

Our Firm Foundation

The Seventh-day Sabbath

Christ Our Righteousness

The Immutable Law of God

The Non-Immortality of the Soul

The Three Angels' Messages

The Sanctuary

Volume 18, Number 1

January 2003



**Winds of Doctrine
in Prophetic Interpretation**



He that Overcometh

“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.” Revelation 3:5.

Overcoming sin is spiritual warfare. We can be trusted with eternal life only as we overcome all sin in our lives and develop a character reflecting the divine Image by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Our baptismal vows are a declaration of war against Satan and his temptations. Satan has now come down to each Seventh-day Adventist with great wrath because he knows the end is very near. In commenting upon a “Brother S,” Sister White shed some light on this spiritual warfare and our covenant relationship with Christ:

“The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever fought. The yielding of self, surrendering all to the will of God and being clothed with humility, possessing that love that is pure, peaceable, and easy to be entreated, full of gentleness and good fruits, is not an easy attainment. And yet it is his privilege and his duty to be a perfect overcomer here. The soul must submit to God before it can be renewed in knowledge and true holiness. The holy life and character of Christ is a faithful example. His confidence in His heavenly Father was unlimited. His obedience and submission were unre-served and perfect. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister to others. He came not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him. In all things He submitted Himself to Him that judgeth righteously. From the lips of the Saviour of the world were heard these words: ‘I can of mine own

self do nothing.’ John 5:30.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 106–107.

Every Seventh-day Adventist must understand that by our baptismal vows we enter into a covenant relationship — an agreement to overcome by God’s power:

“Can you, dear youth, look forward with joyful hope and expectation to the time when the Lord, your righteous Judge, shall confess your name before the Father and before the holy angels? The very best preparation you can have for Christ’s second appearing is to rest with firm faith in the great salvation brought to us at His first coming. You must believe in Christ as a personal Saviour.

“Many of us do not realize the covenant relation in which we stand before God as His people. We are under the most solemn obligations to represent God and Christ. We are to guard against dishonoring God by professing to be His people, and then going directly contrary to His will. We are getting ready to move. Then let us act as if we were. Let us prepare for the mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for those that love Him.” *Our High Calling*, 368.

This spiritual warfare has tested believers for 6,000 years. Satan’s temptations and wrath are strong in this final generation. Only a few (compared to the population) in every generation have qualified by overcoming. “For many are called, but few are chosen.” Matthew 22:14. See *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 10, 50, 136.

“There is no excuse for sinning. A holy temper, a Christlike life, is accessible to every repenting, believing child of God.” *The Desire of Ages*, 311.

There has never been unconditional pardon for sin: “The unconditional pardon of sin never has been,

and never will be. Such pardon would show the abandonment of the principles of righteousness, which are the very foundation of the government of God. It would fill the unfallen universe with consternation. God has faithfully pointed out the results of sin, and if these warnings were not true, how could we be sure that His promises would be fulfilled? That so-called benevolence which would set aside justice is not benevolence but weakness.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 522.

“The strongest temptation cannot excuse sin. However great the pressure brought to bear upon the soul, transgression is our own act. It is not in the power of earth or hell to compel anyone to do evil. Satan attacks us at our weak points, but we need not be overcome. However severe or unexpected the assault, God has provided help for us, and in His strength we may conquer.” *Ibid.*, 421.

“Nothing is apparently more helpless, yet really more invincible, than the soul that feels its nothingness and relies wholly on the merits of the Saviour. By prayer, by the study of His Word, by faith in His abiding presence, the weakest of human beings may live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold them by a hand that will never let go.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 182.

Our key to survival in the daily conflict with temptation is our covenant relationship with God in study and prayer, and in our witness to the church and to the world that we are overcomers by the power of Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Let us commit ourselves to be faithful to our baptismal vows *today*, and may we renew that commitment daily as we prepare for the mansions above. ✠



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

—Editors

Executive Editor: Ron Spear
 Administrative Editor: Bill Humeniuk
 Managing Editor: Harvey Steck
 Layout & Design: Kevin H. Patterson

Our Firm Foundation is a monthly publication of:



Hope International
 P.O. Box 940
 Eatonville, WA 98328 USA

Phone: (360) 832-6602
 Mon–Thurs: 8:30am–5:30pm
 Fri: 8:30am–12:30pm Pacific Time

Fax: (360) 832-3720
Email: office@hopeint.org
Web: <http://www.hopeint.org>

Subscription Information

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

United States: US \$18.75 per year
Canada and Mexico: US \$23.75 per year
Foreign (Surface Mail): US \$23.75 per year, (shipped quarterly)
Foreign (Air Mail): US \$60.00 per year
Large Print Edition: US \$45.00 per year
Audio Edition: US \$60.00 per year
Foreign Audio and Large Print Editions:
 Please inquire regarding postage.

Shipping Information

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

- Add 10% shipping plus US \$3 handling.
- For destinations outside the USA, add 15% shipping plus US \$4 handling.
- If actual shipping charges are greater, you will be billed the difference.

Washington State residents: Please add an additional 7.8% sales tax.

All money received must be in US funds, drawn on US banks.

Copyright © 2003 Hope International

Artwork and photos in this publication are the property of their respective owners, and are used with permission.

Other items are © Hope International.

Cover photo: © Don Farrall / PhotoDisc / PictureQuest

4 Winds of Doctrine in Prophetic Interpretation

Colin D. and Russell R. Standish

Exposing Satan's efforts to confuse our understanding of Revelation, chapter 13.

8 The Way, the Truth, and the Life

Ellen G. White

There are many ways, but only the One leads to heaven.

13 The Steady Tread

Ralph Larson

Jesus is coming soon; can you hear His footsteps?

16 The Glorious Transformation

Francis McLellan Wilcox

What does the second coming of Christ mean to the world?

20 A Holy People

Ellen G. White

The wonderful possibility—and necessity—of being like Christ

24 The Valley of the Shadow of Death

Roberta Robertson

Have you lost all self-respect and self-worth? There is hope!

25 The One-Sentence Principle

Hal Mayer

A vital principle in the life of the overcomer

29 The Spirit Of Prophecy: A Blueprint for the 144,000

Linda D. Prettyman

One of Satan's most hated subjects

departments

Defending the Faith	19
Newswatch	22
Letters to the Editor	31

Winds of Doctrine in Prophetic Interpretation

Colin D. and Russell R. Standish

Seven times in Holy Writ we have a period of 1260 days identified in prophetic revelation:

“And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until *a time and times and the dividing of time.*” Daniel 7:25. (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.)

“And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for *a time, times, and an half*; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.” Daniel 12:7.

“But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot *forty and two months.*” Revelation 11:2.

“And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy *a thousand two hundred and threescore days*, clothed in sackcloth.” Verse 3.

“And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there *a thousand two hundred and threescore days.*” Revelation 12:6.

“And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for *a time, and times, and half a time*, from the face of the serpent.” Verse 14.

“And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue *forty and two months.*” Revelation 13:5.

Among certain professed Seventh-day Adventists, however, it is claimed that while the first six of these time periods refer to the medieval reign of the papacy, the 1260-year period from 538 to 1798, yet the seventh reference, Revelation 13:5, refers to literal time at the end of earth’s history. In this they link themselves with the futuristic interpretation of Biblical prophecy, originated in the deceptive mind of the Spanish Jesuit Francisco Ribera in 1585. His fervent goal was to divert attention away from the evil record of the medieval Papacy.

The Papacy realized that the sixteenth-century Reformers were not united on every doctrinal issue; however, they were unwaveringly united on the identification of the Papacy as the antichrist of Biblical prophecy. As long as Protestants consistently used the day-year principle of prophetic interpretation, it would be nigh impossible to undermine their identification of the Papacy as the antichrist agent of Satan. Thus, in an attempt to divert Protestants from this identification, Ribera rejected the day-year principle of prophetic interpretation, claiming that the antichrist was a satanically controlled individual who would reign in a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem at the end of the age and would fearfully persecute Christians. Obviously, a single individual could not rule for 1260 years, so literal time was substituted for prophetic time. This

became known as the futuristic method of prophetic interpretation.

So effective has been the Jesuit plot that now – though it has taken hundreds of years – Protestants overwhelmingly accept this counterfeit method of biblical interpretation, and very few now identify the antichrist as the Papacy. Sadly, it appears that some Seventh-day Adventists are succumbing to this false principle, which has its origin from the deceptive mind of a Jesuit.

These Seventh-day Adventists use a number of arguments to support their assertions. One of the strongest arguments they use is that the 42-months of Revelation 13:5 is a period of time identified after the deadly wound to the Papacy and the healing of that wound. However, this argument is based upon the erroneous assumption that Revelation, chapter 13, is written in chronological order.

It is plain to all students who carefully study the book of Revelation that it is not written chronologically, although there are chronological segments within the book. Certainly, the second beast, the United States, did not arise after the healing of the deadly wound. Yet, the healing of the deadly wound is identified in Revelation 13:3, and the rise of the second beast in verse 11 of the same chapter. Further, as we compare the little horn power of Daniel, chapter 7, with the beast power of Revelation, chapter 13, we note that all the characteristics that are provided in Daniel, chapter 7, concerning the medieval reign of the Papacy are the same characteristics that are identified after verse

3 concerning the beast power. Here are some examples:

1. The powers are blasphemous powers:

“And he shall speak great words against the most High.” Daniel 7:25.

“And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God.” Revelation 13:6; see also verses 1, 5.

2. Both are persecuting powers: “And shall wear out the saints of the most High.” Daniel 7:25.

“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints.” Revelation 13:7.

3. Both accounts recognize the same time period—a year, two years, and a half-year in Daniel 7:25 (margin), equaling 42 months in Revelation 13:5 (which is a period of 1260 days using the Jewish calendar of months of 30 days each).

This time period represented the period of 1260 years of the religio-political reign of the medieval Papacy. It commenced in A.D. 538 when Pope Virgilius accepted the power vested in him by Emperor Justinian of being the supreme bishop of the world, and continued until 1798 when the reigning pope, Pius VI, was taken captive by French general Berthier, at which time the revolutionary government of France declared the end of the papal rule. *The Great Controversy*, 54, states:

“In the sixth century the Papacy had become firmly established. Its seat of power was fixed in the imperial city, and the bishop of Rome was declared to be the head over the entire church. Paganism had given place to the Papacy. The dragon had given to the beast ‘his power, and his seat, and great authority.’ Revelation 13:2.”

In the footnote, Sister White refers to Daniel 7:25 and Revelation 13:5–7. This referencing provides inspired confirmation that the fulfillment of Revelation, chapter 13, is the medieval reign of the Papacy. So that there could be no doubt concerning this issue, Sister White further elucidates this issue by plainly stating the matter:

“Power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.”

And, says the prophet, ‘I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death.’ And again: ‘He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword.’ Verse 10. The forty and two months are the same as the ‘time and times and the dividing of time,’ three years and a half, or 1260 days, of Daniel 7—the time during which the papal power was to oppress God’s people. This period as stated in preceding chapters, began with the supremacy of the Papacy, A.D. 538, and terminated in 1798. At that time the pope was made captive by

And therefore, it is falsely concluded that this second beast is Satan himself.

From the early inception of the Seventh-day Adventist movement, our pioneers uniformly identified the second beast as the United States of America. This identification of the United States as the second beast of Revelation, chapter 13, was all the more remarkable when it is understood that there appeared to be no likelihood that the emerging nation of the United States would ever rise to be the nation which would use its military might to coerce the inhabitants of the world to worship the

Should Seventh-day Adventists place the 42 months . . . at the end of the earth’s history, they deviate from the day-year principle . . . and are in conflict with inspired revelation.

the French army, the papal power received its deadly wound, and the prediction was fulfilled, ‘He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity.’ ” *Ibid.*, 439.

Once again, should Seventh-day Adventists place the 42 months of Revelation 13:5 at the end of the earth’s history, they deviate from the day-year principle in the interpretation of Revelation 13:5 and are in conflict with inspired revelation.

The Second Beast of Revelation 13

The leopard beast (the first beast) of Revelation, chapter 13, is unquestionably the Papacy. A movement among Seventh-day Adventists has begun, however, which attempts to identify the second beast of Revelation, chapter 13, as Satan himself. It is argued that the second beast “spake as a dragon.” Verse 11. John identifies the dragon as Satan:

“And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” Revelation 12:9.

beast power—the Papacy. In 1823 President Monroe delivered a message to Congress that established the Monroe Doctrine, which forthrightly admonished the European nations not to bring their wars to the Americas but to confine them to the continent of Europe. In turn the United States solemnly declared that they would take no part in European conflicts. While ever the Monroe Doctrine was adhered to, the United States could not fulfill this prophecy. Today, however, the United States has shed every vestige of the Monroe Doctrine, and its role as world policeman is plain for all to see.

Now, as always, we turn to Inspiration to weigh the claim that the beast of verse 11 is Satan. As we will see, the answer is, “He cannot be.” Although we know that all the wicked powers mentioned in Scripture are under the control of Satan, this fact does not justify the identification of these powers as Satan himself.

Let us investigate the context of Scripture and the identifying characteristics of this second beast:

“And I beheld another beast coming up *out of the earth*; and he had two horns like a lamb, and

he spake as a dragon." Revelation 13:11.

First, it will be noted at once that this second beast comes from the earth, whereas verse 1 says that the first beast came up out of the sea: "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."

We have no difficulty in understanding the meaning of "out of the sea," for John explains

"Republicanism and Protestantism became the fundamental principles of the nation. These principles are the secret of its power and prosperity."

that waters are symbolic of multitudes and nations: "And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." Revelation 17:15.

Thus, it causes no surprise whatsoever that the first beast representing the Papacy arose out of the Old World where considerable populations inhabited the Mediterranean region. By contrast the second beast is described as coming up out of the earth. If waters and seas represent multitudes and nations, then the earth, by reverse analogy, represents the more remote or less inhabited parts of the earth. Therefore, we must look to the New World for the identification of this nation. The New World is largely confined to the Americas and Australia and New Zealand. Thus, we must look for this second power as one of the nations of the New World.

Two Horns Like a Lamb

Second, we learn that this beast had two horns like a lamb. As we go through Scripture this is the first time in prophetic depiction that a young animal is presented. If we refer to Daniel, chapter 7, the lion, the bear and the leopard are

mature beasts. In Daniel, chapter 8, the ram and the he-goat are mature animals. The dragon of Revelation, chapter 12, also is depicted as a mature creature. All these powers had existed for many centuries before they rose to dominate the world. A young animal represents a young nation and this is consistent with a nation arising in the New World region.

To identify this second beast of Revelation, chapter 13, as Satan himself makes no sense, for surely Satan has existed for a long period

of time and only a beast of maturity could rightly represent him.

Further, he certainly could not be defined as possessing any lamb-like characteristics whatsoever.

The context itself makes Satan an impossible candidate for this beast.

The Scripture is plain — "He spake as a dragon." It says that he spake *as* a dragon, therefore he is *not* the dragon. If Satan were here referred to, the text itself would say, It was the dragon who spake, but it does not say that. Clearly this power eventually would speak words consistent with the dragon, no doubt motivated by Satan, but the symbol manifestly cannot refer to Satan himself. Therefore, we must look for a political power arising toward the end of earth's history, in the New World, which would become a coercive power in spite of its original lamb-like horns.

The Christians of 150 years ago had no problem in identifying these horns as the two great pillars of the most powerful nation to arise out of the First World, the United States. The Spirit of Prophecy leaves no doubt as to what these two lamb-like horns represent:

"Among the Christian exiles who first fled to America and sought an asylum from royal

oppression and priestly intolerance were many who determined to establish a government upon the broad foundation of civil and religious liberty. Their views found place in the Declaration of Independence, which sets forth the great truth that 'all men are created equal' and endowed with the inalienable right to 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' And the Constitution guarantees to the people the right of self-government, providing that representatives elected by the popular vote shall enact and administer the laws. Freedom of religious faith was also granted, every man being permitted to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience. Republicanism and Protestantism became the fundamental principles of the nation. These principles are the secret of its power and prosperity. The oppressed and downtrodden throughout Christendom have turned to this land with interest and hope. Millions have sought its shores, and the United States has risen to a place among the most powerful nations of the earth." *Ibid.*, 441.

Thus, we can define these two horns in three ways — all very closely related to each other — Republicanism and Protestantism, separation of church and state, and civil and religious freedom. No nation in the history of the world has so clearly enunciated these principles within its Constitution.

A Deceptive, Persecuting Power

We further can easily identify the United States as this second beast of Revelation, chapter 13, because there is no power in the New World other than the United States which has the strength, the military might, and the affluence to fulfill the prophetic description of its ruthless coercion of the inhabitants of the earth.

In Revelation 13:14 the United States is depicted as a deceptive power: "And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell

on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.”

Verse 15 declares that the United States will be a power that will put faithful people to death: “And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.”

The United States is the only country in the Western world which has an active death penalty today. *This is not without significance.* The United States is aligned with Nigeria, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan as the only nations on earth which execute individuals for crimes which they committed while under 18 years of age. These nations are not noted as paragons of justice and make strange bedfellows. Yet, the United States in the past 10 years has executed more criminals who committed their crimes as minors than the other four combined. See *Time*, February 15, 1999.

Verse 17 reveals that the United States will prevent faithful, dedicated Christians from participating in the normal commerce of buying and selling: “And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

No nation in the whole world other than the United States of America has the power to fulfill this prophecy. Thus, while in its formative years the United States was a nation of great toleration and freedom, later it was to change.

We read earlier the Spirit of Prophecy’s description of the United States in its early years: “Among the Christian exiles who first fled to America and sought an asylum from royal oppression and priestly intolerance were many who determined to establish a government upon the broad foundation of civil and religious liberty.” *The Great Controversy*, 441.

In the clearest of words the servant of the Lord explains the changes to come to this nation:

“The lamblike horns and dragon voice of the symbol point to a striking contradiction between the professions and the practice of the nation thus represented. The ‘speaking’ of the nation is the action of its legislative and judicial authorities. By such action it will give the lie to those liberal and peaceful principles which it has put forth as the foundation of its policy. The prediction that it will speak ‘as a dragon,’ and exercise ‘all the power of the first beast,’ plainly foretells a development of the spirit of intolerance and persecution that was manifested by the nations represented by the dragon and the

government taking the preeminent role in crippling both the First Amendment guaranteeing religious freedom (April 17, 1990)¹, and the Fifth Amendment guarding against self-incrimination (March 26, 1991)², and by this act thus stultifying civil freedom. This is powerful evidence of the divine inspiration with which the book *The Great Controversy* was written.

To make it plain to all those Seventh-day Adventists who believe in the inspiration of the Spirit of Prophecy, Sister White has clearly identified the United States as this second beast of Revelation, chapter 13.

There is no power in the New World other than the United States which has the strength, the military might, and the affluence to fulfill the prophetic description.

leopardlike beast. And the statement that the beast with two horns ‘causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast,’ indicates that the authority of this nation is to be exercised in enforcing some observance which shall be an act of homage to the Papacy.” *Ibid.*, 442.

It will be noticed in the above statement that Sister White pinpoints that both the legislative and judicial authorities will be responsible for depriving the citizens of the United States, and indeed the world, of their inalienable rights to religious and civil freedoms. Thus, it is amazing that anyone claiming to be a Seventh-day Adventist could not discern the fulfillment of the prophecy of Revelation 13:11–17 in the light of present events in the decisions of both the Supreme Court and the Congress of the United States of America.

Had Sister White indicated that these freedoms would be taken away only by the legislative branch of government, there could be still a question in our minds as to the identification. But in the 1990s we have seen the judicial branch of

“What nation of the New World was in 1798 rising into power, giving promise of strength and greatness, and attracting the attention of the world? – The application of the symbol admits of no question. One nation, and only one, meets the specifications of this prophecy; it points unmistakably to the United States of America.” *Ibid.*, 440.

In spite of some protests to the contrary, it again is evident that those who declare Satan and not the United States to be the fulfillment of the prophecy of the second beast of Revelation, chapter 13, are rejecting the Spirit of Prophecy. This rejection, if continued, will eventually lead these adherents into spiritual darkness. ✨

Adapted from chapters 5 and 6 of *Winds of Doctrine*, by Colin and Russell Standish.

Note:

¹ *Employment Div., Ore. Dept. of Human Res. vs. Smith*, 494 U.S. 872. Supreme Court cases are available at <http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com>

² *Arizona vs. Fulminante*, 499 U.S. 279.

The Way, the Truth, and the Life

Ellen G. White

As the Saviour met with His disciples for the last time before His baptism of suffering, His thoughts were not of His approaching agony and death, but of the bitter disappointment that was to come upon His disciples. He saw them downcast and sorrowful; and, with a heart full of sympathy and tenderness for them, He said: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." John 14:1-4.

Thomas showed his unbelief by saying mournfully, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" Verse 5. This question showed that the disciples had not understood Christ's oft-repeated lessons in regard to the kingdom of heaven and the future life. But Christ did not rebuke them. He answered Thomas, not alone to instruct him and his fellow disciples, but for the benefit of all who should believe on Him through their Word, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Verse 6.

Jesus here made more distinct and plain than ever before the great central truth of all the gospel. Every lesson given by the great Teacher called forth questions requiring explanation. His answers to these questions presented the truth with freshness and power. This truth is appropriate to all ages, and is spoken to us just as truly as

though Christ in person were among us, teaching us of the things of the kingdom of God.

Dispelling the Darkness

Truth must be presented to the people in clear lines, and never was this more needed than when Christ came to this earth. Satan had arranged matters after his own order. Truth was not appreciated. Where God should reign supreme, the enemy of God and man was seen. Light was called darkness, and darkness light. Licentiousness and fiction had taken the place of righteousness and truth. Men seemed to be fascinated by evil. Any new ideas that started into life, even though they were mere vagaries, seemed to possess a bewitching power.

The standard of morality was low. The impure mysteries of the worship of the people had a degrading power on them; and anything that called to remembrance the goodness, mercy, and love of God, was destroyed. The people could not even endure hereditary nobility of character, because this had a tendency to lift them from their debasement. Men of talent, through whom Christ was working to bring about a reformation, were despised, and many of them suffered a violent death.

Statues were worshiped. Art was made to minister to sin. Nearly every work of art and science was mingled with defilement. Genius was used to obliterate the knowledge of God. The richness of intellect was blotted out of existence. Satan's dark shadow brooded over everything, and the only people who could have revealed

God to the world were so destitute of faith and love that they could not be expected to do anything to stem the tide of woe.

Christ came to illuminate the chambers of the mind, to dispel the darkness, and to fill the soul-temple with hope and gladness. And the truth He brought lost nothing by being questioned and critically examined. Christ often illustrated His lessons by parables, which were afterward explained to the disciples, who were to herald the gospel message.

Can Good Come From Error?

The perversion and misinterpretation of the Scriptures by the Pharisees, and even by those who claimed to believe His words, made it necessary for Christ to speak plainly. It is thought by some to be a misfortune when erroneous theories are advanced, but the Lord has said, "All things work together for good to them that love God." Romans 8:28.

The contention among the Corinthians made it necessary for Paul to write his wonderful epistles to them. If the Gentiles had not backslidden from the faith, Paul would not have written, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another." Galatians 1:6-7. It was a misapplication of the Scriptures, to prove falsehood and error true. If the Thessalonians had not misinterpreted the instruction they received, they would not have entertained the belief that the Lord was immediately to be revealed in the clouds of heaven, thus making it neces-

sary for Paul to present the truth as it is in Jesus, leaving on record truth important for all time.

And so opposition against light and truth called from Christ a clearer definition of the truth. Every time that error is advanced, it will work for good to those who sincerely love God; for when the truth is shadowed by error, those whom the Lord has made His sentinels will make the truth sharper and clearer. They will search the Scriptures for evidence of their faith. The advancement of error is the call for God's servants to arouse, and place the truth in bold relief.

The Subject of Greatest Importance

There are those who would rather start speculative ideas, and dwell on new themes, so arousing a desire for something new and strange, than learn the precious lessons given by Christ. By some these speculative ideas are made all and in all. And thus they neglect to seek for the qualifications that they must possess if they would win the eternal reward. The one thing for us to know is Christ, "the way, the truth, and the life." "This is life eternal," He said, "that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life." If men and women would hear these words, meditate on them, and believe them with the whole heart, all controversy would be ended. Men think too much of what they themselves can do. They become elated and self-confident. They fail to realize their entire dependence upon God. They think that God is dependent on their ability in His work of saving souls. If these looked to Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, they would realize the truth of the words, "Without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6), Christ declared. However, while the good works even of the best men cannot save them, none can be saved without bearing the fruit of good works. The sanctifying power

of Christ upon the heart will produce precious fruit, and His Spirit and power will make our works acceptable to God. If by His Holy Spirit Christ abides in the soul, our features, our attitude, our words will reveal Him to the world.

Christ prayed that His followers might be one, "as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." John 17:21. If the truth were received, its transforming power, as seen in the lives of Christ's followers, would have a convicting power on the most hardened sinners. The holy conversation, humble deportment, the meekness and kindness, would present such a marked contrast to the spirit and character of worldlings, the line of

cross that gulf I will give help and strength.

Thus the exiles are made prisoners of hope. They are placed on probation. God would have us realize the estimate He places on us. He would have us consecrate our whole energies to the help of the heavenly angels, who are striving to lead men to the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Men are working out their own destiny, but God helps every soul that appeals to Him in its helplessness. Those who look to Jesus as the Author and Finisher of their faith never look in vain. They will never miss the road to Paradise; for they are walking in the true way, and from Christ they receive moral power.

Christ is the ladder to heaven. The base of this ladder rests firmly on the earth, brought to the very

Those who look to Jesus as the Author and Finisher of their faith never look in vain. They will never miss the road to Paradise.

demarcation would be so evident, that this in itself would bring conviction. The words would reveal the purity and fragrance of heaven, and they would also be sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of joints and marrow, and of soul and spirit.

Our Ladder to Heaven

"I am the way, the truth, and the life." Through sin the world had been separated from heaven. Men might have looked hopelessly at the heavenly battlements, and in distress and anxiety exclaimed, How shall we reach the abode of bliss? With Thomas they could say truthfully, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" But with His own body Christ bridged the gulf that sin had made. I have provided a way, He says, whereby you may again be united with heaven. I have bridged the deep and impassable gulf. To every soul that desires to

level of humanity, while the topmost round reaches and rests firmly on the throne of God. Jacob saw the glory of God shining above this ladder, while the brightness of the Sun of Righteousness illuminated its whole length. Descending this ladder of shining brightness were angels of God, with communications to the inhabitants of this earth.

Only by Christ's aid can we be saved. If by our own efforts we could reach heaven, Christ need not have left the royal courts, to come to a world all seared and marred by the curse, to be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, to be tempted in all points like as we are, and yet without sin. Surely, we can reach heaven only by the mystic ladder, Jesus Christ; and He came to this earth that we might be enabled to do this. Here the battle between the prince of darkness and the Prince of light was fought, and here Christ conquered in our behalf. Of His own free will He laid

down His life, that He might take it again; and today a living Saviour stands in the heavenly courts as our Intercessor, pleading for us, that through His merits we may be enabled to resist the temptations of the enemy, and be more than conquerors through Him. He knows how to succor them that are tempted, and to deliver the godly out of temptation. Surely He is "the way, the truth, and the life."

The Same Way in Every Age

In the announcement, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," Christ by no means pointed His disciples to a new way. Since the days of Adam, the Lord has had His representatives, men who have kept alive the influences imparted to them from Heaven. Since the first gospel sermon was preached, when in Eden it was declared that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, Christ has been uplifted as the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

The same Christ that is at work today among all classes of people, was at work in the days when Adam lived, when Abel died by the hand of his brother because he presented to God the blood of the slain lamb, representing the blood of Christ. Abel's faithful adherence to God's commands in bringing a lamb as his sacrifice, offended Cain. He had another way, and this way he wanted Abel to follow, instead of following the way of the Lord. Abel would not yield God's way for the way of his brother, and he was murdered. But though dead, Abel yet speaks.

Enoch was one of God's representatives. During his life on earth he walked with God, and God took him to heaven without seeing death. Enoch prophesied of the great event which is the consummation of all things earthly—the second coming of Christ.

Noah's persevering righteousness and faith made him a representative man. The deep, earnest fidelity of Abraham cause him to be called by God "the father of the faithful." For his self-sacrificing zeal Moses received the testimony that he was the meekest and most

humble of all the human family. These were characters illustrious for spirituality and moral excellence.

In every age Christ has been the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He was the Originator and Foundation of the Jewish economy. In the pillar of cloud He guided the children of Israel in their wanderings. Everything was adjusted and arranged by the hand of Divinity. And all the knowledge that came direct from God to them, all the power and glory of that ancient economy, had been poured into the treasury of the Christian church. Nothing has been lost. The accumulated light of generations is given to the church of today, not to be hoarded, but to be circulated. Messengers are to be sent to every part of the earth, proclaiming Christ—the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

The Importance of the Old Testament Scriptures

The earthly temple is no more. Its mysterious veil has been rent asunder; its sacred vessels have been demolished, and the Jewish people are scattered to every part of the world. But the judgments that fell on that nation are a symbol of those that will fall on all who, like Jerusalem, know not the time of their visitation. Let not man mock the ancient Jewish economy, of which Christ was the Originator, and the One to whom the types and shadows pointed. In these types and shadows is revealed the everlasting Gospel.

The idea that the Old Testament no longer possesses vital interest because the New Testament has been written, is an idea fatal to the soul of him who believes it. Both the Old Testament and the New are necessary. The New Testament does not contain another gospel, a new religion. It is but the unfolding of the Old. The past ages are of peculiar value to us; and those who are ignorant of the Scriptures, and of the power of God as manifest in the history of His people, understand but dimly the manner of His working.

In the Scriptures the past is brought down to our time. The

Word of God offers us the treasures of inspired wisdom that have been accumulating from age to age. Before us are examples of piety and devotion. The lives of these men have been placed on record, not to exalt them, but to make us wise unto salvation, to show us the errors and mistakes of good men, and to lead us to imitate their virtues. Let those who talk of the patriarchal and prophetic age as a Christless age, read their Bibles with humble heart, praying for power to follow the example of holy men of God.

Christ was the way by which patriarchs and prophets were saved, and to pour contempt upon this way is to pour contempt upon Christ, enshrouded in the pillar of cloud, and giving directions to Moses to be given to the children of Israel. There was plenty of light in the old way to lead every soul to the abodes of bliss.

The prophets of God spoke less for their own time than for the ages to come, and especially for the generation that would live amid the last scenes of this earth's history. "Not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into." 1 Peter 1:12. "All these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." 1 Corinthians 10:11.

The prophets and apostles meet and unite their witness, testifying of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. The wonderful events in the history of the children of Israel are not to be lost sight of or ignored because of the lapse of time. They are jewels of truth that have been placed in false settings. Christ came to redeem them from error, and to reset them in the framework of truth, that they might shine in their native purity and attractive loveliness. By Him they have been made to give forth a brighter and more powerful luster than ever before.

The patriarchs and prophets were representative men, and through them, from century to century, a flood of knowledge was poured into the world. Adam, repentant and converted, was a Christian; Abel was a Christian; Enoch was a Christian; Noah was a Christian; Abraham was a Christian. In types and symbols the gospel was revealed to those of former dispensations.

The Old Testament Scriptures show us the power possessed by those who looked to Christ. The glorious beams of continually-increasing light are all concentrated in our time. All testify of Christ, "the way, the truth, and the life." But never was this truth so clearly defined as in Christ's answer to the words, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way." Christ is revealed to us in His First Advent. We see Him sacrificing riches, power, and glory for poverty, temptation, privation, and suffering.

Christ is indeed the Way, the Truth, and the Life. There are not many ways to heaven. Each one may not choose his own way. Christ says: "I am the way . . . no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Unless we are individually in this way, we cannot reach the heavenly mansions. The question for each one to ask himself is, Am I following Christ because I know that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life? Am I in the path that leads to perfect obedience? Those who walk in this way never lose their strength, but constantly receive new power for their heavenward march.

A Merciful, Compassionate Saviour

In answer to Christ's words, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," Philip said, "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." John 14:8. "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" Christ said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" Verse 9.

Christ came to our world to reveal the Father. Whatever attrac-

tions He possessed, He manifested only those that dwell in the character of God. His words revealed the goodness, mercy, and love of the Father. His excellence was the perfection of the Father. In His every word and work may be seen the manifestation of the attributes of His Father.

In Christ dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead. However, the only way in which He could reach men was to veil His glory by a garb of humanity. The angels beheld the hiding of His glory, that Divinity might touch humanity. Christ ever retained the utmost hatred for sin, but He loved the purchase of His blood. He suffered in the place of sinful men, taking them into union with Himself. This is the mystery into which angels desire to look. They desire to know how Christ could live and work in a fallen

The question for each one to ask himself is, Am I following Christ because I know that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life? Am I in the path that leads to perfect obedience?

world, how He could mingle with sinful humanity. It was a mystery to them that He who hated sin with intense hatred felt the most tender, compassionate sympathy for the beings that committed sin.

Satan had worked long to efface the true impression of God, and to represent Him as a God having no love. This is Satan's character. He is destitute of mercy and compassion. Overbearing and revengeful, he delights in the misery that he brings on the human family. With these attributes he attempted to clothe the God of heaven.

Christ came to remove these unjust impressions. He came to assure men that they need not fear to approach God because of His greatness and majesty. He constantly sought to carry the attention of His hearers to God. He presented the greatness of the Father's love, declaring that He had so great a care for His children that even the hairs of their head are numbered.

Not a sparrow falls to the ground without the notice of the heavenly Father. He sympathizes with all the creatures He has made, and if the heart is given into His hands, and attuned by His power, it will respond by strains of melody and thanksgiving.

In His wisdom the Saviour teaches us to approach God with the confidence of a child. He instructs us to call Jehovah by the endearing name of "Father," that we may not separate from Him in awe and coldness. Constantly He points us to the emblems of fatherly love, seeking to encourage faith and confidence in God. He pleads with us to have a correct idea of the Father. He throws back the accusation of the enemy, declaring, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him." Psalm 103:13.

He would have the memorials of redeeming grace arrest our attention, that we may know that all the goodness, mercy, patience, forbearance, seen in Him, belong to God.

Why Do We Not Have More Power?

However, notwithstanding the fact that the disciples were privileged to be with Christ, and were greatly blessed by His instruction, they were slow to appropriate His words to themselves, and many times they remained in ignorance of the true meaning of the precious utterances that fell from His lips. He pleaded with them to have faith in Him. "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake." John 14:11. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Matthew 7:20. Is not the fruit I bear sufficient evidence?

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me [not with a

fluctuating faith, but as the only-begotten Son of God, and a personal Saviour], the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." John 14:12-13. This promise the disciples held fast by faith, and on the day of Pentecost it was graciously fulfilled by the Lord. They were bidden not to leave Jerusalem till they had been endued with power from on high. They therefore remained in Jerusalem, fasting and praying. They emptied from their hearts all bitterness, all estrangement, all

them, and the unconverted would be rescued from their insensibility.

The great reason why the church has not more efficiency and power is that its members love the world. They reject the Spirit of God, and fill their hearts with idols. They love the world, and the things of the world, and of all such the words of Inspiration declare, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." 1 John 2:15. They are not, as was Christ, in the world but not of the world. The Lord cannot manifest Himself to professed Christians who love the world; for spiritual things are spiritually discerned.

on the side of the truth. God works in them, to will and to do of His good pleasure, breaking the spell of the world, and engrossing the thoughts with subjects of eternal interest.

The most powerful motives and attractions that can be imagined are offered to reclaim man, and win him from the path of transgression to the path of humble obedience. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Romans 8:32. No stronger inducement could be offered. Nothing is withheld. In Christ God gave Himself. He has enriched the world with a gift beyond all parallel. This gift is the source of all patience, forbearance, and mercy. In it is love sufficient to fill the whole world. It is of infinite value; for with it was given all that Heaven could bestow.

Our great peril is in regarding the Lord's plans with cool indifference. All heaven is actively engaged in working out the plans of God for the salvation of an unbelieving world. How then do finite men dare to put aside God's plans for their own? By doing this, they place their souls in great peril. Shall we not respond to God's love by giving ourselves to Him without reservation, by walking in His way, by determining to do His will? Angels are enlisted in this work. They do the bidding of God by cooperating with human endeavor. They are filled with amazement; for they are unable to measure the greatness of God's love. The chosen instruments of righteousness join in the testimony, saying, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John 4:10. As the followers of Christ see Him—the Way, the Truth, and the Life—they exclaim, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Galatians 6:14. Charged with a special message, they proclaim Christ, and Him crucified. ✠

Signs of the Times, January 6, 13, and 20, 1898.

The great reason why the church has not more efficiency and power is that its members love the world. They reject the Spirit of God, and fill their hearts with idols.

differences; for this would have prevented their prayers being as one. And when they were emptied of self, Christ filled the vacancy. The Holy Spirit came upon them, and filled all the house where they were sitting. Then was the promise fulfilled: "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." Verses 15-16.

The Holy Spirit leads men to cooperate with God. This is the design in divine help. And in our turn we are to lead others to Christ—the Way, the Truth, and the Life. As we engage in this work with heart and soul, we are blessed and strengthened. God stands ready to cooperate with us, but this He cannot do till we do our duty. If ministers and teachers would learn the lessons given here so clearly and explicitly, a great change would take place in the ministry of the Word. They would realize their entire dependence upon God, and would work for Him with whole-hearted earnestness. The Holy Spirit would work in and through

Heaven's Priceless Gifts

The Holy Spirit is given to bring to our remembrance the words and works of Christ, spoken for the salvation of the soul; and if this Spirit were recognized and appreciated, spiritual life would increase 100-fold. But many do not choose to remember. They seek rather to forget the good impression made on mind and heart. They do not desire to yield their way for God's way. God bears long with them, and His Spirit is constantly employed to bring spiritual things to their remembrance, that subjects of vital importance may find a lodgment in their hearts. The Spirit takes of the things of God, and presents them to mind. Constantly the mind is given glimpses of God. If men listen for the voice of God, these spiritual impressions become more and more frequent, and extend from one to another till the leaven seems to go through the whole church. A divine Presence hovers over the people, and a revival is the result. Souls are converted. The sympathies and energies of the people are enlisted

The Steady Tread



Ralph Larson

“Those who place themselves under God’s control, to be led and guided by Him, will catch *the steady tread* of the events ordained by Him to take place.” *Maranatha*, 161. (All emphasis supplied by author unless otherwise noted.)

My older brother was something of a wanderer, and he was not good at communication. He would sometimes be gone, seeking his fortune, for months before we would hear from him. On one such occasion he was away for almost a year. He returned one time in the middle of the night, walked up the boardwalk to our home, crossed the porch, and knocked on the door. To his astonishment my mother, who was sleeping in the house, called his name. She had heard his footsteps and recognized them. Moral: Footsteps will tell us who and what is coming if we will pay attention to them. And the events just preceding the second coming of our Lord will be as clear, distinct and meaningful as footsteps in a *steady tread* moving inexorably toward us.

In my article last month (“Remembering Y2K”) the focus was on

the events ordained by God, such as the latter rain, the loud cry, the shaking time, the sealing, and so on. In this article let us consider some of the other events that will accompany these ordained events and will, therefore, be part of the steady tread of His approaching footsteps.

Eroding Freedoms

One of the heaviest footfalls just now is in recent government actions that have swept away the cherished rights and freedoms that have been carefully guarded throughout our nation’s history.

As a result of the Oklahoma City bombing and the September 11 atrocity, government officials have felt it necessary to authorize searches and seizures without warrants, both of our properties and our persons. And those who are designated by high officials as enemies of society will simply have no rights at all, even to a fair trial. Seventh-day Adventists can easily be identified as enemies of society when they refuse to cooperate in the observance of Sunday.

The technical apparatus for the passing of a Sunday law is already

in place. The coast is clear. There is little remaining to bar enforcement of a national Sunday law. Yet, what about the mental and emotional attitudes of the people? It is hard to imagine secular-minded and materialistic Americans going along with any kind of a religious law. What could change their attitude?

Consider again the disasters referred to above—the Oklahoma City bombing and the September 11 atrocity. Did they not bring significant changes in the attitudes of the people?—Most assuredly they did. Many are now saying that we must give up some of our rights and freedoms for the sake of security. Those who would point out the dangers inherent in this procedure are not being listened to at all.

Greater Catastrophes

How then would people’s attitudes be affected if the USA should become involved in a *much greater catastrophe*? We have been told that nations who hate us have missiles with atomic warheads capable of reaching our cities. We hear that there are “satchel bombs”

that are small enough to be carried, yet are powerful enough to destroy a city. As unthinkable horrible as such things are, we cannot deny that they are possibilities.

What if the unspeakable should actually happen? What if we are forced to look upon the ruins of some of our cities and realize that we have no way of preventing more such losses?

I can remember Pearl Harbor. After that first terrible strike, we had no way of knowing whether there would be more, involving such coastal cities as Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles – and who knew what else? One of the unusual results was that secular

image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.” verses 13–14.

We are listening here to the steady tread of *spiritualism*. Mary is being represented by evil angels in miraculous appearances all over the world, now numbering in the hundreds. The Harry Potter books of spiritualism for children are being sold by the millions. Churches that specialize in spiritualism (under other names) are growing very rapidly. Spurious claims about miracles are now being made, but we need to remember the warning that this will not always be true. The devil’s last-day miracles will be real, not fake.

We are listening here to the steady tread of spiritualism. Mary is being represented by evil angels in miraculous appearances. . . . The Harry Potter books of spiritualism for children are being sold by the millions.

groups all over the country began opening their meetings with prayer. Church attendance suddenly increased. The lesson is clear. In spite of their materialistic attitudes and the boastful impiety of some, Americans can “get religion” very quickly if they are frightened enough. The old adage that there are no atheists in fox-holes has its element of truth.

Just let an overwhelming disaster occur and the American people will be ready for a Sunday law, we may be sure.

Spiritualism

And to make this even more certain, just add the miracles described in Revelation, chapter 13:

“And he (the United States) doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an

“Unless we stand on the elevated platform of eternal truth, we shall be swept away by the tide of delusive error that is sweeping over the world. Satan is coming down with *great power to work miracles*, and unless we are abiding in Christ, we shall be deceived. God’s *people are not the only ones who will have miracle-working power in the last days*. Satan and his agencies will work ‘with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish.’ 2 Thessalonians 2:9–10.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 19, 54.

“Some will be tempted to receive these wonders as from God. *The sick will be healed before us. Miracles will be performed in our sight*. Are we prepared for the trial which awaits us when the lying wonders of Satan shall be more fully exhibited?” *Maranatha*, 208.

Ecumenism

And while we are adjusting our minds to this reality, our attention is diverted by the heavy footfalls of another steady tread, the move-

ment of the Protestant churches toward Rome. For years we have been looking in wonder at this statement:

“The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience.” *The Great Controversy*, 588.

We have taken notice of the ecumenical movement and of certain dialogues between Protestants and Catholics, and to some they have seemed to be moving rather slowly toward unity. However, we are reminded of the statement that the final movements will be rapid ones:

“The days in which we live are solemn and important. The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude. *The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating*. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones.” *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 11.

The Incoming Tide of Evil

However, by far the heaviest of the approaching footsteps are those in the steady tread of events within our own Seventh-day Adventist Church. Those of us who have spent our entire lives in devoted service to our beloved church are now compelled to watch with unutterable anguish as evil after evil come boldly into the church, brazenly defying the faithful to do anything about them.

And just what *are* we to do? – “If wrongs are apparent among His people, and if the servants of God

pass on indifferent to them, they virtually sustain and justify the sinner, and are alike guilty and will just as surely receive the displeasure of God; for they will be made responsible for the sins of the guilty. In vision I have been pointed to many instances where the displeasure of God has been incurred by a neglect on the part of His servants to deal with the wrongs and sins existing among them. Those who have excused these wrongs have been thought by the people to be very amiable and lovely in disposition, simply because they shunned to discharge a plain scriptural duty. The task was not agreeable to their feelings; therefore they avoided it. . . .

“The true people of God, who have the spirit of the work of the Lord and the salvation of souls at heart, will ever view sin in its real, sinful character. They will always be on the side of faithful and plain dealing with sins which easily beset the people of God. Especially in the closing work for the church, in the sealing time of the one hundred and forty-four thousand who are to stand without fault before the throne of God, will they feel most deeply the wrongs of God’s professed people.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 265–266.

Fortunately, it is not the duty of God’s faithful people to separate the wheat and the tares. God is still in control, and He has made it clear *what* He intends to do about the apostasy within the church, and *how* He intends to do it. Our task is to be patient and steadfast while He purifies the church—both its ministry and laity. There is light at the end of the tunnel, for which we praise the Lord. If it were not for this light, we might be overwhelmed with discouragement; however, with the light we can endure.

Two Rays of Light

There are actually two rays of light shining on our pathway. One tells us what we can expect in the way of apostasy. It makes it clear that the apostasy will afflict some at all levels of the church. The other tells us what God is going to do about that apostasy.

“Many will stand *in our pulpits* with the torch of false prophecy in their hands, kindled from the hellish torch of Satan.” *Testimonies to Ministers*, 409–410.

“Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, *these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan* to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them.” *The Great Controversy*, 608.

It is grimly amusing to hear people denying the inspiration of Ellen White even while they themselves are proving her inspiration correct by doing exactly what she predicted.

We are even given advance warning as to the points of our faith that the apostates will attack.

“The enemy will bring in false theories, *such as the doctrine that there is no sanctuary*. This is one of the points on which there will be a departing from the faith.” *Counsels To Writers and Editors*, 53.

It is grimly amusing to hear people denying the inspiration of Ellen White even while they themselves are proving her inspiration correct by doing exactly what she predicted about their attacks on the sanctuary. These attacks are part of the steady tread of events in the church.

“The Lord is soon to come. There must be a refining, winnowing process in every church, for *there are among us wicked men* who do not love the truth or honor God.” *Last Day Events*, 173.

Recognizing False Teachers

This gives rise to a very important question: How shall we recognize these wicked men? How shall we know when there is a man standing in our pulpit with his

torch kindled from the hellish torch of Satan? We can hardly expect them to identify themselves. Here are a few suggestions:

First, recognize that apostate ministers in our time generally fall into one or the other of two classes, the Liberals and the Calvinists. They enter the church by different doors, so to speak, but once inside they stand together on the same platform, giving similar answers to important questions.

The Liberal takes the basic approach that nothing is or can be certain or sure. Therefore, he largely discredits both the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. The Calvinist

comes in through a different door. He does not disparage the Bible. Rather, he insists that the Bible guarantees to him the right to keep on sinning, and that no one can take that Bible “right” away from him.

When asked a question about the lifestyle of a Christian, both will answer that it is not important, giving their different reasons.

Both will have much to say about justification (forgiveness) and little to say about sanctification.

Both will ignore or disparage the Spirit of Prophecy because of Ellen White’s strong emphasis on sanctification.

Both will be open and receptive to worldly practices in all walks of life, including celebration worship.

Both will deny the possibility of victorious Christian living.

Both will be derisive and scornful of those who do not agree with them, calling them “legalists.”

Both will stand together, presenting a united front against those whom they call “legalists” in board meetings, business meetings,

continued on page 18...

The Glorious Transformation

Francis McLellan Wilcox

The hope of a golden age has long been indulged by mankind. However, this world is still full of doubt and uncertainty. Men still grope in darkness, not knowing whither their steps are tending. The great world problems are still far from solution. The living conditions of the great masses of mankind have been but slightly ameliorated. It is still a world of sorrow and pain and suffering.

The present picture is not altogether dark. These very conditions which we see around us are the omens of a brighter day and of a really new world soon to be ushered in. No heart need sink in discouragement over the situation which exists. There is no occasion for disbelief in divine revelation or in the leadings of the divine Hand. On the contrary, the world situation affords striking evidence of the authenticity of the Scriptures of truth and the inspiration of the Holy Word. We are seeing today the exact fulfillment of what the prophets of God centuries ago foresaw would take place.

The index finger of these great prophecies points with unmistakable evidence to the second coming of Christ. And what does the

second coming of Christ mean to the world?

Christ's Coming Means . . .

1. The end of strife and war. The kingdoms of this world will soon give place to the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. And when that time comes, the scepter of peace will bear rule over the nations of men. No more will the fair flower of youth, the bravest and best, be called upon to defend their national colors because of some real or fancied affront to their country. No more will the armies of earth be marshaled in battle array. No more will children be rendered fatherless and wives widows by war's ruthless carnage. No more will the earth be drenched with the blood of the slain. No more will fertile fields be desolated, cities wrecked and ruined, or men and women driven from their homes. The Prince of Peace will sit upon the throne of universal dominion, and the joy of peace will fill every heart. See Isaiah 55:12; Romans 14:17; Isaiah 5:2.

2. The end of sickness, pain, and death. Pain of body and pain of heart will have an end. In the blessed reign of our Christ no one will say, "I am sick." Isaiah 33:24.

"The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped." Isaiah 35:5. The bloom of health will rest upon every cheek, and in the freshness and vigor of eternal youth will the nations of men delight themselves in the abundance of peace. They "shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Verse 10.

3. The end of poverty. No longer will there exist the extremes of society; no longer will men labor for a pittance of bread. The struggle to keep the wolf from the door and to eke out a miserable existence—at present a struggle which millions of earth's inhabitants are compelled to make—will be forever past. This is the blessed comfort which the Master holds out to the downtrodden and oppressed. He exhorts them to be patient unto the coming of the Lord, to endure kindly and cheerfully the servitude which earth's conditions impose, to cherish no spirit of retaliation or resentment, and to find hope in the untoward circumstances which surround them, seeing in them a sign of coming deliverance. See 2 Corinthians 8:9.

4. Release from the power of death and from all the fear of death. When the Deliverer comes, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Revelation 21:4. In that blessed state we shall witness no more tearful eyes, no more heaving breasts or hearts bursting with grief, no more open graves or yawning sepulchers. The fear of death and disease will be forever banished from every heart, for death itself will be destroyed, and life, abounding life, will fill God's fair universe and be the inspiration of all its inhabitants.

5. We shall see our blessed Lord. We shall see face-to-face Him Whom we have learned to love having never seen. We shall clasp His hand and walk by His side. We shall hear the melody of His voice and feel the thrill of His beaming eyes of love. In His Presence we shall find fullness of joy, and at His right hand pleasures forevermore. To the disciple of the Master there is satisfying joy in the communion which he holds with his absent Lord, but this will not compare with the joy he will feel in His personal Presence. In this life we love our friends. We cannot separate this love from the love of their personal presence. How we love to meet them after separation, to sit by their side and tell them of our experiences and listen to theirs! This but feebly represents the joy of association with the Lord, the One who through earth's dark night has proved our Guide, our Counselor, our Friend; Who has comforted us in sorrow, protected us in danger, Who in His great love died for our salvation. In His Presence we shall find satisfying joy. To this association every child of God may look forward with longing anticipation. See 1 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Peter 1:8; 1 Chronicles 16:27; Psalms 95:2; 100:2.

6. We shall greet once more our loved ones who are sleeping in the tomb. At the sound of the last

trump they will come forth from their dusty beds, shouting victory over death and the grave. We shall see them no longer weak and emaciated from disease. We shall look into their faces no longer disfigured by pain. They will come forth in the freshness of eternal youth, changed by the power of God from mortality to immortality. In their bodies will no longer dwell the seeds of death. They will be raised to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, which shall never pass away. We shall clasp glad hands before the throne of God, and take part in that triumphal song of praise which will arise

from the gracious lips of the King of kings and Lord of lords. Just as long as God Himself endures, we shall endure also, and with unfettered feet and untrammelled minds shall be able to pursue the path of progress which His providence has marked out for us. See Isaiah 64:4; 1 Corinthians 2:9.

It is these considerations that bring joy in the midst of earth's sorrow, that surround even the present night of sin with a halo of light.

Such is the true new world, the golden age, the better tomorrow, the glorious transformation, to which we may look forward with settled confidence and assurance.

It is these considerations that bring joy in the midst of earth's sorrow, that surround even the present night of sin with a halo of light.

from the rejoicing hearts of the redeemed hosts. In God's eternal purpose we may separate for a while. We may wander far apart through limitless space, but every moment of that time we shall have the positive assurance that the separation is but for a moment in the great eternity of heaven, and that we shall meet once more before the great white throne to mingle our voices together in praise and adoration to our Benefactor and Redeemer. See Hosea 13:14; 1 Corinthians 15:52.

7. To the children of God, Christ's coming means that the restricted privileges and opportunities of this mortal life will be exchanged for the unlimited opportunities and exalted privileges of immortal life. Here our best efforts fail of the perfect measure of success, and are but feeble attempts to compass the infinite. In the life to come we shall not be limited in our study or in the achievement of God's eternal purpose. We shall sit at the feet of angels as our instructors. We shall listen to the wisdom which falls

The Goal of Every Generation

It is the heavenly Canaan which has been placed before the church of Christ in every age as the goal of all their strivings.

It is the world promised to Abraham and to his seed. See Genesis 13:14-15; Romans 4:13. That seed, the apostle Paul tells us, was Jesus Christ the Lord (see Galatians 3:16), and included with Christ the faithful of every age and every nationality (see verse 29).

It is the world of which the earthly Canaan was the miniature, or type, the world which would be ruled over by the Seed of Abraham, the Son of David—Jesus Christ the Lord. See Luke 1:31-33.

It is a world whose territory is to be this earth, renewed by the cleansing fires of the last great day and brought back to its Edenic purity, the same as it was when given to Adam before sin entered. See 2 Peter 3:7-13.

It is a world, the capital of which will be the New Jerusalem, which shall descend from God out of heaven. See Revelation 21:1-2.

Into this new and better world everyone who reads these words may enter. It is well worth the struggle to obtain.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." 1 Corinthians 2:9. "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Romans 8:18.

Let us never forget this earnest admonition from Ellen G. White: "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history." *Life Sketches*, 196. ✨

Frances McClellan Wilcox served as editor of the Review and Herald for 33 years. This article was adapted from his book entitled Heart to Heart Talks, 250-255.

continued from page 15...

and so on. Sadly, I have watched this happen.

We must recognize that both of these false theologies are raging throughout the church today, doing enormous damage.

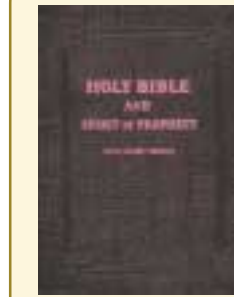
God's Way of Purifying the Church

So what is God going to do about it? Nothing?—By no means. This is the second ray of light that shines through the long, dark tunnel of apostasy. God has not been taken by surprise. He has a plan for the purification of the church. What is His plan?—In a word, *persecution*.

Just as the apostasy has involved persons at all levels in the church, even so there is to be a sifting, a shaking, a winnowing, and a weeding at all levels.

Observe: "The great issue so near at hand will weed out those whom God has not appointed and He will have a pure, true, sanctified ministry prepared for the latter rain." *Selected Messages*, book 3, 385.

"Ministers and doctors may depart from the faith, as the Word



New!

KJV Holy Bible and Spirit of Prophecy

Everlasting Gospel Publishing Association

A leather-bound study Bible that also includes the full text of the Conflict of the Ages books (*Patriarchs and Prophets, Prophets and Kings, Desire of Ages, Acts of the Apostles, The Great Controversy*) plus *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, Christ's Object Lessons*, and *Steps to Christ*. Includes Scripture cross-references only to these eight Spirit of Prophecy books. Includes maps. (No marginal references, concordance, or subject index.)

You will not find a more convenient way to take your Bible and these books when you travel!

Leather-bound, Black, Zipper, KJV, 2285 pages

Catalog # BEGW-KHBS

Price: \$59.95

declares they will, and as the messages that God has given His servant declare they will." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 7, 192.

"Soon God's people will be tested by fiery trials, and the great proportion of those who now appear to be genuine and true will prove to be base metal." *Sons and Daughters of God*, 201.

"Many a star that we have admired for its brilliancy will then go out in darkness. Chaff like a cloud will be borne away on the wind, even from places where we see only floors of rich wheat." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 81.

"Let opposition arise, let bigotry and intolerance again bear sway, let persecution be kindled, and the halfhearted and hypocritical will waver and yield the faith; but the true Christian will stand firm as a rock, his faith stronger, his hope brighter, than in days of prosperity." *The Great Controversy*, 602.

Praise God! The news is not all bad. Not only will the faithful be steadfast but also they will be joined by a large number of new converts who will come into the church after it has been purified.

"Standard after standard was left to trail in the dust as company after company from the Lord's army joined the foe and tribe after tribe from the ranks of the enemy united with the commandment-keeping people of God." *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 41.

"Multitudes are to be gathered into the fold. . . . The broken ranks will be filled up by those represented by Christ as coming in at the eleventh hour." *This Day with God*, 163.

So, it is a great time to be alive, albeit a dangerous time. The steady tread of events is coming closer and closer, and the footfalls are getting louder and louder. There are majestic events ahead of us. May the Lord lead us safely and triumphantly through them all to victory.

Again, I wish to strongly recommend that every Seventh-day Adventist home should have a copy of the recent White Estate book entitled *Last Day Events*.¹ We should all make ourselves very familiar with its contents. We will need the information it contains in the near future. ✨

¹Available from your local ABC or Hope International.



Bible Marking

As you mark this study in your Bible, we hope that it will be a blessing to you and that you will be better equipped to give an answer for your faith. See 1 Peter 3:15. Let us pray the Lord of the harvest to give us opportunities to share His truth with others while it is still day.

“Church members are to do evangelistic work in the homes of their neighbors who have not yet received full evidence of the truth for this time. . . . The presentation of the truth, in love and simplicity, from house to house, is in harmony with the instruction that Christ gave His disciples.” *Ye Shall Receive Power*, 147.

The Editors

Bible Marking Directions

- On a blank page in the front or back of your Bible, write the study title, the code, and the first reference. This month’s entry would appear as follows:

Three Messages,

TM1: Revelation 14:6-7.

- Turn to the first verse and write the comment (if you wish to use the comments), and the next reference in the margin near it. If the comment is long, you can write it at the top or bottom of the page, with an asterisk or the code of the study to refer you to it.

- Turn to the next text and repeat the process until you reach the end. Beside the last text, write “**End TM.**”

- Go through the study to check for broken links.

- Share the study with others!

We have been given the last message of warning and of mercy to deliver to the world. What a trust! What a commission! As events shape up all around us, we can see that time will not, *cannot* last much longer. Let us resolve, therefore, to do our part, as the Lord leads and empowers, to finish this work. May there not be another year of waiting! “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” Revelation 22:20.

Three Messages

Code: TM

TM1: Revelation 14:6-7.

The announcement of the first message—the everlasting gospel—is made to the whole world.

TM2: Acts 17:31.

The day of judgment has been set.

TM3: Amos 3:7.

God makes all things known to His prophets.

TM4: Revelation 14:8.

The second message announces the fall of spiritual Babylon.

TM5: James 4:4.

The fallen church, allied with worldly powers, has become God’s enemy.

TM6: 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

Here is a prophetic description of Babylon—all false religion.

TM7: Revelation 18:2.

These churches are filled with unconverted people.

TM8: Revelation 18:4.

God’s people will all be called out.

TM9: Revelation 14:9-12.

The third message, which warns against worshiping a certain beast and his image, is the last call that swells into the loud cry of Revelation 18:2-4.

TM10: Revelation 13:1-8.

This beast is a symbol of the Papacy.

TM11: Revelation 13:11-17.

Another beast makes an image to this beast and endeavors to make all people worship it.

TM12: Revelation 14:12.

Those who refuse to worship the beast will be God’s command-keeping people.

TM13: Revelation 12:17.

The remnant will be persecuted for their loyalty to God.

TM14: Revelation 14:15.

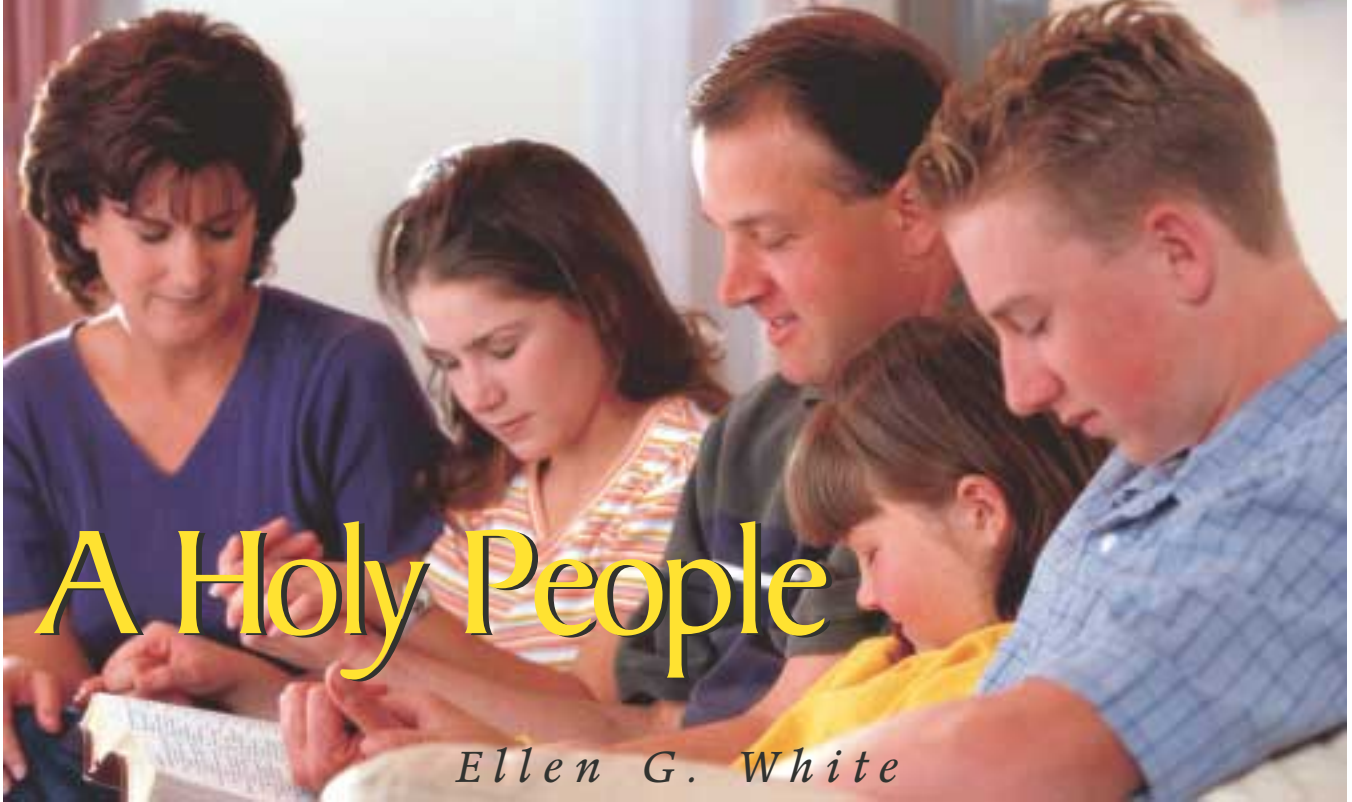
These messages ripen the harvest of the earth.

TM15: Matthew 13:38-39.

The harvest is the end of the world.

TM16: Revelation 14:14-15.

Jesus comes to reap the harvest and take His children to be with Him forevermore. ✠



A Holy People

Ellen G. White

“Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy. Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity: who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words: that they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not. They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them? They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep.

“But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded. So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away. And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing. The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.” Psalm 64:1-10.

This scripture will be literally fulfilled. Everything is to be shaken that can be shaken, that those things that cannot be shaken may remain. I am amazed as I consider

the past, present, and future of the people of God. The Lord will have a pure, holy people—a people who will stand the test. Every believer needs now to search his heart as with a lighted candle.

We may well ask the question asked by the lawyer, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Christ said unto him, “What is written in the law? how readest thou?” The answer came, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.” And Christ said, “Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.” Luke 10:25-28.

The Sinner’s Only Hope

“God 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 is our Creator, Benefactor, Preserver. The Author of all good, He is able to fulfill His purpose in the creation of human beings.

The wickedness that fills our world is the result of Adam’s refusal to take God’s Word as supreme. He disobeyed, and fell under the temptation of the enemy. “Sin entered into the world, and

death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Romans 5:12. God declared, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Ezekiel 18:4. And, apart from the plan of redemption, human beings are doomed to death. “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23. But Christ gave His life to save the sinner from the death sentence. He died that we might live. To those who receive Him He gives power that enables them to separate from that which, unless they return to their loyalty, will place them where they must be condemned and punished.

Christ is the sinner’s only hope. By His death He brought salvation within the reach of all. Through His grace all may become loyal subjects of God’s kingdom. Only by His sacrifice could salvation be brought within man’s reach. This sacrifice has made it possible for men and women to fulfill the conditions laid down in the councils of heaven.

Christ came to this earth and lived a life of perfect obedience, that men and women, through His grace, might also live lives of perfect obedience. This is necessary to their salvation. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.

Before us is held out the wonderful possibility of being like Christ—obedient to all the principles of the law of God. But of ourselves we are utterly powerless to attain to this condition. All that is good in man comes to Him through Christ. The holiness that God’s Word declares we must have before we can be saved is the result of the working of divine grace as we bow in submission to the discipline and restraining influence of the Spirit of truth.

Man’s obedience can be made perfect only by the incense of Christ’s righteousness, which fills with divine fragrance every act of true obedience. The part of the Christian is to persevere in overcoming every fault. Constantly he is to pray to the Saviour to heal the disorders of his diseased soul. He has not the wisdom and strength without which he cannot overcome. They belong to the Lord, and He bestows them on those who in humiliation and contrition seek Him for help.

The work of transformation from unholiness to holiness is a continuous work. Day-by-day God labors for man’s sanctification, and man is to cooperate with Him by putting forth persevering efforts in the cultivation of right habits. The way in which we are to work out our own salvation is plainly specified in the first chapter of Second Peter. Constantly we are to add grace to grace, and as we do this, God will work for us upon the plan of multiplication. He is always ready to hear and answer the prayer of the contrite heart, and grace and peace are multiplied to His faithful ones. Gladly He grants them the blessings that they need in their struggle against the evils that beset them. Those who listen to the counsels of His Word shall not want any good thing.

The reason that many who once knew and loved the Saviour are now in darkness, wandering far from Him, is because in self-confidence and self-sufficiency they have followed their own inclinations. They walked not in the way

of the Lord—the only way of peace and happiness. By disobedience they cut themselves off from receiving His blessings, when by obedience they might have gone forward in His strength.

The abundant evidence given by God that He desires the salvation of all will be the condemnation of those who refuse the gift of heaven. At the last great day, when all will be rewarded or punished according to their obedience or disobedience, the cross of Calvary will appear plainly before those standing before the Judge of all the earth to receive sentence for eternity. They are made capable of

at last be pronounced. The earth will be purified from their misdoings, their defiance of God.

“Yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.” Psalm 37:10. “For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” Malachi 4:1. “They shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts.” Verse 3.

Day-by-day God labors for man’s sanctification, and man is to cooperate with Him by putting forth persevering efforts in the cultivation of right habits.

comprehending something of the love that God has expressed for fallen human beings. They see how greatly He has been dishonored by those who have continued in transgression, choosing sides with Satan, and showing contempt for the law of Jehovah. They see that obedience to this law would have brought them life and health, prosperity and eternal good.

Today angels are sent to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, to help them to escape from the thralldom of Satan’s power, and stand as faithful volunteers in the army of Him who in their behalf came to this world and endured suffering and affliction. Each human being is given the freedom of choice. It is his to decide whether he will stand under the black banner of rebellion, or under the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel. With deep solicitude Heaven watches the conflict between good and evil. None but the obedient can enter the gates of the city of God. Upon those who choose to continue in transgression, the death sentence must

Those who refuse to conform their characters to the divine similitude can never enter the city of God. They have cut themselves off from the happiness, and hope, and peace, and joy that might have been theirs. Had they accepted the grace of Christ, they would have been made strong to resist the temptations of the enemy; and they would at last have been received into the holy city as sons and daughters of God, to be eternally blessed, to live a life measuring with the life of God.

But the mournful words that God spoke of Israel, He will be obliged to speak of many, many living on the earth today: “My people would not harken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts’ lust: and they walked in their own counsels.” Psalm 81:11-12. God would have rejoiced to number them with the saints in light, but He could not; for they refused all His invitations and appeals. He says, “Oh that my

continued on page 23...



**“The spirit of Ann Landers—
Her good advice made her
credible; her bad advice made
her destructive”**

News Item: “Esther Lederer, much better known as Ann Landers, died in Chicago last week. But make no mistake about it: Her spirit lives on.

“Make no mistake about this, either: The spirit of Ann Landers is in large measure what is so wrong with our society. If that seems to you like a harsh thing to say right after a woman’s death, I am sorry.

“Error is always more dangerous when it comes from a casual and unsuspecting source than when it shows up hand-delivered by the Devil himself, sulphurous sparks flying and forked tail wagging. And who could be more innocuous than a woman from Sioux City, Iowa, full of midwestern common sense? . . .

“If what you say every day to that many people [something like 90 million readers every day] is trivial, maybe it doesn’t matter all that much—except that even then, all those people are taught to think trivially. But if what you say focuses regularly on the most important issues of life, and if you say it over and over again for 40 years to perhaps the biggest audience humankind has ever handed to a single writer, no one should pretend that it doesn’t have an effect.

“So here’s the problem with Ann Landers over that long stretch of time: She made it all up as she went along—including, of course, her own name.

“Ann Landers never had the foggiest idea what her anchor was. She was the archetype of modern relativism, tailored for the masses.

They followed her loyally, and listened to her attentively, because she always ultimately let them off the hook. She had the uncanny ability to sound old-fashionedly firm, but never bothered to identify what her absolutes were or where they came from. . . .

“Like a stopped clock that is right twice every day, Ms. Landers dispensed just enough good advice to be dangerous to many. A witty and often compassionate relativist, she was a picture of the society she worked hard to serve—and the society that, regrettably, she also helped misshape in some terribly damaging ways.” *World*, July/August 2002.

End-Time Perspective: Satan who is correctly identified as bringing this type of relativistic counsel into our society has also succeeded in bringing it into our church—often from our own leaders and pastors—to help us feel better about ourselves and to lull us to sleep. It causes many to neglect the preparation we need in order to be able to stand in the great day of God, which is almost upon us.

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Those who overcome as Christ overcame will need to constantly guard themselves against the temptations of Satan. The appetite and passions should be restricted and under the control of enlightened conscience, that the intellect may be unimpaired, the perceptive powers clear, so that the workings of Satan and his snares may not be interpreted to be the providence of God. Many desire the final reward and victory which are to be given to overcomers, but are not willing to endure toil, privation, and denial of self, as did their Redeemer. It is only through obedience and continual effort that we shall overcome as Christ overcame.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 491.

**“Conservative Churches Grow
While Liberal Churches Die on
the Vine”**

News Item: “According to a recent study by the Glenmary Research Center, ‘Socially conservative churches that demand high commitment from their members grew faster than other religious denominations in the last decade. . . .’ Denominations described in the media as ‘mainline Protestant’ or ‘liberal’—such as the United Presbyterians, United Methodists and Episcopalians—were continuing their decades-long erosion in membership. There is ‘nothing astounding’ about the losses in such denominations that have been in decline for nearly 40 years, said Mark Tooley, who directs the Institute for Religion and Democracy’s United Methodist studies initiatives. ‘Churches that are faithful to their historic teachings, that offer transcendent truth to their congregants, that demand something morally of their people, and that believe in the need for personal conversion have a strong incentive to grow,’ Tooley said. ‘Churches that allow themselves to be defined by the secular culture’s definition of “inclusivity” and “tolerance” really have little to offer that will change hearts or inspire great loyalty, much less create membership growth.’ ” *Crosswalk.com*, Religion Today summary for October 2, 2002.

End-Time Perspective: Many in the Seventh-day Adventist Church are trying to fit in with the world and the churches of Babylon, moving by sight and not by faith. By doing so, we are defeating the very purpose that we have been called to fulfill—to call people out of Babylon to the changeless, sanctifying truths of all time. Let us take heed lest we be judged “cowardly” and not qualified to “inherit all things.” See Revelation 21:7–8. ❀

continued from page 21...

people had harkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. The haters of the LORD should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever. He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee." Verses 13-16.

The Divine Standard of Character

God's law is the transcript of His character, and those only who obey this law will be accepted by Him. Every departure from obedience to the law of God is rebellion. It is for the highest interest of man to obey the law of God; for conformity to the principles of this law is essential to the formation of a righteous character. The rules of life that the Lord has given will make men pure and happy and holy. Those only who obey these

rules can hear from the lips of Christ the words, Come up higher.

Idolaters are condemned by the Word of God. Their folly consists in trusting in self for salvation, in bowing down to the works of their own hands. God classes as idolaters those who trust in their own wisdom, their own devising, depending for success on their

Himself to us. He is well pleased when we urge past mercies and blessings as a reason why He should bestow on us higher and greater blessings. He is honored when we love Him, and bear testimony to the genuineness of our love by keeping His commandments. He is honored when we set apart the seventh day as sacred and

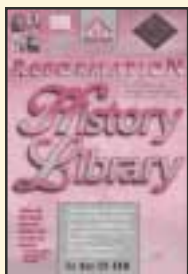
God classes as idolaters those who trust in their own wisdom, their own devising, depending for success on their riches and power, striving to strengthen themselves by alliance with men whom the world calls great.

riches and power, striving to strengthen themselves by alliance with men whom the world calls great, but who fail to discern the binding claims of His law.

God will more than fulfill the highest expectations of those who put their trust in Him. He desires us to remember that when we are humble and contrite, we stand where He can and will manifest

holy. To those who do this the Sabbath is a sign, "that they might know," God declares, "that I am the LORD that sanctify them." Ezekiel 20:12. Sanctification means habitual communion with God. There is nothing so great and powerful as God's love for those who are His children. ✠

Review and Herald, March 15, 1906.



Reformation History Library

Hartland Publications

This easy-to-use computer application contains over 50 rare and historical, classic, Christian resources. It includes works by Allix, d'Aubigne, Benedict, Wylie, Foxe, Knox, Calvin, Josephus, and many more! Also includes over 650 Reformation-era graphics illustrations. Complete search features are available as well.

Boxed Software, CD-ROM, Version 1, x86 Requirements: MS Windows 3.1, MS Windows 95, or later; Mac Requirements: MacOS 7.5 or later

Catalog # SEMA-RHLI

Regular Price: \$64.95 **Sale Price: \$25.99**



Hindsight

Dave Fiedler

Academy Enterprises

Get a taste of "Millerism," watch spiritualism sweep the nation, define 'Sanitarium,' get arrested for working on Sunday, weep with Dudley Canright, and build a school system from the ground up. A candid look at Adventist history.

Paperback, 283 pages, 1996

Catalog # BEFD-HIND

Price: \$8.95 **Sale Price: \$7.50**

Sale ends February 28. See page 3 for shipping and sales-tax information.



The Valley of the Shadow of Death

Roberta Robertson

During a recent summer, I made a decision, a really big one—one that impacted the direction of my entire future. I was certain that God led me to make the decision, and that it was right. I had prayed much about it and felt at peace in the direction I chose. But then, it began to backfire. By November, *all* evidence

wrong. Any self-worth and self-respect that I had had vaporized. The long, dark winter nights enveloped me like an impenetrable cloud. I sank into depression and utter despair. It seemed there was no hope for me. My thoughts even turned suicidal. *Why did I even have to be born into this world? Was it just to make mistakes like this?*

Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' Romans 8:1." *Ibid.*, 142.

That's it! I thought, *I am crushed under a load of guilt, shame, and remorse. And this says there is hope!* I wrote down the reference and looked it up on my Ellen G. White CD-ROM at home. I read the whole chapter. Then I read the selections again in context in the books they were taken from. I found more answers:

That's it! *I thought*, I am crushed under a load of guilt, shame, and remorse. And this says there is hope!

"This feeling of guiltiness must be laid at the foot of the cross of Calvary. The sense of sinfulness has poisoned the springs of life and of true happiness. Now Jesus says, 'Lay it all on Me; I will take your sins. I will give you peace. Banish no longer your self-respect, for I have bought you with the price of My own blood. You are Mine. Your weakened will I will strengthen; your remorse for sin I will remove.' " *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, 305.

However, doubt overwhelmed me again. *Why would God love me? I am nothing – in fact, worse than nothing.* I searched through my

went contrary to the decision. I was completely confused. I had been so certain that I had decided according to God's will. However, now it was plain that I had been far from understanding His will. It had seemed so right. How could I have been so deceived?

I doubted myself. I doubted my connection to God. I saw myself as weak, inefficient, and unable to discern truth from error, right from

Then one Sabbath evening, friends invited me over for vespers. They read from a new book compiled from the writings of Ellen White, *Daughters of God*. In the chapter entitled "Self-Respect" they read, "It is your privilege to go to Jesus and be cleansed, and to stand before the law *without shame and remorse*. 'There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in

continued on page 28...

THE ONE-SENTENCE PRINCIPLE

Hal Mayer

“One sentence of Scripture is of more value than ten thousand of man’s ideas or arguments.” *Testimonies*, vol. 7, 71.

This incredible statement directly addresses the key principle that every Seventh-day Adventist must face. Bible heroes were loyal to this principle. Jesus Himself promoted it. It should be attached to your refrigerator, taped in your Bible, and memorized.

Moses and the One-Sentence Principle

After God gave Israel the Ten Commandments—the sacred oracles—Moses went up the mountain to commune with God. However, as Moses delayed to come down, the people came to Aaron: “Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.” Exodus 32:1.

Aaron did not seem to value the sacred oracles as he should

have, for he told them, “Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me.” Verse 2. Here in this one sentence of Scripture, we learn that jewelry comes from Egypt. When Israel left Egypt, the Egyptians loaded them down with all kinds of things. Backsliding always leads us to use the things of Egypt to adorn or gratify self. Israel often backslid and reverted to acting like the Egyptians. They returned to looking like the Egyptians, eating like the Egyptians, and worshiping like the Egyptians. You can always tell when someone is struggling spiritually. On come the makeup, rings, and earrings (and not just in the ears either). Out comes the worldly music, TV, video games, and so on.

Aaron made them a golden calf that they began to worship as if it had parted the Red Sea before them.

However, God said to Moses, “Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves.” Verse 7. Note that God now disowned them! God was trying to impress upon Moses that the people had forgotten God. “They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf.” Verse 8.

Have you ever wondered what God would say to Moses if he were the General Conference president today? He might put it a little differently: They have made them a molten BMW or Mercedes. . . . They have made them a molten 27-inch TV. . . . They have made them molten clothing to wear, molten food to eat, of the things that they still have from the world.

“Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.” Verse 10. God provoked Moses to intercessory

prayer, because over the next 40 years he was going to need to use it—a lot! Do you think we need to do some intercessory prayer now ourselves?—We have brothers and sisters that believe not the truth, yet they call themselves Seventh-day Adventists. We need to pray for them, that God will awaken them and deliver them from the day of judgment.

Moses' anger waxed hot when he saw the calf "and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount." Verse 19. He also took action and destroyed the calf. But when Moses asked Aaron about this sin, Aaron said, "Let not the anger of my lord wax

excuses, or "arguments" for their televisions, extravagant homes, the flesh they eat, the immodest clothes they wear, and all those things from Egypt, which they manage to hang on to?

Aaron tries lying: "Then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf" (verse 24)—as if it were some great miracle of Providence! You can hear them in modern parlance. "I just put in my credit card and out fell these earrings." Or "I just went into the bank, and miracle of miracles, they loaned me the money to buy this big, expensive house, and my Mercedes." Or "This outfit is not so immodest; besides, it was on sale."

flee in order to be loyal to Scripture.

To Joseph one sentence of Scripture was of more value than avoiding prison or death. God rewarded His loyalty; and He will reward the loyalty of anyone who adopts this principle. Has the one-sentence principle become the driving force in your life, motivating your decisions, thoughts and choices?

Daniel Demonstrates the Principle

"Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God [God's Oracles]." Daniel 6:5. So they conspired to create a law that they knew Daniel would break.

Did Daniel change his pattern when put under that pressure? What will happen to you when a law is made—such as a Sunday law—that you are going to have to break if you are going to be loyal to God?—Like Daniel, you will have to have settled the question of this principle in your life long before that happens. If one sentence of Scripture is of more value to you than 10,000 of man's ideas or arguments, you will be able to stand by the power of God in you.

Angels will stand by your side as they did with Daniel in the lions' den. Was it difficult for Daniel?—Yes. Did the lions hurt Daniel?—No. God was glorified. This one-sentence principle always glorifies God.

Jesus, Our Perfect Example

Jesus never attended a "conference" school. He was a home-schooler. He learned at His mother's knee that one sentence of Scripture is of more value than 10,000 of man's ideas or arguments. At the tender age of 12 He was in the temple baffling the teachers of Israel with His knowledge. Jesus had mastered the Bible (the Torah)—not the writings of the theologians.

Theology is the study of what men have said *about* God and the

Sometimes temptation tries to grab you and hold you like Mrs. Potiphar did with Joseph. But like Joseph, when temptations arise you must do the right thing and flee in order to be loyal to Scripture.

hot: thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief." Verse 22. In other words: "Go easy Moses, have a little tact. You are too rough on the people. They are not ready for these reforms. Slow down." Have you ever heard those things before?

Do you think the angels of God would have stood by Aaron had he stood firmly on the one-sentence principle?—The people may have threatened to kill him. They might have put terrible pressure on him, but he did not have to buckle. One sentence of Scripture is enough to call all the mighty hosts of heaven to your defense and outweigh all the arguments of even perverse mobs.

The people came to Aaron with arguments and ideas: "We don't know what has happened to Moses, so make us gods." They could have presented 10,000 ideas to Aaron, but if Aaron had understood the one-sentence principle, he could have withstood them all. Have you ever heard Seventh-day Adventists make

Moses did not hesitate to solve this serious problem. The people needed to understand that one sentence of Scripture was truly of more value than 10,000 of man's ideas or arguments.

Joseph Gets It Right

When Joseph was approached by Potiphar's wife to do something God had forbidden, Joseph just said "No." "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Genesis 39:9. One sentence of Scripture was of more value to Joseph than 10,000 of Mrs. Potiphar's ideas or arguments. Though in the time of Joseph the oracles of God were transmitted verbally, he remained loyal to them regardless of the consequences.

Have you ever been pressured by someone who wanted you to join them in sin?—Sometimes temptation tries to grab you and hold you like Mrs. Potiphar did with Joseph. See verses 11–12. But like Joseph, when temptations arise you must do the right thing and

Bible – not the study of the Bible itself. Many among us want to know what Luther, Calvin, and even Augustine said, but somehow what the Bible says does not seem as important. We send our teachers off to Oxford, Fuller, and other Babylonish seminaries to get “advanced” degrees, and then bring them back to teach in our schools the ideas and arguments of the fallen churches. Do they have the one-sentence principle in their hearts?

Jesus had not studied the Mishna (the church manual). You see, the theologians of the day were studying the Mishna more than the Bible (the Torah). They were studying to find out what one can do and what one cannot do to be loyal to the church structure and the leaders. There were so many rabbinical restrictions and laws to learn and follow that they forgot the law of God. They were so busy making certain that they understood all the secondary details that they missed out on the primary one-sentence principle. Truly, they were straining at gnats and swallowing camels. See Matthew 23:24.

“At a very early age, Jesus had begun to act for Himself in the formation of His character, and not even respect and love for His parents could turn Him from obedience to God’s Word. ‘It is written’ was His reason for every act that varied from the family customs. . . .

“His brothers . . . insisted that the traditions must be heeded, as if they were the requirements of God. They even regarded the precepts of men more highly than the Word of God, and they were greatly annoyed at the clear penetration of Jesus in distinguishing between the false and the true. His strict obedience to the law of God they condemned as stubbornness. . . .

“Christ was not exclusive, and He had given special offense to the Pharisees by departing in this respect from their rigid rules. He found the domain of religion fenced in by high walls of

seclusion, as too sacred a matter for everyday life. These walls of partition He overthrew.” *The Desire of Ages*, 86.

Jesus spent a lot of time in His ministry overthrowing the Mishna. His own brothers did not practice the one-sentence principle. They had gone to the schools of the rabbis and learned to value man’s ideas and arguments more.

Jesus was an offense especially to the devil in the wilderness. Jesus’ first principle with every temptation was “It is written!” – One sentence of Scripture is of more value than 10,000 of man’s ideas or arguments. And the devil came with some ideas and

rabbis. He pulls them down, overthrows them, and then restores their loyalty to the oracles of God.

Listen to some of Jesus’ words. “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill.” Matthew 5:21. These teachings had been around a long time, and this is one of the Ten Commandments. “But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment.” Verse 22. The rabbis had reinterpreted the commandments to be limited to physical killing. Thus, you could hate your brother and do things to him without killing him, and not be guilty.

Jesus was constantly drawing the attention of the people away from the sayings of men toward the eternal Word of truth.

arguments. “If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.” Matthew 4:3. “You’re hungry, you have the power, go ahead, why not?” But Jesus answered: “It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” Verse 4.

Only *one* sentence of Scripture is more valuable than 10,000 of man’s ideas or arguments. Imagine the power of the whole Bible and Spirit of Prophecy! (Remember, the Spirit of Prophecy is part of the oracles, though it is the lesser light.) How many arguments and ideas does that cover? – Millions of them. Every idea or argument of which you could possibly think, which is contrary to God’s Word, is covered in Holy Writ. You just have to find it. It is there for you.

Jesus was constantly drawing the attention of the people away from the sayings of men toward the eternal Word of truth. Even in the blessed Sermon on the Mount, He begins to unravel the loyalty of the people to the traditions of the

“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery.” Verse 27.

Another commandment. However, they had found ways to get around it so that they could do what they really wanted to do. Remember the woman taken in adultery? She was the only one they brought to Jesus. Where was the man? – They had ignored one party to the crime and yet claimed that they were being obedient to God. “But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” Verses 27–28.

“Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all.” Verses 33–34.

Notice how many times Jesus said “But I say unto you.” Jesus was really saying, “I have a higher authority than the rabbis.” The rabbis did not appreciate that, because they were teaching that man’s rules were more important

than God's Word. Jesus, by contrast, was constantly drawing their attention away from man's ideas and putting it back on the Word of God.

Here's another example: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not." Matthew 23:2-3. This chapter is all about "woes" on the Pharisees as Jesus openly opposed their teachings that were in conflict with Scripture.

When Jesus healed the man at the pool of Bethesda, the scripture says: "And on the same day was the sabbath." John 5:9. Why did

Jesus do it on the Sabbath? — Healing this man on the Sabbath "would open the way for Him to denounce the restrictions of the Jews in regard to the Lord's day." *Ibid.*, 206.

Jesus deliberately did things the rabbis forbade on the Sabbath in order to break down their traditions and uphold the true importance of Scripture. No doubt they accused Him of not being loyal to the church, but what else could He do? They were not being loyal to God.

After Jesus healed the blind man on the Sabbath, the Pharisees disfellowshipped him. Yet, Jesus found that man and accepted his worship independently. See John

9:35-38.

Jesus, in essence, asserts that even the disfellowshipped can still be a part of His church, and that their worship can be acceptable to Him. This was the ultimate statement of His authority over the dictums of the rabbis. Jesus was so loyal to Scripture that the church rulers eventually had Him crucified.

Jesus is our Example. If we are going to have the one-sentence principle in our lives, we may have some of the same problems Jesus had. But that does not change the fact that "one sentence of Scripture is of more value than ten thousand of man's ideas or arguments." ✠

continued from page 24...

soul, but found nothing at all that I could offer to God as a reason to claim His love and sacrifice for myself. Day after day I plugged away at my necessary duties, almost unable to function, while a cloud of depression and despair locked me in. Many nights I cried myself to sleep. *My life is nothing. Why couldn't I just die?*

If I had any courage to pray at all, my prayers sounded something like David's, "O LORD, rebuke me not in Thy wrath: neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure. For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me. My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness. I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart. Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my

groaning is not hid from thee. My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me." Psalm 38:1-10.

Slowly, subtly the still, small voice reached into the darkness and spoke light to my soul through verses that I had memorized:

"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Mark 2:17.

I gave My "only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish." John 3:16.

"God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8.

"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Ephesians 2:8.

"God is love." 1 John 4:8.

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us." Verse 10.

Wow! The truth burst through the darkness like the dawn after a stormy night. *God's love is an unconditional gift. It needs no reason. I cannot explain it. I can only accept it.* If I did see merit in myself by which to claim God's blessing, I could not receive God's love. Now I understand why Christ said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for

theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Matthew 5:3-4.

"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." Psalm 34:18.

I saw God's hands stretched out to me, and I reached out and grasped by faith the gift of love. *Yes! I believe!* Peace washed over my soul like rain on a desert waste. No matter what I am, or what I have done, God loves even me — not because I am worth loving but because *He is Love*. And that love is now the foundation of my self-respect.

Intellectually, I had always known these truths — that I am a sinner saved only by the grace of God. However, it was not until I went through the valley of the shadow of death that I understood it in my heart. That was the most difficult and emotionally stressful experience of my entire life. Physically it took a serious toll on my body that I am still recovering from three years later. Yet, if that was the only way my proud and stubborn will could fall on the Rock and be broken, then I am thankful God allowed it to happen. Praise His name! ✠

The Spirit Of Prophecy: A Blueprint for the 144,000

Linda D. Prettyman

In 1844, a young woman named Ellen White received the first of many hundreds of visions and dreams. Its content? – The journey of the remnant people from the time of the midnight cry to the New Earth. See *Early Writings*, 13. The theme throughout the vision was the 144,000, revealing the focus of God’s attention, and where He would have us focus our attention.

For the first time since John the Beloved received the vision of the Revelation many identifying traits were added to the description of the 144,000, and as a result, they come alive before us – identifiable, even familiar.

That first vision in 1844 provided a foundation. All subsequent visions and dreams were expansions and supplements, clarifying the images presented there, for the development, organization, and employment of that people – the 144,000.

Different groups embarked upon the journey at different times in that first of Sister White’s visions, but only the 144,000 were dwelt upon throughout the vision. The Spirit of Prophecy gives us a blueprint for the 144,000. In health reform, education, medical minis-

try, by personifying in knowledge and life the teachings of Jesus Christ from both the Old and New Testaments, these people were to exemplify all of God’s hopes, efforts, and sacrifices throughout the age of sin.

The 144,000 are to be the ripened wheat, for whom the husbandman has labored and waited with great earnestness and longing through the barren winter, the fruitless spring, and the ripening times of summer. Fall has arrived; and the crop is apparent. Yet, still, danger lurks at all times, enemies abound at every corner, and all may yet be lost before the crop ripens if the most diligent vigilance is not religiously exercised.

The lurking lion – that great adversary of our God and King – is still in possession of an intellect greatly superior to ours, and Satan still finds, in view of our exceedingly dull wits, that it is an easy task to flood God’s people with heresies and lead them to place soul-crippling construction on key Spirit of Prophecy statements or concepts.

Look, for example, at the following statement: “It is not His will that they [His people] shall get into

controversy over questions which will not help them spiritually, such as, Who is to compose the hundred and forty-four thousand?” *Selected Messages*, book 1, 174. Please note, it says, “who is to compose,” not what their characteristics are.

God has gone out of His way to reveal their character to us. Is He then going to say, Go your way, close your eyes on this matter, seek not to know their character and function? – Certainly not. The purpose of the Spirit of Prophecy is to delineate the standard of Christ, the mark, and the prize for which we are ever to strive. The 144,000 personify that perfection with which Sister White fills her writings, and for which she urges us to strive with all our God-given powers to attain. See *Last Day Events*, 222.

Friends and beloved of God, our heavenly Father has revealed much to us identifying these people, for they are to be planted upon the utmost heights of Zion for all eternity, recognized as even the very pillars in the temple of God. See Revelation 3:12. He deeply desires that we understand what it is He expects of us, and that we would believe and receive all He

has provided for us to become—the image of Jesus fully.

I pray that you will gain an understanding of the time we are living in. It is the time of the first angel's message: our High Priest is in the Most Holy Place in the temple in Heaven. It is the time of the second angel's message: the apostasy of the churches is evident. It is the time of the third angel's message: the time when those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus give the message that Babylon has fallen and to come out of her that all who will may flee. See Revelation 14:6–12; chapter 18. The people of Revelation 3:12 are in the heavenly temple, and if you prize Jesus, eternal life, and heaven, you will be in there with Him.

standing of sin had to go so that the people would feel free to sin in Laodicean ease and comfort. Satan aims to convince us that we cannot identify the characteristics of the 144,000, that it is unimportant, a thing unessential and not to be revealed, since these people are mentioned only in the book of Revelation.

Sister White did say not to waste time trying to know if a certain Mary Jones or Joe Smith is in the number. That is none of our business. But she also said that we will know “in a short time.” See *Selected Messages*, book 1, 174. Why?—Because, when the national Sunday law goes into effect, millions now professing the Seventh-day Adventist faith will leave—blow away like the leaves of

ing of His divine nature, we will come to perfectly reflect the character of Christ.

“As the Son of man was perfect in His life, so His followers are to be perfect in their life.” *The Desire of Ages*, 311.

“Christ became one flesh with us, in order that we might become one spirit with Him.” *Ibid*, 388.

“The Lord requires perfection from His redeemed family. He expects from us the perfection which Christ revealed in His humanity.” *Child Guidance*, 477.

By partaking of His Word, His Spirit, His nature, we shall surely reflect His image fully.

Please, I beg of you: in your hearts, in your homes, in your studies, in your churches, resurrect this precious inheritance, which we have been given from our bare beginnings. It is still our high calling, our blessed hope—that He will save us—*fully and completely*—from our sins.

God is able to do it. He desires with all His heart to do it. He will do it, if we will go with Him and cast Him not away. He will do it if we are willing to be made willing, if we will pray to be filled with His Spirit as Christ was. See *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 142.

Beloved, this is it: we are practically there. Certainly, those who will eventually be part of the 144,000 could be in the world today—though perhaps they are not yet perfected or even enrolled in the remnant church.

If we would be among them, we must now count ourselves in that greatest of God's armies and come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty. The armies are approaching the final battleground. Whose army are you in? Under whose banner do you stand?

All hail the power of Jesus' name. Let us before Him fall, then rise, and take our position in the field. Say not with the wicked who fall from the narrow path, “Since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning.” 2 Peter 3:4. ✠

Satan aims to convince us that we cannot identify the characteristics of the 144,000, that it is unimportant, a thing unessential and not to be revealed.

Satan has sought to lead God's remnant people to allow this pivotal issue of the character of the 144,000 to be swept from the arena. Only thus will he succeed in his effort to dishearten God's people and spawn unbelief in the ability of Christ Jesus to give us the power to utterly overcome sin.

It has been years since I have heard the mention of perfection or overcoming sin in a Bible study, Sabbath school class, or other church setting without having the air thickly sown with seeds of unbelief, denial, and avowals that we never will overcome sin in this life. I have seen the origin of these infidel sentiments; and I have seen them grow and gather momentum.

Why is the enemy of souls so opposed to the study of the 144,000?—The knowledge of the characteristics of the 144,000 had to become obscure because they call us to perfection. Perfection had to go, because it is sinless. The under-

autumn. Here and there among all those naked deciduous trees will stand strong and true a few faithful evergreens, obvious for the scarcity of their number—as a few stars shine very brightly in the dark night.

The doctrine of the 144,000, one of the pillars of God's church, came under great attack because God's whole purpose in the remnant church was to produce a generation who would believe, who would pursue the prize. These people would follow the Lamb wherever He leads, faultless and without guile before God's throne, without an intercessor as only Christ before them had been.

Who else would Satan possibly despise, fear, and seek to destroy more than the 144,000? To eradicate from the minds of the people this image is the focus of all his fallen angelic intellect.

By beholding, believing, striving in the Spirit of Christ, and partak-



Thank you for your wonderful magazine so filled with truth. My husband and I look forward to each one. God bless you all in the work you are doing.

LS, Arizona

I am interested in your Bible study program. I want to learn more about the Bible so I can come closer to Jesus Christ our Saviour. I want to get a better understanding of His Word and His Father's Word. Please send me some Bible study books.

RM, Maryland

My wife and I are new to the Adventist movement having been asked to leave our Baptist Church, because I began to share the knowledge of the fourth commandment and how this has not been changed.

We are interested in study materials that will give us further insight into the truth in the Scriptures especially from the Hebraic viewpoint in light of what Paul says in Romans 3. A Jewish Adventist gave me the book *Waymarks of Adventism*, and that is why I'm writing.

LL, Tennessee

Our daughter has an interest in studying for baptism. She is 12, almost 13-years-old. We are a Seventh-day Adventist family. We obtained your Law of God brochure from Hartland Bible camp meeting. Since we had purchased 250 of them for distribution in our little boro, we thought we'd better know what our neighbors would be getting.

Thank you kindly for the Bible course by mail. Our daughter is anxious to begin her studies for baptism.

CF, Pennsylvania

Please forgive me for taking so long. I am sending — to take care of the balance. In the last letter I

wrote to you, I asked the Lord Jesus Christ the Righteous, the Lamb Slain from the Foundation of the World to teach my hands to profit. He did in a most marvelous way. He allowed me to put my three sons in Christian school. I now work for a mortgage company, and am learning to be a loan officer. Please keep us in your prayers. This position will help me support the work and live simply and debt free.

JS, Alabama

Here's my check to help finish the work. I don't have much income, as I have been unable to find work. I'm 82 and strong for my age, able to take care of myself—a vegetarian, bake my own bread, keep house and garden. When I hear the news, I realize I may live to see Jesus return. But if I don't, I want to be ready to go Home. I am the only Seventh-day Adventist in my family. Please pray for me.

LD, South Carolina

We loved your camp meeting videotapes. All the speakers were wonderful. The people who can attend your camp meetings are surely blessed to be able to be there. Please continue to reach people all around the world with God's Word as you have been doing.

WF, Canada

From Overseas

I got the two packages of magazine of the issues of May and June together from the post office. I do not know what to say except a million thanks again for making it possible for us to have them. I wish we could have funds to cover for these magazines, but the recipients of these magazines are all poor. They are always very happy to receive them and are sharing them with others. We can only pray for your work there that God will bless all of you more and more, so you can continue sending these precious magazines to us.

JB, Philippines

I received your March 2002 *Our Firm Foundation*. I am thanking you for it. Please continue to send your

magazine and a few audio message cassettes to us. We can use your message cassettes in our Hope camp meetings.

We did successful service to our Lord in 2001. We are doing victorious service to our God in 2002 also. And we are with absolute faith to do the ministry of our Lord in the new and remote villages of our — state of India. We are experiencing persecutions and blasphemies in the ministry of our Lord, yet with patience and courage we are continuing the work of our Lord. He is giving us protection through His angels and using us in His ministry. Many people came to Jesus through our work. God saved them through His grace.

We are doing the following activities:

1. Christian Library: to encourage the readers spiritually
2. Church Planting: constructing churches to worship our Lord
3. Gospel Outreach: preaching in remote villages to win perishing souls
4. Seminars: to teach the servants of God
5. Conventions: to encourage the Christians
6. Orphanage: feeding the children who lost their parents in the cyclones

Please come to India to see the work which we are doing here.

MK, India

I am a 25-year-old ministering to God's people in my district as an evangelist. I really want to know more spiritually. To know more, reading Spirit of Prophecy and praying to God is mandatory. Praying to God is at hand for everybody. But to read more, getting different spiritual books is needed. To get inspired books also asks financial income. As you know, most Ethiopians are poor.

So, I need your charity. Please send me the book entitled *Daniel and Revelation* and *Review and Herald* articles. If not possible to send both, please send either.

FA, Ethiopia



Hope International CAMP MEETING 2002

Audio Cassette Sale

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Eatonville, WA
Permit No. 8

The following messages are available from Hope International's camp meetings that were held in California in the Fall 2002. Those who attended received a blessing from the messages, and we believe you will, too.

Angwin Camp Meeting 2002

- Ron Spear *The Omega of Apostasy*
- Jesse Ramirez *Life Eternal, Part 1*
- Bill Humeniuk *Eden's Way*
- Hal Mayer *When God Changes Churches*
- Bill Humeniuk *King Jehu*
- Ron Spear *The Cleansing of the Sanctuary*
- Bill Humeniuk *It's High Time to Awake*
- Ron Spear *The Three Angels' Messages*
- Bill Humeniuk *Mission Report*
- Hal Mayer *Terrorists and the Demise of Religious Liberty*
- Hal Mayer *One Sentence of Scripture*
- Bill Humeniuk *Great Power and Glory*
- Jesse Ramirez *Life Eternal, Part 2*

Colton Camp Meeting 2002

- Jesse Ramirez *We Must Be United*
- Maurice Berry *Standing in His Glory*
- Bill Humeniuk *Take Heed*
- Ron Spear *The Cleansing of the Sanctuary*
- Colin Standish *The Judgments*
- Maurice Berry *Forming the Image to the Beast*
- Bill Humeniuk *We Have Seen His Star*
- Colin Standish *Who Will Finish the Work?*
- Bill Humeniuk *African Testimonies*
- Ron Spear *The Three Angels' Messages*
- Hal Mayer *I Was Blind and Now I See*
- Maurice Berry *The Testimony of Jesus*
- Maurice Berry *The Return of Balaam and Balak*

**Only \$3.00 each
or \$32.00 per Set!**

Payment Method

- Check Date:
- Money Order
- Credit Card (VISA / MasterCard)

Credit Card Number

Expiration Date: /
month year

Signature

Name

Address

Phone:

Hope International
P.O. Box 940
Eatonville, WA 98328
Change Service Requested



Please make checks or money orders payable to Hope International.
Please see page 3 for shipping and sales-tax information.