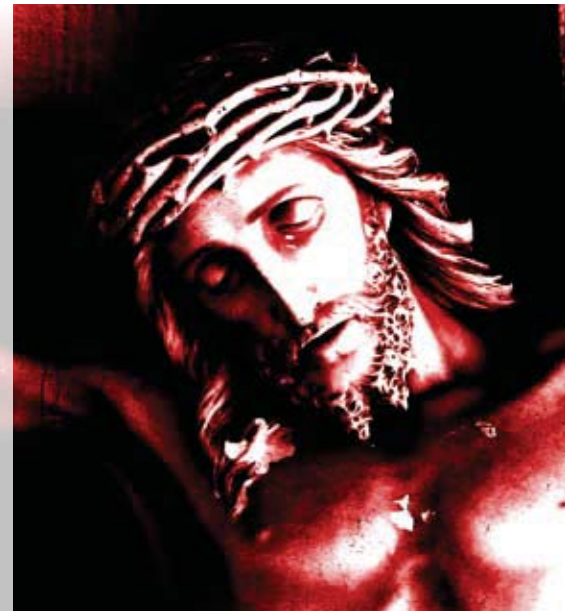
The “Vengeance” of God

To argue, therefore, that some men experiencing the first death are not always conscious of their dying (dying in their sleep, etc.) so therefore they don’t “taste death” is irrelevant as an argument, because the “penalty” death which the wicked will experience is simply nonexistence. God’s “vengeance,” on the other hand, is of a totally different order and occurs in a dimension we can barely conceive of, the details of which we just read. This is God’s sustained wrath, as opposed to His sustaining grace. This is an aspect of God’s justice and vengeance against the horrors of sin. And when it is over, it is over eternally. Thank God!

As we have just seen, according to Inspiration, not all the lost will receive the same punishment. Some will suffer terrible agonies of guilt and despair and vain regret; others will expire swiftly, snuffed out as though they had never been. But ALL will die the second death, which is the ultimate, final and complete penalty of the law and which is exacted for transgression.

The Experience of Jesus

Jesus suffered the uttermost agonies of the worst of sinners and paid the ultimate “penalty:” “It was not alone by dying on the cross that Christ accomplished His work of saving men. The ignominy and suffering [including the sense of His Father’s abhorrence of



sin—which He had become for us] and humiliation was a part of His mission.” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, 1147.

Jesus bridged the gulf of separation caused by sin. He bore sin into the grave. Fallen human nature died, never to rise again!

Satan did his worst to inflict unjustified suffering on the spotless Son of God. God will inflict justified suffering on Satan and his followers in the lake of fire.

“His love for the fallen race, His desire to save them, was so great that He took upon Himself the wrath of His Father, and consented to suffer the penalty of that transgression which plunged guilty man in degradation. He bore the sins of man in His own body.” *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 482.

We need to remember that the body of Jesus that went into the grave is not the body that came out. He came forth from the grave with a glorified body. “Christ took with Him to the heavenly courts His glorified humanity.” *Ministry of Healing*, 421.

Vengeance and Wages

Satan will eventually die the second death for his own sin—even if he had never been able to get another being to follow him in rebellion.

Spirit beings do not need to eat of the tree of life in order to keep living—even though they are not divine—yet they too were and are subject to probation. (We

are told in *Patriarchs & Prophets*, 53: “Like the angels, the dwellers in Eden had been placed upon probation, . . .” We are also told “in order to possess an endless existence, man must continue to partake of the Tree of Life. Deprived of this, his vitality would gradually diminish until life should become extinct.” *Ibid.*, 60. In *Testimonies to Ministers*, 143, God’s messenger informed us “man was dependent upon the Tree of Life for immortality.”

Neither Adam, who before sin had eaten of the tree, nor any of his descendants ever lived to the one thousand year mark after being deprived of access to the tree of life. On the other hand, Satan and his demons have had no access, either. By the close of the millennium, they will have had no access for 7000 plus years. Their probation closed while in heaven, yet they have to be destroyed by a direct action on God’s part. Clearly their existence is not dependant on the Tree of Life as mankind is.”)

Satan closed his probation in heaven before he was cast out. Man closes his probation—in most cases—at the end of his earthly life. The close of mortal probation—that which man calls “death” and the Bible indicates as the “first death”—Jesus called simply a “sleep,” as opposed to the warning against the “second death.” Matthew 9:24; John 11:11-13. This “sleep” (the first death) is not and never was the “wages of sin;” it is simply the close of that probationary period allotted to man in which he is given opportunity to choose “so great salvation” as offered by God.

Those who believe that Jesus died the first death after having “tasted death for every man” in the Garden of Gethsemane go on to say, therefore, that Satan dies the second death on behalf of those who have confessed and forsaken their sins. If that were so, then he (Satan) would be their sin bearer and Satan’s death would be what saves the righteous.

Those who believe that Jesus died the first death after having “tasted death for every man” in the Garden of Gethsemane go on to say, therefore, that Satan dies

the second death on behalf of those who have confessed and forsaken their sins. If that were so, then he (Satan) would be their sin bearer and Satan’s death would be what saves the righteous. But what justice would be served in Satan dying the second death for the sins of the righteous, when he was going to die the second death anyway for his own sinful rebellion? Do we think that God, the righteous judge, would see any justice in that?

Confessed Sins Put Upon Azazel

“But!” you ask. “Doesn’t scripture teach that the confessed sins that have been transferred to the sanctuary through confession and the medium of Christ’s blood—doesn’t scripture teach that these sins will one day be transferred to Azazel, the scapegoat, at Christ’s finalization of the antitypical day-of-atonement work in the heavenly Sanctuary—when the Sanctuary is finally cleansed of all confessed sin?” Yes! That sin is returned to the author of sin and will be destroyed, together with Satan, when sin is destroyed root (Satan) and branch (Satan’s followers and their evil deeds, as well as the evil deeds committed by the righteous while they were still “sold under sin”). This destruction is the purging of the universe and this planet of the malignant evil of sin. This destruction, though, is an act of mercy, but not the total punishment. It is the “wages of sin,” but not the “vengeance of God”!

There are those, the prophet declares, who in this life have been so degraded by slavery or other circumstances that they are never raised to life after this probationary life is over, but will simply be as though they had never been (i.e., non-existent, which is ultimately the same as the second death. See *Early Writings*, 276). Is that mercy or vengeance? Clearly that is mercy, and the second death of the wicked and the death of Satan himself is an act of mercy and not vengeance! The lake of fire is God’s vengeance. It is the suffering experienced by Satan, his angels and the wicked whilst being consumed in the lake of fire that constitutes God’s vengeance. See *Early Writings*, 294. This is the vengeance cried out for from the “blood of Abel” and from the “souls beneath the altar.” Indeed, from the martyrs of all ages. “Vengeance

is Mine,” saith the Lord, and He will execute vengeance on all them that live ungodly for all their wicked works.

Jesus had to assume our human nature in order to be able to die! Divinity cannot die.

But who paid the penalty, the “wages of sin,” for the sins of the righteous? Jesus! “None but Christ could redeem fallen man from the curse of the law and bring him again into harmony with Heaven. Christ would take upon Himself the guilt and shame of sin—sin so offensive to a holy God that it must separate the Father and His Son.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 63.

And what is the curse of the Law? Its penalty! What is the penalty for sin? Death! (The “curse” of the Law). Does the first death (sleep—a close of probationary life) or eternal death constitute the penalty? Yes, it is eternal death that is the penalty.

If Jesus paid the penalty, then He had to have died the “penalty death.” God’s prophet makes it abundantly clear which death is the penalty for sin: “Soon they [the wicked] will receive the reward of their doings, the death that is the wages of sin. . . .” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 220. “In dying, He condemned the originator of sin and disloyalty to suffer the penalty of sin—eternal death.” [What did God’s prophet just tell us the penalty for sin is? “Eternal death”—otherwise known as the second death.] *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 213.

These two above quotations clarify forever what the penalty of sin is. There are more, however: “God allowed His own Son to be put to death in order to answer the penalty of the transgression of the law. . . .” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 253. That penalty can never be merely the “sleep” that ends probationary life. Over and over the prophet reiterates that Jesus paid the “penalty” of sin for us. *To be continued.*



Barry J. Mellor of Tennessee has been variously a sailor, entomologist’s assistant, clerk, auto technician (qualified), student, mission farm manager and business economics lecturer, town mayor, farmer, maintenance man and lifestyle counselor (self supporting), builders’ carpenter, church company leader, and preacher.

The Position and Responsibility of a True Educator

Part 2

Ellen G. White



What is taught and how it is taught affect lives for eternity.

Learning Chaff or Wheat?

Essential Studies.

There is nothing so ennobling and invigorating as a study of the great themes which concern our eternal life. Let students seek to grasp these God-given truths; let them seek to measure these precious things, and their minds will expand and grow strong in the effort. But a mind crowded with a mass of matter it will never be able to use, is a mind dwarfed and enfeebled, because only put to the task of dealing with commonplace material. It has not been put to the task of considering the high, elevated disclosures coming from God.

The Bible must be made the foundation for all study. Individually we must learn from this Lesson-book which God has given us, the condition of the salvation of our souls; for it is the only book that tells

us what we must do in order to be saved. Not only this, but from it strength may be received for the intellect. The many books which education is thought to embrace, are misleading, a deception and a delusion. "What is the chaff to the wheat?" Satan is now stirring up the minds of men to furnish to the world literature which is of a cheap, superficial order, but which fascinates the mind, and fastens it in a network of his contrivance. After reading these books, the mind lives in an unreal world, and the life, so far as usefulness is concerned, is as barren as a fruitless tree. The brain is intoxicated, making it impossible for the eternal realities, which are essential for the present and the future, to be pressed home. A mind educated to feed upon trash is unable to see in the Word of God the beauty that is there.

Nature, Bible, Basic Subjects

Every child may gain knowledge as Jesus did, -from the works of nature and the pages of God's holy Word. As we seek to become acquainted with our heavenly Father through His Word, holy angels will come near, our minds will be strengthened, our character will be elevated and refined, and we shall become more like our Saviour. And as we behold the





beautiful and grand in nature, our affections will go out after God, while the spirit is awed, the soul is invigorated, by coming in contact with the Infinite through His works.

As divine truth is revealed in Holy Writ, so it is reflected, as from a mirror, in the face of nature; and through His creation we become acquainted with the Creator. And so the book of nature becomes a great lesson-book, which instructors who are wise can use, in connection with the Scriptures, to guide lost sheep back to the fold of God. As the works of God are studied, the Holy Spirit flashes conviction into the mind. It is not the conviction which logical reasoning produces; but unless the mind has become too dark to know God, the eye too dim to see Him, the ear too dull to hear His voice, a deeper meaning is grasped, and the sublime, spiritual truths of the written Word are impressed on the heart.

It is a mistake to put into the hands of the youth books which puzzle and confuse them, a study of which can not fail to confound things in their minds. The reason given for this study is that the teacher has passed over the same ground, and the student must follow. But if teachers were receiving light and wisdom from the divine Teacher, they would look at these things in a very different way. They would measure the relative importance of the things to be learned in school; the common, essential branches of education would be more thoroughly taught, and

the Word of God would be honored and esteemed as the bread sent down from heaven, which sustains all spiritual life, binding the human agent with Christ in God.

Godless Science and Infidel Authors

Cold philosophical speculations, and scientific research in which God is not acknowledged, are a positive injury. And the evil is aggravated when, as is often the case, books placed in the hands of the young, accepted as authority, and depended upon in their education, are from authors avowedly infidel. Throughout the thoughts presented by these men, their poisonous sentiments are interwoven. The study of such books is like handling black coals; a student can not be undefiled in mind who thinks along the line of skepticism.

Rightly understood, science and the written Word agree, and each sheds light on the other.

Yet the study of the sciences is not to be neglected. Books must be used for this purpose; but they should be in harmony with the Bible, for that is the standard. Books of this character should take the place of many of those now in the hands of students. God is the author of science. Scientific research opens to the mind vast fields of thought and information, enabling us to see God in His created works. Ignorance may try to support skepticism by appeals to science; but instead of doing this, science contributes fresh evidences of the wisdom and power of God. Rightly understood, science and the written Word agree, and each sheds light on the other. Together they lead us to God, by teaching us something of the wise and beneficent laws through which He works.

Other Important Studies

Moral philosophy, the study of the Scriptures, and physical training should be combined with the stud-



ies usually pursued in schools.

Music forms a part of God's worship in the courts above, and we should endeavor, in our songs of praise, to approach as nearly as possible to the harmony of the heavenly choirs. The proper training of the voice is an important feature in education, and should not be neglected.

Students should be taught how to breathe, how to read and speak so that the strain will not come on the throat and lungs but on the abdominal muscles.

"Know Thyself" Physically

Physical culture is an essential part of all right methods of education. The young need to be taught how to develop their physical powers, how to preserve these powers in the best condition, and how to make them useful in the practical duties of life. Many think that these things are no part of school work; but this is a mistake. The lessons necessary to fit one for practical usefulness should be taught to every child in the home and to every student in the schools.

Every student should understand how to take care of himself so as to preserve the best possible condition of health, resisting feebleness and disease....

It is well that physiology is introduced into the common schools as a branch of education; all children should study it. And then parents should see to it that practical hygiene is added. This will make their knowledge of physiology of decided benefit.

The work of physical training, begun in the home, should be carried on in the school. It is the design of the Creator that man shall know himself; but too often in the pursuit of knowledge this design is lost

sight of. Students devote years to different educational lines; they become engrossed in the study of the sciences and of things in the natural world; they are intelligent on most subjects, but they do not become acquainted with themselves. They look upon the delicate human organism as something that will take care of itself; and that which is in the highest degree essential,--a knowledge of their own bodies,--is neglected.

Every student should understand how to take care of himself so as to preserve the best possible condition of health, resisting feebleness and disease; if from any cause disease does come, or accidents do occur, he should know how to meet ordinary emergencies without calling upon a physician and taking his poisonous drugs.

There are times when Greek and Latin scholars are needed. Some must study these languages. But the study of Greek and Latin is of far less consequence to ourselves, to the world, and to God, than the thorough study and use of the whole human machinery.

Honor in All Classes of Work

There is science in the humblest kind of work, and if all would thus regard it, they would see nobility in labor. Heart and soul are to be put into work of any kind; then there is cheerfulness and efficiency. In agriculture or mechanical occupations men may give evidence to God that they appreciate His gift in the physical powers, and the mental faculties as well. Let the educated ability be employed in devising improved methods of work. This is just what the Lord wants. There is honor in any class of work that needs to be done. Let the law of God be made the standard of action, and it ennobles and sanctifies all labor. Faithfulness in the discharge of every duty makes the work noble, and reveals a character that God can approve.

Teaching Methods

Methods.

There should be more faithful teachers, who will strive to make students understand their lessons, not by explaining everything themselves, but by letting the students explain thoroughly every passage which



they read. Let the inquiring minds of the students be respected. Treat their inquiries with respect. To skim over the surface will do little good. Thoughtful investigation and earnest, taxing study are required to comprehend it.

Every faculty, every attribute, with which the Creator has endowed us, is to be employed for His glory and for the uplifting of our fellowmen.

When students enter the school to obtain an education, the instructors should endeavor to surround them with objects of the most pleasing, interesting character, that the mind may not be confined to the dead study of books. All schools should be located, so far as possible, where the eye will rest upon the things of nature instead of masses of buildings. The ever-shifting scenery will gratify the taste and control the imagination. Here is a living teacher, instructing constantly.

All narrowness should be avoided. Let teachers so far unbend from their dignity as to be one with the children in their exercises and amusements, without leaving the impression that you are watching them, and without going round and round in stately dignity, as tho you were like a uniformed soldier on guard over them. Your very presence gives a mold to their course of action.

Every faculty, every attribute, with which the Creator has endowed us, is to be employed for His glory and for the uplifting of our fellowmen. And in this employment is found its purest, noblest, and happiest exercise.

Were this principle given the attention which its importance demands, there would be a radical change in some of the current methods of education. Instead of appealing to pride and selfish ambition, kindling

a spirit of emulation, teachers would endeavor to awaken the love for goodness and truth and beauty,-- to arouse the desire for excellence. The student would seek the development of God's gifts in himself, not to excel others, but to fulfil the purpose of the Creator and to receive His likeness.

All May Advance

Results.

While a good education is a great benefit if combined with consecration in its possessor, still those who do not have the privilege of gaining high literary attainments need not think they can not advance in intellectual and spiritual life. If they will make the most

of the knowledge they have, if they will seek to gather something to their store every day, and will overcome all perverseness of temper through the studious cultivation of Christlike traits of character, God will open channels of wisdom to them, and it may be said of them, as it was said of old concerning the Hebrew children, God gave them wisdom and understanding. There is

no limit to the usefulness of those who put self to one side, make room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon their hearts, and live lives wholly sanctified to the service of God, enduring the necessary discipline imposed by the Lord without complaining or fainting by the way.

Signs of the Times, March 14, 1900.



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

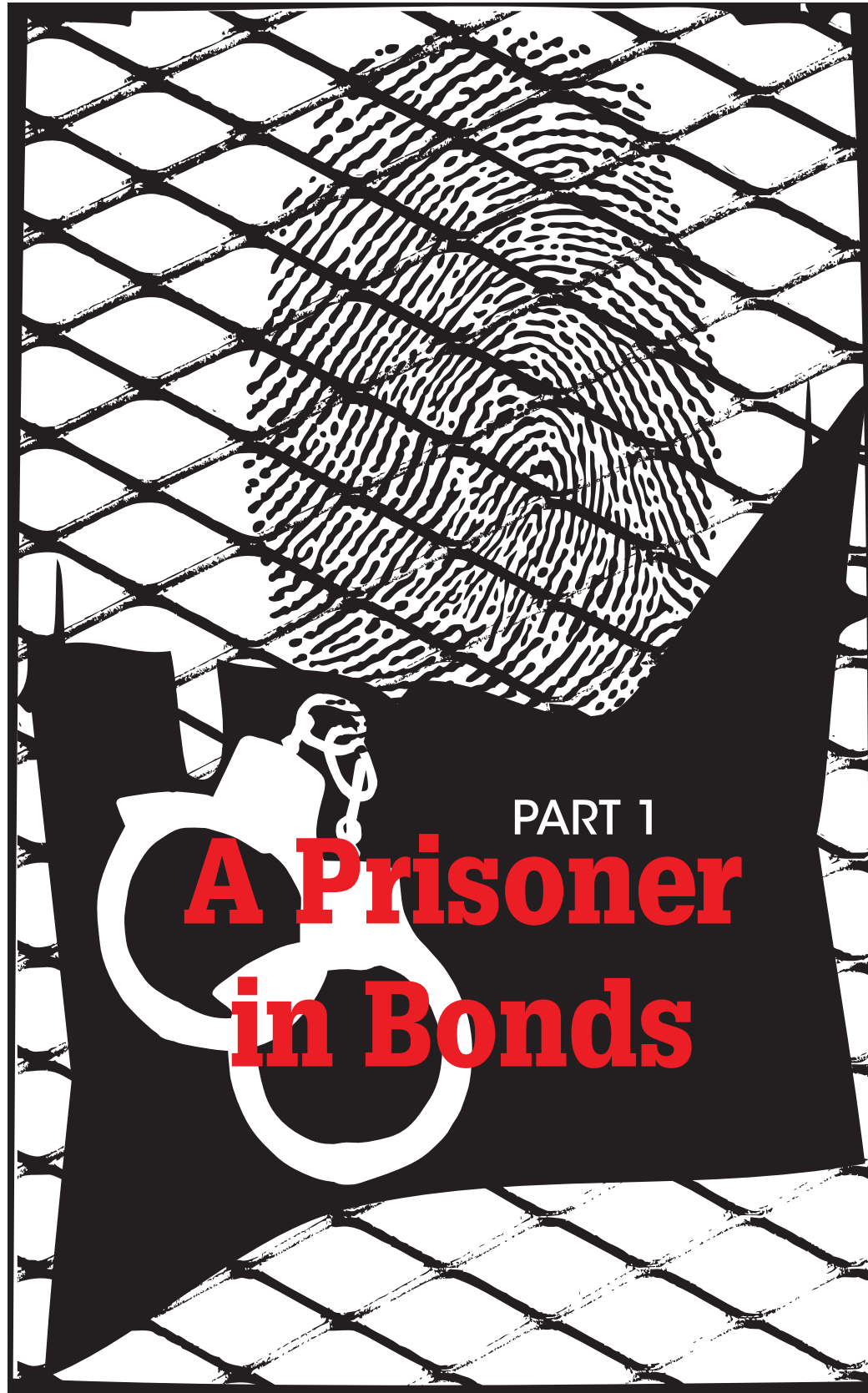
messenger of God. To this day, her counsels are an incalculable blessing to God's people around the world.



November 22, 2006. Franklin Morris wrote: I received this email from my former roommate and friend Sung Hoon, and I was really blessed. [Franklin and Sung Hoon were roommates at Hartland College. Then-twenty-five-year-old Sung Hoon graduated in summer 2006 then returned home to South Korea.] South Koreans must serve in the military. If they don't, they go to prison for three years. Sung Hoon's family members had to sign a paper for him to come to the US. If he didn't go back, then something would happen to them. I want you to read this email, and pray for Sung Hoon. I was really thinking about my stance with God as I read it. [What follows is the email Franklin mentioned, followed by a series of emails from or about Sung Hoon.]

A Conscientious Objector

This is Sung Hoon. Dear Hartland family, Just let you know that by God's grace, I'm safely arrived at home. Yesterday morning, I reported to the military department and expressed my conviction. As soon as they heard me about the conscientious objection, they asked me if I was a Jehovah's Witness. I told them that I'm a Seventh-day Adventist. They asked me what the difference was. I told them that Jehovah's Witnesses do not want to do anything with the army and the government, but the Seventh-day Adventists are willing to serve the country as long as it doesn't contradict with the will of God. And I asked them if they can help me to serve the country without having to carry arms and without having to break the Sabbath. They told me that even though they want to help me, they have to follow the law. They told me that there are only two options for me. Any other options? They said no. I then told them that I will have to choose prison than to compromise my conviction. They tried to persuade me one more time: "We can help you keep the Sabbath. Other Seventh-day Adventists carry arms. Why do you have to choose this path? Remember, you will have a red



PART 1

A Prisoner in Bonds

mark on your name rest of your life. Just serve two years carrying arms like others do. That's wiser."

Well, it might be wiser to the eyes of men, but not in the eyes of God. My conviction is not based upon what other people do. "I'll not bear arms. I want to be faithful to my country, but I can't compromise my faith. If there's no other option than prison, I will have to choose prison."

That was the end. I had to write a written statement of my conviction and that I'm willing to take whatever punishment the law requires. After I signed the paper, they told me that policemen will come to my house at the end of December. They will then decide the length of the imprisonment. It's only by God's grace and through your prayers that I was able to stand alone up to this point. Please continue to pray for me—not for a lighter burden, but for a broader shoulder. Thank you for all the kindness and love you all have shown to me. It's very different out here. I will forever cherish each one of you. God bless, and I will keep

**Sung Hoon Kang,
Sung Hyun Kang,
Joong Ho Shin,
Ju Hyun Cho,
Franklin Morris:**

**A series of emails
collected and submitted
by Franklin Morris;
used by permission.**

**A testimony
of steadfast
faith and
loyalty.**

in touch and let you know what's happening.

December 17, 2006. Greetings from Korea again! I just came back from the police station. By God's grace, everything went well. The head of the police station seemed very kind and courteous. He asked me several questions and he wrote in the statement that I'm not trying to avoid the requirements of the country, but willing to obey the law of the country as long as it doesn't contradict with God's law. He asked me if there was no change in my convictions. I told them that my convictions are still the same. He said, "I can see that you are not trying to avoid the army for no reason. I will see if I can help you with indictment without detention." But he told me that it's up to the district attorney to make the final decision. If the district attorney decides this case to be indictment without detention, I can stay home at least till the final sentence is made. I praise God for softening the heart of this man. Please continue to pray for me that God's will be done in my life. These are the promises God has given me this morning before I went to the police station:

Isa 43:1–2 "But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

Joshua 1:9 "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

Isa 41:8–10 "But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee,

and not cast thee away. Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

He is faithful to His promises. He indeed was with me and strengthened me and helped me.

Here's another news to share with you. Few days ago, UN made a comment about two conscientious objectors (JW) in South Korea who appealed to UN. UN has requested to the South Korean government to repay for their mental anguish they've gone through in the prison. So it seems like there is a possibility of taking a different course towards the conscientious objectors from now on. Or at least there's a possibility of being more open to the conscientious objectors. When I first heard the news, I knew God's hand was moving. I knew it was an answer to your prayers. Wherever He leads, I know that will be the happiest place for me to be...

"Since they cannot always have the guidance and protection of parents and guardians, they need to be trained to self-reliance and self-control. They must be taught to think and act from conscientious principle." Messages to Young People, 379.

January 1, 2007. Happy New Year! God has given us another new year! A year closer to our Home! I just want to bring you some more updates about my situation. First of all, I've received a letter from the court that I can stay home until the court date. I know that was the direct answer to your prayers! Praise the Lord!

More interesting things have been happening here in Korea. Few days ago, the president of Korea made a speech that stirred the whole country. In that speech, he insisted that by March 2007, he will shorten the length of military service, and also he will provide substitute service for conscientious objectors. I praised God as soon as I



heard that news.

In the morning worship following morning God gave me these words:

Psalm 105:1–2 “O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.”

Amazingly, the devotion ended with these words from *Steps to Christ*, p. 125:

“We cannot but look forward to new perplexities in the coming conflict, but we may look on what is past as well as on what is to come, and say, ‘Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.’ As thy days, so shall thy strength be.’ Deuteronomy 33:25. The trial will not exceed the strength that shall be given us to bear it. Then let us take up our work just where we find it, believing that whatever may come, strength proportionate to the trial will be given.”

There were tears in my eyes, and those words were engraved in my heart. They gave me much comfort. I felt as though God was speaking to me in person. He has done so many things for me in my life. I must make known His deeds among the people. And no matter what’s waiting ahead of me, I know God will give me the strength proportionate to the trial. Praise the Lord!

“Parents, let the instruction you give your children be simple, and be sure that it is clearly understood. The lessons that you learn from the Word you are to present to their young minds so plainly that they cannot fail to understand. By simple lessons drawn from the Word of God and their own experience, you may teach them how to conform their lives to the highest standard. Even in childhood and youth they may learn to live thoughtful, earnest lives that will yield a rich harvest of good.”
Child Guidance, 514.

I will end with this. Some people told me to find an excuse to postpone my court case since the new policy concerning the conscientious objectors

might be pronounced in March. But my parents and I agreed that we shouldn’t rely on arms of flesh (men’s methods). If it is God’s will for me to not go to prison, He is more than able to carry it out His will. He won’t be late for few months or few days or even few seconds! The hardest lesson for us to learn: patiently waiting upon God’s time table. I prayed to God that He will lead my steps and I will humbly follow.

Then yesterday, in the newspaper, there was an article about the same topic. It said that the decision will be pronounced in January instead of March! We serve an awesome and living God! I’m still not sure how the court case will go with all these changing policies, but one thing I’m sure of is that God is in control. Continue to pray for me that God’s will be done in this situation. I pray this update has brought comfort and blessings to you.

A Move and a Court Date

March 18, 2007. “Since my visit to the police station two months ago, I’ve been patiently waiting for the court date. And for two months I hadn’t heard anything at all. Meanwhile, I’ve been studying the Bible intensely, and reading many precious books. God opened up the door and by God’s grace and wisdom and your prayers, the church youth group on Sabbath afternoons was revived. About 8–10 young people joined the Conversion and Righteousness by Faith studies. The response was great. Also, their parents were telling me that they notice a change in their children. Simple truths are precious jewels to many young people out here.

At the end of last month, my [pastor] dad was assigned to another church and our family has moved to another city.... It’s the biggest church in this conference and has a huge youth group. Then, last Friday (March 2), I finally received the court date. It’s going to be on Wednesday, March 21, 2007.... I solicit your prayers.

Here’s an interesting thought. I found out that this new church has a prison ministry in the nearby prison. There are about 12 baptized SDAs in that prison right now as a result of this ministry. But the prison allows only one visitation a month. These souls are searching and hungering for the truth. They keep the Sabbath in their cells and witness to other inmates and also use letters to witness to their families, and some of them have become Adventists, too. Who knows if God may send me to this nearby prison. Could it be that God was holding the court date and directed our family to this new church? I’m not sure at this moment, but wherever God leads, I know that He never makes mistakes and will be the best and the only way to go.

I will email you after the court case, if I can, and tell you of the decision on my case. Again, please continue to pray for me that God’s plan will be accomplished in my life and He will carry me through and many other souls will be won to the kingdom.

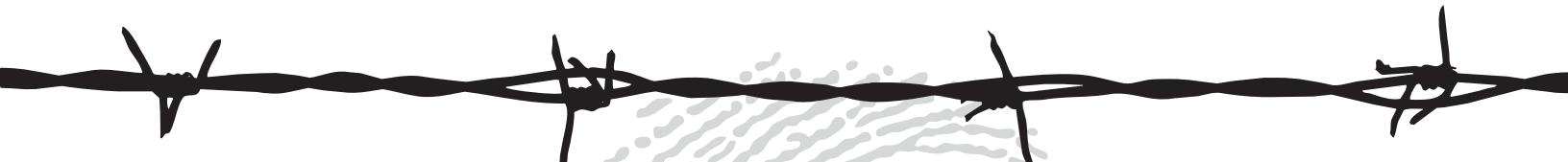
Sung Hoon’s Trial

March 21, 2007. Here are the details of my trial: When I woke up this morning and opened up the Bible, He gave me this promise:

“I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about. Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God.” Psalm 3:5–7.

Again, what an awesome promise He has given me! With that, I read many emails that you’ve sent to me. I don’t know how I can thank you enough for all your encouraging words, Bible promises and prayers. As I read through, tears filled my eyes and gave me a great courage.

There were two trials before mine. The first one got 15-year sentence in jail; the second one got confiscation and \$15,000 fine, plus a one-and-a-half year sentence in jail. When my turn came, to be honest, I was little bit nervous. But your prayers gave



me much courage, and even though I didn't have any earthly private lawyer, I knew I had the heavenly Lawyer, Jesus Christ, defending silently for me.

They accused me of avoiding the army requirement without any justifiable reason. I told them that I have no desire to avoid the duty to the country. I told them of my religious convictions and that I'm willing to do an alternative service, if possible. I realized that all of the officers were very open and kind. I could see the Holy Spirit has already softened the hearts of those officers.

The judge said that he understands my religious convictions, but by the current law of the country, it's not a justifiable reason for not bearing arms. He expressed that it's very unfortunate that the current law doesn't allow any alternative service for the conscientious objectors. He expressed that he's sorry for me.

According to the law, they could give me anywhere between a one-and-a-half year to a three-year sentence. I got a one-and-a-half year sentence, which is the least they could give. They will take me away in two weeks (April 6th).

They asked me if I had any final words. I said, "I love my country and its law. As a God-believing Christian, I don't want to give any idea that Christians don't respect the law of the country. I love and respect the law of the country. I want to be faithful to the duty to the country. But when it contradicts with God's law, Christians must choose God's law rather than the law of the country. And I want you to know that my love for my country and its law, as well as my love for my God, will not change."

They nodded and that was the end of my trial. My mother was in tears—tears of joy and sadness, perhaps. But we all thanked and praised God for His mercy, care and love.

Once again, I want to express my gratitude from the deepest part of my heart for all your prayers, encouraging words and precious Bible promises! God surely has answered your prayers and kept those promises!

Please continue to pray for my

brother, also. After the trial, he went to the army department and wrote a statement that he would not bear arms. Praise the Lord! He asks for your prayers. I don't know when will be his trial, but from looking at my case, it would take at least few months.

I will write you one more time before they take me away.

His Mother's Story

April 22, 2007. Mr. Shin, Dean of Men at Hartland College, wrote: I called Sung Hoon's home this morning and his mother answered the phone. This is what she told me On the day of sentencing, she thought she had about an hour before Sung Hoon's turn to be sentenced so she went out to buy some fruit for him. By the time she returned to court, Sung Hoon was not in sight in the court room and she did not know where he was sent for four days. Because other defendants quickly appealed their sentencing dates, his turn came sooner than she thought...

Several days afterward, his mother found out where he was and visited him. What she saw was a face that she was not used to. Since there was a prison guard who was writing down everything he said, he did not say much other than, "I have experienced a lot of things which I never knew before." He was imprisoned for two weeks with other inmates in that temporary cell to wait for his final room assignment.

On her way back, tears streaming down her face, she prayed, "My Heavenly Father, thank you for Sung Hoon, for he is there to share Your light, Your message to the people who do not know You yet, and to suffer afflictions so that he would become a mighty soldier and worker for you in the future." When she could not do anything for her son who was behind the thick double- or triple-paned glass windows, she could understand the heart of the Father in Heaven after He sent Jesus to us. She thanked God for that experience of knowing Him better.

He has visiting hours 4 times a month for 14 minutes each time. No

outside food is allowed him, but he can purchase food from the shop in the prison. However, it also has to be shared with everyone in his cell, which number varies. The cost of the food is very expensive, and most of the selections include only meat, poultry, and dried fish. He is allowed to write letters once a month for 30 minutes in a designated place, and they are screened before being sent out. He is permitted to receive mail only after it is screened [no phone calls]. Some letters may never reach him depending on the contents. He was allowed to bring his Bible and a few other books into the prison.

"With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world! How soon might the end come—the end of suffering and sorrow and sin!" Maranatha, 122.

Sung Hoon's mother heard this latest news from a friend who visited him recently. One inmate saw his Bible and asked for a Bible Study. This friend said that Sung Hoon's face lit up with a smile when he said that. Praise the Lord! There is a lot to pray for, and be thankful for, despite a horrible situation.

His Brother Responds

April 25, 2007. Sung Hyun, Sung Hoon's older brother who also chose to become a conscientious objector, wrote: Thank you for your encouraging words. We visited him a few days ago and he looked much brighter. He was smiling and had a positive spirit. His sentence has finally been confirmed and he is now officially a prisoner. He was moved to a new room. He said the new one is much better than the previous one, where all kinds of people were together. The new room he was assigned is much more in order and people are more stable. He said that he is going to move his room once more when the department where he is

going to work is decided. It looks like the people who are going to work at the same department will be living together. Most likely they will be the Jehovah's Witness people.

He was having a hard time the first time the first time [the first room] because he is not used to an environment like that, with such rough people around him, and unprotected. But now he is more used to the people there and he is doing much better. I thank you for all the prayers and concerns for my brother...

I am still waiting for the court to contact me, so I do not have any dates [about my own trial] that I can tell you. I have told my brother that you have written me. Thank you again for all your encouragements and kind words. I hope God continues to pour blessing on you.

April 30, 2007. Sung Hoon's brother Sung Hyun again: Thank you again for your encouraging words. My family is trying our best to provide all the material needs for Sung Hoon. We have put some money on his account so that he may use it whenever he needs. We are also providing him with books that he wants to read. There are a limited number, color, and style of clothes that we can give him. I think all we need is your prayers. We tried to buy him some fruits and foods that he can eat ... from the prison store, but, when we visited him last time, he told us that the food hardly got to him. He told us not to buy him anything because he is not getting anything.... He told us that there are some vegetarian dishes there that he can eat. It is not the best, but he is ok with them.

First Impressions

May 2, 2007. Sung Hoon wrote again from prison: Greetings from prison! It has been ten days since I was arrested and put into this prison. It's in the city



that I lived before my family moved. It's about two hours from my house. There are nine people in our cell. There is one Jehovah's Witness.

Everything is new and strange to me. There are many things that I'm not used to. One of the hardest things is to keep my mind on sacred things against all the TV sounds, cursing words, and profane words—especially on Sabbath. It's so different keeping Sabbath by myself. What a blessing it was to keep the Sabbath with brothers and sisters in

Christ! My inmates constantly make fun of me whenever I read the Bible. They mock at me when I pray. On the other side, they ask me lots of questions about the Bible and about God. I see God working in their hearts.

It has not been easy, to be honest. In fact, it has been one of the toughest trials I've ever gone through in my life. But I know that God is using this circumstance to bring out all unchristlike character traits that are deeply embedded in my heart. It's a painful and humiliating process, but I pray that God will not stop to hurt me and cut out all that needs to be removed from my heart... Please keep me in your prayers. I really need them. May God be with all of you!

“Those who are suffering for Christ's sake, who will not yield the truth for error, who, perhaps, are incarcerated within prison walls, these need comfort and encouragement.” Youth Instructor, Aug. 19, 1897.

To Be Continued.



Franklin Morris submitted this from Virginia, where he is a student at Hartland College.

Call for Writers

In view of escalating global political and economic tensions, *Our Firm Foundation* is discontinuing the children's story to create additional space for articles. The magazine has from its inception been a unique forum for God's people worldwide to share their biblical studies and spiritual insights, as well as news articles and other items of interest to Seventh-day Adventists. We invite those with a burden to encourage, uplift, strengthen and/or warn their brothers and sisters to do so in these pages. We are enjoined to spread “by voice and pen” the message of hope and salvation (RH, March 4, 1844). Given the current indicators toward prophetic fulfillment, never has the need for such action been so great.

We solicit articles of various lengths. Shorter ones are welcome, longer ones can appear in more than one issue, but the ideal length is around 2500 words. Articles must be submitted in a Word.doc format, and whenever another person's words or thoughts are used, the author and/or source must be cited. All articles and items selected for an issue are proofread for any spelling or grammar errors prior to publication.

Share your thoughts. Share your studies. Share your faith.

Editor

Love Your Enemies

Clark Floyd

How will we react to those who “despitefully use us,” who persecute us?

Persecution is coming! The Scripture very clearly tells us that “all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” 2 Tim. 3:12. We can look back through the pages of history and see that persecution has always followed God’s people in one form or another.

“Persecution and reproach await all who are imbued with the Spirit of Christ. The character of the persecution changes with the times, but the principle—the spirit that underlies it—is the same that has slain the chosen of the Lord ever since the days of Abel.” *Acts of the Apostles*, 576.

Why God Allows Persecution

God has allowed persecution to come against His people for various reasons. “The righteous are placed in the furnace of affliction, that they themselves may be purified; that their example may convince others of the reality of faith and godliness; and also that their consistent course may condemn the ungodly and unbelieving.” *Great Controversy*, 48.

“In the absence of persecution, there have drifted into our ranks some who appear sound, and their Christianity unquestionable, but who, if persecution should arise, would go out from us.” *Maranatha*, 28.

Persecutors Redeemable

Often we think of ourselves and how we will fare under conditions of persecution, but an important question for the Christian is, “How will we react to those who persecute us?” Do we see our tormentors as enemies only, or do we see the possibilities that God saw in each of us before our conversion? What can we learn from the pages of Scripture?

In the second book of Kings, chapter 21, verse 16, we read: “Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; beside his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing [that which was] evil in the sight of the LORD.”

Ellen White, in commenting on this verse, says: “One of the first to fall was Isaiah, who for over half a century had stood before Judah as the appointed messenger of Jehovah.” *Prophets and Kings*, 382. Thus we can see King Manasseh was one of the worst enemies of God during the larger part of his reign.



Can you imagine the joy Stephen will have
when he sees Saul among God's people
in the first resurrection?

“So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, [and] to do worse than the heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel. And the LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken. Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, And prayed unto him: and he was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he [was] God.” 2 Chron. 33:9-13.

This tyrant, whom many would have never expected to see in heaven, repented near the end of his life and will be in God's kingdom.

King Nebuchadnezzar, another tyrant king, will also be among those finally saved in the kingdom of God, thanks to the faithful witness of Daniel. Not only did he write the fourth chapter of the

book of Daniel, but his final words tell it all. “Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.” Verse 37.

Saul, in New Testament times, was moved upon by the faithful witness of Stephen who “cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge,” as he was being stoned to death by Saul's companions. Acts 7:60. Jesus later, on the road to Damascus, brought total conversion to Saul. Can you imagine the joy Stephen will have when he sees Saul among God's people in the first resurrection?



We must remember who we once were,
how God treated our shortcomings, and how He
wooded us in the midst of them.

The Philippian jailer was moved upon by Paul and Silas because of their love toward him under conditions of persecution, and he and his whole family became baptized converts. See Acts 16.

Again, how are we going to look at those who persecute us or even at those we see as enemies for other reasons?

Giving Love for Hatred

Jesus has given His counsel: “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your

enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” Matt. 5:43, 44.

In referring to the above, Ellen White states: “Many may say, ‘This is a hard commandment; for I want to keep just as far as I can from my enemies.’ But acting in accordance with your own inclination would not be carrying out the principles that our Saviour has given.” *Medical Ministry*, 253.

In thinking on these things, we must remember who we once were, how God treated our shortcomings, and how He wooed us in the midst of them.

“When the believer, in view of all his transgressions, exercises faith in God, believes that he is pardoned, because Christ has died as his sacrifice, he will be so filled with gratitude to God that his tender sympathy will be reaching out to those who, like himself, have sinned and have need of pardon. Pride will find no place in his heart. Such faith as this will be a deathblow to a revengeful spirit.” *Home Missionary*, February 1, 1892.



“It is only the Spirit of God
that gives love for hatred.”

And again, “It is only the Spirit of God that gives love for hatred. To be kind to the unthankful and to the evil, to do good hoping for nothing again, is the insignia of the royalty of heaven, the sure token by which the children of

the Highest reveal their high estate.” *Mount of Blessing*, 75.

Indulgence of Sin is Not Love

But there is a balance that we must acknowledge. “While we are required to be Christlike toward those who are our enemies, we must not, in order to have peace, cover up the faults of those we see in error.” Stephen spoke out strongly while still showing his love for those that were about to stone him. “Jesus, the world’s Redeemer, never purchased peace by covering iniquity, or by anything like compromise. Though His heart was constantly overflowing with love for the whole human race, He was never indulgent to their sins. He was too much their friend to remain silent while they were pursuing a course which would ruin their souls—the souls He had purchased with His own blood.” *Upward Look*, 220.

How Will We React?

Brothers and Sisters, how will we relate to those “who despitefully use us?” Our answer to this will help us realize whether we are truly and totally surrendered to Jesus.

THE KEY: “All who love and fear God will suffer persecution. But Jesus will be near to sustain everyone who is afflicted for the truth’s sake.” *Signs of the Times*, March 3, 1890.

May the Lord be your personal friend and guide through the troublesome times that are coming!



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



Theological Waymarks

Part 5

The King of the North

Rome “Enters,” Religious Liberty and our Definitive Instruction

Dan. 11:41 “He shall enter⁹³⁵ also into the glorious⁶⁶⁴³ land,⁷⁷⁶ and many⁷²²⁷ countries shall be overthrown:³⁷⁸² but these⁴²⁸ shall escape⁴⁴²² out of his hand,⁴⁴⁸⁰, ³⁰²⁷ even Edom,¹²³ and Moab,⁴¹²⁴ and the chief⁷²²⁵ of the children¹¹²¹ of Ammon.”⁹⁵⁹⁸³

“Light must come to the people . . . to give the note of warning, that none may be in ignorance of the purposes of God or the devices of Satan. At the great heart of the work, Satan will use his hellish arts to the utmost. He will seek in every possible way to interpose himself between the people and God, and shut away the light that God would have come to his children. It is his design to keep them in ignorance of what shall come upon the earth. All should be prepared to hear the signal trumpet of the watchman, and be ready to pass the word along the walls of Zion, that the people may prepare themselves for the conflict. The people must not be left to stumble their way along in darkness, not knowing what is before them, and unprepared for the great issues that are coming. There is a work to be done for this time in fitting a people to stand in the day of trouble, and all must act their part in this work. They must be clothed

with the righteousness of Christ, and be so fortified by the truth, that the delusions of Satan shall not be accepted by them as genuine manifestations of the power of God.” *Review and Herald*, December 24, 1889

come upon our people in all parts of the world.” *Ibid.*, 395.

This uniting of America with the papacy is what John in Revelation 16:13-14 and Ellen White refer to as part of the three-fold union. We will soon explain in detail all three entities and their roles in prophetic history. However, it is expedient at this time to discuss the appointed work of the people of God when Rome first “enters,” because the crisis will come upon our people in all parts of the world. The same cause will produce the same effect in all parts of Christendom, and thus this counsel will apply to all of spiritual Israel (His Church). The true people of God around the world must hear the trumpet sounding the warning, calling them to a clear awareness of the nature of the crisis just ahead of them and their responsibilities regarding those events.

We previously witnessed that when the King of the North (the papacy) commences her final onslaught against God’s Church, she will first focus her energies on undermining religious liberty. That will culminate in the union of church and state in America, which will manifest itself in a legislated national Sunday law. That, in turn, will fully resurrect persecution. When



Dan. 11:41 “He shall enter also into the glorious land . . .”

The events of the future have truly been revealed to us. “As America, the land of religious liberty, shall unite with the papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false sabbath, the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 6, 19.

“Foreign nations will follow the example of the United States. Though she leads out, yet the same crisis will

does this event take place? What precipitates this open onslaught which brings about a union of church and state? We are not told, but the issue will be religious liberty—freedom of conscience. Once this event is seen to be taking place, we have clear counsel as to what is to be our work and response.

“The Religious Liberty Work”

“A season of great trial is before us. It becomes us now to use all our capabilities and gifts in advancing the work of God. The powers the Lord has given us are to be used to build up, not to tear down. Those who are ignorantly deceived are not to remain in this condition. The Lord says to His messengers: Go to them and declare unto them what I have said, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear. The time is right upon us when persecution will come to those who proclaim the truth. The outlook is not flattering; but, notwithstanding this, let us not give up our efforts to save those ready to perish, for whose ransom the Prince of heaven offered up His precious life. When one means fails, try another. Our efforts must not be dead and lifeless. As long as life is spared, let us work for God. In all ages of the church God’s appointed messengers have exposed themselves to reproach and persecution for the truth’s sake. But wherever God’s people may be forced to go, even though, like the beloved disciple, they are banished to desert islands, Christ will know where they are and will strengthen and bless them, filling them with peace and joy. Soon there is to be trouble all over the world. It becomes everyone to seek to know God. We have no time to delay.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 9, 227-8.



results of enforcing the observances of the church by civil authority” are chronicled, persecution will then most certainly rear her ugly head. *Great Controversy*, 606. This will pave the way for the third angel’s message. “. . . As the question of enforcing Sunday observance is [being] widely agitated, the event so long doubted and disbelieved is *seen* to be *approaching*, and the third message will produce an effect which it could not have had before.” *Great Controversy*, 606.

It was this very issue of religious liberty that Ellen White said was the commencement of the crisis in 1888 that, had it been permitted to follow through to its conclusion, would have brought on the national Sunday law in America back then:

“The crisis is now upon us. The battle is to be waged between the Christianity of the Bible and the Christianity of human tradition. Is there not a criminal neglect in our present sleepy condition? There must be a decided advance movement among us. We must show to the world that we recognize, in the events that are now taking place in connection with the National Reform movement, the fulfillment of prophecy. That which we have, for the last thirty or forty years,

“It is our duty to do all in our power to avert the threatened danger. We should endeavor to disarm prejudice by placing ourselves in a proper light before the people. We should bring before them the real question at issue, thus interposing the most effectual protest against measures to restrict liberty of conscience.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, 452.

Meeting the Crisis

God, faced with an unready church and perhaps for other reasons known only to Himself, did not allow the event to come to fruition in 1888. But the same crisis will come again, and He in His timing will permit it to come to its evil climax. What are



the implications for a commandment-keeping church? What is to be her response to the crisis? It is a crisis of the same nature that Seventh-day Adventists will be called to meet once again by presenting the present truth for this time as it is found in the three angels’ messages—a work that, according to *The Review and Herald*, October 31, 1899, was to be repeated during the final crisis.

“In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining

Only through religious freedom can faith find its existence and expression.

It is in this crisis of religious liberty that God’s people will fully present the second angel’s message to the world. When the sins of Rome and the apostate churches are opened before all, and “the fearful

proclaimed would come, is now here; and the trumpet of every watchman upon the walls of Zion should raise the alarm.” *Review and Herald*, January 1, 1889.

wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention. The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been given us to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our work. The world is to be warned, and God's people are to be true to the trust committed to them." *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 9, 19.

The second angel's message is to be repeated in this satanically-inspired showdown, but this time, in all its fullness. In order to do so, it is imperative that God's last-day remnant comprehend the core issues.

"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Revelation 14:8.

first angel was followed by a second, proclaiming, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.' [Revelation 14:8] This message was understood



by disfellowshipping and removing their members. It was then that they sealed their moral fall. As a consequence, about fifty thousand who accepted the first angel's message and the doctrine of the second coming were compelled to withdraw from those churches.

The rejection of the first angel's message and resultant expulsion from the Protestant churches of those whose consciences received it was but the first step in a three-stage fall of Babylon. The daughters of Babylon will but follow the behavior pattern of their mother church. In the 1840s came the rejection stage when light was refused. When the image of the beast shall be set up and a Sunday law legislated, that will be the replacement stage. Enforcement of that law will be the final step, which will fully reveal the principles and consequences of satanic rule. Our purpose in this article is to fully develop the central issue in the fall of Babylon—the topic of the second angel's message: the issue of religious liberty—the right to worship and obey God as each believes, or the abridgment of that right through some use of force or superior power to compel otherwise.

In 1888 Ellen White compared the treatment she was then receiving from the brethren to the experience of her family four decades earlier:

"I told them of the hard position I was placed in, to stand, as it were, alone and be compelled to reprove the wrong spirit that was a controlling power at that meeting. The suspicion and jealousy, the evil surmisings, the resistance of the Spirit of God that was appealing to them, were more after the order in which the Reformers had been treated. It was the very order in which the church had treated my father's family and eight of us--the entire family living in Portland, Maine, were excluded from the church because we favored

"The perfect fulfillment of Revelation 14:8 is yet future."

"The second angel's message of Revelation 14 was first preached in the summer of 1844, and it then had a more direct application to the churches of the United States, where the warning of the judgment had been most widely proclaimed and most generally rejected, and where the declension in the churches had been most rapid. *But the message of the second angel did not reach its complete fulfillment in 1844.* The churches then experienced a *moral fall*, in consequence of their refusal of the light of the advent message; *but that fall was not complete.* As they have continued to reject the special truths for this time they have fallen lower and lower. Not yet, however, can it be said that 'Babylon is fallen, . . . because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.' *She has not yet made [compelled] all nations do this. . . . The change is a progressive one, and the perfect fulfillment of Revelation 14:8 is yet future.*" *Great Controversy*, 389-90, emphasis added.

"When the churches spurned the counsel of God by rejecting the Advent message, the Lord rejected them. The

by Adventists to be an announcement of the moral fall of the churches in consequence of their rejection of the first message. The proclamation, 'Babylon is fallen,' was given in the summer of 1844, and as the result, about fifty thousand withdrew from these churches. The term Babylon, derived from Babel, and signifying confusion, is applied in Scripture to the various forms of false or apostate religion. But the message announcing the fall of Babylon must apply to some religious body that was once pure, and has become corrupt. It cannot be the Romish Church which is here meant; for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries. But how appropriate the figure as applied to the Protestant churches" *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, 232-3.

"Justice and mercy are the foundation of the law and government of God."

Compelling the Conscience

It was in the summer of 1844 when the Protestant churches, having rejected the Advent message, then resorted to *force*

the message proclaimed by William Miller." *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 16, 213; *Manuscript Releases* No. 1216.

Understanding the Government of God

This spirit of intolerance—of religious bigotry on the part of the majority—is addressed in explicit terms and requires our attention:

“Those who endeavor to obey all the commandments of God will be opposed and derided. They can stand only in God. In order to endure the trial before them, they must understand the will of God as revealed in His word; they can honor Him only as they have a right conception of His character, government, and purposes, and act in accordance with them. None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict.” *Great Controversy*, 593-4.

In order to honor our Father regardless of our trials and to ultimately stand in His presence, we must have “a right conception of His *character, government*

Christ came to show us the Father; that would include His character and principles of government. If we are at last to find a place among the heavenly throng, we will have first developed His character and accepted those principles here, living daily in accord with them, for we have been informed that it is “the highest crime to rebel against the government of God.” *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 1, 22. Fortunately, we are not left to flounder in speculation as to what constitutes the government of God. Inspiration has minutely defined what that government is:

Pillars of God’s Government

“The law of love being the foundation of the government of God. . . .” *Great Controversy*, 493.

“Justice and mercy are the foundation of the law and government of God.” *Ibid.*, 503.

“The law of God is the foundation of his Government in Heaven and in earth.” *Signs of the Times*, March 30, 1888.

“Christ would have all understand the events of his second appearing. The judgment scene will take place in the presence of all the worlds; for in this judgment the government of God will be vindicated, and *his law* will stand forth as ‘holy, and just, and good.’ Then every case will be decided, and sentence will be passed upon all. Sin will not then

as Satan would make it appear, founded upon a blind submission, an unreasoning control. It appeals to the intellect and the conscience. ‘Come now, and let us reason together,’ is the Creator’s invitation to the beings He has made. Isaiah 1:18. *God does not force the will of His creatures. He cannot accept an homage that is not willingly and intelligently given.* He desires that all the inhabitants of the universe shall be convinced of His justice in the final overthrow of rebellion and the eradication of sin. He purposes that the real nature and direful effects of sin shall be clearly manifested to the end that all may be assured of the wisdom and justice of the divine government.” *Bible Training School*, December 1, 1908.

Hence we see that the government of God consists of love, justice, mercy; His law; and freedom of choice. Divinely-ordained free will, acknowledged in the concept of religious liberty, is the very essence of the second angel’s message of Revelation, 14:8, which verse reveals that force and the compelling of the conscience is contrary to the government of God.

Contrasting Christlike and UnChristlike Governments

Thus under the subheading, one will read: A contributor to *The Southern Watchman* wrote: “All slavery, physical, moral, and intellectual, comes from breaking that law. Liberty is found only in obedience to it. . . . His will becomes ours, and with Christ we delight to do His will, because His law is in our hearts. Here is perfect liberty. The perfectly saved will be perfectly free.

and *purposes*, and act in accordance with them.” We believe His *character* and *purposes* are clearly understood by all, but what does Inspiration mean by His *government*? Isaiah, speaking of Christ, said:

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.” Isaiah 9:6-7.

appear attractive, but will be seen in all its hideous magnitude. All will see the relation in which they stand to God and to one another.” *Review and Herald*, September 20, 1898.

“The government of God is not,





Throughout eternity they will do just what they please, because they please to do just what makes liberty and joy possible. Now, as to the relation of the state to the conscience of man. Christ found men enslaved to kings and to priests. . . . After having made men free to [from] sin, that the internal principle of love might work itself out in outward acts of righteousness unhindered by force, . . . has God given to any human authority the right to take away that freedom, and so thwart His plans? He has commanded all men to worship Him and obey His precepts, and this command applies to each individual personally; but has He ever commanded any man or set of men to compel others to worship Him, or to act even outwardly as if they worshiped Him? To ask these questions is to answer them emphatically in the negative. . .

the wheat shall be rooted also. Again Jesus said, ‘My kingdom is not of this world, if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight.’ Every civil law has the power of the sword back of it. If it is right to make law, then it is right to enforce it. In denying to the church the power of the sword, Jesus therefore forbade the church to ask the state for laws enforcing religious beliefs and observances. Paul understood this when he said, ‘The weapons of our

which is of the utmost import. If not followed by all, Inspiration has revealed that the whole body of Adventism will suffer, even from just one reckless individual: “The question of religious liberty is very important, and it should be handled with great wisdom and discretion. Unless this is done there is danger that by our own course of action we shall bring upon ourselves a crisis before we are prepared for it.” *Testimonies for Ministers*, 219.

Divinely-ordained free will is the very essence of the second angel’s message.

warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.’ The early church, strong only in the power of God, triumphed grandly, even over the opposing forces of a false religion, upheld by the state. Only when she allied herself with the state, seeking its aid, did she deny her God, lose her power, and darken the world into a night of a thousand years. The present effort of the church to get the state to enforce the observance of Sunday, and to introduce the teaching of Christianity into state schools, is but a revival of the pagan and papal doctrine of force in religious things, and as such it is antichristian.” George Fifiield, *Southern Watchman*, May 1, 1906.

Mindful of that counsel, we must nevertheless act. “We must soon wrestle with the powers of the land, and we have every reason to fear that falsehood will gain the mastery. We shall call upon our churches in the name of the Lord to view this struggle in its true light. . . . This contest is to decide whether the pure gospel shall have the field in our nation, or whether the popery of past ages shall receive the right hand of fellowship from Protestantism, and this power prevail to restrict religious liberty. . . . The message must go broadcast, that those who have been imperceptibly tampering with popery, not knowing what they were doing, may hear. . . .” *Selected Messages*, Vol. 3, 385-6. Yes,

Whoever restricts religious liberty restricts truth itself.

When Peter, as a member of the Christian church, sought to defend the truth by the sword, Jesus, pointing to His Father as the Church’s only source of power, said, ‘Put up again thy sword into its place; for all they that take the sword [i.e., in religious matters] shall perish with the sword.’ The tares are to be allowed to grow with the wheat until the harvest. Then God will send forth His angels to gather out the tares and burn them. No human effort of arbitrary force can be used in rooting them out, lest in the act

***Act Wisely—
But Act***

All the world will see the contrast between the principles of the government of God and that of Satan’s, and all the world will choose their allegiance to one side of this issue or the other. They are to be warned, but we must not act independently, for by so doing we will close up our work prematurely and bring on a persecution that we are not yet prepared to meet. Indeed, definitive counsel has been given to God’s people





the time is just before us when we will call our church members to action, so that all may hear this heaven-sent warning message to those who wish to restrict religious liberty. In this message heaven still extends the invitation of the gospel in the first angel's message as well as in the second angel's.

Effects of Religious Coercion

The hellish principles behind an attempt to control the conscience are rarely touched upon, but the people of God will experience their full impact in the very near future. This is why we have taken a departure here from our scriptural study of Daniel 11:40-45 to look into this much-misunderstood and neglected topic and reveal the first work that heaven has commissioned the people of God to do when the King of the North "enters" into the realm of the church. When we, as a people, fully take in the concepts of religious liberty that are foundational to the government of God, we will have a powerful testimony for the truth that cannot be overthrown. We must understand and proclaim that faith itself demands freedom.

Without Freedom, Faith Stunted

When the conscience is controlled through force, faith ceases to be faith. Love disappears and the motive for obedience then becomes fear. It is only through religious freedom that faith can find its fullest potential and expression. Faith, therefore, has its best protection in religious liberty. In an unrestricted religious environment, where one's faith is not governed by mandatory limitations or coercion, faith is an unlimited and voluntary "choice in action." Faith is free to be expressed in

the choices one makes regarding the invitation and, in fact, every aspect of the gospel. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:17.

In fact, religious liberty and true faith are mutually dependent upon one another, for whoever endangers

or restricts religious liberty threatens or restricts truth itself, for truth is forever unfolding to the one who lives and walks by faith. When the soul is prevented from seeking where it will, when it is demanded that the individual conform to certain religious doctrines or practices, when the mind is subjugated to another human being, no true spiritual growth can occur. The religious experience will be dwarfed or stalled. And with no living experience, there can be no character development, and thus no sanctification. Hence Satan wins.

"Some will be convicted [by faith] and [by faith] will heed the words spoken to them in love and tenderness. They will acknowledge that the *truth is the very thing they need to set them free* from the slavery of sin and the bondage of worldly principles. There are opened before them themes of thought, fields for action, that they had never comprehended." *Medical Ministry*, 244.

Only living faith leads to spiritual growth. A formality of religious experience contributes to nothing but an external experience, which is valueless with God. It is faith alone that, above all other considerations, makes men free, because only in free exercise of faith—freedom to believe and follow as suits the heart of each—can man be the free moral agent as God created him to be. Paul exemplified that principle in 1 Corinthians 9:19, referring to himself as "free from all men."

"It is not God's purpose to coerce the will. Man was created a free moral agent. Like the inhabitants of all other worlds, he must be subjected to the test of obedience; but he is never brought into such a position that yielding to evil becomes a matter of necessity." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 331-2.

It is only by a clear understanding of this matter for ourselves that we will properly proclaim the second angel's message, thus fulfilling our divine commission during the final crisis. Therefore, "let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Romans 14:5.

"The exercise of force is contrary to



the principles of God's government; He desires only the service of love; and love cannot be commanded; it cannot be won by force or authority. Only by love is love awakened." *Desire of Ages*, 22. *To be continued.*



Heidi Heiks, editor of Our Firm Foundation magazine, has been a college educator, an author, and a radio speaker for The People of the Book radio program. He continues to write and is currently a teacher and speaker for Hope International throughout the United States.

News Watch



FBI Biometric Database

The FBI is spending \$1 billion “to build the world’s largest computer database of people’s physical characteristics” which “would give the government unprecedented abilities to identify individuals” in the US and abroad. Already “digital images of faces, fingerprints and palm patterns” are being stored. In coming years, “law enforcement authorities around the world will be able to rely on iris patterns, face-shape data, scars, and perhaps even the unique ways people walk and talk.... The FBI will also retain, upon request of employers, the fingerprints of employees who have undergone criminal background checks so the employers can be notified if employees have brushes with the law.”

The system, designed “according to standards shared by Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand,” is called Next Generation Identification. “...Researchers are working on capturing images of people’s irises at distances of up to 15 feet, and of faces from as far away as 200 yards.”

The project is “raising questions about the ability of Americans to avoid unwanted scrutiny.” Also, the criticism is that “people’s bodies will become de facto national identification cards.” However, “advocates say bringing together information from a wide variety of sources and making it available to multiple agencies increases the chances to catch criminals.” Ellen Nakashima, *Washington Post*, Dec. 22, 2007.

End-time perspective: “In the whole Satanic force there is not power to overcome one soul who in simple trust casts himself on Christ. ‘He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength.’ Isa. 40:29.” COL 157.



Tasers for Civilians

Though illegal in some places, tasers—a powerful, painful electronic weapon that temporarily disrupts the nervous system and disables the target (at up to 15’ away, for consumer models)—are now marketed in colors and patterns to appeal to civilians, especially women, for self-defense. Amnesty Internat’l “contends more than 290 people in the United States have died after being struck by police Tasers, and the group opposes their sale to civilians.”

Taser Internat’l disputes those allegations, pointing out some recent

wrongful-death lawsuits against them were dismissed. J. L. Miller, *Wilmington News Journal*, March 3, 2008.

End-time perspective: “We are to present the claims of His Word. We shall not be held guiltless if we neglect this solemn duty. But while we stand in defense of the truth, let us not stand in defense of self, and make a great ado because we are called to bear reproach and misrepresentation. Let us not pity ourselves, but be very jealous for the law of the Most High.” Ev 625.



High Turnover Rate

Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life’s major new survey found that “28% of American adults have left the faith of their childhood for another one.” That doesn’t include Protestants who switched: 44%. “For some groups, their relatively steady number of adherents over the years hides a remarkable amount of coming and going...”

Director Lugo suggested a highly competitive “marketplace” with groups promoting their tenets for potential converts to try out. He said while that may account for the “religious vitality of the American people, it also suggests that there is an institutional loosening of ties, with less individual commitment to a given faith or denomination.

“Lugo would not speculate on whether such a buyer’s market might cause some groups to dilute their particular beliefs in order to compete. There are signs of that in such surveys as one done by the Willow Creek megachurch outside Chicago, which has been extremely successful in attracting tens



Our Creative Creator

Skunk cabbage, one of the earliest wildflowers on the East Coast, smells up to its name but gains our admiration because it “can actually generate enough heat to melt the ice that may surround it, forming a microclimate for the insects [flies] that pollinate it.” The plant’s deep roots have large stores of sugars to provide energy for the flower heads to “break down substances while using a good deal of oxygen.” Bud Cole, *Outdoor Adventurer*, Feb. 2008, 12.

End-time perspective: “Shall not our hearts be filled with gratitude as we read the evidences of His wisdom and love in the wonders of His creation? *Lift Him Up*, 67.

of thousands of religious ‘seekers.’ [When] an internal survey recently indicated much of its membership was ‘stalled’ in their spiritual growth, Lugo allowed that ‘it does raise the question of, once you attract these folks, how do you root them within your own particular tradition...’ The full report is accessible at the Pew Forum site.” David Van Biema, *Yahoo!News*, Feb. 25, 2008.

Fully 46 percent of immigrants to American claim Catholicism; only 24 percent Protestantism. Elesha Coffman, *ChristianityToday.com*, Feb. 26, 2008.

End-time perspective: “To the law and to the prophets...”

“I saw that God had honest children among the nominal Adventists, and the fallen churches, and ministers and people will yet be called out from these churches, ...and they will gladly embrace the truth...” 1 SG 172.

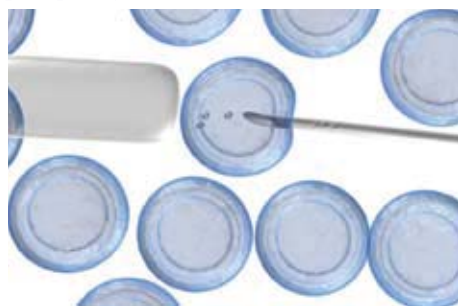


Largest US Budget Proposal

“In the nation’s first \$3 trillion budget, ...Bush seeks to seal his legacy of promoting a strong defense to fight terrorism and tax cuts to spur the economy... The 2009 spending plan... will project huge budget deficits, around \$400 billion for this year and next and more than double the 2007 deficit... But even those estimates could prove too low, given the rapidly weakening economy and the total costs of the war in Iraq and Afghanistan,” not included in the request. Martin Crutsinger, *Asso. Press*, Feb. 4, 2008.

End-time perspective: “It will be declared that the nation is offending God by the violation of the Sunday-Sabbath, that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly

enforced, and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the nation, preventing its restoration to divine favor and *temporal prosperity.*” 4SP 408, italics added.



“New” Sins to Confess

Modern times bring modern sins, so the Vatican has cautioned of “‘new’ sins such as causing environmental blight.” The greatest danger to the modern soul was said to be the ethics of bioethics, including embryo destruction for stem cells and cloning. Social and economic injustices, drug trafficking, and polluting are also “modern sins.”

Joining the global bandwagon, Pope Benedict has made several strong appeals for the protection of the environment; the Vatican has hosted a scientific conference on the topic.

But sins are to be confessed to a priest (no longer anonymously but face-to-face, as per a 1973 papal decree), and the Vatican’s #2 man for matters of conscience “bemoaned that fewer and fewer Catholics go to confession at all”—up to 60 percent in Italy itself, according to a study. “The same study... showed that 30 percent of Italian Catholics believed that there was no need for a priest to be God’s intermediary and 20 percent felt uncomfortable talking about their sins to another person.” Phillip Pullella, *Reuters*, March 10, 2008.

End-time perspective: “Like the men before the Flood, the Canaanites lived only to blaspheme Heaven and defile the earth.” PP 492.



Global Cooling?

“...New satellite data from the Nat’l Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin. shows that polar ice levels, which dropped markedly... [last year], have roared back over the winter to near their original size.

“That news, combined with reports throughout the Northern Hemisphere of some of the coldest winters on record suggests the earth’s recent warming trend could be changing...” *World*, March 8-5, 2008, 11.

End-time perspective: Don’t let the scientific confusion stress you. “The melody of praise is the atmosphere of heaven...” HP 94.

World Sovereignty?

“A bill committing at least \$30 billion of taxpayer money to fighting global poverty has slipped through the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by voice vote and without hearings. The legislation... would require the president to submit to the UN-crafted ...goal of reducing global poverty by one half by 2015.

“That agenda... takes a significant step toward the UN goal of international governance and taxes, an affront to U.S. sovereignty.” *World*, March 8-15, 2008, 11.

End-time perspective: “As the numbers of Israel increased they were to enlarge their borders, until their kingdom should embrace the world.” COL 290.



Health Gem



Time to Change Course

“The disease and suffering that everywhere prevail are largely due to popular errors in regard to diet.”

When the abuse of health is carried so far that sickness results, the sufferer can often do for himself what no one else can do for him. The first thing to be done is to ascertain the true character of the sickness and then go to work intelligently to remove the cause. If the harmonious working of the system has become unbalanced by overwork, overeating, or other irregularities, do not endeavor to adjust the difficulties by adding a burden of poisonous medicines. The Ministry of Healing, 235.

Contrary to this advice, the first thing many of us do when we are sick is ask the doctor for a prescription. We want something to make us get better fast! We do not want to examine what made us sick in the first place. This tendency, this attitude, has resulted in the abuse of many drugs, antibiotics in particular.

The Food and Drug Administration reported in the Nov- Dec 1998 issue of *FDA Consumer* that doctors will often prescribe antibiotics for viruses, such as colds and flu. Antibiotics work only against bacterial infections, so therefore any antibiotics prescribed for these viruses are basically useless! It was estimated that one-third of antibiotic prescriptions written were unnecessary. That was almost 10 years ago; the abuse has only continued to get worse!

Why do the doctors prescribe antibiotics when they know, or should know, that the antibiotic is useless? They often succumb to pressure from their patients. After waiting for forty-five minutes

and spending \$100, people expect to get something to make them feel better. Tired parents who have been up for several nights with a sick child plead for anything to give them relief!

Should we continue on this course of antibiotic abuse, the experts predict all manner of dire outcomes. This is the time to reexamine why we are sick, to go to work to intelligently remove the cause. What does that entail? How do we find out why we are sick? As Adventists we have an advantage that the world does not. We have the health message. Our Creator has lovingly provided us with His counsel; we need only listen and follow.

Our diets are a great place to start. How do we choose what to eat? *Foods should be chosen that best supply the elements needed for building up the body. In this choice, appetite is not a safe guide. Through wrong habits of eating, the appetite has become perverted. Often it demands food that impairs health and causes weakness instead of strength. We cannot safely be guided by the customs of society. The disease and suffering that everywhere prevail are largely due to popular errors in regard to diet.* Ministry of Health, 295.

It may seem difficult to change eating habits, when taking pills is so easy. However, the results of a healthier diet, the promises that we have been given, are certainly worth the effort. *Grains, fruits, nuts and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. These foods, prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible, are the most*

healthful and nourishing. They impart strength, a power of endurance, and a vigor of intellect that are not afforded by a more complex and stimulating diet. Ministry of Healing, 296.

In these last days, as we prepare for the soon coming of our Lord, don't you want to have the power to endure? Don't you want a vigorous intellect to discern spiritual matters? Don't you want to feel better?

If you have a desire to make changes in your lifestyle, to get healthy, Hope for Health would love to aid you in this endeavor.

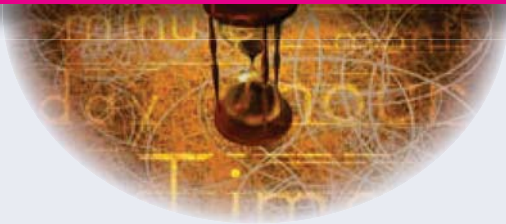
As in all things, our Father in Heaven desires to help you as you seek His will to improve your health. *Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.* 3 John 2.

In these last days, as we prepare for the soon coming of our Lord, don't you want to have the power to endure? Don't you want a vigorous intellect to discern spiritual matters? Don't you want to feel better? As in all things, our Father in Heaven desires to help you as you seek His will to improve your health. *Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.* 3 John 2.

If you have a desire to make changes in your lifestyle and to get healthy, Hope for Health would love to aid you in this endeavor. For information on natural anti-biotics such as Ultra Fighter, Swedish Bitters or Mighty Immune Plus, or for FREE health counseling, call our health professionals at 309-343-5853.

"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."

Historical Footnotes



Source: *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1915.

1. James White suffered from much stress, insufficient rest, and unrelieved responsibility of the early work until God allowed him to suffer
 - a. a heart attack.
 - b. a stroke.
 - c. dropsy.
 - d. a and c.
2. Although the Whites had confidence in hydrotherapy, Ellen did not use hydropathic remedies on James. Why not?
 - a. Felt herself unskilled in their use
 - b. No way to heat enough water
 - c. Too exhausted herself
 - d. B and C.
3. Before there was ever an Adventist sanitarium, James and Ellen went to a sanitarium in
 - a. Rochester, NY.
 - b. Battle Creek, MI.
 - c. Oswego, NY.
 - d. Danville, NY.
4. After being cut off from active labor for _____, the Whites returned to service among the churches.
 - a. 1 year
 - b. 15 months
 - c. 8 months
 - d. 18 months
5. Until James regained his strength, Ellen walked with him
 - a. twice daily.
 - b. regardless of weather conditions.
 - c. outdoors.
 - d. All of the above.
6. When the Whites were discouraged by unwarranted suspicion, the Lord gave Ellen a vision of
 - a. a vine.
 - b. a horse pulling a heavy wagon.
 - c. a lost child.
 - d. a flower bud opening.
7. It had grown across treetops, forming an arbor, until a wind shook it down and someone severed remaining tendrils. It lay on the ground until
 - a. it grew back up the tree.
 - b. an angel raised it so it stood upright.
 - c. someone rapidly cleaned up the area.
 - d. it was gathered and burned.
8. The dream's import was explained to her.
 - a. The vine represented Ellen.
 - b. She was to lean on God.
 - c. She was to flourish in God's strength, not on human support.
 - d. All of the above.
9. In Maine, Mr. and Mrs. White spoke in favor of _____. This was to combat different forms of error, confusion, fanaticism and disorder where there was a lack of this.
 - a. disfellowshipping.
 - b. temporary membership.
 - c. church discipline.
 - d. public rebuke.
10. In New Hampshire, one young man who had never professed religion walked _____ just to hear the Lord's truth. He took his stand on the Lord's side before returning home.
 - a. forty miles
 - b. in a drenching downpour
 - c. overnight
 - d. b and c

Answers: 1:b; 2:c; 3:d; 4:b; 5:d; 6:a; 7:b; 8:d; 9:c; 10:a.



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Letters to The Editor



■ I've been going through my old *Our Firm Foundations* and reading ones I've marked with red pencils and am so thrilled my husband saved them. It's making me closer to Jesus, as my husband was always SDA, but these dear papers really touch me, so now I would like to subscribe to your magazine for someone else. I celebrated my 83rd birthday Jan 19.
AB, Oregon

■ Thank you for your letter! I appreciate that you would take the time to write to me. Thank you for your ministry. The Lord still tells me that Hope is where my heart is, with all of my brothers and sisters in Christ. Thank you for being so true to God. Tell Heather Olson that I really enjoy her articles! I enjoy them all! The magazine is still speaking only the truth, and I rest assured that God is telling me that my support is to remain loyal to your ministry. Thank you for your encouragement in these last days.
DW, Florida

■ We loved the DVD *Another Opportunity* that you sent to us. We have watched it four times already and we get more out of it each time we watch it. The message on clay was excellent, too. I take care of large herds of animals here in Alberta, Canada, and whenever the animals are sick, I see them go and find clay ground to lick. What Heather had

said I know personally to be true!

We praise the Lord for the work you are doing there at Hope International. We were so blessed to have an opportunity to call about the various illnesses we and our family have had, and the help we received there. Thank you so much.

We want to help support the work you are doing. We believe that God has raised you up to be a light in this dark world. God bless you all!

ET, Canada

■ "Praise ye the Lord, O give thanks unto the Lord; For he is good for His mercy endureth for ever." We must say a big thank you for your wonderful parcel containing Holy Bibles and *Our Firm Foundation* magazines. These materials arrived here in sound and good condition few days ago. Once again we must say, "May the good Lord continue to bless us all according to his riches."

I continue to appreciate the articles you publish each month, as usual, and have appreciated the series on the "daily" by Heidi Heiks. God bless all of you as you continue serving Him.

ES, Ohio

■ God bless you all in your ministry. I pray to be a part of it in the future.

JS, Missouri

■ I am sending you some of our

activities during the end of the year (2007) through CD. I also included the flyers that we published about the Sabbath and 8 Laws of Health in our vernacular. We already distributed 15,000 copies on that. We are so happy that your aid helps a lot. As you can view in the CD, we also distributed Bibles - in Jail, Marahan and Bandihan. And I can say, your help is our primary source of that. Again, thank you for your great help in our ministry here in the Philippines.

RC

■ I want to compliment your staff on a excellent *Our Firm Foundation* this past month. I am so glad to hear that the Willow Creek group are recanting on their ideas. It sure has put our church in a mess. Hope we can recover. I also want to compliment Heather on her meat articles. They are great!!!

YB, West Virginia

■ Thank you for this message. I thought that it was just me or perhaps I was getting cynical, but I have experienced certain events in a couple of our churches that only now I can see were great mistakes or attempts to change foundational truth. Twice the issues were Sabbath-related, once in 1987 and again in 1998. Both times it was attending pastors. I have been home churching....

DS, Illinois

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