

our firm
FOUNDATION

Volume 28, Number 1 • January 2013

The Immutable Law of God • Christ Our Righteousness • The Seventh-day Sabbath
The Three Angels' Messages • The Non-Immortality of the Soul • The Sanctuary

A Trojan Horse



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- The Gates Of Pearl
- Caesar's Household
- A Prayer
- Tearing Off the Blindfold!
- He Will Come Again
- The Power Of Forgiveness
Forgive To Be Forgiven
- Health Gem: 10 Foods to Soothe
Inflammation and Banish Pain
- Ellen White's Vision:
The Sins of Babylon

Editorial

Clark Floyd



Clark Floyd, editor of Our Firm Foundation magazine, has been co-host of the radio program Bible Answers with Clark and Lee and is a licensed attorney and an ordained Seventh-day Adventist pastor. He has spoken internationally and makes his home in the beautiful mountains of western North Carolina.

In the book, Ministry of Healing by Ellen G. White at page 417, appears this powerful statement: “Above the distractions of the earth He sits enthroned; all things are open to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He orders that which His providence sees best.” This statement gives me great encouragement, knowing that the trials of the last days will soon be upon us, and I hope you, our reader, will also think about this statement and be buoyed up for the things ahead of all of us.

There is a second statement that is equally important in the book, Mount of Blessing at page 71: “The Father’s presence encircled Christ, and nothing befell Him but that which infinite love permitted for the blessing of the world. Here was His source of comfort, and it is for us. He who is imbued with the spirit of Christ, abides in Christ. The blow that is aimed at him falls upon the Saviour who surrounds him with His presence. Whatever comes to him comes from Christ. He has no need to resist evil for Christ is his defense. Nothing can touch him except by our Lord’s permission; and all things that are permitted work together for good to them that love God. Romans 8:28.”

As we think of our Heavenly Father, we have many examples in the Bible of Him appearing to different prophets to encourage them or to

help them understand that He is constantly aware of all things that happen on earth.

One of the first prophets to have a vision of God’s throne was Micaiah. His experience is recorded in 1 Kings 22:19: “I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left.”

In Isaiah 6:1-3 & 5, we have the following experience: “In the year that Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.” Then we have certain activity going on that helps Isaiah to see the holiness of God—“the whole earth is full of his glory”. “Woe is me! for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.”

Ezekiel, while near the River Chebar in Babylon, also saw visions of God—“The heavens were opened.”

Daniel was another to be encouraged by his visions of the throne in heaven, “I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool.” Daniel 7:9.

In the New Testament times, Stephen, “being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into

heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.” Acts 7:55. The fact that Jesus was standing indicated the close of probation of the Jews as a nation at the stoning of Stephen. (See Daniel 12:1, and the 70 week prophecy of Daniel 9:24).

Paul had his heavenly vision of Jesus in Acts 9:3-6, and John, his vision of the heavenly throne room as contained in Revelation 4 and 5.

And finally, our modern day prophet, Ellen White, had her vision at the end of the 2300 days. “I saw a throne, and on it sat the Father and the Son. I gazed on Jesus’ countenance and admired His lovely person. The Father’s person I could not behold, for a cloud of glorious light covered Him. I asked Jesus if His Father had a form like Himself. He said He had...” EW54.

God the Father and Jesus are both there. They are interested in our well-being, and especially in having each of us there when Jesus comes to take His people home. So, dear brothers and sisters, have courage through the times ahead. I frequently have to tell myself—“God is in control!”—His throne room is there—He knows all that happens in each of our lives.

“Each morning consecrate you and your children to God for that day. Make no calculation for months or years; these are not yours. One brief day is given you. As if it were your last on earth, work during its hours for the Master. Lay all your plans before God, to be carried out or given up, as His providence shall indicate...” 7 T 44.

The fact that Jesus was standing indicated the close of probation of the Jews as a nation at the stoning of Stephen.

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

Executive Director:

Joe Olson
executivedirector@hopeint.org

Editor:

Clark Floyd
editorial@hopeint.org

Copy-editor:

Reen Swindle

Director of Hope For Health:

Heather Olson, N.D., R.N., C.H.
hopeforhealth@hopeint.org

Bookstore Manager:

Georgine Olson
shipping@hopeint.org

About Hope International:

We are a lay ministry founded, supported, and operated by Seventh-day Adventists to assist God's Church in the proclamation of the Everlasting Gospel in every way that is consistent with the principles of God as revealed in Inspiration.

Invitation to Writers

We are accepting article-length manuscripts (3000 words) for possible publication in *Our Firm Foundation*. We prefer that submissions be submitted in Word.doc format as a computer file. Include a digital picture and a short bio. Please address all correspondence to Editor, *Our Firm Foundation*, 151 Ascension Lane, Marshall, NC 28753, or by email to editorial@hopeint.org.

Subscription Information: See page 31
• Shipping & Sales Tax: See page 31

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

Printing & Design by



cover story

04 Spiritual Formation -
A Troman Horse

Allen Barnes

features

09 The Gates Of Pearl

L. D. Santee

10 Caesar's Household

Mrs. E. G. White

13 A Prayer

Mrs. L. R. Reynolds

14 Tearing Off the
Blindfold!

Joe Olson

16 He Will Come Again

James Edson White

18 The Power Of
Forgiveness Forgive To
Be Forgiven

Emmanuel Machakaire

departments

02 Editorial

23 Christian Crossword

24 Health Gem:
10 Foods to Soothe
Inflammation and
Banish Pain

29 News Watch

30 Ellen White's Vision:
The Sins of Babylon

ad features

22 MSM

28 Joint Support



04



09



10



13



14



16



18





SPIRITUAL FORMATION

A Troman Horse

By Allen Barnes

Most everyone has, at one time or another, heard the story of the Trojan Horse. According to legend, the Greeks had maintained a ten-year siege of the ancient city of Troy, but had not been able to take the city. A remarkable strategy was designed to finally penetrate this great stronghold. A large wooden horse was constructed and left outside the city walls, while the Greeks retired and withdrew the siege. The inhabitants of Troy were rejoicing, but also extremely curious about this great wooden horse.

It was finally decided to bring the horse into the city, assuming that it was left as a tribute to Troy's invincibility.

Little did they know that, inside the horse, were several soldiers who were waiting for the right opportunity to slip out of their concealment, overcome the guards, and open the gates of the city to the armies lying in wait.

No, the expression Troman Horse is not a misspelling. Troman is a word the author has coined to describe the clandestine tactic of the Roman Catholic Church to further penetrate Protestant and Anabaptist denominations and churches, bringing them under the control of the Vatican. If this sounds a bit unrealistic, bear with us as we explore this devilish subject and you will begin to see the power and potential of this diabolical Troman Horse.

TWO DIFFERENT MONKS

Just eight years after the birth of Martin Luther, whose work of reform would change the history of the world, was the birth of another individual who would also help shape the course of history—Ignatius Loyola. The journey of these two monks was in opposite directions, however.

Ignatius Loyola had been brought up in the court of Ferdinand the Catholic. His person was graceful; he was expert in handling the sword and the lance, and ardently desired the glory of chivalry. To array himself in glittering arms, to ride a noble steed, to expose himself to the brilliant dangers of the tournament, to engage in hazardous exploits, to share in the venomous struggles of faction, and to display as much devotion for Saint Peter as for his lady-love—such was the life of this young chevalier. —J.H.Merle D’Aubigne, *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, vol. 3, bk. 10, p. 352.

Loyola was seriously injured while defending the city of Pampeluna, and was unable to continue his military exploits. Not one to remain idle, he began to form a different kind of army, a spiritual force to maintain a defense of the pope and the Catholic Church. Although the name of this army is the Society of Jesus, we know it better as the Order of the Jesuits.

Two different men, two different paths

These two great men of the sixteenth century, these founders of two spiritual powers which for three centuries have been warring together, were at this moment brothers; and perhaps, if they had met, Luther and Loyola would have embraced, and mingled their tears and their prayers. But from this hour the two monks were destined to follow entirely different paths... Luther turned towards Christ, Loyola only fell back upon himself. —Ibid., p. 354.

The ultimate form of idolatry is making one's own god

Luther began to search the Scriptures for answers to his spiritual questions. He found a sin-pardoning Saviour and the truth of salvation by faith in God’s grace. In contrast, Loyola

...did not seek truth in the Holy Scriptures; but imagined in their place immediate communication with the world of spirits. He soon lived entirely in ecstasies and contemplation. (Ibid.)

Loyola was developing the ultimate form of idolatry—constructing the god of one’s own satanic imagination. This is not to say that he *knew* that he was being satanically inspired, but it was the natural outgrowth of departing from the Word of God to follow mysticism.

Loyola desired God’s presence on his terms

Loyola longed for supernatural experiences, believing them to be evidence of God’s presence and power. Deceived, he turned to the writings of the Roman Catholic mystics and saints, longing for God to reveal Himself in everything, all the time. He desired God’s presence on his terms, and Satan made sure he would think he found Him....”Being able to find God whenever he wanted, Ignatius was now able to find that God of love in all things...” (Brentwood Religious Education Service, April 2005.) Loyola’s experience was mysticism, and he taught all those enlisted in the Jesuit order, which he founded. —Rick Howard, *The Omega Rebellion*, p. 26, 27.

Pantheism is the basis of the New Age religion

Believing that everything is in God and a part of God is none other than pantheism or, as some are calling it, panentheism, which allows for a personal God who is in all things. This is the basis of the New Age religion and the current phenomenon called “the emerging church” that is rapidly gaining ground, both in America and abroad. Says Ray Yungen:

A New Age spirituality has infiltrated much of the Christian church, and an attempt to reorient evangelicalism is taking place outside the radar of most believers. Prominent Christian leaders are now making unprecedented statements, urging followers to practice meditative techniques. Big-name pastors are attending conferences where yoga workshops and labyrinths (maze-like structures) are part of the program. The term *New Age* itself is rarely explained from most pulpits and only then as a far-out belief system practiced by gurus and Hollywood celebrities.

While many Christian leaders have given the impression that nothing is amiss, a New Age, mystical spirituality has become intricately woven into the fiber of countless churches, youth organizations, and Christian educational institutions. —Yungen, *A Time of Departing*, p. 9.



THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

Before we demonstrate how wide-spread the inroads have been, let us first attempt to understand what Spiritual Formation is and how it works. As noted above, Loyola entered into the realm of mysticism in order to find God. In reality, what he found was an open channel of communication with evil spirits, which he assumed was a great revelation of God. Ignatius actually adopted the techniques of mystics and monks from centuries earlier, known as the Desert Fathers, refining them into what he called *spiritual exercises*.

To foster the growth of this infant Hercules [the Jesuit Order], Loyola had prepared beforehand his book entitled *Spiritual Exercises*. This is a body of rules for teaching men how to conduct the work of their “conversion”. It consists of four grand meditations, and the penitent, retiring into solitude, is to occupy absorbingly his mind on each in succession, during the space of the rising and setting of seven suns. It may be fitly styled a journey from the gates of destruction to the gates of Paradise, mapped out in stages so that it might be gone in the short period of four weeks. There are few more remarkable books in the world. It combines the self-denial and mortification of the Brahmin with the asceticism of the anchorite, and the ecstasies of the schoolmen, it professes, like the Koran, to be a revelation. “The Book of Exercises,” says a Jesuit, “was truly written by the finger of God, and delivered to Ignatius by the Holy Mother of God.”

Absolute unquestioning obedience is mandatory

The *Spiritual Exercises*, as we have said, was a body of rules which by following one could effect upon himself that great change which in Biblical and theological language is termed “conversion”. The book displayed on the part of its author great knowledge of the human heart. The method prescribed was an adroit imitation of that process of conviction, of alarm, of enlightenment, and of peace, through which the Holy Spirit leads the soul—that undergoes that change in very deed. This Divine transformation was at that hour taking place in thousands of instances in the Protestant world. Loyola, like the magicians of old who strove to rival Moses, wrought with his enchantments to produce the same miracle. —J. A. Wylie,



History of Protestantism, vol. 2, bk. 15, p. 384, 385.

These exercises were designed to bring about absolute obedience on the part of the members of his order, to their superiors. Their superiors would be equally submissive to those above them, the Jesuit general being at the top of the hierarchy. Loyola was elected by his pupils the first general of the order.

“Few royal sceptres bring with them such an amount of real power as this election bestowed on Loyola. The day would come when the tiara itself would bow before that yet mightier authority which was represented by the cap of the General of the Jesuits.” *Ibid.*, p. 387.

The opinion of any doctor or Jesuit is the criteria for determining right or wrong

It mattered not what one’s superior demanded of him, even if immoral or illegal, for their creed included the maxim that “the end justifies the means.” Their doctrine of probabilism, whereby they assign all acts, moral or immoral, right or wrong, to either “probable” or “most probable”, allows a Jesuit license to do most anything. For example, an act may be considered probably lawful, but “most probably sinful”. Therefore it is justified to do that which has been declared “probably lawful” even if it is also “most probably sinful”. And what criteria is used to determine right from wrong? Not Scripture or sanctified sense, but the opinion of any doctor or Jesuit. Wylie comments on these Jesuit methods, but then explains how they go even one step further.

But this unbounded liberty of wickedness did not content the sons of Loyola. They panted for a liberty, if possible, yet more boundless; they wished to be released from the easy condition of imagining some good end for the wickedness they wished to perpetrate, and to be free to sin without the trouble of assigning even to themselves any end at all. This they have accomplished by the method of directing the intention.

The ‘soul’ remains innocent while the body commits abominable acts

This is a new ethical science, unknown to those ages which were not privileged to bask in the illuminating rays of the Society of Jesus, and it is as simple as convenient. It is the soul, they argue, that does the act, so far as it is moral or immoral. As regards the body’s share in it, neither virtue nor vice can be predicated of it. If, therefore, while the hand is shedding blood, or the tongue is calumniating character, or uttering a falsehood, the soul can so abstract itself from what the body is doing as to occupy itself the while with some holy theme, or fix its meditation upon some benefit or advantage likely to arise from the deed, which it knows, or at least suspects, the body is at that moment engaged in doing,

the soul contracts neither guilt nor stain, and the man runs no risk of ever being called to account for the murder, or theft, or calumny, by God, or of incurring his displeasure on that ground. —Ibid., p. 395, 396.

In a nutshell, the Jesuit may commit murder, tell lies, abuse children or any other abominable act and justify his actions by thinking on good things while he is sinning. It is hard to imagine a greater deception! One thing is absolutely clear from this—the *spiritual exercises* can destroy the conscience of those who practice them.

CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER

These same exercises are taught in Spiritual Formation classes and seminars, only under a more subtle form. One of these exercises is meditation, often called *meditative prayer* or *contemplative prayer*. Amazingly, these same techniques are practiced by New Agers, Hindus, and other Eastern religions. Some teachers (professing Christians) of this type of meditative prayer actually believe that Christians are depriving themselves if they do not learn the way of other religions.

In the wider ecumenism of the Spirit being opened for us today, we need to humbly accept the learnings of particular Eastern religions ... What makes a particular practice Christian is not its source, but its intent ... this is important to remember in the face of those Christians who would try to impoverish our spiritual resources by too narrowly defining them. —Rick Warren, *Purpose Driven Life*, p. 299, as quoted in Yungen, *Time of Departing*, p. 43.

Rick Warren says we need the help of Eastern mystics; the Bible is not enough

As you may know, Rick Warren's book has become a best-seller among Christians today. Do you understand what he is saying? The Bible alone is not sufficient to teach us how to grow spiritually; he says we need the help of Eastern mystics.

Contemplative prayer sounds innocent enough to the average Christian. It may sound like intimate communication with God, pondering His majesty, power, love, provisions, etc. One would imagine contemplating all the wonderful attributes of God and meditating on His word. Unfortunately, this is *not* what is taught in Spiritual Formation classes. Here is how one teacher of contemplative prayer describes it:

When one enters the deeper layers of contemplative prayer one sooner or later experiences the void, the emptiness, the nothingness ... the profound mystical silence ... an absence of thought. —Thomas Merton, cited in William Johnston's *Letters to Contemplatives*, p. 13, as quoted in Yungen, *Time of Departing*, p. 33.



As taught by the Spiritual Formation instructors, often called *directors* or *mentors*, contemplative prayer is just the opposite of what it sounds like. The purpose is to empty the mind so completely that one enters into a sort of self-induced, hypnotic state. A repetitive *mantra* is used to achieve this “emptiness”, much like that employed in Eastern religious and occult practices. The mantra may be a single verse of Scripture or perhaps only a phrase of the verse. It might be simply repeating the name of Jesus over and over. But what did Jesus say about this kind of practice?

What really makes a practice Christian?

But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. —Matthew 6:7.

It is mind-boggling that Christians can be induced to do the very thing that Jesus commanded not to do, all the while believing they are having a close encounter with God.

It should be apparent that mantra meditation or *sacred word* prayer qualifies as “vain repetition” and clearly fits an accurate description of the point Jesus was making. Yet in spite of this, trusted evangelical Christians have often pronounced that Christian mysticism is different from other forms of mysticism (such as Eastern or occult) because it is focused on Jesus Christ. This logic may sound credible on the surface, but Christians must ask themselves a very simple and fundamental question: What really makes a practice Christian? The answer is obvious—does the New Testament sanction it? Hasn't Christ taught us, through His Word, to pray in faith in His name and according to His will? Did He leave something out? Would Jesus hold out on His true followers? Never! —Yungen, *A Time of Departing*, p. 44.

THE SILENCE

The purpose of contemplative prayer (which has several other names such as *breath prayer*, *mystical prayer*, *centering*, etc.) is to bring the individual into a state of silence. This is not merely an external silence, a quiet place where one

can pray and meditate, but an inward silence. In this condition the mind is completely emptied, supposedly prepared to be filled with the presence of God. In actuality, the mind is left wide open for the influence of demons. Read this warning from one who was once involved in New Age and Eastern mysticism, but is now a Christian pastor.



creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. —Romans 1:25.

Some will surely argue that this is different from Christian contemplative prayer, but bear in mind that the techniques taught in Christian seminars are the very techniques used by mystics and Buddhists. Thomas Keating, a Roman Catholic priest, is a big proponent of Spiritual Formation.

Fundamental occult practice

The various techniques used to reach the silence taught in spiritual formation seminars, such as the use of repetitive scripture and prayers, chanting, listening, focusing, mantras, all variations of satanic, and hypnotic procedures, were used for thousands of years to accomplish one goal: the slowing down of the *natural* thought process. A shocking truth, they are learning to open the door of their mind to *altered states of consciousness*. This is an *occult science fundamental*. —Howard, *The Omega Rebellion*, p. 140.

He identifies this method as *fundamental* in occult practice. To demonstrate this truth, we will now quote a modern mystic from his book, *Three Magic Words*. Note the method as well as the intent and philosophy behind it. This is clear pantheism.

The brain is stilled. The man, at last lets go; he glides below it into the quiet feeling, the quiet sense of his own identity with the self of other things—of the universe. He glides past the feeling into the very identity itself where a glorious all consciousness leaves no room for separate self-thoughts or emotions.

I turn from the world about me to the world of consciousness that lies within. I shut out all memories of the past, create no images of the future. I concentrate on my being, on my awareness. I slide deep into the very recesses of my soul to a place of utter repose. I know, I know that this is Immortal Self, this is God, this is me. I am, I always was, I always will be. —Melvin Powers, *Three Magic Words*, p. 315-319.

The techniques taught in Christian seminars are the very techniques used by mystics and Buddhists

What great deception! As already stated this is the ultimate form of idolatry—making God to be whatever you imagine. In this case, Powers imagined himself to be God. One cannot help but think of the words of Paul to the Romans:

Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the

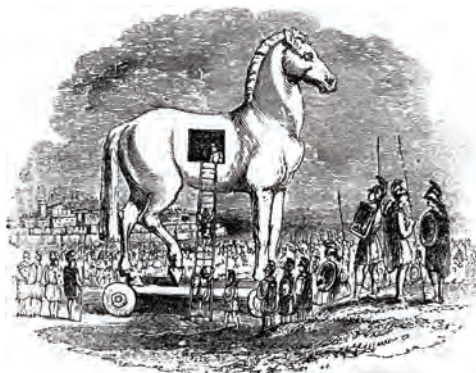
He has a web site where he explains the history of contemplative prayer. (A printed copy was made available to the current writer.) In this document we learn that a Zen master and Transcendental Meditation instructor were instrumental in helping the Catholic community learn these techniques. Today, if one were to trace back and find the sources of nearly all the Spiritual Formation seminars conducted, he would find that Catholic priests (especially Jesuits) are at the root. This is a planned, well-constructed, Trojan Horse planted in the various denominations of Christendom.

One of the diabolical ideas introduced by Spiritual Formation is that a Christian *must* experience the *silence* to have genuine Christian growth. This leaves the feeling with those who experience it that they have reached a higher plane than those who have never learned the spiritual exercises.

All roads lead to Rome

Roman Catholic doctrine teaches that supernatural manifestations experienced when the disciple enters the mystical state called the silence, where the presence of God is experienced, are absolutely required for there to be any genuine Christian growth, for that is where God's grace is received, according to their theology. —Howard, *The Omega Rebellion*, p. 114.

Perhaps we have here the key to understanding, at least in part, how obedience to superiors is obtained through this system. The directors (instructors in Spiritual Formation) would obviously be the most experienced in these spiritual exercises, thus are in advance of the novitiate who has just entered into training. The director is thus looked upon as an authority and the novitiate believes he must trust this authority. This is the first and necessary step toward mind-control. Thus we have Protestants and Anabaptists yielding the first step in the mind-control process to Catholic (often Jesuit) instructors. Even if the director happens to be one of your own faith, remember that he/she has already yielded to another who is also yielded to another, and on up the chain of the Catholic hierarchy. Never forget the old saying—"All roads lead to Rome!"



The Gates Of Pearl

L. D. Santee

Far from the world of sin and care,
Unseen by mortal eye,
There stands a city passing fair,
Gleaming in yon bright sky.
There, where the tear-drops never fall,
Love's banners bright unfurl,
And set within the jasper wall,
Are wondrous gates of pearl.

They'll swing full wide in welcoming,
Obeying God's behest,
And the redeemed shall enter in,
Their glorious home of rest.
No gloomy clouds, enwreathed with storm,
Their darts shall ever hurl,
But radiant are the skies of morn,
Behind the gates of pearl.

City of light, thou land of love,
Garden of fadeless flowers,
Soon shall the ransomed dwell above,
In heaven's radiant bowers.
The stormy voyage o'er at last,
Each straining sail they furl;
Tis God, and heaven, and home at last
Beyond the gates of pearl.



CAESAR'S HOUSEHOLD

Mrs. E. G. White



The gospel has ever achieved its greatest success among the humbler classes. "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." It could not be expected that Paul, a poor and friendless prisoner, would be able to gain the attention of the wealthy and titled classes of Roman citizens. To them vice presented all its glittering allurements, and held them willing captives. But from among the toil-worn, want-stricken victims of their oppression, even from among the poor slaves, many gladly listened to the words of Paul, and in the faith of Christ found a hope and peace that cheered them under the hardships of their lot.

Yet while the apostle's work began with the humble and the lowly, its influence extended until it reached the very palace of the emperor.

The word of God is not bound

Rome was at this time the metropolis of the world. The haughty Caesars were giving laws to nearly every nation upon the earth. Either king and courtier were ignorant of the humble Nazarene, or they regarded him with hatred and derision. And yet in less than two years the gospel found its way from the prisoner's lowly home into the imperial halls. Paul was in bonds as an evil-doer; but "the word of God is not bound."

In former years the apostle had publicly proclaimed the faith of Christ with winning power; and by signs and miracles he had given unmistakable evidence of its divine character. With noble firmness he had risen up before the sages of Greece, and by his knowledge and eloquence had put to silence the arguments of proud philosophy. With undaunted courage he had stood before kings and governors, and reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, until the haughty rulers trembled as if already beholding the terrors of the day of God.

In Paul's bondage great victory was won for the gospel

No such opportunities were now granted the apostle, confined as he was to his own dwelling, and able to proclaim the truth to those only who sought him there. He had not, like Moses and Aaron, a divine command to go before the profligate king, and in the name of the great I AM rebuke his cruelty and oppression. Yet it was at this very time, when its chief advocate was apparently cut off from public labor, that a great victory was won for the gospel; for from the very household of the king, members were added to the church.



Nowhere could there exist an atmosphere more uncongenial to Christianity than in the Roman court. Nero seemed to have obliterated from his soul the last trace of the divine, and even of the human, and to bear the impress of Satan. His attendants and courtiers were in general of the same character as himself, fierce, debased, and corrupt. To all appearance it would be impossible for Christianity to gain a foothold in the court and palace of Nero.



Paul proclaimed his imprisonment to be a furtherance of the gospel

Yet in this case, as in so many others, was proved the truth of Paul's assertion that the weapons of his warfare were "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." Even in Nero's household, trophies of the cross were won. From the vile attendants of a viler king were gained converts who became sons of God. These were not Christians secretly, but openly. They were not ashamed of their faith.

And by what means was an entrance achieved and a firm footing gained for Christianity where even its admission seemed impossible? In his epistle to the Philippians, Paul ascribed to his own imprisonment

his success in winning converts to the faith from Nero's household. Fearful lest the Philippians might think that his afflictions had impeded the progress of the gospel, he assured them: "I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel."



Human expectations may fail, but not the purpose of God

When the Christian churches first learned that Paul was to visit Rome, they looked forward to a signal triumph of the gospel in that city. Paul had borne the truth to many lands; he had proclaimed it in great cities. Might not this champion of the faith succeed in winning souls to Christ, even in the metropolis of the world? But their hopes were crushed by the tidings that Paul had gone to Rome as a prisoner. They had confidently hoped to see the gospel, once established at this great center, extend rapidly to all nations, and become a prevailing power in the earth. How great their disappointment! Human expectations had failed, but not the purpose of God.

Not by Paul's sermons, but by his bonds, was the attention of the court attracted to Christianity. It was as a captive that he broke from so many souls the bonds that held them in the slavery of sin. Nor was this all. He declared: "Many of the brethren in the



Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear."

Souls may be won to Christ through meekness and patience, as well as boldness

Paul's patience and cheerfulness during his long and unjust imprisonment, his courage and faith, were a continual sermon. His spirit, so unlike the spirit of the world, bore witness that a power higher than that of earth, was abiding with him. And by his example, Christians were impelled to greater energy as advocates of the cause from the public labors of which Paul had been withdrawn. In these ways were the apostle's bonds influential, so that when his power and usefulness seemed cut off, and to all appearance he could do the least, then it was that he gathered sheaves for Christ in fields from which he seemed wholly excluded.

Before the close of that two years' imprisonment, Paul was able to say, "My bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;" and among those who sent greetings to the Philippians he mentions chiefly them "that are of Caesar's household."

Patience as well as courage has its victories. By meekness under trial, no less than by boldness in enterprise, souls may be won to Christ. The Christian who manifests patience and cheerfulness under bereavement and suffering, who meets even death

itself with the peace and calmness of an unwavering faith, may accomplish for the gospel more than he could have effected by a long life of faithful labor. Often when the servant of God is withdrawn from active duty, the mysterious providence which our short-sighted vision would lament, is designed by God to accomplish a work that otherwise would never have been done.

No matter our circumstances, we always have service to render

Let not the follower of Christ think, when he is no longer able to labor openly and actively for God and his truth, that he has no service to render, no reward to secure. Christ's true witnesses are never laid aside. In health and sickness, in life and death, God uses them still. When through



Satan's malice the servants of Christ have been persecuted, their active labors hindered, when they have been cast into prison, or dragged to the scaffold or to the stake, it was that truth might gain a greater triumph. As these faithful ones sealed their testimony with their blood, souls hitherto in doubt and uncertainty were convinced of the faith of Christ, and took their stand courageously for him. From the ashes of the martyrs has sprung an abundant harvest for God.

The zeal and fidelity of Paul and his fellow workers, no less than the faith and obedience of these converts to Christianity, under circumstances so forbidding, rebuke slothfulness and lack of faith in the minister of Christ. The apostle and his associate workers might have argued that it would be vain to call to repentance and faith in

Christ the servants of Nero, subjected, as they were, to fierce temptations, surrounded by formidable hindrances, and exposed to bitter opposition. Even should they be convinced of the truth, how could they render obedience? But Paul did not reason thus; in faith he presented the gospel to these souls; and among those who heard were some who decided to obey at any cost. Notwithstanding obstacles and dangers, they would accept the light, and trust God to help them let their light shine forth to others.

There are no conditions of salvation that we cannot comply with

Not only were converts won to the truth in Caesar's household, but after their conversation they remained in that household. They did not feel at liberty to abandon their post of duty because their surroundings were no longer congenial. The truth had found them there, and there they remained, by their changed life and character testifying to the transforming power of the new faith.

Are any tempted to make their circumstances an excuse for failing to witness for Christ? Let them consider the situation of the disciples in Caesar's household -- the depravity of the emperor, the profligacy of the court. We can hardly imagine circumstances more unfavorable to a religious life, and entailing greater sacrifice or opposition than



those in which these converts found themselves. Yet amidst difficulties and dangers they maintained their fidelity. Because of obstacles that seem insurmountable, the Christian may seek to excuse himself from obeying the truth as it is in Jesus; but he can offer no excuse that will bear investigation. Could he do this, he would prove God unjust, in that he had made for his children conditions of salvation with which they could not comply.



Help and grace are promised to us in every situation

He whose heart is fixed to serve God will find opportunity to witness for him. Difficulties will be powerless to hinder him who is determined to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. In the strength gained by prayer and a study of the Word, he will seek virtue and forsake vice. Looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of the faith, who endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, the believer will willingly brave contempt and derision. And help and grace sufficient for every circumstance are promised by him whose word is truth. His everlasting arms encircle the soul that turns to him for aid. In his care we may rest safely, saying, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee." To all who put their trust in him, God will fulfil his promise.



Our mission is to seek and to save the lost, even in the midst of persecution

By his own example the Saviour has shown that his followers can be in the world, and yet not of the world. He came not to partake of its delusive pleasures, to be swayed by its customs, and to follow its practises, but to do his Father's will, to seek and save the lost. With this object before him, the Christian may stand uncontaminated in any surroundings. Whatever his station or circumstances, exalted or humble, he will manifest the power of true religion in the faithful performance of duty.

Not in freedom from trial, but in the midst of it, is Christian character developed. Exposure to rebuffs and opposition leads the follower of Christ to greater watchfulness, and more earnest prayer to the mighty Helper. Severe trial endured by the grace of God develops patience, vigilance, fortitude, and a deep and abiding trust in God. It is the triumph of the Christian faith that it enables its follower to suffer and be strong; to submit, and thus to conquer; to be killed all the day long, and yet to live; to bear the cross, and thus to win the crown of glory.

RH, Dec. 21, 1911



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.

A Prayer

Mrs. L. R. Reynolds

Lord, make my mind broad as thy world is wide,
And untrammelled by human creeds;
Then give me a heart that is willing and kind,
To feel humanity's needs.

Lord, make me as staunch and as firm as the hills,
To stand for the right against wrong;
Then give me a heart that is gentle and meek,
As I journey life's pathway along.

Lord, make me as brave as the martyr who dares
For conscience to yield up his life;
Then make me as swift as a bird on the wing,
To flee from all envy and strife.

Lord, make me unswerving and true as the sun
When it shines in the power of its might;
Then make me as peaceful and calm as the moon
When it glides through the heavens at night.

And when I am firm, and brave, and true,
There's a purpose that reaches out still;
Then give me a heart consecrated to Thee
And glad to perform all thy will.



Tearing Off the Blindfold!



By Joe Olson

“For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids.” Zech. 9:17.

I'd like to try something here that rarely happens in the world any more. Frankly, I'm not sure how often it happens in the church, either. I'd like to try to pull back the curtain that the devil has installed that we might see the honest truth for a few minutes.

If you believe that there is a God and that His Son Jesus Christ did come here 2,000 years ago to die for our sins, then you are better off than probably 66% of the entire world. According to the number one website on Google for “How many Christians are there in the world?”, 33% of the world's inhabitants are Christian. And since Jesus said He was the only way to eternal life, that means that two out of every three people living in the world are lost if they don't become Christians.

Two-thirds of the world are already completely deceived and are bound up as bundles ready to be burned. They are so deceived that they do not even accept that God sent His Son here to pay for our sins. As a result, they

will pay for their own sins. Unless we are able to reach them with the truth, they will be lost eternally.

Over half of those professing Christianity do not believe in the Bible

There are 38,000 Christian religions, according to Christianity Today. Now, of the over 2 billion Christians in the world, in the 38,000 different Christian religions, only 648 million of those believe in the Bible. Do you find that interesting? Well over *half* of the Christian believers do not believe in the Bible. So that means that around 31% of the world's Christians are Bible believers. Since the Bible is the basis of all truth in this world, and 69% of Christians don't believe in the Bible, we can probably safely add them to the group that is being deceived as well. “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” Ps. 119:105. If the word is not believed, then there is no light for them... right? They would be in total darkness, no matter what they profess.

They have no anchor; no solid foundation. They are boats drifting on the ocean of false theories, going any direction the wind happens to be blowing at the moment.

As of February 5, 2012, the world

population has been determined to be 6,992,413,490. If you divide that number into the 648 million Bible believers, you come up with less than 1 percent of the world's inhabitants. Less than 1% of the world's population are Bible-believing Christians. One in a hundred. Would you agree that the devil has been pretty successful in deceiving us? If less than one in a hundred believe the Bible as God's unerring word, then the devil has very few he really needs to work on, doesn't he?

Then, if we take the 17 million Seventh-day Adventists and divide them by the 648 million Bible believers, we come up with 0.026 or 26 people per thousand Bible believing Christians. If you divided it by the world's population, we would have 0.0024% of the world's population being Bible-believing Seventh-day Adventists.

That is 24 people out of every 10,000 people on earth. That, of course, assumes every professing Seventh-day Adventist is truly seeking and serving God with all his or her heart.

We know from scripture that the devil has filled the church with tares

According to my research, approximately half of the Seventh-day Adventist members go to church on any given Sabbath. If that is correct, then there are only 12 of 10,000 people who are active, Bible-believing Christians.

Then we would have to take those that attend church services each week, and try to estimate how many of them are really Bible-believing... I mean to the point of genuinely trying to keep God's commandments and have the faith of Jesus. We know from the scripture that the devil has filled the church with tares. We also know from Revelation chapter 3, that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is lukewarm and neither hot nor cold. Based on those two facts, can

we safely assume that half or less of the remaining church members are truly committing their souls to Jesus? Some would say less, or even much less than that, but for argument's sake, let's use half. That now makes just 6 people out of 10,000 people who are true Christian believers. That means for every 10,000 people on this earth, 9,994 of them follow or obey the devil. Pretty scary statistic isn't it?

If we are not committed to Jesus, then we are devil worshippers

Now, let's look at this from the other direction...According to the Bible, if people are not following or obeying Jesus Christ, who are they following? Jesus said we will choose one master or the other. There are only two choices.

Most people probably would not accept my figures here. Most don't accept that if they are not committed to Jesus Christ, that they are devil worshippers. But, most people rejected our Lord and Saviour when He came, and Jesus wondered if there would be any faith when He came back again. "... Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8. Apparently, Jesus ran these numbers before I did.

We live amongst devil worshippers. No, they may not know it and they may not understand what I mean and they certainly wouldn't agree with it, but are these not the facts? You can look up the same statistics I have. Determine for yourself if I am telling the truth or not. Actually, Jesus' own words should be enough. He asked the people a rhetorical question about whether or not there would be any faithful people when He came back again. He was indicating that there would be very few who followed, truly followed God. So few, that it might appear as if there were not any.

The devil wants us blinded from seeing the truth

My point in this little exercise is

not to discourage or instill fear, but to let you know how successful the devil has been. He does not want us to know how well he controls this earth and the people in it. He wants us blind to the fact that he runs virtually everything. His great fear is that we might wake up and see the truth of what this world actually is.

I'd like to go back to our opening text... "For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids." Zech. 9:17. The mere fact that we exist at this moment is because of the goodness of the Lord. The second man sinned, Jesus Christ stepped in and took our place and our punishment. And the devil has spent 6,000 years to keep that information under wraps. If that truth were to be really broadcast to the world, and believed, there would be a seismic shift in the world and its understanding of "truth". But of course, we know that for the most part, that will not actually happen, I mean, happen for real, because Jesus wondered if He would find any faith on this earth when He comes back.

We have all been led astray by Satan's deceptions

Now the question is: "Why do people not see the truth of the love of God?" God is the One who has done everything for us, all of us, and has blessed us beyond compare and has over and over again accepted us back into His loving arms, from every time we stray. He has forgiven and He has entreated and He has done all in His power to get us to see the truth that we might turn back to Him to be saved eternally. This whole great controversy is about us seeing our Father for who He actually is and not as the devil has painted Him. The whole mess is predicated on the devil trying to deceive us into thinking that You are not the loving, wise, totally holy and good God who does nothing but right and good for His creation. As a result, we have all been led astray

and we have been taught, from the moment of conception, to do the opposite of whatever You have said.

And what's worse, we actually think that the things we do are better and more righteous than the things You ask of us. It is a total mind reversal that has happened and everything You do is to try to get our minds on the right track again. Deception does not even begin to express what has happened to us. Everything we do and everything we hear and watch and read about is all deception. It is so overmastering and powerful that only a very few ever see the light of truth. We have to wrest ourselves away from all of the avenues that the devil uses to get us further and further off track.

We have counsel to keep things out of our lives that destroy our discernment

That is why Ellen White wanted us to stay away from the novels and the plays and the games and everything that takes our minds off sharpening our abilities to see through the mists and clouds of error. If we don't get through to the light, and recognize our continual need of correction in all things worldly and spiritual, we will be lost eternally.

And then if you add the need to get our diets in line so that we can overcome the veritable poisons that we put into our bodies that effect our minds in such a way that we can't think logically, we will never be able to make the changes so needed to our reasoning abilities that we again might see the truth of things.

O my Father, thank You for this time and for tearing away the devil's blindfold from my eyes! I love You!



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

He Will Come Again



When Jesus returns, all the holy angels will accompany Him

Many of the prophets of the Old Testament foretold the second coming of Christ to this earth. Even before the flood this was understood; for we read that “Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints.”

By James Edson White

“Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” Acts 1:11.

At the close of the Passover Supper, just before entering upon His night of agony in Gethsemane, the Saviour told His disciples that He was soon going away from them. This made them very sorrowful, but the Master comforted them with the words, “I will come again.”

He told them of a glorious city that was being prepared for the faithful. Already many beautiful mansions had been built in it, and when He should go back to heaven, He would prepare other mansions for them, and for all the righteous who should live after them.

Abraham looked forward to the time when he would have a home in this city, for Paul wrote of him: “for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” Heb. 11:10. The apostle-prophet John gives a full description of this city in the twenty-first chapter of Revelation.

The prophet Zechariah testifies of the same event: “And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee.” Zech. 14:5. And the Saviour tells us that “the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him.” Matt. 25:31.

By this we see that the saints spoken of by Jude and Zechariah refer to the hosts of angels that will come with Him at His second advent. The Saviour says that all the holy angels will come with Him. Heaven will be emptied; for all its glorious inhabitants will join their Lord on this wonderful journey from heaven to earth.

Job and David spoke of the second coming of Jesus

Job based his hope on the second coming of Christ. Hear what he says: “For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold Him, and not another.” Job 19:25-27.

Job was not alone in this consolation. David, the sweet singer of Israel, contemplating the future said: “Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and



the fullness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord: for He cometh, for He cometh to judge the earth: He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth." Psalm 96:11-13.

Jesus tells us He is coming to reward every man according to his works

With burning eloquence, from lips touched with hallowed fire from heaven, the gospel prophet exclaims: "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He shall save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isa. 25:8, 9.

Again, the beloved Daniel, inspired of God, referring to the same thing, said: "At that time shall Michael (Christ) stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of Thy people; ...and at that time Thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Dan. 12:1, 2.

The apostle Paul testifies: "And unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28, "At His first advent, our Saviour bore the sins of the world in Gethsemane and on Calvary. At His second advent, He comes bearing no sin, but as the mighty and glorious King, to take all His faithful children to Himself forever." Matt. 25:31. Of this wonderful event our Lord Himself testifies: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works." Matt. 16:27.

Jesus ascended bodily and will return in like manner

As the Saviour was taken up from the disciples, two



angels were sent to comfort them. They said: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1:11.

The very same Jesus who had taught them, who had walked up and down with them through the cities of Israel, and who John says they had seen and handled, is to come back to earth again. And for the benefit of those who desire to know how He will come, the angels said, He will "so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." He ascended bodily, and they saw Him as He went, and "a cloud received Him out of their sight." He will come back in the same manner. John says of the event: "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him." Revelation 1:7.



When He ascended He was visible until a cloud of glory received Him out of their sight. When He returns, the cloud will be first seen; but as He nears the earth, the glorious person of the world's Redeemer will be plainly visible to all beholders, for "every eye shall see Him." Rev. 1:7.

There will be no mistaking the second coming of Jesus

Many theories are taught in regard to the second advent of the Lord. Some now claim that this event occurs at conversion. Others believe that Christ comes at the death of every saint. But we read that "as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Such a description cannot be applied to the calm death of the Christian, nor yet to the quiet working of the Holy Spirit at conversion. When our Lord comes in the clouds of heaven no one will question whether He is really our Saviour. For the lightning that flashes across the sky in the east cannot be hidden from the dwellers in the west. So the presence of Christ will be seen to earth's remotest bounds. It must be so; for He brings with Him all the glory of the universe; for He comes "in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels." Luke 9:26.

THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS FORGIVE TO BE FORGIVEN

By Emmanuel Machakaire

“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” Eph 4:31-32. Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man, have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also [do] ye. Col. 3:13.

We live in a society in which we are wronged, frustrated and angered almost every day and we are bound to store up anger that sooner or later is going to break us, causing pain and misery for many of us. Research indicates that unprocessed anger can produce all sorts of physical disorders which range all the way from arthritis to asthma, from urinary disorders to the common cold. And we have known for a long time that anger can cause serious emotional disorders when it is not handled effectively. The best prescribed cure to this is forgiveness.

To help us understand the subject of forgiveness here are some definitions of forgiveness:

1. To cease to blame or hold resentment against (someone or something)
2. To grant pardon for (a mistake, wrongdoing, etc.)
3. To free or pardon (someone) from penalty
4. To stop being angry with (someone who has wronged us)

THE QUIET MILKMAN

In the beautiful hills of Pennsylvania, a devout group of Christian people live a simple life without automobiles, electricity, or modern machinery. They work hard and live quiet, peaceful lives separate

from the world. Most of their food comes from their own farms. The women sew and knit and weave their clothing, which is modest and plain. They are known as the Amish people.

A 32-year-old milk truck driver lived with his family in their Nickel Mines community. He was not Amish, but his pickup route took him to many Amish dairy farms, where he became known as the quiet milkman. In October 2006 he suddenly lost all reason and control. In his tormented mind he blamed God for the death of his first child and some unsubstantiated memories. He stormed into the Amish school without any provocation, released the boys and adults, and tied up the 10 girls. He shot the girls, killing five and wounding five. Then he took his own life.

A LANGUAGE OF FORGIVENESS

This shocking violence caused great anguish among the Amish, but no anger. There was hurt, but no hate. Their forgiveness was immediate. Collectively they began to reach out to the milkman’s suffering family. As the milkman’s family gathered in his home the day after the shootings, an Amish neighbor came over, wrapped his arms around the father of the dead gunman, and said, “We will forgive you.” The Amish leaders visited the milkman’s wife and children to extend their sympathy, their

forgiveness, their help, and their love. About half of the mourners at the milkman’s funeral were Amish. In turn, the Amish invited the milkman’s family to attend the funeral services of the girls who had been killed. A remarkable peace settled on the Amish as their faith sustained them during this crisis.

One local resident very eloquently summed up the aftermath of this tragedy when he said, “We were all speaking the same language, and not just English, but a language of caring, a language of community, [and] a language of service. And, yes a language of forgiveness.”

THE RESULTS OF FORGIVENESS

The family of the milkman who killed the five girls released the following statement to the public: “To our Amish friends, neighbors, and local community:

“Our family wants each of you to know that we are overwhelmed by the forgiveness, grace, and mercy that you’ve extended to us. Your love for our family has helped to provide the healing we so desperately need. The prayers, flowers, cards, and gifts you’ve given have touched our hearts in a way no words can describe. Your compassion has reached beyond our family, beyond our community, and is

changing our world, and for this we sincerely thank you.

“Please know that our hearts have been broken by all that has happened. We are filled with sorrow for all of our Amish neighbors whom



we have loved and continue to love. We know that there are many hard days ahead for all the families who lost loved ones, and so we will continue to put our hope and trust in the God



of all comfort, as we all seek to rebuild our lives.”

Hearing of this tragedy, many people sent money to the Amish to pay for the health care of the five surviving girls and for the burial expenses of the five who were killed. As a further demonstration of their discipleship, the Amish decided to share some of the money with the widow of the milkman and her three children because they too were victims of this terrible tragedy.

It was because of their faith in God and trust in His word that enabled the Amish people to manifest such an expression of forgiveness.

FORGIVENESS IS THERAPEUTIC

Forgiveness is not always instantaneous as it was with the Amish. Some hold grudges for a lifetime, unaware that courageously forgiving those who have wronged us is wholesome and therapeutic.

“Forgiveness is freeing up and putting to better use the energy once consumed by holding grudges, harboring resentments, and nursing unhealed wounds. It is rediscovering the strengths we always had and relocating our limitless capacity to



understand and accept other people and ourselves.”

Forgiveness comes more readily when, like the Amish, we have faith in God and trust in His word.

Such faith “enables people to withstand the worst of humanity. It also enables people to look beyond themselves. More importantly, it enables them to forgive.”

JACOB AND ESAU - A STORY OF FORGIVENESS

The Bible is one long story of how God reaches out to show His love and forgiveness to mankind. In Genesis 3:15 God gives His first promise of a Redeemer who would forgive the world of their sin. The Bible gives various stories demonstrating forgiveness.

In the story of Jacob and Esau (Gen. 25, 27, 32, 33) we get a real story of forgiveness.

The twins, Jacob and Esau, were very different from one another. One was a man’s man. Esau loved outdoor activities like tending the sheep and hunting. Jacob preferred to stay at home and learn from his mother.

One day Esau came in from the field famished. He begged Jacob to give him something to eat. In return Jacob sold a bowl of soup to his older twin in exchange for the birthright.

Esau traded the larger portion of their inheritance for a bowl of beans. Gen. 25:29-34.

The deception continued. When their father Isaac knew he was near death he requested

that his manly son Esau kill a deer to prepare a fine meal before dividing the estate. Rebecca, the mother of the twins, heard the request and helped Jacob pull off a grand scheme to fool Isaac into giving Jacob the larger portion of the inheritance.

In the end, Jacob had to run for his life. He fled to another country to find his mother’s relatives who would care for him. It was many years before he returned to his own family. When he did, he heard that his brother Esau was looking for him. The deceiver, Jacob, was scared. He devised a plan so that his brother could only destroy

half of Jacob’s wealth if he was caught.

Gen. 32.

When they finally met, Esau ran to Jacob and hugged him and kissed him and showed forgiveness and mercy. He had so forgiven Jacob that he was surprised Jacob would even think that there

might be hard feelings between them. Gen. 33.



IN PLACE OF HATE, JOSEPH FORGAVE HIS BROTHERS

In Genesis chapters 37 to 50, we get another remarkable story on forgiveness among brothers.

The 11th son born to Jacob was Joseph. God revealed His plan for the life of Joseph when he was still a young boy. Joseph excitedly talked with his brothers about God’s plans. His brothers became jealous and eventually sold him into slavery while telling their father Jacob that his favorite son had been killed by a wild animal.

Joseph was bought by a man who eventually recognized Joseph’s honesty. The man gave Joseph great freedom even though he was still a slave. Eventually Joseph was wrongly accused of a crime and ended up in prison. Joseph’s integrity won him

favor with the jail keepers and he became a guard over other prisoners. Through time God elevated Joseph to great power within the kingdom.

The brothers thought Joseph was dead. They did not suspect that the man they stood before was their own brother Joseph. When Joseph revealed himself, they were shocked to know he was alive. They even feared for years that he would seek retribution. After the family was reunited they lived together in Egypt. When their father passed away, the brothers began to fear even more that Joseph would finally show his hatred towards them. Genesis 50:1. Joseph was heartbroken when he learned they still did not trust him and that they feared what he would do to them. Gen. 50:17.

This amazing story of forgiveness culminates with these words from Joseph to his brothers: "And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them." Gen. 50:19-21. What a remarkable story of forgiveness; in place of hate Joseph expressed true love for his brothers. This shows that the best way to repay those who



hurt us and cause us much pain and anguish is to love them. For if God allowed them to do it to us He has a purpose to accomplish for our good, so who are we to fight those who hurt us?

FORGIVENESS DOWN THROUGH GENERATIONS

It is for God to repay them if He so wishes for vengeance is His as for us our duty is to love them and by so doing we can win many hearts to Christ.

Another great Bible story about forgiveness is the story of David and Mephibosheth. 2 Sam 9.

Though King Saul tried to destroy David throughout the book of 1 Sam., David responded with kindness and forgiveness to the household of Saul. After he became king, David looked for anyone who was still living from the household of Saul so that he could demonstrate his love and friendship for Jonathan, Saul's son.

David showed kindness to Mephibosheth by restoring to him and his family the land owned by the former king. David paid to have the land farmed and cared for. As for Mephibosheth himself, David made a place for him at his own table so that he was accepted as part of the king's family.



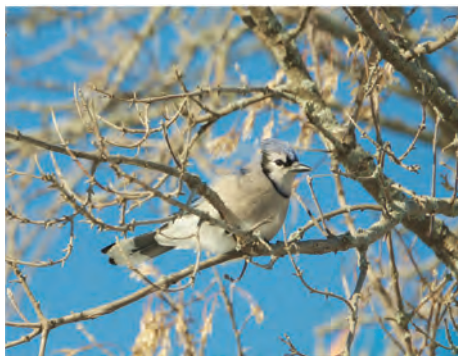
realized that he had a loving father who treated his servants better than the boy was currently living. He decided to return home as a servant to the father; at least he would have food

to eat. Little did he know, his father was expecting the boy's return. As soon as the father saw the young man on the horizon, he ran to him with open arms of forgiveness.

Though the boy returned with hopes of just being a servant, the father accepted him as the son he always was. The boy was forgiven and restored to his former position in the family. This is exactly what God does with us, we cause God so much pain and hurt when we fall into sin and rebel against Him but when we come to our senses and repent He always accepts us as His sons and daughters without holding any grudges against us. We must demonstrate this heavenly love ourselves by loving those who hurt us.

A DEMONSTRATION OF THE FORGIVENESS OF JESUS TOWARD US

In Luke chapter 15 we get another interesting story on forgiveness, the story about the prodigal son. It is a Bible story between a father and a son which Jesus taught to illustrate



HE WHO IS DEVOID OF THE POWER TO FORGIVE IS DEVOID OF THE POWER TO LOVE

In a show of His own divinity, Jesus forgave a woman who was caught in the act of adultery. John 8. She was brought to the Lord by the spiritual leaders in town. They wanted to see if Jesus, claiming to be the Son of God, would obey the Law of God and have the woman stoned. Instead, Jesus said that they were welcome to start the stoning as soon as they felt like they were without sin and did not deserve a stoning of their own. They dropped their stones and walked away.

Jesus feigned surprise when he looked up from playing in the dirt and the woman was standing there alone with no accusers. Asking her if there was anyone left to accuse her of her sin, she answered, "No." Jesus responded, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." Jesus did this to set an example to all of us by demonstrating that we must forgive others no matter what they have done to us, since we too need to be forgiven for our own sins. By refusing to forgive others we will be acting like the accusers of the woman, condemning others for death yet we have our own sins worthy of death. He, who is devoid of the power to forgive, is devoid of the power to love.

"The Christian whose heart has been touched with the beauty of the Saviour's character is to put into practice that which he learns in the school of Christ." SD 90. That is forgiveness.

Forgiveness is an attribute of God that we are consistently taught in the Bible that we too can demonstrate to others.

HATRED AND REVENGE ARE ATTRIBUTES OF SATAN

Forgiveness - it's such a hard thing to do, but it can be so liberating to the soul. In the true spirit of Christ we need to learn to forgive the unforgivable. We don't have to condone what's been done; what's

wrong is still wrong. What we do have to do is allow ourselves to release all the negative emotions associated with that person. As long as we hold onto the pain, we are choosing to allow that person's past actions to continue to hurt us.

Forgiveness is a source of power. When tragedy strikes, we should not respond by seeking personal revenge, because the spirit of hatred and revenge originated with Satan and it led him to put to death the Son of God. Whoever cherishes malice or unkindness is cherishing the same spirit, and its fruit will be unto death. In the revengeful thought the evil deed lies enfolded, as the plant in



the seed. "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." 1 John 3:15, MB 56, 1896, 2MCP 524. As Confucius says, "Before you embark on a journey of revenge, dig two graves."

TO FORGIVE IS THE HIGHEST AND MOST BEAUTIFUL FORM OF LOVE

What can we all learn from such experiences as these? "Like Christ we shall forgive our enemies, and watch for opportunities to show those who have harmed us that we love their souls, and if we could, would do



them good. . . . If those who have injured us, still continue in their course of wrongdoing . . . we must make efforts to be reconciled to our brethren, following the Bible plan, as Christ Himself has directed. If our brethren refuse to be reconciled, then

do not talk about them, nor injure their influence, but leave them in the hands of a just God, who judgeth all men righteously. . . . Let the love of Christ flow into the heart and transform the character or we shall not be children of God." SD 90.

- To forgive is the highest and most beautiful form of love. In return, you will receive untold peace and happiness.
- Let us forgive each other and only then will we live in peace.
- Forgiveness is the glue that repairs broken relationships.
- Forgiveness is the sweet smell left by the flower on the bottom of the shoe which trampled it.
- Forgiveness is the best gift we can give to ourselves.
- Let us remember that we need to forgive to be forgiven.

It will take humility to forgive the unforgivable, but if we will get on our knees and ask our Heavenly Father for a feeling of forgiveness, He will help us. The Lord requires us "to forgive all men" for our own good because "hatred retards spiritual growth." Only as we rid ourselves of hatred and bitterness can the Lord put comfort into our hearts. Amen.



Emmanuel Machakaire, originally from Zimbabwe, is a devoted member of the Seventh-day Adventist church in South Africa.

Hope for Health



Are you looking for pain relief? If so, look no further! MSM can actually help to repair damaged tissue rather than just suppressing the pain. It can help reduce the pain and discomfort that comes from inflammatory conditions, injuries, or tissue damage with the added effect of enhanced natural beauty! Widely known as the "beauty mineral" MSM helps beautify the skin, increase the glossy and healthy look of the hair, and strengthen the nails! For feeling and looking your best on the inside AND outside, try MSM today!!

MSM – Powder & Capsules

Price:

16 oz. powder	\$14.99
120 capsules	\$12.99
240 capsules	\$20.99

Suggested Adult Dosage:

- Powder: 1/2 - 2 teaspoons with water or juice 1-3 times per day with food depending on severity of health concern.
- Capsules: 2-10 capsules, 1-3 times a day with food.

NOTE: You can take up to six teaspoons (or 30 capsules) per day (approx 30,000 mg.) for three to six weeks for maximum health benefits before reducing to a daily amount of 3,000 to 6,000 mg. (3-6 capsules or 1/2 - 1 teaspoon per day). You should always build up to larger daily intakes slowly. Don't take too much too soon or you may get headaches, stomach upset, or skin blemishes - all of which may be unpleasant but generally temporary in nature.

1 teaspoon = 5 capsules = 5,000 mg.

To Order Call Today:

1-800-468-7884

or Visit us on the web at:

www.hopeforhealthusa.com

*Prices listed above do not include shipping and handling or sales tax



HOW DOES MSM WORK?

MSM makes the cell walls flexible and elastic. If the amount of MSM in the body is too low, new cells lose some of their flexibility and elasticity. MSM makes cell walls permeable, allowing water and other nutrients to freely flow into cells and allow waste and toxins to properly flow out, thus improving the health of connective tissue and reducing pain. MSM also reduces inflammation and permits the muscles to heal while preventing them from becoming sore.

HOPE FOR HEALTH MSM CAN HELP:

- Relieve pain and inflammation.
- Reduce or eliminate muscle cramps.
- Reduce or eliminate pain from chronic conditions.
- Improve suppleness of skin and shininess of hair.
- Help to reduce wrinkles associated with aging.
- Increase alertness and ability to concentrate.
- Improve mood.
- Beautify and strengthen nails, making them less prone to cracking and splitting.

Q: I AM ALLERGIC TO SULFUR. CAN I TAKE MSM?

A: Strictly speaking, the concept of a "sulfur allergy" is a misconception: sulfur is an element, the third most abundant mineral in the human body. MSM provides this organic sulfur. It's not possible to be allergic to sulfur because it has no protein component. When people say they are "allergic to sulfur", what they really mean is that they are allergic or sensitive to certain sulfur-containing substances, most notably to sulfa-based drugs (sulfonamides) or to sulfites (preservatives used in wines and some foods), but apart from sulfur,

MSM bears no relation to these substances.

Sulfonamides do not occur naturally and are used as antibiotics. The sulfa molecule is much larger and can cause severe reactions in some individuals. Sulfites are a form of preservative that can cause allergic reactions in some individuals. An estimated half-million people are sulfite sensitive in the US. MSM does not contain sulfites, therefore should not cause a reaction in sulfite-sensitive individuals.

While many people are allergic to sulfa drugs and sulfites, no similar reactions have ever been reported with MSM.

AMAZING MSM FACTS:

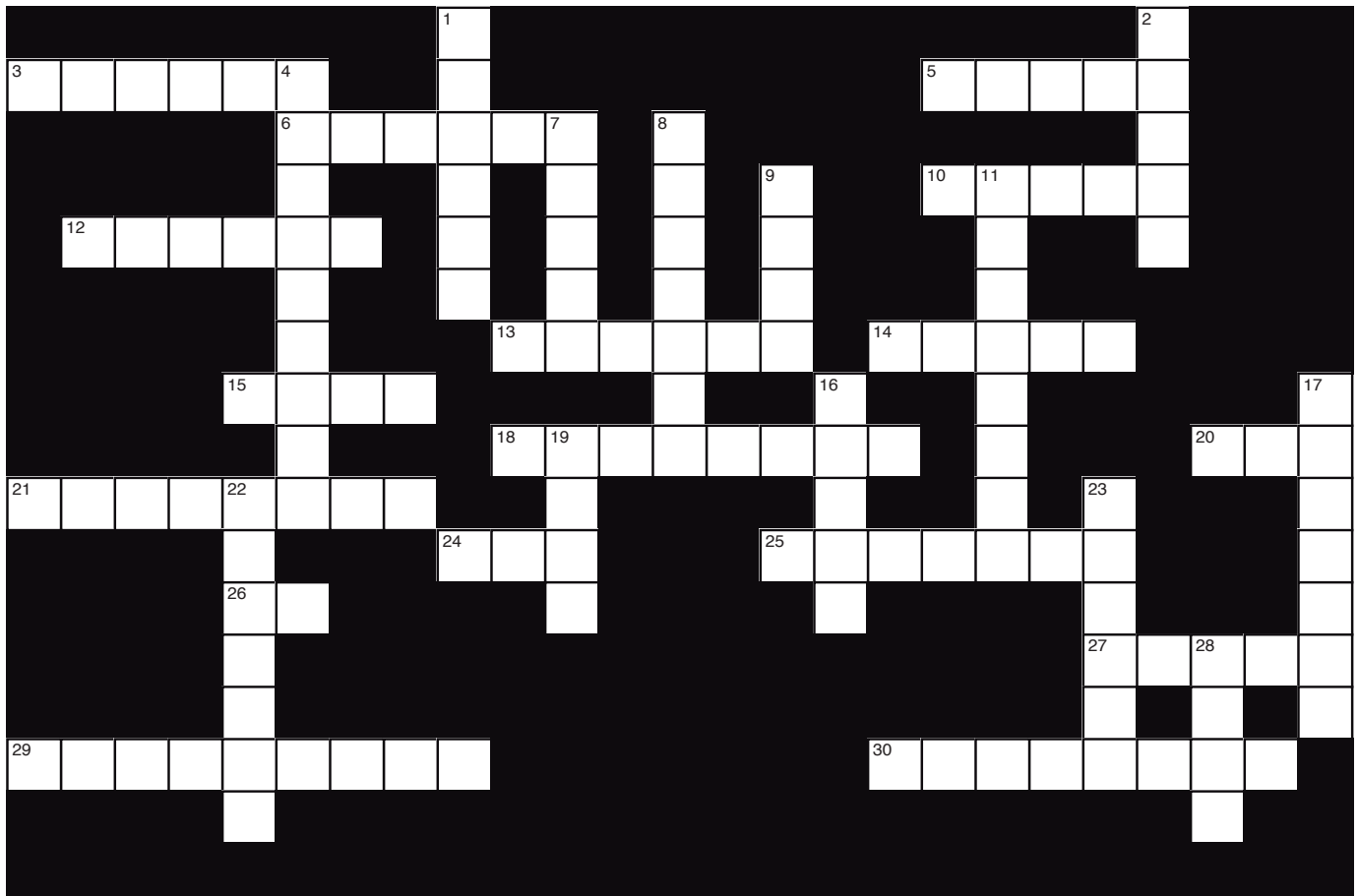
- People who suffer from chronic pain have reported up to 80% less pain and inflammation when taking MSM on a daily basis.
- MSM has been used over and over again for the relief of general pain, joint and muscle pain, and even head trauma!
- MSM reduces swelling that causes pain. It is so effective that doctors are often able to reduce or eliminate pain medication for patients with chronic pain.
- MSM has anti-inflammatory and pain-reducing properties, and can block the pain response in nerve fibers.
- Studies have shown that MSM is a safe and effective anti-inflammatory agent. It may also contribute to the integrity of joint cartilage and other connective tissue.

SO, IF YOU BATTLE WITH PAIN OR FATIGUE, DON'T WAIT ANOTHER MINUTE! TRY HOPE FOR HEALTH'S MSM TODAY!

*These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to prevent, diagnose, treat, or cure any disease.

Combining nature, faith, and love to bring healing to the world.

Christian Crossword



ACROSS

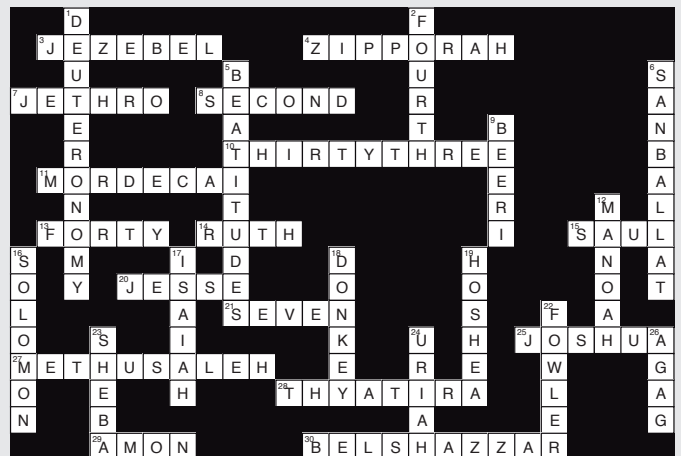
3. A Jewish weight
5. Home of the prophet Amos
6. 2 bears punished the boys for insulting which prophet?
10. Paul ended up on the island of ____ after the shipwreck
12. A day's journey during Bible times was how many miles?
13. One of the seven churches in Revelation—the persecuted church
14. In Revelation what is the color of the 2nd sequence of horses?
15. Scene of Daniel's visions in Daniel 8
18. A cubit is how many inches?
20. Most likely the earliest book of the Bible?
21. Esther's Jewish name
24. The color of the first horse Zechariah saw?
25. Paul's homeland
26. Where did Job live?
27. The Queen that visited Solomon was from ____
29. The mother of John the Baptist
30. He wrote a letter against the Jews to King Artaxerxes

DOWN

1. The dethroned Queen in Esther
2. The place of Samuel's headquarters
4. The orator that gave evidence against Paul to the governor
7. Terah was the father of ____
8. A female prophetess and judge
9. A descendant of Aaron who lived in exile in Babylon and wrote a book of the Bible

11. Paul shipwrecked in which sea?
16. Paul, accused of sedition, made a defense before ____
17. The Shunammite that was David's nurse
19. Zechariah's grandfather
22. The throne of King Ahasuerus was in ____
23. Paul's birthplace
28. The firstborn of Isaac and Rebekah

Answers from Christian Crossword published in the December 2012 issue of Our Firm Foundation



10 Foods to Soothe Inflammation and Banish Pain



Dr. Olson comes from a long line of health professionals including MDs, naturopaths, and osteopaths. Having always wanted to help people, especially in the area of health, she was a missionary to Belize and Korea. A national speaker, an RN for years, a certified herbologist, and a naturopathic doctor, Dr. Olson is utilizing this experience and wealth of knowledge for the benefit of people all over the world.

Now that the hub-bub of the holidays (and food-related excesses that go with it) is behind us, the New Year is here and you can finally sit back and relax. Ah-hhhh... But for some of you it may not be that easy. A combination of cold and wet weather, unhealthy holiday foods, trips to see various family members, and staying up later than normal has left you exhausted and sore. So let this New Year be the time to focus on your health! I'm sure more than a few of us have an "Eating Better" resolution on our agenda this year so why not make sure we're eating the foods that help reduce those aches and pains to get us ready for the upcoming spring cleaning?

A number of anti-inflammatory drugs on the market promise to ease our pain and calm angry allergic reactions, but while they may provide quick relief, long-term use of some anti-inflammatory medications such as NSAIDs and steroids can actually weaken our immunity or cause unwanted side effects. As is so often the case, nature has provided us with many anti-inflammatory foods that work **without** adverse reactions AND taste great! Besides their ability to reduce inflammation, these foods also supply us with loads of essential vitamins and minerals that boost our immune health. Talk about two birds with one stone! So add these foods and start feeling better today!



1. Papaya

Coined by Christopher Columbus as the 'fruit of the angels', papaya contains papain, a protein-digesting enzyme. Together with other nutrients such as vitamin C and E, papain helps to reduce inflammation, improve digestion, and speed healing from burns. Eat fresh fruits whenever possible, as dried fruits can contain high levels of chemicals such as sulphur dioxide, a preservative that has been linked to an increased risk of respiratory disease. If you must opt for the dried form, make sure it's preservative-free!

2. Pineapples

Another tropical wonder-fruit, with its potent mix of vitamins, antioxidants, and enzymes (in particular, bro-



melain), pineapple is an all-body anti-inflammation cocktail! Bromelain, an enzyme that aids in the healing of indigestion, also helps with sports injuries, trauma, and many other kinds of swelling. Extracts of bromelain have also proven to be as **effective** as some non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and are used in a number of natural anti-inflammatory supplements for arthritis. Pineapple also helps protect against colon cancer, arthritis, and macular degeneration. Try a half to one cup of fresh pineapple; two or three times a week – or daily for serious inflammation.

3. Bing Cherries

Arthritis hurts. But fresh cherries may help! Results of a study by USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists and their university colleagues



suggest that some natural compounds in plump, juicy Bing cherries may reduce painful arthritic inflammation; and when eaten daily, can lower the risk of tendonitis, bursitis, arthritis, and even a very painful form of arthritis, called gout. During gout attacks, crystals of a naturally occurring chemical, uric acid, accumulate in joints—commonly in the



toes—and cause pain. Urate in blood plasma is a precursor to uric acid crystal buildup. During the study, volunteers' plasma urate levels **decreased significantly** while the urate excreted in the



urine **increased significantly** during 5 hours after eating a bowl of cherries (meaning they were peeing out the excess uric acid) which strongly suggest that cherries can play an important role in fighting gout! Eating cherries may also help lessen the severity of other inflammatory conditions such as cardiovascular disease and cancer, while reducing the risk of chronic diseases and metabolic syndrome.

In another study published in a 2006 issue of the *Journal of Nutrition*, healthy men and women who supplemented their daily diets with 280 grams of Bing cherries had fewer markers (substances that indicate inflammation) in their blood, including C-reactive protein and nitric oxide.

4. Apples

An apple a day reduces swelling of all kinds, thanks to quercetin, a flavonoid also found in the skin of red onions. Quercetin reduces the risk of allergies, heart attack, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and prostate and lung cancers. If given the choice, opt for Red Delicious. They contain the most inflammation-fighting antioxidants!

5. Blueberries

An antioxidant powerhouse, the blueberry is high



in phytonutrients that confer anti-inflammatory protection against many diseases such as arthritis, cancer, and dementia! Loaded with fiber that helps you feel full (and eat less), blueberries top the charts in antioxidant power, protecting your body against inflammation and free radicals, molecules that can damage cells and organs. A recent study even showed that one-half to one cup of mixed berries a day improved **cognition** and **motor performance** in animals. James Joseph, PhD, director of the Neuroscience Lab at the United States Department of Agriculture Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University, Boston, who conducted the study, notes that we become more susceptible to the damaging effects of free radicals and inflammation as we age. Berries help prevent those effects by turning off the inflam-

mation signals triggered by cytokines and COX-2s, he says, making them an ideal part of your diet. To get the optimal health benefits of berries, eat two to three types of fresh, frozen or dehydrated berries each day. *Also try:* blackberries, cranberries, strawberries, and raspberries. These berries are also delicious and high in inflammation-fighting antioxidants. So start feasting on one type of berry each week!

6. Olive Oil

The extra-virgin variety is the Mediterranean's secret to longevity! Its rich supply of beneficial fatty acids and polyphenols help reduce pain and inflammation in cells throughout the body, including the joints! In fact, a study in the journal *Nature* found that it's as **effective as Advil** at reducing inflammation!! These powerful nutrients also protect the heart and blood vessels from inflammation that can lead to heart trouble and lower the risk of asthma and rheumatoid arthritis. Susan Bowerman, assistant director of the Center for Human Nutrition at the University of California at Los Angeles, recommends 2 tablespoons a day.



7. Avocado & Avocado Oil

The ability of avocado to help prevent unwanted inflammation is absolutely unquestionable in the world of health research. Also known as alligator pear, and often mistaken for a vegetable, avocado is a fruit that contains high levels of healthy monounsaturated fats and a variety of other beneficial nutrients! Researchers believe that the avocado's amazing diversity of carotenoids is a key factor in the anti-inflammatory properties of

this delicious food. The list of carotenoids found in avocado include well-known carotenoids like beta-carotene, alpha-carotene and lutein, but also many lesser known carotenoids including neochrome, neoxanthin, chrysanthemaxanthin, beta-cryptoxanthin, zeaxanthin, and violaxanthin.

Consider adding avocado to your salads, and not just for taste! Recent research has shown that absorption of two key carotenoid antioxidants—lycopene and beta-carotene—increases significantly when fresh avocado (or avocado oil) is added to an otherwise avocado-free salad. One cup of fresh avocado added to a salad of romaine lettuce, spinach, and carrots increased absorption of carotenoids from this salad between **200-400%**! This research result makes perfect sense because carotenoids are fat-soluble and would be provided with the fat they need for absorption from the addition of avocado. Avocado oil added to a salad accomplished the same result as did both avocado oil and fresh avocado added to salsa!

Tip: avocado oil has an even higher smoke point than olive oil, making it the ideal oil for cooking!

8. Turmeric

A member of the ginger family commonly found in pre-mixed curry powder, turmeric has been used medicinally for centuries, and has gained recent acceptance as a compound that may help control inflammation according to Dr. Jonny Bowden, a clinical nutrition specialist. One of the main reasons for this is a powerful compound it contains called Curcumin,



a polyphenol that gives the spice its tang and yellow hue and may interfere with the production of certain chemicals associated with inflammation. An effective anti-arthritis agent, some studies found that turmeric's anti-inflammatory effects are **on a par with potent drugs such as hydrocortisone and Motrin**, yet with none of their side effects! This strong, yet safe compound has also shown to have anti-tumor properties and may be helpful at battling premature cognitive decline, inflammatory conditions, and inhibiting the growth of plaques associated with Alzheimer's disease.

9. Ginger

Like turmeric, ginger is also highly prized around the world for its anti-inflammatory benefits, and is well-known for relieving motion sickness, morning sickness, nausea, and hasten-



ing the recovery from a cold. How does it work? Ginger contains very potent anti-inflammatory compounds called gingerols. These substances are believed to explain why so many people with osteoarthritis or rheumatoid arthritis experience reductions in their pain levels and improvements in their mobility when they consume ginger regularly. In two clinical studies involving patients who responded to conventional drugs and also those who didn't, physicians found that 75% of arthritis patients and 100% of patients with muscular discomfort experienced relief of pain and/or swelling when taking ginger. Regularly spicing up your meals with fresh ginger may help, suggests a study published in a



recent issue of *Osteoarthritis Cartilage*. In this twelve month study, 29 patients with painful arthritis in the knee (6 men and 23 women ranging in age from 42-85 years) participated in a placebo-controlled, double-blind, crossover study. Not only did participants taking ginger report substantially less pain than those on placebo, but swelling in their knees, an objective measurement of lessened inflammation, dropped also significantly in those treated with ginger versus the placebo group.

A study published in the February 2005 issue of the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* sheds further light on the mechanisms



of action that underlie ginger’s anti-inflammatory effectiveness. In this research, ginger was shown to suppress the pro-inflammatory compounds (cytokines and chemokines) produced by synoviocytes (cells comprising the synovial lining of the joints), chondrocytes (cells comprising joint cartilage) and leukocytes (immune cells).

10. Sweet Potato

Other exotic vegetables and fruits often overshadow the lowly sweet potato, but don’t overlook this humble vegetable! It is a great source of complex carbohydrates, beta-carotene, manganese, vitamin B6 and C, as well as dietary fiber. Working in concert, these nutrients are powerful antioxidants that help to heal inflammation throughout the body! Avoid processed potato products though. Commercially processed potatoes are usually prepared in overheated polyunsaturated

or hydrogenated oils, and are loaded with high amounts of sugar and salt, increasing the risk of heart disease, cancer and diabetes for anyone who munches on them.

Sweet Potato Dog Chews

An added benefit: your pooch can enjoy the health benefits from sweet potatoes too! Providing our four-



legged family members with healthy food and treats is crucial for their optimum health! Chewy sweet potato dog treats can satisfy the need to chew for puppies and promote good dental

health for adult dogs. In addition to all of these benefits, most dogs love their chewy texture and sweet taste, a combination that is sure to keep them eagerly coming back for more. Anyone in my family will tell you that my dog, Max, will do nearly *anything* for a sweet potato treat and I feel good knowing it’s good for him! Making your own all-natural sweet potato chewy dog treats is an excellent alternative to rawhide, which is a choking risk for pets (and they’re just plain yucky to me – ew!). This is a very simple dog treat that your dog will love, is easy to make, and all you need is 3 or 4 large (organic if you can find them) sweet potatoes! **Recipe:** Thoroughly wash sweet potatoes. Slice each sweet potato into 1/4” slices lengthwise and place the slices on a baking sheet or dehydrator sheet (if you have one). Bake at the lowest setting on your oven, or dehydrate at 145 – 155 degrees until done. Approximately 6-8 hours will leave them with a chewy texture, for crunchier treats dehydrate longer until you have the desired consistency.



Hope for Health

Joint pain can be caused by many types of injuries or conditions. It can be a mild annoyance or an incapacitating obstacle that affects young and old, men and women, and people from all racial and ethnic groups. No matter what causes it, joint pain can be very bothersome. But the good news is, help is available! If you suffer from joint pain, regardless of the cause, Joint Support can help! Joint Support is a specially formulated blend of herbs and nutrients that help reduce inflammation and pain while nourishing the entire structural system (bones, muscles, and joints).

HOPE FOR HEALTH'S JOINT SUPPORT CAN HELP REDUCE:

- Joint and muscle swelling, inflammation, and pain, the buildup of uric acid in the joints, and also muscle and joint fatigue.

HOPE FOR HEALTH'S JOINT SUPPORT CAN HELP INCREASE:

- Range of motion in the joints, joint and muscle strength, and overall mobility.

CAUSES OF JOINT PAIN

- Joint pain can be attributed to many causes, including degenerative conditions, sports injuries, or just the normal repetitive wear and tear of an active life. Here's what happens, and why it hurts: between the bones in every joint is a layer of tissue called cartilage, which serves as a protective cushion and allows smooth movement with minimal friction. When cartilage is damaged or wears away, the bones rub against each other, causing discomfort, swelling, and stiffness.

Price:
100 caplets.....\$21.99

Suggested Adult Dosage:

- 1-2 caplets, three times a day on an empty stomach (otherwise with food if not tolerated well).

To Order Call Today:

1-800-468-7884

or Visit us on the web at:

www.hopeforhealthusa.com

***Prices listed above do not include shipping and handling or sales tax**

JointSupport

DISCOVER SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF THE 29 EXTRAORDINARY INGREDIENTS IN JOINT SUPPORT!!

- Devil's Claw - Harpagoside, the active ingredient in devil's claw, helps reduce pain and inflammation in joints. May also help lower uric acid levels which can accumulate in the joints & cause pain.
- Alfalfa Leaves - Helps relieve fluid retention, swelling, and pain.
- Yucca - Reduces joint inflammation and pain while providing nutritional support to the structural system (bones, joints, muscles).
- White Willow Bark - Renowned for anti-inflammatory and pain-reducing abilities, especially related to painful joints.
- Cat's Claw - Helps protect cartilage, the shock-absorbing tissue between bones. Also helps suppress joint pain and inflammation.
- MSM - Reduces pain and swelling, improves joint flexibility and mobility, and repairs cartilage.
- Horsetail - Rich in silica, horsetail (also called joint-grass) nourishes connective tissue and helps restore weak or damaged cartilage, joints, and bones.
- Ginger - Has proven equally effective as conventional methods at relieving pain and inflammation.
- Licorice - Helps alleviate joint pain and stiffness.
- Bromelain - One of the most powerful natural anti-inflammatories known!
- Evening Primrose Oil - Significantly reduces pain & inflammation.
- Citrus Bio-Flavonoid Complex - Reduces inflammation & swelling.
- Borage Seed Oil - Helps reduce joint pain, swelling, inflammation, and morning stiffness. Improves mobility and grip strength.
- Vitamin A - Crucial to the formation of collagen and connective tissues, which is particularly helpful for joint pain.
- Vitamin B6 - A deficiency of B6 raises the risk for joint problems.
- Vitamin C - Reduces inflammation. Is essential for cartilage repair.
- Vitamin D2 - Helps rebuild cartilage and strengthen the bones. A deficiency of vitamin D can even cause bone and joint pain.
- Vitamin E - Enhances the repair of connective tissues. Helps relieve joint pain and leg cramps.
- Calcium - This mineral helps improve bone density as well as relieving joint pain and improving mobility.
- Magnesium - A deficiency of this mineral may cause leg cramps or joint pain. Magnesium also helps strengthen the bones by aiding calcium absorption.
- Pantothenic Acid - Reduces joint inflammation and stiffness.
- Niacinamide - Improves joint mobility, muscle strength, and decreases muscle fatigue. May completely eliminate joint pain.
- Copper - A deficiency of this mineral can cause joint pain and weak bones. A powerful antiinflammatory, it also helps reduce joint pain.
- Selenium - Fights inflammation, pain, and stiffness of the joints.
- Zinc - Helps reduce joint and muscle pain, fatigue, & inflammation.
- Quercetin - A powerful bioflavonoid with significant antiinflammatory properties. Helps reduce inflammation and pain.
- Niacin - Improves joint mobility and muscle strength. Also decreases muscle and joint fatigue.
- Boron - Helps the body to conserve magnesium and calcium. Helps prevent bone de-mineralization. Maintains healthy bones and joints.

*These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to prevent, diagnose, treat, or cure any disease.



Combining nature, faith, and love to bring healing to the world.

News Watch



1. **Trumpet.com, November 19, 2012—Pope: Christ was not a prophet!**

“In a startling statement made during his Monday Angelus to the faithful, Pope Benedict declares Jesus Christ was no prophet.”

“At midday today the holy father appeared at the window of his study to recite the Angelus with faithful gathered in St. Peter’s Square. He commented on this Sunday’s gospel focusing on Jesus’s words about the end of time.” ‘So begins the report of the Vatican’s own information service on a public statement the pope made on Monday.’

“In a startling statement about Jesus Christ’s revelation of the signs leading up to His return to Earth, Pope Benedict declared that Jesus does not describe the end of the world, and when He uses apocalyptic images He does not act as a ‘seer’. On the contrary, He wishes to ensure that His disciples in every age remain unmoved by dates and prediction.”

Editor’s note: With many clear predictions in the Bible about the nature of the Papacy in the end times, I am sure the Pope would want the world to “remain unmoved by dates and predictions”.

“By the decree of enforcing the

institution of the Papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with Spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and Republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan, and that the end is near.”—5T, 451.

2. **Time Magazine, November 26, 2012, pages 32-35, Flooded, Uprooted, Burned—The Tracks of Sandy, photographs by Stephen Wilkes for Time with comment--**

“Breezy Point, N.Y., Nov. 4—Firefighters still don’t know what started the flames that swept through this community on the tip of the Rockaway Peninsula the night Sandy made landfall. As the fire consumed more than 100 homes, they struggled to help, kept away at times by the impassable ocean surge. Now only a scar remains....”

“Staten Island, N.Y., Nov. 9—‘The first two or three days were absolute chaos,’ says James P. Molinaro, borough president of Staten Island, where powerful waves and winds ripped homes...

from their foundation—17000 homes flooded, 140,000 people without electric.

“Jacob Riis Park, Queens, N.Y., Nov. 9—In Sandy’s wake, this beachside park has become a temporary dump, one of three locations collectively storing some 250,000 tons of debris gathered by the New York City sanitation department to date.”

End Time Perspective: “Everything in the world is in agitation. The signs of the times are ominous. Coming events cast their shadows before. The Spirit of God is withdrawing from the earth, and calamity follows calamity by sea and by land. There are tempests, earthquakes, fires, floods.... Who can read the future? Where is security? There is assurance in nothing that is human or earthly. Rapidly are men ranging themselves under the banner they have chosen. Restlessly are they waiting and watching the movements of their leaders. There are those who are waiting and watching and working for our Lord’s appearing. Another class are falling into line under the generalship of the first great apostate. Few believe with heart and soul that we have a hell to shun and a heaven to win.” DA 636

Editor’s Note: Is this another call to get out of the cities?



Ellen White's *Vision*

The Sins of Babylon

I saw that since the second angel proclaimed the fall of the churches, they have been growing more and more corrupt. They bear the name of being Christ's followers; yet it is impossible to distinguish them from the world. Ministers take their texts from the Word of God, but preach smooth things. To this the natural heart feels no objection. It is only the spirit and power of the truth and the salvation of Christ that are hateful to the carnal heart. There is nothing in the popular ministry that stirs the wrath of Satan, makes the sinner tremble, or applies to the heart and conscience the fearful realities of a judgment soon to come. Wicked men are generally pleased with a form of piety without true godliness, and they will aid and support such a religion.

Many who profess to be Christians have not known God

Said the angel, "Nothing less than the whole armor of righteousness can enable man to overcome the powers of darkness and retain the victory over them. Satan has taken full possession of the churches as a body. The sayings and doings of men are dwelt upon instead of the plain, cutting truths of the Word of God. The spirit and

friendship of the world are at enmity with God. When the truth in its simplicity and strength, as it is in Jesus, is brought to bear against the spirit of the world, it at once awakens the spirit of persecution. Very many who profess to be Christians have not known God. The natural heart has not been changed, and the carnal mind remains at enmity with God. They are Satan's faithful servants, notwithstanding they have assumed another name."

God is not in the thoughts of the nominal churches

I saw that since Jesus left the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary and entered within the second veil, the churches have been filling up with every unclean and hateful bird. I saw great iniquity and vileness in the churches; yet their members profess to be Christians. Their profession, their prayers, and their exhortations are an abomination in the sight of God. Said the angel, "God will not smell in their assemblies. Selfishness, fraud, and deceit are practiced by them without the reprovings of conscience. And over all these evil traits they throw the cloak of religion." I was shown the pride of the nominal churches. God

is not in their thoughts; their carnal minds dwell upon themselves; they decorate their poor mortal bodies, and then look upon themselves with satisfaction and pleasure. Jesus and the angels look upon them in anger. Said the angel, "Their sins and pride have reached unto heaven. Their portion is prepared. Justice and judgment have slumbered long, but will soon awake. Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." The fearful threatenings of the third angel are to be realized, and all the wicked are to drink of the wrath of God. An innumerable host of evil angels are spreading over the whole land and crowding the churches. These agents of Satan look upon the religious bodies with exultation, for the cloak of religion covers the greatest crime and iniquity.

God will restrain his anger but little longer

All heaven beholds with indignation human beings, the workmanship of God, reduced by their fellow men to the lowest depths of degradation and placed on a level with the brute creation. Professed followers of that dear Saviour whose compassion was ever moved at the sight of human woe, heartily engage in this enormous and grievous sin, and deal in slaves and souls of men. Human agony is carried from place to place and bought and sold. Angels have recorded it all; it is written in the book. The tears of the pious bondmen and bondwomen, of fathers, mothers, and children, brothers and sisters, are all bottled up in heaven. God will restrain His anger but little longer. His wrath burns against this nation



and especially against the religious bodies that have sanctioned this terrible traffic and have themselves engaged in it. Such injustice, such oppression, such sufferings, are looked upon with heartless indifference by many professed followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. And many of them can themselves inflict, with hateful satisfaction, all this indescribable agony; and yet they dare to worship God. It is solemn mockery; Satan exults over it and reproaches Jesus and His angels with such inconsistency, saying, with hellish triumph, "Such are Christ's followers!"

The cries of the oppressed have reached unto heaven

These professed Christians read of the sufferings of the martyrs, and tears course down their cheeks. They wonder that men could ever become so hardened as to practice such cruelty toward their fellow men. Yet those who think and speak thus are at the same time holding human beings in slavery. And this is not all; they sever the ties of nature and cruelly oppress their fellow men. They can inflict most inhuman torture with the

same relentless cruelty manifested by papists and heathen toward Christ's followers. Said the angel, "It will be more tolerable for the heathen and for papists in the day of the execution of God's judgment than for such men." The cries of the oppressed have reached unto heaven, and angels stand amazed at the untold, agonizing sufferings which man, formed in the image of his Maker, causes his fellow man. Said the angel, "The names of the oppressors are written in blood, crossed with stripes, and flooded with agonizing, burning tears of suffering. God's anger will not cease until He has caused this land of light to drink the dregs of the cup of His fury, until He has rewarded unto Babylon double. Reward her even as she rewarded you, double unto her double according to her works; in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double."

God cannot take into heaven any who have been forced into ignorance

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, while the master must endure the seven last plagues and then come up in the second resurrection and suffer the second, most awful death. Then the justice of God will be satisfied.

EW 276

Editor's Note: Ellen White saw the horrible condition that existed with slavery, and here speaks of consequences when we mistreat our fellow men.



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.

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

Subscription Order Line: 1-800-468-7884

Subscription Information

United States	US \$23.99 per year
Canada & Mexico	US \$34.99 per year
Foreign (Air Mail)	US \$59.99 per year
Large Print Edition	Black & White US \$29.99 per year
Large Print Edition	Color US \$39.99 per year
Foreign Large Print Edition.....	Please Inquire

Subscription Assistance

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

Shipping, Sales Tax & Currency

For all products advertised in this publication (unless otherwise noted): • **USA destinations:** \$0.00-\$25.00=\$6.25, \$25.01-\$50.00=\$9.25, \$50.01-\$100.00=\$13.50, \$100.01-\$200.00=\$16.75, \$200.01 or more \$2.99
 • **To destinations outside the USA:** Actual shipping rate will be charged.
Sales tax: Illinois residents, please add 6.5%.
All money sent must be in US funds, drawn on US banks.

"Those who prayerfully
study the Scriptures
go from their study
wiser than when they
opened the Bible." UL52

"The testimony of the
Lord is sure, making
wise the simple."
Psalms 19:7

Hope International
151 Ascension Lane
Marshall, NC 28753

