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

# EZRA'S DILEMMA



## **ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:**

- The Coming Dawn
- Christ and the Law
- Sinner, Turn
- The Leader of Israel
- Spiritual Formation:  
Wondering After the Beast
- Health Gem: 5 More Foods  
to Soothe Inflammation and  
Banish Pain
- Ellen White's Vision: The First  
Advent of Christ

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*The choice for Jesus must be made  
before His second coming.*

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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.

As I come to this editorial, I have had many different thoughts come to mind. The question always arises, what shall I talk about? I see the purpose of an editorial as information that should help draw people closer to Jesus and at the same time prepare them for His second coming. It should give them material to make them better witnesses to those that they come in contact with.

Recently my wife heard a pastor on the radio speaking in regard to literal Israel—i.e. the nation of Israel and to the conversion of Jews at the second coming of Jesus. This continues to be a main theme among many protestant denominations.

The question arises, are we as Seventh-day Adventist Christians ready with the Bible to show that to be looking to the conversion of the Jews in Israel at the second coming is not really Biblical—the choice for Jesus must be made before His second coming.

A dispensational magazine, *Christian Life Magazine* of November 1967, contained the following statement: “The Jews are to be gathered back to the land in a state of unbelief. The national conversion to Jesus Christ their Messiah will not take place until after they are restored to the land.”

As Bible students, how would each of our readers handle this sort of statement? Are you ready to discuss this issue with folks that you come in contact with? In the first place, the Bible does never speak of a national conversion. We are converted as individuals.

The Jews returned to the present state which became Israel in 1948, and it is believed by them that they will be converted by sight at the return of Jesus.

Where do we go in the Bible to answer this?

In Daniel 9:24, we recognize the close of probation on the Jewish nation (not on individual Jews). “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city to finish the transgression and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness...”

In Daniel 9:25 the coming of the Messiah the Prince (Jesus) is predicted for 27 A.D. (His ministry was to begin at His baptism by John). In 31 A.D. would be His crucifixion. And in 34 A.D., the end of the seventy weeks; the probation of the Jewish nation would close if they had not fulfilled the above mentioned requirements.

At the stoning of Stephen (34 A.D.) in Acts 7:56, Jesus is seen by Stephen standing (not sitting as in Matt. 26:64 & Matt. 25:31) on the right hand of God thus indicating the close of probation. See Daniel 12:1—when Michael (Jesus) stands up, probation closes.

There are also other indications of the close of probation in the Bible. In Matthew 23:37 & 38, we read, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you

desolate.” Notice also Jesus uses the term “your house”. Just a couple of chapters earlier, he had called it, “My house” referring to Himself. See Matthew 21:13.

In Matthew 21:33-43, we have the story (a parable of Jesus) of the householder, representing God, planting a vineyard and letting it out to husbandmen (the Jewish nation). When it was ready for fruit to be produced, God sent his servants to collect that fruit, but the husbandmen beat one and killed another and stoned another. More husbandmen were sent, and the same thing happened. Finally the son was sent, and He was killed by the husbandmen. The listeners (consisting of Jews) were asked what the householder would do with these husbandmen—when the lord of the vineyard comes he will destroy those wicked husbandmen. Then in verse 45, the Bible says, “And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he had spake of them.”

In addition to the above indications of the close of probation for the Jewish nation, we have statements of Paul concerning Israel. See, for instance Romans 9:6 “For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.” There is an Israel after the flesh and a spiritual Israel.

Brothers and Sisters, do we know our Bibles well enough to answer our Protestant friends in regard to the position the nation of Israel, who does not accept Jesus as their Messiah, will be in when Jesus returns?



**Our Mission:**

It is the mission of Hope International and the editors of *Our Firm Foundation* to clearly present Christ and His truth. The days remaining for this world are few, and we must work quickly. We must boldly proclaim the historic truths of Adventism that place us on so firm a foundation in the midst of this troubled world. —Editor

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Printing & Design by



**cover story**

**04** Ezra's Dilemma

*Joe Olson*

**features**

**09** The Coming Dawn

*A.G. C.*

**10** Christ and the Law

*Mrs. E. G. White*

**13** Sinner, Turn

*Clara E. Richeson*

**14** The Leader of Israel

*James Edson White*

**16** Spiritual Formation –  
Wondering After the  
Beast

*Allen Barnes*



**04**



**09**



**10**



**13**



**14**



**16**



**24**

**departments**

- 02** Editorial
- 23** Christian Crossword
- 24** Health Gem:  
5 More Foods to  
Soothe Inflammation  
and Banish Pain
- 29** News Watch
- 30** Ellen White's Vision:  
The First Advent of  
Christ

**ad features**

- 22** B-Complex
- 28** Swedish Bitters Salve





# EZRA'S DILEMMA

By Joe Olson

Ezra is an extremely interesting and enjoyable book. It's only 10 chapters long and you can easily read it through in one sitting. Ezra is a Levite, where in chapter seven, he delineates his genealogy all the way back to Aaron. He is a "ready scribe" in the law of Moses, which God had given. The word "ready" here in the King James refers to his being "quick and skilful and diligent and... ready". The word "scribe" refers to inscribing something in order to remember it or to recount or tell or explain something. In other words, Ezra is an excellent teacher of the word of God.

**God thought the little book of Ezra was important enough to include in the historical canon of scripture**

Ezra put his skills to work here in this book of the Bible with his name. He writes his book as a chronological history of the return of the Jews after 70 years of captivity in Babylon. Interestingly, there are actually several books of the Bible that deal with this time frame of history. It starts with the captivity of the Jews by Babylon in

Jeremiah. Then you have the Book of Daniel, where he is praying at the end of the 70-year captivity for the release of God's people from Babylon; then Haggai was raised up by God to address the Israelites and their sinful condition; then God raised up Zechariah to comfort and educate the Israelites at this time; then Ezra gives his historical account; then Nehemiah does the same in his book. The Book of Esther deals with a certain situation that arose during this time frame as well, although not getting into any more detail than her specific situation.

At least seven different books of the Bible deal with this time period of the Jews. That should be significant to us. The fact that God would include, in the historical canon of scripture, of all the material He could have kept or discarded... seven or more books that dealt with the Jews' return to the Promised Land, should be very important to us. It obviously was to Him. And if God thought it was that important, maybe we should give it a deeper look.

**Jeremiah prophesied what would happen and when**

Daniel, who is in Babylon, and has been there for many, many years, realized that the Babylonian captivity



of the Jews was coming to an end. “In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.” Dan. 9:1, 2.

Daniel was very familiar with Jeremiah’s prophecy and Jeremiah’s book as well. Jeremiah said flat out that after 70 years, God would remember His people and bring them back home. “For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.” Jeremiah prophesied what would happen and when. Daniel knew about Jeremiah’s prophecy and begins praying for the exodus back to Jerusalem to begin. They have been in captivity for many years, and have been promised by God that they would be released and allowed to go back to the “Promised Land”. Jer. 29:10.

### **We have all been in captivity at one time or another**

Do you see the correlations between the Babylonian captivity and the Egyptian captivity? God’s people were in bondage in Egypt, otherwise known as paganism, or the “world”. God’s people are in bondage in Babylon, otherwise known as paganism, or the “world”. God promises to release them from Egyptian captivity. God promises to release them from Babylonian captivity. God takes the Egyptian captives to the Promised Land. God takes the Babylonian captives back to the Promised Land.

Both of these examples are given in the scripture for our benefit. We have all been in the “world”. We either are, or were, pagans, or “non-believers” at one time or another. We have all been in captivity. And now, God wants to take us to the Promised Land... heaven! These historical accounts have been given to us that we might see where they had problems and might avoid what they did. They were also given to see the miraculous events that transpired, proving that God was with them every step of the way.



### **If you long for something better than this world, then you can appreciate the book of Ezra**

The Book of Ezra is a wonderful account of how God plans to bring us home. Don’t you want to go home? Have you had enough of this world

yet? Are you tired of all the wretchedness and misery and pain and death? Have you grown weary of the lies and deceptions and the failed promises of everyone you have ever met? Wouldn’t you rather be where there is perpetual light and health and joy and peace?

And just as an aside for those of you reading this who might be young and have not experienced a lot of what I am referring to... first, thank God Almighty. Look at the rest of humanity and be very, very thankful that your parents or friends or family or whoever is helping and watching over and protecting you, is actually led by God to do so. And then try your best, and I know it may be difficult, to imagine these bad things that you read and hear about will happen to you one day. If you can imagine that, then you, too, will long for something better. If you can imagine that, then you can better appreciate the Book of Ezra.

### **The Lord will make it happen for us to get to our Promised Land**

Ezra begins his book right at the release of the Jews from captivity... “Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah

might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.” Ezra 1:1-3.

Ezra states that the king of Persia, Cyrus, made a decree that he was going to build God a house in Jerusalem, and let all the people who want to leave, go back to Jerusalem. The Bible says that, “the Lord



stirred up the spirit of Cyrus...” The Lord made it happen. The Lord made it happen in Egypt too. And this makes the very obvious case that the Lord will make it happen for us to get to *our* Promised Land as well. All the people were able to do to “help”, if you will, was to go where God said to go and do what God opened the door for them to do. That’s all we can do now... it is all we have ever been able to do. Go where God says go and do what God says to do.



### Don't interfere with God's plans

It has never been different than that. Pretty simple actually. The problem comes in... the problems always come in... when we interfere with God's plan. Just a few examples... God tells you to be an educator. You go and do that. Then you tell your children they need to be educators. Wait a minute... did God tell them or did you? You see how it starts? God tells you to quit eating meat. You go and do that. Then you tell everyone you know that *they* must quit eating meat. *Really?* And we do it with all kinds of things.

Of course, we have lots of help from the devil to push us one way or the other. But if we get back to the basics, to what WE have been told to do or where to go, then maybe we can get some of our sanity back, and things will go so much more smoothly in our families and our lives. Try to remember when dealing with others, especially family members and church members: did God tell *you* to do it, or did He tell *them* to do it? If He told *them*, then let God deal with them about it. I'm expecting a whole lot of happiness beginning to grow from this message alone! Let other people go and grow at their own pace with God. You go and grow at the pace God tells *you!* But in this case with Ezra and the rest of the Jews, God has called them *all...* all who want to ... to come back home. All who “want” to... What a concept huh? You gotta wanna. If you don't want to, you will be miserable for a long, long, long time. God forces no one and neither should we. It's all about free will.

### God's accounting process is very exacting

Well, as Ezra continues, there are a lot of people who decide to go back. Chapter 2 of Ezra gives the names of the families and how many from each family. There was a very



strict accounting. I am amazed at the exacting ways they counted everyone. But, later on, you will see why. Ezra 2:64 states: “The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore.” 42,360 people. Remember that number... it will come back into play later in the message. Forty two thousand and three hundred and sixty people.

They even numbered how many horses, mules, donkeys and camels came back to their land! Talk about not missing anything! Another point to be made: God accounts for everyone and everything. Jesus wasn't kidding when He said every hair on our head is numbered! Think about that when you begin to feel like God has left you alone or doesn't know you or where you are... He is waaaaaaay too exacting a God for that, trust me. Or better yet, trust Him and His word!

### All of God's people will have problems

Now, we won't read the whole book in this message, but there is so much more to be gleaned from this short little book. I hope you will advantage yourself by reading it over and over again. But I want to deal with something that actually happens at the end of the book. The majority of Ezra is dealing with the move, the different offers from the different kings, the rebuilding of the temple and the city walls, the problems they encountered and how God saw them through it all.

Ezra and the people had problems to deal with. Remember that. So did God's people who left Egypt. All of God's people will have problems. The hope is that we will stay close to God when these problems occur, and let Him help us through them. Sometimes our problems last a day, like the Egyptian army coming after the freed Israelites. Sometimes it is a problem, like Paul with his poor eyesight, that lasts a lifetime. But God will help us through all of them, no matter how long or how many we have.

### A serious problem is brought to Ezra's attention

Also, just as an aside, it is in Ezra where we have the decree of Artaxerxes that begins the 2,300-day prophecy that culminates in 1844. Ezra *really* is that important! And now, after the temple is rebuilt, the city wall has been restored, the feasts and



festivals have been reinstated and all is going well, Ezra is informed of something. This is something he had no idea about. All this time and all that has been done, he was unaware of the problem. Not everyone else was unaware mind you, but Ezra was.

In chapter nine, the problem is brought to Ezra's attention. "Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass." Ezra 9:1, 2.

### Some of the people had married strange wives

Ezra states that after everything had been repaired and reinstated and reconstituted and revitalized and everything has been put back on track, the princes came to him with this issue. Some of the people, who have lived in Babylon for up to seventy years, have taken wives who were not Israelites. And not just taken wives of different religions, but they were, "doing according to their abominations..." God had told the Israelites never, ever to take a wife of another nationality or tribe or country because they were not Israelites. Today we would say, "Do not take a wife who is not a Christian", or in the case of Seventh-day Adventists, "those who are not of our faith". Why? What's the big deal? After all, that might help them to become Christians or Seventh-day Adventist Christians... right? Not according to God, who many of you might suspect is smarter than we are.

This is what God had to say when He told Moses to come again into the mount to get another copy of the Ten Commandments that Moses had broken when witnessing the Israelites worshipping the golden calf his brother Aaron had made... "Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee:" Ex. 34:12. Don't get hooked up with people who don't believe what you do! And why? You will be taken in a snare... or a trap. Well, what kind of trap? God tells us a little further down... "And thou take of



their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods." Ex. 34:16. God says, if you get connected with unbelievers, you will end up going after their gods, or what is important to them. In other words, you will not lift them up toward your God, they will drag you down toward their gods, whatever they might be.

### They had been repeatedly instructed never to marry a non-Jew

The Jews were very specifically warned about this kind of thing. "Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it:" Deut. 6:1. And God goes on in Deuteronomy to verses many of us are very familiar with... "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes." Deut.

6:7, 8.

All God's children were to be repeatedly told and taught and instructed to never, never, ever marry a non-Jew... EVER! And why? Because they would lead you away from your God and get you to worship theirs. Don't do it. Don't ever, ever do it! Remember Samson? How did things work out with him and his Philistine wife? Don't ever, ever marry a non-Jew, a non-Christian, and non-Seventh-day Adventist. NEVER!

### Ezra was so distraught at the news he rent his garment and tore out his hair

Well... maybe things were different since they were in captivity for so long. I mean, they weren't in their own homeland you know. There probably was a limited selection of acceptable mates. And I'm sure there were lots of cute, young Babylonian women. And I'm also sure the devil pointed out each one! But that doesn't mean just because they married these Babylonian women, that God was right and that the men went whoring after their gods... does it? Maybe we should read the first verse again... "Now when these things were done, the princes came

to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.” “...doing according to their abominations...” Ezra 9:1. Imagine that... God *was* right!



told this since they were born. In other words, an ignorance plea was not going to work.

**Their punishment for willfully sinning was much less than they deserved**

Well, how did Ezra take hearing this news? I mean, everything up to this point was going very well. New walls, new city, new temple, etc., etc. Surely this little snag won't be too upsetting. “And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished.” Ezra 9:3. Do you know how upset you have to be to rip hair out of your face and head? Today we would say that Ezra flipped out. Yes, he was very, “astonied”. The word, astonished means stunned or made numb or stupefy. It's where we get the word, astonished. He couldn't believe it.

### Ezra confesses the sin of the people to God

After being “astonied” for several hours, he then lifts his hands to God and pours out his heart to Him. He admits what gross sinners they all are, including himself, and that they deserve absolutely none of God's mercy. He gives a little history of the sins and transgressions of the people, obviously more for the people listening than for God. I'm pretty sure God was aware of it. Then he fully admits what has happened... “And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments, Which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, saying, The land, unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end to another with their uncleanness. Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever: that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave



it for an inheritance to your children for ever.” Ezra 9:10-12. He recognizes that they have all been

And here is an interesting observation... “And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this;” Ezra 9:13. Ezra again points out that after 70 years of punishment for their willful sinning, which, he says, was much less than they deserved, God gave them a glorious deliverance from Babylon.

Then he asked the question that everyone there must have, or should have, been thinking. “Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping?” Ezra 9:14. How in the world do we think we will escape total destruction after this? God had given so much, blessed so much, offered so much... and still we stick it in His face? How can we possibly think we will survive?

### And there is still hope for Israel

At this point, Ezra throws himself down, just wiped out. “Now when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men and women and children: for the people wept very sore.” Ezra 10:1. The news is spreading about what has happened and what was going on. Ezra has a dilemma. What does he do now?

Someone in the congregation speaks up... “And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, answered and said unto Ezra, We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land: yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.” Ezra 10:2. There is hope in Israel! There is *hope* in Israel! Praise God that there is still hope in Israel.



So, what happened? How was Ezra's dilemma solved? Stay tuned!

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





# *The Coming Dawn*

“The night is far spent; the day is at hand.”  
Romans 13:12

I've watched and waited, tho the night is long,  
And, O, so dark, I sometimes miss my way!  
My eyes are often dim, too dim to see  
The promises that herald in the day.

But I remember, when my doubts are shaped,  
And cling like specters of a hope long dead,  
There was a darker night, and One who watched  
With a world's sin upon His sinless head.

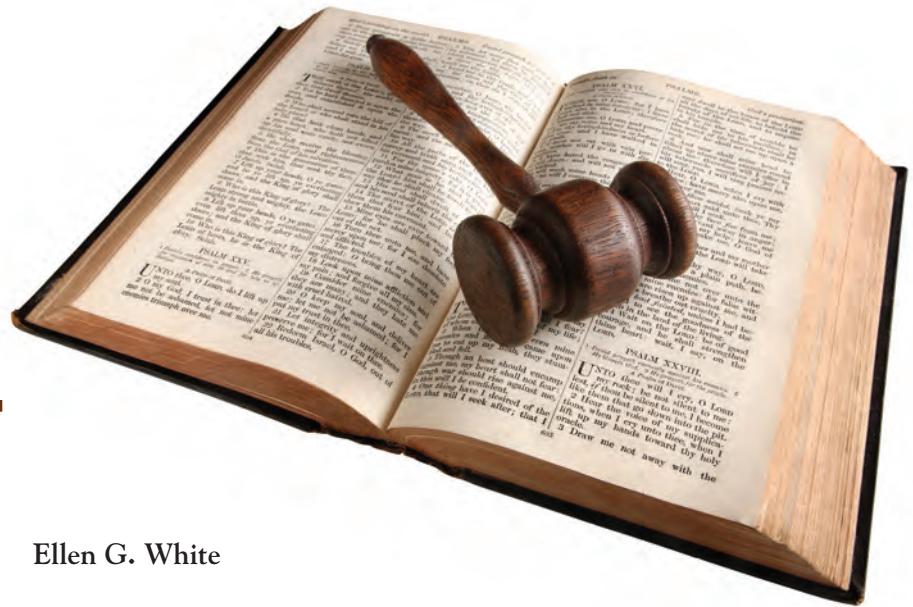
And I was there. I helped to form the tears  
That nature forced through every bleeding pore.  
Yes, I remember, and I strive to cry,  
“When will the darkness flee and night be o'er?”

When will the light appear? O Jesus, when  
Will thy long-looked-for presence greet our sight?  
When will the day in all its glory dawn,  
To scatter the last shadows of the night?

~A.G. C.



# CHRIST AND THE LAW



Ellen G. White

By the crucifixion of Christ the immutability of the law of God was forever established. Had it been possible, God would have changed His law to meet man in his fallen condition. But this law is unalterable, and the only way in which man could be saved was for a substitute to be provided, who would bear the penalty of transgression, and thus give man an opportunity of returning to his loyalty.

Charged with an embassy of mercy, love, and pardon, Christ came to His own. But His own received Him not. He was buffeted by temptation, and bruised and lacerated by the cruel lash. He was crowned with thorns, and crucified. His hands and feet were pierced by nails.

## **THOSE WHITED SEPULCHERS REVILED THE ONE WHO CAME TO SAVE THEM FROM THEIR SINS**

Behold the spectators who reviled Christ while He hung on the cross. Were they the abandoned class, the heathen, who knew not God? "They that passed by reviled Him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking Him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; Himself He can not save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He

trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him; for He said, I am the Son of God."

Those that Christ had declared were whited sepulchers, who deceived the people by an outward appearance of sanctity, were now reviling One who came from heaven to save a perishing world, and in whose heart a zeal for right and justice and for the glory of God was the highest object. Those who chose Barabbas, thus yoking up with Satan, gave evidence that a profession of piety and of love for God, and a claim to know the Scriptures, neither made them the sons of God nor led them to represent His character. To those who had true religion, and there were such among the spectators, it must indeed have appeared as tho Satan were linked up with the men who were triumphantly shouting in blasphemy against the

Commander of all heaven.

## **THE FALLEN ANGELS BORE NO RESEMBLANCE TO THE BEAUTIFUL AND GLORIOUS BEINGS GOD HAD CREATED**

Obedience to every word that proceeds from the mouth of God is required. Had Christ conceded one jot or tittle of this, the hostility of Satan and his army would not have burst upon Him with irrepressible fury. He was able to perform marvelous works, and had He but given some license to sin, had He permitted evil passions to go unrebuked, men would have rendered Him their homage. But He rebuked all sin and hypocrisy, and men said, He is an impostor. The principalities and powers of darkness assembled round His cross. The arch apostate, still retaining his lofty stature, led the apostate host, who

were leagued with human beings in the strife against God. When the Lord created these beings to stand before His throne, they were beautiful and glorious. Their loveliness and holiness







were equal to their exalted station. They were enriched by the wisdom of God, and girded with the panoply of heaven. But who could recognize in the fallen angels the glorious seraphs that once ministered in the heavenly courts?

**SATAN COULD NOT BRUISE CHRIST'S HEAD UNLESS CHRIST PROVED FALSE TO GOD**

Satanic agencies confederated with evil men to lead the people to believe that Christ was the chief of sinners, and to make Him an object of detestation. But the priests and rulers failed to realize that in Christ divinity was enthroned in humanity. Christ's humanity could not be separated from His divinity. Could one sin have been found in Christ, the world would have plunged into blackness and ruin. If Satan could have so bruised Christ's heel that He would have yielded to the physical torture, his triumph would have been complete. He could have shouted victory. The world would have been his kingdom. But Satan could only cause pain. He could not touch Christ's head unless Christ proved false to God. Satan and his angels united with the priests and rulers in mocking

and deriding the Son of God. He filled them with vile and loathsome speeches. He inspired their taunts. But by all this he gained nothing. He was permitted to bruise Christ's heel, but Christ was bruising his head. By working through the priests against Christ, Satan was effecting his own downfall.

**THE RESULT OF SATAN'S WORKING THROUGH PROFESSEDLY PIOUS MEN HAD TO BE SHOWN**

Hanging on the cross, the Son of God bore the insults of His enemies. Heavenly angels were not far away. They heard the mocking taunts and saw the wagging heads. Gladly would they have broken their ranks and gone to the Son of God in His humiliation and bodily anguish; but they were not permitted to do this. It must be demonstrated before the universe what men will do when under the control of Satan. The insult, abuse, and mockery that Christ bore were part of God's great plan. The result of Satan's working through the professedly pious men must be shown.

As the prince of darkness inspired the Jewish priests to join the rebellion against God, so he will again inspire men. He will persuade them to apostatize from the service of God, and to use their religion as a weapon against their Creator. They may profess great zeal in God's service, but, poor souls, they are serving the prince



of darkness, and as their general, Satan leads them.

**CHRIST DIED OF A BROKEN HEART DUE TO MENTAL AGONY**

"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" The wrath of God fell upon Christ. This was the hiding of the Father's countenance. Tho innocent, Christ was treated as a sinner, that through His merits sinners, tho guilty, might be treated as the loyal and obedient children of God. Christ died with the sins of the world imputed to Him, that His righteousness might be imputed to the sinner. When the sense of the loss of His Father's favor was withdrawn, Christ had drained the last dregs in the cup of bitterness.

"Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar; and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to His mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished." There was a shriek, shrill and agonizing, and the Son of God expired. He died of a broken heart. When the spear was thrust into His side, there flowed forth blood and water. His heart was broken by His mental agony. And the hearts of all who seek the Lord and find Him will be broken as they see the result of sin.

**BOTH SATAN'S AND CHRIST'S CHARACTERS WERE REVEALED AT THE CROSS**

In His dying agony on the cross, Christ was scorned by the people who claimed to be waiting for the Messiah, but who showed by their actions the value of their spirituality. Surely Christ has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Surely he was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. But did not Satan understand that while He was bruising the heel of the Son of God, the Son of God was bruising his head? What great and wonderful effects have



resulted from the crucifixion! What a view of the character of God, Christ's sacrifice has opened to the universe! His love for man, far surpassing all human love, has lifted the law of God to its own eternal dignity. The attributes of God have been revealed, and the holy requirements of His law have been vindicated. The effects of the sacrifice on the cross are still felt; but all who would be saved must themselves have an interest in the crucified One.

**THOSE REFUSING OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S LAW, BUT WILLING TO BE LED BY SATAN WILL SUFFER ETERNAL DEATH**

In His great suffering, Christ felt no pang of bitterness against His Father. He felt no remorse for His own sins,

but for the sins of the fallen race. But those who refuse the gift of Christ will one day feel the sting of remorse. Entire obedience to the law of God is the condition of salvation. Those who refuse this, who refuse to accept Christ, will become embittered against God. When punished

for transgression, they will feel despair and hatred. This will be the experience of all who do not enter into Christ's suffering; for it is the sure consequence of sin.

We read of chains of darkness for the transgressor of God's law. We read of the worm that dieth not, and of the fire that is not quenched. Thus is represented the experience of every one who has permitted himself to be grafted into the stock of Satan, who has cherished sinful attributes. When it is too late, he will see that sin is the transgression of God's law. He will realize that because of transgression, his soul is cut off from God, and that God's wrath abides on him. This is a fire unquenchable, and by it every unrepentant sinner will be destroyed. Satan strives constantly to lead men

into sin, and he who is willing to be led, who refuses to forsake his sins, and despises forgiveness and grace, will suffer the result of his course.

**CHRIST DIED TO EXALT THE LAW AND MAKE IT HONORABLE**

By dying on the cross, Christ gave His life as an offering for sin, that through His power man might turn from his sins, be converted, and become a laborer together with God. Greater love than this can never be shown. More could not be done than has been done to demonstrate the immutability of God's law. Christ did not die to abolish the law or to detract in the slightest degree from its influence or power. He died to exalt the law and make it honorable. Full of goodness, compassion, and love, he hated only one thing, --sin, "the transgression of the law." In the very act of dying to save what was lost, Christ reached the perfect standard of obedience as our substitute and surety. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." No pang of anguish that Christ endured was in vain. Thus the ransom was paid for all who accept Christ as their personal Saviour. From the Word of God they receive their title to freedom. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; . . . for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

ST, April 14, 1898



*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.*





# *Sinner, Turn*

Sinner, turn those anxious eyes  
From the pathway strewn with thorn.  
Let them rest upon the skies,  
Where in splendor breaks the morn.

Lift them high the earth above,  
Sick with madness and with strife.  
Dwell upon the wondrous love  
Of the glorious Prince of life.

So the tear-wet orbs behold,  
Through the mist-like veil of time,  
Gleams of heaven's shining gold;  
And the vision grand, sublime,

Shall dispel the aching pain  
From the wildly-throbbing heart;  
And the wound shall heal again,  
And the haunting doubt depart.

Clara E. Richeson.

# The Leader of Israel

By James Edson White

As captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. Joshua 5:14  
My presence shall go with thee. Exodus 33:14

When the hosts of Israel left Egypt to go the land of Canaan, they did not go alone. God said to them: "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of Him, and obey His voice, provoke Him not; for He will not pardon your transgressions: for My name is in Him." Exodus 23: 20, 21.



"My presence shall go with thee." Exodus 33:14, 15.

So, throughout their journeyings, the presence of the Lord went with them as a pillar of cloud by day, which protected them from the intense heat of the desert. In the night this was changed to a pillar of fire, to give them light and comfort. When the Lord would have them journey, the pillar would be lifted, and move in the direction they should take. When it stood still, the camp was pitched beneath its protection.

## *The spiritual Rock was Jesus*

Soon after leaving Egypt, they came into the desert, where there was no water. When Moses cried to the Lord, He directed him to the rock of Horeb. When Moses smote the rock, as commanded, the waters flowed from it, and supplied all their needs. Ever after, in their wanderings, until they neared the promised land, wherever they camped there was the cooling stream of water in the desert, flowing from the rock.

## *Christ was the angel that accompanied Israel in their wanderings*

Only one being in the universe besides the Father bears the name of God, and that is His Son, Jesus Christ. Hence this Angel that accompanied Israel in their wanderings was no other than Christ. The Lord did not trust to an ordinary angel the work of leading his people from slavery to the promised land, but the Son of God, the Creator of the earth, the unseen leader of Israel, superintended it.

But the rebellion of the people was so great that at one time Moses feared that the Lord might leave them, and so he pleads: "If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." And the Lord answered:



Paul declares that this was a type of Christ, who was with them. He says: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized unto



Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of the spiritual Rock that followed them: and that rock was Christ.” 1 Corinthians 10: 1-4.



They were fed miraculously with manna, or angel’s food, and drank water which came as a miracle from the rock, but it was Christ, who was with them, who was the real source of supply. And Moses testified, “Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.” Deuteronomy 8:4.

***It was Christ who spoke the Ten Commandments from Mt. Sinai***

We can now understand the statement of Stephen: “This (Moses) is he that was in the church in the wilderness with the Angel (Christ) which spake to him (Moses) in the Mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles (the law of God) to give unto us.” Acts 7:38.

We have found the Angel in the wilderness to have been Christ. The Father and the Son were doubtless both in the mount. But it was the Son as Mediator between God and man, who spoke the ten commandments from Mount Sinai, in the presence of Moses and the Hebrew fathers. Hence we see that Christ is not only the Creator, but He is also the giver of His Father’s law to this world. How appropriate, therefore, that He should, when on earth,



proclaim Himself “Lord of the Sabbath,” and the expounder of all the precepts of His Father’s divine law.

***Christ is the Captain of the heavenly angels***

As the Hebrews reached the promised land, under the leadership of Joshua, as they were preparing to attack Jericho, the Lord appeared to Joshua in person. “And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood a Man

over against him with His sword drawn in His hand; and Joshua went unto Him, and said unto Him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And He said, Nay; but as Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come.” Joshua 5:13-15.

Christ is the Captain, or Archangel, of the host of heavenly angels. See Jude 9; 1Thessalonians 4:16. The Angel told Joshua what the Israelites should do; and at the signal appointed, the “host of the Lord,” or the angels from heaven, threw down the walls of Jericho, and Joshua and his army finished the work as instructed by the Angel.



***From Genesis to Revelation, Christ is there***

The Spirit of Christ inspired the prophets of the former dispensation. It testified through them of Christ’s sufferings at

His first advent, and of the glory that should follow at His second coming. The apostle, speaking of the great salvation which had come to the church through Jesus Christ, says that the prophets “inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.” 1 Peter 1: 10, 11.

Hence we can see that it was Christ who has given to us the Old as well as the New Testament. He spoke through the prophets of the Old Testament, the same as He has through Peter, James, John, and Paul in the New. So we have a whole Bible, filled, from Genesis to Revelation, with the wonderful gospel of salvation through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for which we will praise Him now and evermore.

# SPIRITUAL FORMATION

BY ALLEN BARNES

## WONDERING AFTER THE BEAST

### **HYPNOSIS**

This author had a first-hand opportunity to witness the incredible power of the mind and how hypnosis can cause a person to do things against his will, prevent him from doing his will, and afford the body almost supernatural strength. When just a boy, our family and a few friends were gathered in our living room. My uncle was present, who had been trained in hypnosis. We pressed upon him to demonstrate it, most of us believing it was just a hoax. We found out differently!

He got a volunteer, another young boy about my age, who he was able to quickly bring into a trance. He told the boy that he would not be able to

rise off of the couch when asked to do so. As soon as the boy came out of the trance, we bid him to arise, but he was unable to move, no matter how hard he tried. Next, my uncle put him back into the trance and told him he would get up, but not be able to move his right foot. Again, coming out of the trance, we all asked him to walk. He arose, but could not take the first step with his right foot.

### *The reality of hypnosis*

While this appeared to be genuine, we were not all convinced. It was possible, we thought, that the boy was just playing along with my uncle. Then came the clincher. Putting him back under the trance, he told him that he would now become a stiff plank, strong as steel. While still in the trance, he was

stretched between two chairs, his head resting on one, while his heels were perched on the other, with nothing supporting his body between the chairs. Then two of us were invited to sit on his torso. Amazingly, his body did not collapse under the weight—in fact, it did not even bend. The rest of us tried to accomplish the same feat, stretching our own bodies between the chairs, but found it impossible.

From that day forward, I never would forget the power of the mind and the reality of hypnosis. Today, the art of mind-control has been brought to a higher, yet more subtle level.

### **ECSTASY**

Let's return to the words of the modern mystic for a moment. "I slide deep into the very recesses of my soul to a place of utter repose." Here is a clue as to what the person encounters when practicing the contemplative prayer and entering the silence, a hypnotic state.. When the individual





has an experience of *utter repose*, or *ecstasy*, as often it has been described, he/she abandons Christian reasoning (a conscience affected by knowledge of Scripture and the divine will) to glory in *feelings*. This is dangerous ground. True spiritual growth does not come to us through feelings, but through the Word of God and obedience to that Word. When we abandon this central pillar of our faith (for faith comes by hearing the Word of God, Romans 10:17), we find ourselves adrift on a perilous ocean, without chart, compass, or anchor.

**Blind-sided by the Spiritual Formation craze**

Ray Yungen, author of *A Time of Departing*, points out that even the popular preacher, David Jeremiah, who once authored a wonderful book exposing the New Age movement and its negative impact on Christianity, has apparently gotten blind-sided by the Spiritual Formation craze. In Jeremiah's book, *Life Wide Open*, written in 2003, he quotes several Spiritual Formation advocates. In the introduction of the book, Jeremiah wrote:

**A small handful among us have discovered what the rest of us would pay dearly to know: How can we bring real, living excitement into this life?**

According to Yungen, Jeremiah does not attempt to teach the reader how to obtain this excitement by study of the Word, but rather by learning the secrets of those who are practicing contemplative prayer. This popular radio preacher is endorsing writers who are steeped in Spiritual Formation.

**In the book, Jeremiah names contemplatives, New Agers, emergents, and mystics including: Sue Monk Kidd,... Peter Senge (an advocate of Buddhist-style meditation), Brother Lawrence, Eugene**

**Peterson, Erwin McManus (an emerging church leader), and Calvin Miller. —A Time of Departing, p. 186.**

**Contemplative prayer leads away from Biblical authority**

Here is just a sample of the philosophy of Sue Monk Kidd, indicative of where this pantheistic-tending, contemplative prayer will lead. While listening to a preacher explain that the Bible was to be our sole and ultimate authority, her response was this:

**“...no, no, no! The ultimate authority of my life is not the Bible; it is not confined between the covers of a book. It is not something written by men and frozen in time. It is not from a source outside myself. My ultimate authority is the divine voice in my soul. Period!—Sue Monk Kidd, *The Dance of a Dissident Daughter*, p. 76.**

As for Calvin Miller, Yungen comments:

**It is perplexing why Jeremiah chose to quote Miller as an example we should follow. In *Into the Depths of God*, Miller encourages readers to engage in centering prayer and explains it as a union between man and God ... *Into the Depths of God* is an exhortation in contemplative spirituality and is brimming with quotes**



**by Thomas Merton and other contemplatives. Miller speaks of the “wonderful relationship between ecstasy [mystical state] and transcendence [God],” and says that “Ecstasy is meant to increase our desire for heaven.” This state of “Ecstasy” is the same state Thomas Merton likened to an LSD trip and which made him say he wanted to be the best Buddhist he could be. —Ibid.**

**The deadly wound has been healing**

One surely has to wonder how David Jeremiah could have been pulled in with the likes of these men. Or do we need wonder? This Spiritual Formation movement is poised to take over Christendom. It all ties in with the warning given in Revelation 13:3: “*And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.*” Since the deadly wound was inflicted in 1798, when the papacy was temporarily overthrown, the deadly wound has been healing. The Counter-Reformation launched at the Catholic Church’s Council of Trent, along with the relentless working of the Jesuits, has once again made the Vatican the most powerful organization on the planet.

We see from David Jeremiah’s own pen that there is this perception that “A small handful among us have discovered what the rest of us would pay dearly to know.” This small handful is obviously those who have



experienced the silence. This “small handful” is rapidly growing into a vast multitude.

Another popular preacher, Chuck Swindoll, authored a well-known book, *So You Want to be Like Christ: Eight Essential Disciplines to Get There*, in which he quotes several contemplative prayer proponents and teachers. Although he does not get into the details of how to engage in contemplative prayer, he does, as Ray Yungen points out, “bring the proverbial horse right to the water.” In harmony with the other contemplatives, Swindoll states:

I do not believe that anyone can ever become a deep person [intimate with God] without stillness and silence. —as quoted in Yungen, *A Time of Departing*, p. 191.

## ACCREDITATION

There is a growing concern—make that an alarm—that religious schools are now the great medium through which Spiritual Formation has entered into the various churches of Christendom. These schools, including seminaries, produce the pastors, teachers, administrators and missionaries of our various denominations. They are now, for the most part, accredited by two accrediting boards.

What do Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Biola Seminary, Fuller Theological Seminary, Dallas Theological Seminary, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Urshan Graduate School of Theology, Briercree College and Seminary, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Multnomah Biblical Seminary,

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Moody Theological Seminary & Graduate School and around 240 other seminaries throughout North America all have in common? They are all accredited through the Association of Theological Seminaries (ATS).

What do Cincinnati Christian University, Columbia International University, Eston College, Hope International University, Moody Bible Institute, Multnomah University, Nazarene Bible College, and Prairie Bible College and about 90 other colleges and seminaries throughout North America all have in common? They are all accredited through the Association for Biblical Higher Education.

What do the two accreditation organizations – Association of Theological Seminaries and Association for Biblical Higher Education – have in common? Both associations require schools that wish to be accredited to include Spiritual Formation within the school's infrastructure. Just what exactly does that mean for these 350 some seminaries and Bible colleges? Well, it means that if they want to receive and



maintain their accreditation, they are going to have to incorporate Spiritual Formation (i.e., contemplative spirituality) into the lives of their students. — Lighthouse Trails Editors, Nov. 15, 2011. (Emphasis added.)

*Amazing! And if you think that the student may opt out, think again*

Students who oppose or resist contemplative spirituality aren't going to find success in these 350 theological Spiritual Formation-driven schools. According to the ATS Handbook, “direct evidence of students reaching stated goals is needed” (page 9, Section 8). In a section titled Quality Assurance Expectations, it explains again that students will be expected to “provide evidence” that they are being transformed into their view of spirituality. —Ibid.

Reader, please grasp the significance of that policy. Not only is Spiritual Formation to be a part of every accredited school, but evidence must be demonstrated that each student is “being transformed into their [the directors'] view of spirituality.” Every student's mind is to be moulded by these exercises in the same way that Loyola's students were moulded. All the world is wondering after the beast! How did they manage to gain such control over our denominational schools? Perhaps it is because we have allowed our schools to go the way of the world rather than the way





of God. One compromise has led to another until we find ourselves at the mercy of Babylon. Yes, the majority of Christendom is in Babylonian captivity, and know it not.

## THREE UNCLEAN SPIRITS

There is an amazing vision that the seer of Patmos had concerning end-time movements, just before the Battle of Armageddon; in fact, marshalling the multitudes to the battle.

**And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. —Revelation 16:13.**

These three unclean spirits are forces in the world today that are working in harmony to bring the world into a position opposed to God. These spirits come out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. Let's see if we can identify these entities.

### The dragon

Revelation 12:9 identifies the dragon as "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan." So, in a primary sense, we know that the dragon is Satan. He also has a kingdom which is mentioned in verse 3 as "having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads." Heads, horns and crowns are symbols the prophets

used to identify kingdoms (see Daniel 7 as an example). In Revelation 12:3 we find that "the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born." This was Satan using Herod the king to try to kill the baby Jesus. Of course his attempt was thwarted. The dragon's kingdom was, at that time, Pagan Rome. Paganism was the prevailing religion of that day, the remnants of it still being witnessed



today in modern spiritualism and pagan, Eastern religions.

### The beast

We now come to the beast. Again, we know that beasts are symbolic of kingdoms. Pagan Rome

was followed by Papal Rome. Papal Rome is the subject of Revelation 13.

**And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. — Revelation 13:1, 2.**



Note that the dragon gave authority to this beast. This tells us that the power behind this beast is Satan. In the secondary sense, Pagan Rome must have given the seat of authority to the papacy. This was fulfilled when Emperor Justinian gave that power to the pope of Rome, declaring him to be the highest authority. This took place in 533 A.D., but was not fully realized until 538, when the last of the three opposing powers (the three horns plucked up by the roots, Daniel 7:8, 24) had been overthrown. The papacy was to rule for 1260 years (Daniel 7:25, Revelation 13:5) from 538 A.D. to 1798, at which time it received the deadly wound, as mentioned earlier. Now the wound is almost healed.

**And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. — Revelation 13:7, 8.**

In ages past, the papacy made physical war upon the saints. An estimated 50 million martyrs were slain for refusing to accept the pope as supreme and submitting to the Catholic doctrines and practices. In modern times, the strategy is different. Protestants and Anabaptists are being overcome by stealth, infiltration, deception, political involvement, and whatever means Rome can use, especially this new Trojan Horse—Spiritual Formation.

### The false prophet

Herein lies the key to identifying the false prophet. Evangelical Christianity has fallen from its position of sounding the truth of prophecy for these last days. Where Protestants and Anabaptists once unanimously identified the papacy as the antichrist and the



Catholic Church as the great whore of Revelation, they have now, generally speaking, relinquished that position to embrace the papal errors again. Nearly every denomination has had ongoing dialogues with the Roman Catholic Church and now agrees on many things. A recent poll showed that over 90% of Protestants have no problem with the Catholic Church. What a shift—from calling the pope the antichrist to now seeing him (as Billy Graham and former President George Bush have said) as the greatest moral leader of the world. Truly, the whole world wonders after the beast.

**And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. —Revelation 13:12.**

### **The blending of church and state**

Protestants have, by and large, united together for political reasons, and to achieve more clout, they have united with the Catholic Church under such organizations as the Christian Coalition and Christian Churches Together, apparently oblivious to where these movements are leading. These groups are bent on tearing down the separating wall between



church and state, which will place the Catholic Church precisely where she wants to be—in control of both church and state. Her goal is to reign and she is poised to do so, having now gained the majority in Congress and the Supreme Court.

**Because it was only to Simon Peter, the chief of his Apostles, and to Simon Peter's lawful successors in the Holy See, that Jesus confided the Keys of his moral authority, the Roman Catholic Church has always claimed—and, under John Paul II [now Benedict XVI], claims today—to be the ultimate arbiter of what is morally good and morally bad in human actions. —Malachi Martin, *The Keys of this Blood*, p. 157.**

Let it never be forgotten that the papacy does not confine itself to religious affairs. The Vatican desires the same position it held during the Dark Ages—supreme power over nations and their governments. The late Malachi Martin (former Jesuit and Vatican insider) made it absolutely clear that the Roman Catholic Church is in an “all-out, no-holds-barred... competition” to “establish the first one-world system of government that has ever existed in the society of nations” (Ibid., p. 15). The subtitle of the book is “The Struggle for World Dominion Between Pope John Paul II, Mikhail Gorbachev & the Capitalist West.” Gorbachev has since bowed to the pope and dismantled the Soviet Union. We are now down to the Vatican and the Capitalist West. With the economies of Europe and

America in perilous shape, the Vatican is positioning itself to be the victor in this global competition.

### **Spirits of devils**

How could Evangelical Christians participate in movements designed to exalt the papacy? Just as the “mystery of iniquity” was at work in Paul’s day (2 Thessalonians 2:7) to bring the papacy into power, it is at work now. This brings us to the three unclean spirits that come out of the mouths of the dragon, beast, and false prophet.

**For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Revelation 16:14.**

Spiritual Formation is providing a powerful medium for these unclean spirits. Multitudes are opening themselves up to devils when they enter the *silence*. The Trojan Horse is placed not only at the gates of the Christian churches, but at the very gates of the individual’s soul. Like the citizens of Troy, curiosity and admiration leads the saints to bring the horse right into their own hearts and minds. The end result is a submission into the hands of the papacy. The spiritual directors and mentors are leading their unsuspecting followers right into the snare. History is being repeated. Just as the great *falling away* took place in the early church, resulting in the exaltation of the pope, once again, just before the second coming of Christ, another *falling away* is in progress.

**Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. —2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4.**





### *The birth of the futurist interpretation of Daniel and Revelation*

Popular teaching today is that the antichrist will appear after the saints have been raptured. He will then, supposedly, make a covenant with literal Israel and the temple will be rebuilt. What many fail to realize is that this is an interpretation of the

Jesuit, Francisco Ribera, in the 16th Century, designed to get the papacy off the hook. The Reformation was in full swing and the Catholic Church was losing members by the thousands, convinced that Rome was the very seat of antichrist. By removing the final week of Daniel's seventy week prophecy (Daniel 9:24-27), and casting it off to some distant time in the future, Ribera was able to divert the attention away from the papacy to some future individual.

This *futurist* interpretation of Daniel and Revelation (which adversely affects the rest of the Scriptures) has been embraced by the majority of Christians, leaving them vulnerable to Satan's great deceptions. Focus has been taken off of the pope as antichrist, leaving little fear of what the Vatican is planning. By accepting



Jesuit fables, Evangelicals have placed themselves in a very precarious position.



### *What is the temple of God?*

The temple of God is the Church, not a brick and mortar edifice. It is not a rebuilt temple in literal Jerusalem. Note the following verses from Paul and Peter.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. — 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17.

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. — 2 Corinthians 6:16.

And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. — Ephesians 2:20-22.

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. — 1 Peter 2:5.

### *God shall send them strong delusion*

And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

—2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.

These are strong words indeed! Paul makes it clear that “the man of sin” would deceive the world, but that the deception takes hold only because there is not a “love of the truth.” God does not want anyone to be deceived

and lost, for He “so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). God does not purpose to deceive by sending strong delusion; He allows it because they do not love the truth. The Scriptures reveal, without doubt, that the doctrines of Rome are full of error. This is why

the Reformation grew so rapidly, for the Bible was placed in the hands of the common people, after being suppressed for so many generations. They discovered many of the errors of Rome by reading the Word of God for themselves.

The Bible is also clear, for those who will search the Scriptures, about who the great harlot is and her plans to obtain world dominion. It is because of the lack of individual study and consecration to Christ that multitudes are being deceived. Herein lies also the reason why Spiritual Formation is being so widely accepted.

# Hope for Health



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cell growth; aids in red blood cell production; and contributes to a balanced metabolism. Studies looking at large groups of people show that increased intake of vitamin B9 (folic acid) is linked to a lower risk of unhealthy cell growth in the colon.

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- Inositol - Aids choline in the metabolism and utilization of fat. (Helps process it so it is used rather than stored).
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*~ Dr. Andrew Weil*

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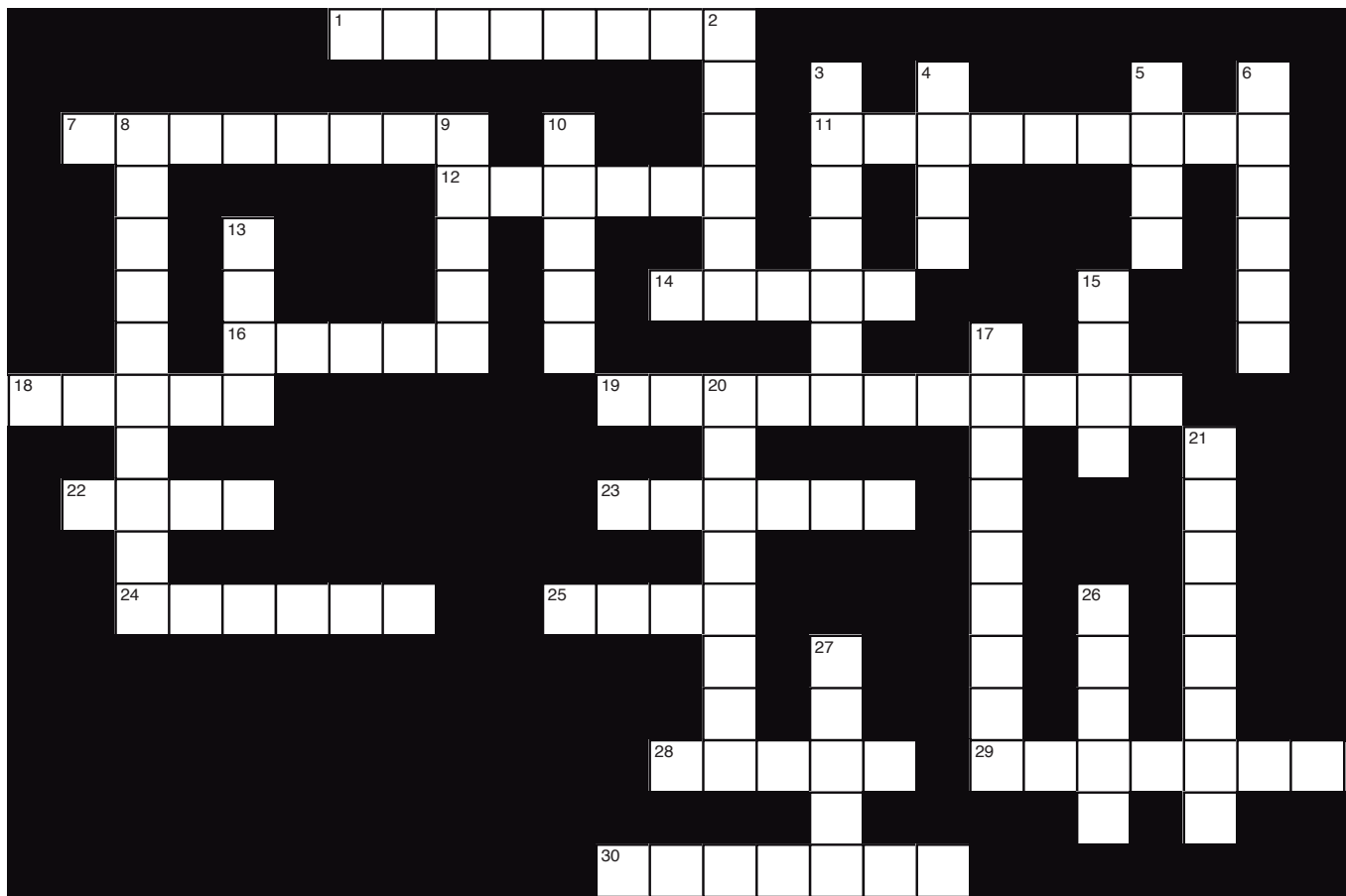
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# Christian Crossword



## ACROSS

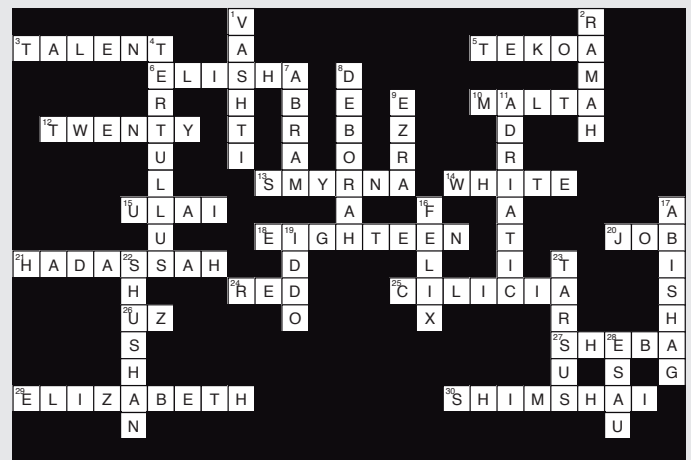
1. Solomon's first son
7. What enemy of the Israelites did Haman descend from?
11. During Abraham's life what king had a dream from God?
12. What prophet proclaimed a draught to King Ahab?
14. What was the subject of the 4th plague in Egypt?
16. David's firstborn son in Hebron
18. Who was King Saul's oldest daughter?
19. King of Salem
22. How many sons did David have by Bethshua?
23. In which commandment are the name and title of the lawgiver?
24. What animal did Balaam mistreat?
25. Jacob's first wife
28. What was the subject of the 2nd plague in Egypt?
29. What was the penalty for blasphemy in the time of Moses?
30. What Judge was associated with Barak in battle?

## DOWN

2. What daughter of King Saul was given to David?
3. One of Noah's sons
4. How many months for the waters of the flood to decrease?
5. The 3rd son of Adam
6. How many cubits was the height of the ark?
8. The ark was made of what kind of wood?
9. How many sons did Job have initially?

10. What was the waterproofing of the ark?
13. The murderer of Abner
15. From which of Noah's sons did Jesus descend?
17. The third book of Moses is called \_\_\_\_\_
20. What was the meaning of the name Isaac?
21. From which tribe did King Saul come?
26. Where was the medium from that King Saul consulted?
27. The mother of Ishmael

## Answers from Christian Crossword published in the January 2013 issue of Our Firm Foundation



## 5 More 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.



### 1. Spinach

Did you know that spinach has one of the highest nutrient contents of any veggie on the produce stand? This dark green leafy vegetable is so rich in anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidative flavonoids and carotenoids that it's almost impossible to believe! Here's just a partial list: Vitamins A, B2, B6, C, E, K, calcium, folate, iron, magnesium, manganese, potassium and tryptophan! Spinach launches a three-pronged attack against inflammation. It's high in beta-carotene, the same carotenoid that gives the carrot its anti-inflammatory properties, as well as vitamin C and vitamin K, which also help to reduce inflammation. Interestingly, a study showed that a diet rich in vitamin K1, a type of K vitamin found in green, leafy vegetables, lowered the levels of **fourteen** different blood markers for inflammation! Try to buy organic whenever possible or wash thoroughly with a produce wash as it's also among the foods on which pesticide residues have been most frequently found.

### 2. Broccoli

Your parents knew what they were talking about when they said you needed to eat your broccoli! Broccoli is one of the most nutritious and anti-inflammatory foods on the planet! This healing super food relieves joint pain and encourages new cartilage growth. Sulforaphane, vitamin

C, vitamin K, beta carotene, selenium, calcium and the pain-reliever salicylic acid top the list of nutrients in broccoli. Not only broccoli, but all the members of broccoli's cruciferous family of vegetables play a critical role in reversing arthritis and other inflammatory conditions.



Broccoli eases inflammation with sulforaphane. This naturally-occurring sulfur compound prevents joint pain in the same way COX-2 arthritis drugs do, but without the potentially dangerous side effects! Plus, the beneficial effects **last longer** and Johns Hopkins researchers studying COX-2 drugs found that compounds in cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli can even stop pain **before** it starts! Not only is sulforaphane anti-inflammatory, but it has also shown to be an anti-cancer agent as it helps the body to get rid of potentially carcinogenic compounds.

Broccoli is also loaded with salicylic acid (SA), the same pain-relieving active ingredient in aspirin. SA reduces joint inflammation by inhibiting the production of prostaglandin hormones, which cause joint swelling and tenderness. A study published in the British medical journal *Lancet* noted that getting salicylic acid from food provides the same anti-inflammatory benefits as aspirin with **absolutely none of the bleeding problems**. They also found that vegetarians have higher levels of salicylic acid in their bloodstreams than non-vegetarians, sometimes equal to the amount in a daily aspirin! Broccoli, peppers and spinach are all high in SA and should be part of your daily diet for reducing pain and inflammation!

Broccoli's selenium also fights pain and inflammation! Researchers tracking more than 900 people found those with low selenium levels in their blood had a 200% higher risk of developing severe arthritis. Selenium





strengthens cartilage because it fights free radicals. The selenium most usable by the body is called selenium methyl selenocysteine—and the food richest in this compound? You guessed it: broccoli (followed by garlic).

### 3. Pumpkin Seeds

The healing properties of pumpkin seeds have also been recently investigated with respect to inflammation, particularly with arthritis. In animal studies, the addition of pumpkin seeds to the diet has compared favorably with use of the non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug indomethacin in reducing inflammatory symptoms! Particularly important, though, is that **unlike the drug**, pumpkin seeds **do not** increase the level of damaged fats (lipid peroxides) in the linings of the joints, a side effect that actually **contributes to the progression of arthritis**. You read that right. The side effect of the arthritis drug was that it can contribute to arthritis!

Pumpkin seeds also provide a wide range of traditional nutrients. They are a very good source of the



minerals magnesium, manganese and phosphorus, and a good source of iron, copper, protein, and zinc. Snack on a quarter-cup of pumpkin seeds and you will receive 73.5% of the DV for manganese, 47.7% of the daily value for magnesium, 39.7% of the DV for phosphorus, 21.5% of the DV for copper, 19.5% of the DV for protein, 16.8% of the DV for zinc, and 15.7% of the DV for iron.



### 4. Chia Seeds

You may know chia as the sprouts that grow on the porous clay figurines called Chia Pets, however there is much more to them than that! Chia seeds, like flaxseeds, contain a great deal of healthy omega-3 fatty acids (5 grams in 2 tablespoons!), but unlike flaxseeds, you don't have to grind chia seed in order for your body to use it, and chia seed does not spoil quickly, making it much more convenient than flaxseed. In the body, omega-3s are converted into prostaglandins, which are known to have both pain relieving and anti-inflammatory properties and help the body fight off some of the effects of aging! Two tablespoons of these nutritious little seeds also have a respectable amount

of antioxidants, 7 grams of fiber, 4 grams of protein and 205 milligrams of calcium!

### 5. Red Grapes

This deeply hued fruit contains resveratrol, a powerful compound that blocks the enzymes that contribute to tissue degeneration. In lab experiments at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago,

resveratrol protected against the kind of cartilage damage that causes back pain. Studies show that the resveratrol found in the skin of grapes may also provide protection against inflammation. In a study published in the August 2009

issue of *The FASEB Journal*, mice that were treated with resveratrol were protected against inflammation, while the untreated group was not. When testing the tissue of the mice, researchers discovered that resveratrol prevented the body from producing two molecules that trigger inflammation in the body - sphingosine kinase and phospholipase D. So grab a bunch or have a glass of grape juice, and fill up on other





foods rich in resveratrol, including blueberries and cranberries, which contain other powerful antioxidants as well!

## More Do's and Don'ts for Pain and Inflammation Relief

### 1. DO be mindful of allergies.

If you're allergic to the foods listed here, you must of course avoid them, no matter how nutrient-packed they may be. Consuming food that you're sensitive to may only cause more, not reduce, inflammation and pain. As you transition to a healthier diet you can often reintroduce foods that you were previously sensitive to, but do not try this if you have a serious allergy as this can be dangerous.

**2. DO avoid junk food.** Loading up on junk foods, high-fat meats, sugar, and highly processed foods may increase the potential for inflammation in your body. Reduce your consumption of trans-fats and saturated fats by avoiding highly processed foods, red meats, and high-fat processed meats such as bacon and



sausage. Cut back or avoid refined white flours in bread and pasta (look for 100-percent whole-grains instead). Eliminate added sugars by decreasing your consumption of sugary sodas, pastries, candy, rich desserts, and pre-sweetened cereals. A diet high in sugar is unquestionably inflammation-promoting and should be avoided.

**3. DO stay hydrated!** If you're dehydrated, you'll have a lot more

muscle spasms and cramps. Being properly hydrated encourages chronic pain relief because water keeps joints and muscles lubricated, hydrated and plumper, easing flexibility. Aim for half of your body weight in ounces each day! Also limit coffee and other caffeinated drinks, because caffeine is dehydrating. Eat water-rich foods such as peaches, watermelon, grapes, citrus fruits, celery, cucumbers and broth-based soups to help boost your hydration level. You'll know if your body is hydrated enough when your urine is clear, not bright yellow.



**4. DO get enough sleep.** Skimp on sleep and you'll not only be cranky and groggy, but you'll also feel more aches and pains. Research lately has linked lack of sleep to diabetes, weight gain, higher stress levels, and increased pain. If you don't get that good 7-8 hours a night's sleep that allows your body to recover from the day's stressors, you will be more likely to be overweight, full of stress, more apt to have pain or more pain than if you were sleeping. That includes back and neck pain or any other chronic pain condition. What should



you do to promote good sleep? Start with getting rid of all visible light sources - and that includes electronics. If the pineal gland in your skin sees the light, you will not be able to get into that deep restful sleep. Good sleep is essential for good health. It can mean the difference between no pain and lots of pain. If you don't sleep, your body cannot heal. If it doesn't heal, then your pain will be worse! One way to get a good night's rest: establish proper *sleep hygiene*. This includes not watching TV in bed, not working in your bedroom, turning in and waking at the same time, and avoiding naps during the day.

**5. DON'T stop moving.** Chronic pain is no excuse to skip workouts. Pain may make you want to rest, but exercise can provide chronic pain relief. "Exercise, aerobic or otherwise, has cardiovascular benefits and increases flexibility," says Charles Argoff, M.D., professor of neurology at Albany Medical College and director of Albany Medical Center's chronic pain management program. "It releases endorphins, which naturally help with chronic pain relief and make us feel better." The key is doing the right exercises for your body and condition, so talk to your doctor before beginning any exercise



program. For example, if you have severe osteoporosis, it might be risky to lift weights. A low-impact workout, such as water exercises, might be easier on your bones. Those with fibromyalgia or rheumatoid arthritis also may find chronic pain relief with less intense, milder activities such as walking and stretching. Those with carpal tunnel syndrome, a condition in which nerves between arms and fingers become compressed, benefit from stretching wrists and hands. Have upper-back, shoulder or neck aches? Stretching the upper back, shoulder and chest wall muscles might bring chronic pain relief. For joint pain, do low-impact aerobics like swimming, cycling or elliptical training regularly. Keeping muscles around the joints strong and flexible

prevents joint pain, and using stationary exercise machines, will help reduce wear and tear on your joints.

**6. DON'T sweat the small stuff.** Stress aggravates pain. "You may tighten or clench your jaw or raise your shoulders and be in a very guarded position when you're stressed out," says Alpana Gowda, M.D., chronic pain management physician and clinical instructor in pain medicine at Stanford University. "These things can actually change the neural pathway firings in the brain, keeping you more susceptible to pain and heightening your perception of [it]," she adds.

So get out and get moving, drink your water, get proper rest, eat fresh inflammation-reducing foods and start the new year with less pain than last year! Make 2013 your pain-free year and feel better than ever!

- [http://www.menshealth.com/mhlists/nutritious\\_foods\\_for\\_a\\_healthy\\_body/bone\\_builder\\_bananas.php?page=1](http://www.menshealth.com/mhlists/nutritious_foods_for_a_healthy_body/bone_builder_bananas.php?page=1)
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- <http://theptrx.wordpress.com/2008/12/09/can-lack-of-sleep-cause-pain/>



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# News Watch

worldwide  
 Shares WORTHLES  
 Stocks tumble assets  
 anxiety deepens  
 Interest rates  
 liquidity  
 RECESSION FORECAST



Ron Frank / Shutterstock.com

## 1. Time, January 14, 2013, page 15, Mass Shootings--

On March 13, 1996, Thomas Hamilton walked into an elementary school in the Scottish village of Dunblane and began firing. By the time the rampage was over, Hamilton had killed 16 children and a teacher before turning his gun on himself. Dunblane was the worst school shooting in British history. On December 14, 2012, we had the mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. Other mass shootings have occurred in other countries. We, not to long before the Sandy Hook incident, had the killings

at the theater in Aurora, Colorado. (Editor's note—I have added to the above article to cover the most recent killings.)

### END TIME PERSPECTIVE:

"The terrible reports we hear of murders and robberies, of railway accidents

and deeds of violence, tell the story that the end of all things is at hand. Now, just now, we need to be preparing for the Lord's second coming.--Letter 308, 1907. LDE 23

## 2. Time, January 14, 2013, page 7, Briefing--

"I thought it would be cool."—Erika Menendez, when

asked by police why she allegedly killed a Hindu man by pushing him in front of a New York City subway train; she also told investigators she blames "Muslims, Hindus and Egyptians" for the 9/11 attacks.

"We're going to dig 10 new graves today...We're preparing them. Maybe we'll be buried in them."—Abu Sulaiman, resident of the northern Syrian city of Azaz, where dozens of civilians are dying each day in the ongoing civil war.

These statements fit in with the end time perspective above.



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# Ellen White's *Vision*

## *The First Advent of Christ*

I was carried down to the time when Jesus was to take upon Himself man's nature, humble Himself as a man, and suffer the temptations of Satan.

His birth was without worldly grandeur. He was born in a stable and cradled in a manger; yet His birth was honored far above that of any of the sons of men. Angels from heaven informed the shepherds of the advent of Jesus, and light and glory from God accompanied their testimony. The heavenly host touched their harps and glorified God. They triumphantly heralded the advent of the Son of God to a fallen world to accomplish the work of redemption, and by His death to bring peace, happiness, and everlasting life to man. God honored the advent of His Son. Angels worshiped Him.

### *Behold the Lamb!*

Angels of God hovered over the scene of His baptism; the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove and lighted upon Him, and as the people stood greatly amazed, with their eyes fastened upon Him, the Father's voice was heard from heaven, saying, Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased.

John was not certain that it was the Saviour who came to be baptized of him in Jordan. But God had promised him a sign by which he should know the Lamb of God. That sign was given as the heavenly dove rested upon Jesus, and the glory of God shone round about Him. John reached forth his hand, pointing to Jesus, and with a loud voice cried out, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!"

### *Fearless of consequences, John reproved sin*

John informed his disciples that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the Saviour of the world. As his work was closing, he taught his disciples to look to Jesus, and follow Him as the Great Teacher. John's life was sorrowful and self-denying. He heralded the first advent of Christ, but was not permitted to witness His miracles, and enjoy the power manifested by Him. When Jesus should establish Himself as a teacher, John knew that he himself must die. His voice was seldom heard, except in the wilderness. His life was lonely. He did not cling to his father's family, to enjoy their society, but left them in order to fulfill his mission. Multitudes left the busy cities and villages and flocked to the wilderness to hear the words of the wonderful prophet. John laid the ax to the root of the tree. He reproved sin,

fearless of consequences, and prepared the way for the Lamb of God.

### *While imprisoned, John heard of the mighty works of Jesus*

Herod was affected as he listened to the powerful, pointed testimonies of John, and with deep interest he inquired what he must do to become his disciple. John was acquainted with the fact that he was about to marry his brother's wife, while her husband was yet living, and faithfully told Herod that this was not lawful. Herod was unwilling to make any sacrifice. He married his brother's wife, and through her influence, seized John and put him in prison, intending however to release him. While there confined, John heard through his disciples of the mighty works of Jesus. He could not listen to His gracious words; but the disciples informed him and comforted him with what they had heard. Soon John was beheaded, through the influence of Herod's wife. I saw that the humblest disciples who followed Jesus, witnessed His miracles, and heard the comforting words which fell from His lips, were greater than John the Baptist; that is, they were more exalted and honored, and had more pleasure in their lives.

John came in the spirit and power of Elijah to proclaim the first advent of Jesus. I was pointed down to the last days and saw that John represented those who should go forth in the spirit and power of Elijah to herald the day of wrath and the second advent of Jesus.

### *Even after becoming emaciated, Christ answered Satan's temptations mildly*

After the baptism of Jesus in Jordan, He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. The Holy Spirit had prepared Him for that special scene of fierce temptations. Forty days He was tempted of Satan, and in those days He ate nothing. Everything around Him was unpleasant, from which human nature would be led to shrink. He was with the wild beasts and the devil, in a desolate, lonely place. The Son of God was pale and emaciated, through fasting and suffering. But His course was marked out, and He must fulfill the work which He came to do.

Satan took advantage of the sufferings of the Son of God and prepared to beset Him with manifold temptations, hoping to obtain the victory over Him, because He had humbled Himself as a man. Satan came with this



temptation: "If Thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread." He tempted Jesus to condescend to give him proof of His being the Messiah, by exercising His divine power. Jesus mildly answered him, "It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God."

### *Satan could not alter the plan of salvation*

Satan was seeking a dispute with Jesus concerning His being the Son of God. He referred to His weak, suffering condition and boastfully affirmed that he was stronger than Jesus. But the word spoken from heaven, "Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased," was sufficient to sustain Jesus through all His sufferings. I saw that Christ had nothing to do in convincing Satan of His power or of His being the Saviour of the world. Satan had sufficient evidence of the exalted station and authority of the Son of God. His unwillingness to yield to Christ's authority had shut him out of heaven.

Satan, to manifest his power, carried Jesus to Jerusalem, and set Him upon a pinnacle of the temple, and there tempted Him to give evidence that He was the Son of God, by casting Himself down from that dizzy height. Satan came with the words of inspiration: "For it is written, He shall give His angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee: and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone." Jesus answering said unto him, "It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Satan wished to cause Jesus to presume upon the mercy of His Father and risk His life before the fulfillment of His mission. He had hoped that the plan of salvation would fail; but the plan was laid too deep to be overthrown or marred by Satan.

### *Jesus never condescended to Satan*

Christ is the example for all Christians. When they are tempted, or their rights are disputed, they should bear it patiently. They should not feel that they have a right to call upon the Lord to display His power that they may obtain a victory over their enemies, unless God can be directly honored and glorified thereby. If Jesus had cast Himself from the pinnacle of the temple, it would not have glorified His Father; for none would have witnessed the act but Satan and the angels of God. And it would have been tempting the Lord to display His power to His bitterest foe. It would have been condescending to the one whom Jesus came to conquer.

"And the devil, taking Him up into an high mountain, showed unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a

moment of time. And the devil said unto Him, All this power will I give Thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If Thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be Thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind Me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

### *Satan knew his power was limited*

Satan presented before Jesus the kingdoms of the world in the most attractive light. If Jesus would there worship him, he offered to relinquish his claims to the possessions of earth. If the plan of salvation should be carried out, and Jesus should die to redeem man, Satan knew that his own power must be limited and finally taken away, and that he would be destroyed. Therefore it was his studied plan to prevent, if possible, the completion of the great work which had been commenced by the Son of God. If the plan of man's redemption should fail, Satan would retain the kingdom which he then claimed. And if he should succeed, he flattered himself that he would reign in opposition to the God of heaven.

### *Through all of Satan's temptations, Jesus remained steadfast*

Satan exulted when Jesus laid aside His power and glory and left heaven. He thought that the Son of God was then placed in his power. The temptation took so easily with the holy pair in Eden that he hoped by his satanic power and cunning to overthrow even the Son of God, and thereby save his own life and kingdom. If he could tempt Jesus to depart from the will of His Father, his object would be gained. But Jesus met the tempter with the rebuke, "Get thee behind Me, Satan." He was to bow only to His Father. Satan claimed the kingdom of earth as his and insinuated to Jesus that all His sufferings might be saved: that He need not die to obtain the kingdoms of this world; if He would worship him He might have all the possessions of earth and the glory of reigning over them. But Jesus was steadfast. He knew that the time was to come when He would by His own life redeem the kingdom from Satan, and that, after a season, all in heaven and earth would submit to Him. He chose His life of suffering and His dreadful death, as the way appointed by His Father that He might become a lawful heir to the kingdoms of earth and have them given into His hands as an everlasting possession. Satan also will be given into His hands to be destroyed by death, nevermore to annoy Jesus or the saints in glory.

~ EW 157

***"I would encourage those who assemble in little companies to worship God. Brethren and sisters, be not disheartened because you are so few in number. The tree that stands alone upon the plain, strikes its roots deeper into the earth, spreads out its branches farther on every side, and grows stronger and more symmetrical while wrestling singly with the tempest or rejoicing in the sunshine. So the Christian, cut off from earthly dependence, may learn to rely wholly upon God, and may gain strength and courage from every conflict.***

***May the Lord bless the scattered and lonely ones, and make them efficient workers for Him." ~ ST Jan. 12, 1882 ~***

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