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our firm **FOUNDATION**

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

Rejoice, and be Exceeding Glad!

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Ellen White's Vision: The Two Ways

As Seventh-day Adventists, we often run into the problem of explaining that we have a prophet who has given us much guidance in many areas of our lives. The prophet is not a substitute for the Bible, but in fact uplifts our need to study the Bible.

In the Book of Revelation, chapter 12, verse 17, we read about a scenario which would take place near the end of time before the second coming of Jesus—“And the dragon (Satan) was wroth with the woman (church), and went to make war with the remnant of her seed (last part of God’s church before His coming), which keep the commandments of God (all ten as given at Mt. Sinai), and have the testimony of Jesus.”

In Revelation chapter 19, verse 10, it is revealed to John by an angel that the “testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”.

...many folks claiming to be God’s people have failed to accept His prophet.

The Seventh-day Adventist church is the only last day church that claims both the end time prophet, Ellen G. White, and the need to keep all ten commandments, including the 4th, which requires worship on the 7th day.

If one studies the various time prophecies in the Bible, he or she will find that at the beginning of each time prophecy is a prophet that proclaims that particular time prophecy as given to that prophet by God; and at the end of each time prophecy is a prophet that gathers God’s people for God’s purposes at that point in time. For instance, the first time prophecy was the 120 years declared by God through

Noah. Noah declared the prophecy though his activity of building the ark, and at the end of that time period sought to gather the people aboard that ark for their salvation from the flood. As it was, very few, only Noah’s family listened to the prophet.

There is an article which appeared twice in *Our Firm Foundation* (first in May, 1992, then again in Dec., 2006) regarding the gathering of God’s people after every time prophecy. The last time period is the 2300 years that takes us to 1844. We should have expected a prophet around that time to guide in God’s last day movement.

Ellen White was that prophet. And just like with Noah and some of God’s other prophets, many folks claiming to be God’s people have failed to accept His prophet. They have not read her many books that help us to better understand the Bible, and give much council in regard to being ready for the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. And many of our people are not equipped to show that she is truly the prophet of God. Prayerfully, this editorial will help you in that regard.

Not only has Ellen White written more words than any other woman or man, but the testimonials of those who witnessed her in vision point out that her physical condition during her visions could have been brought about only by God.

“While she is in vision, her breathing entirely ceases. No breath ever escapes her nostrils or lips when in this condition. This has been proved by many witnesses, among them physicians of skill, and themselves unbelievers in the visions, on some occasions being appointed by a public congregation for the purpose. It has been proved many times by tightly holding the nostrils

and mouth with the hand, and by putting a looking glass before them so close that any escape of the moisture of the breath would be detected. In this condition she often speaks words and short sentences, yet not the slightest breath escapes... A person may pinch her flesh, and do things which cause great and sudden pain in her ordinary condition, and she will not notice it by the slightest tremor.” Why I Believe in Mrs. E. G. White by Francis D. Nichol, page 87.

A book was written (edited) in 2004 by Robert Cohen, a non- Seventh-day Adventist, entitled God’s Nutritionist, Pearls of Wisdom from Ellen G. White, in which Robert Cohen reprinted several statements from *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, after having that book sent to him by a Seventh-day Adventist. He pointed out that that book was way ahead of its time. He spoke about “copying down one inspirational passage after another on my laptop”.

Dear Reader, the evidence is there. Search for it and learn it. Be ready to use it when you have the opportunity to share the counsels of the Spirit of Prophecy with others. Hand out her books, especially the conflict series. God has given this gift for the people of our day—Use it!



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Our Mission:

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

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About Hope International:

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

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

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Rejoice, and be Exceeding Glad!

By Patricia J. Smith

There are times in our journey of life on the earth when rejoicing and gladness come naturally—when they are wholesome emotions to have: at a birthday party, at a wedding, at a baptism, upon the safe arrival of a child into the world, at a graduation, and when one's heartfelt longing becomes reality, to name a few of the joyful occasions that a person may experience.

However, the words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ quoted in the title of this article do not refer to a time in human life when it is naturally easy to be joyful and happy. They were not said in the context of the second coming of Jesus, when He returns to



receive His own into glory, or even to the occasion when new believers join God's true, last-day remnant church; nor do they refer to the time when God answers a faithful and earnest prayer in a miraculous way.

God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts

In Isaiah 55:8, 9, we are told something of the way the Godhead thinks—for the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are all God, each by Himself, and share the same character, nature, and purposes. The text states, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Therefore, in regard to the occasion on which Christ said we should rejoice, we can expect it to be different from what we would



naturally be happy about, and we should seek to learn the higher, wiser lesson God seeks to teach us.

In reading the context of the admonition to rejoice that Christ gave His disciples, we readily understand that He spoke these words to encourage His followers when they would be called upon to endure persecution, for righteousness' sake. "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Matthew 5:10-12.

We are to look to our promised glorious future

Naturally, under persecution, when we forget God's over-riding plan for our lives as His dear children, and His powerful ability to turn evil into good, the human heart cries out, "Why me? Why am I suffering? I don't deserve this! O Lord, where are You when I need You?"

But when we look even deeper into the words of Christ, when we delve into the encouragement given and under which circumstances we should rejoice, we discover that our Saviour, God manifest in the flesh, desires us to look beyond the present suffering and persecution to the promised glorious future, and realize that in Him, there is always reason to rejoice in every circumstance and situation we may encounter in life.

Let us look at the conditions under which we should rejoice:

1. Matthew 5:10—persecuted for righteousness' sake. We must be persecuted for the right reason in order to be blessed, in order to rejoice. It is when we are hated and treated meanly and wrongly for righteousness' sake, because we did right in following Jesus,

that we are blessed, and ours is the kingdom of heaven.

2. Comparing what Peter—one of those who heard firsthand these words of Christ—wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit regarding persecution, we get an even clearer understanding of the blessing that is for the persecuted ones. "But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled." 1 Peter 3:14. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified...Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." 1 Peter 4:12-14, 16.

3. There are also some situations a Christian should not be found in, or suffer in consequence of—"But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters." 1 Peter 4:15.

We must allow God's holy Word to define righteousness

But, exactly, what is righteousness, for which we are blessed, if we suffer for its sake? We want the Bible definition, the holy thoughts of God, to tell us what is righteousness. "My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness." Psalm 119:172. The Ten Commandments are righteousness, declaring to us what is right and pleasing in the sight of God. When we obey God's Holy Law, in the power of Christ dwelling in us by the Holy Spirit, and are yet persecuted for being obedient to our Creator, then it is we are to rejoice,





for we are following closely the footsteps of our suffering Saviour.

We should not transgress and disobey any of the Ten Commandments in order to escape persecution, for their righteous character reflects the character of the Law Givers, the Creators of heaven and earth—the Godhead. “O Lord God of Israel, thou art righteous...” Ezra 9:15. “O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.” John 17:25. “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” 1 John 2:1. “For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.” Ephesians 5:9.

So we see clearly from Scripture that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit—the three members of the Godhead—are all righteous and involved in righteousness.

It is those who have been truly converted that can stand firmly and boldly on the platform of righteousness—the Ten Commandments—under cruel persecution. “The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.” Proverbs 28:1.

Let us see the truth of Proverbs 28:1 in action, in the experience of the disciples of Christ. Before Jesus died on Calvary, they were unconverted, still following their own minds, and therefore were wicked. It is very clear from the testimony of the Bible that there are only two masters that mankind can serve - God and Satan. If we do not serve God, then we are serving Satan. (See Romans 6:16, 17, 18-23, John 8:34, 44, 31, 12; 13:15, 1 John 3:7-10).

Before the crucifixion:

1. The disciples were selfish, all wanting to be the greatest and have the highest place next to Jesus. (Mathew 20:20-24; Mark 9:33, 34).

2. When Jesus told them he would be persecuted until death, and rise again the third day, they did not understand Him. Peter even rebuked Him, telling Him He would not suffer and die. (Mark 9:31, 32; Matthew 16:21-23).

3. Christ plainly told Peter he was not converted. (Luke 22:31, 32).

4. The unconverted disciples fled from Jesus, afraid when He was arrested. (Mark 14:50).

5. Peter fought physically against persecution, defending Jesus with a sword. (John 18:10, 11, 26). He also denied that he even knew Jesus, his Master, with cursing and swearing. (Mark 14:66-72). Notice that it was when he was yet unconverted that he resorted to defending himself with physical weapons. Fear and the desire for self-preservation took hold of his mind, in the place where true, abiding faith in God ought to have been.

6. All of the disciples were afraid at the arrest of Jesus and in the upper room before they knew He had risen. (John 20:19). They fled when no man pursued them, at this crucial time. Thus they demonstrated that they did not have the perfect love of God in them—“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.” 1 John 4:18.

Only after conversion were the disciples able to “rejoice and be exceeding glad”

There is a clear contrast, a decided change in the disciples’ attitudes, speech and behavior after they had received the early rain power of the Holy Spirit in the upper room on the day of Pentecost. It was only after they were truly converted, after they were no longer contending selfishly with one another for the highest place, that they learned to obey humbly Jesus’ instruction to “rejoice and be exceeding glad” when undergoing persecution for righteousness’ sake.

It was unmistakably demonstrated,

especially by Peter, that the eleven disciples, who were Christ's close companions for 3-31/2 years, were new people by the power of the indwelling Christ. Now instead of being wicked and fleeing when no one was even chasing them, they were bold as a lion and righteous, on the side of the persecuted, crucified, risen and ascended Saviour Jesus Christ. Notice Peter's bold words, on the day of Pentecost, in his sermon, placing the blame for Jesus' death squarely on those responsible. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know; Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2:22, 23.

Take up your cross...

Here Peter boldly declares what is already well-known—that the leaders of Israel, the chosen people of God, have hated and rebelled against the mercy and goodness of God shown in the life of Jesus of Nazareth—God in the flesh—and wickedly plotted His death and crucified Him! The church in partnership with the state (Rome) persecuted the righteous Redeemer of the world!

Before He was taken, persecuted and slain, Christ told His disciples that they too would suffer persecution, for He had chosen them out of the world. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also." John 15:18-20. Following in the footsteps of Jesus,

the eleven disciples, and also all true disciples today, suffered, and will suffer persecution or were accepted, experiencing at the hands of those they encounter the same attitudes their Master dealt with, for "the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" Matthew 10:24, 25. Clearly, if we claim to be followers of Christ (Christians) and yet are in harmony with the world and are suffering no persecution or trials for the sake of Christ, which is the sake of righteousness, our connection with Christ needs to be deeper, more genuine, one of total surrender to His divinely revealed will as found in the word of God. True Christianity involves a cross—not only that of Christ, but our own personal cross that we are to bear daily, as Jesus taught those who heard Him. "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Matthew 16:24.

Peter wavered between truth and error

Before conversion, the disciples, along with Judas Iscariot who was eventually shaken out and lost, were carnally minded, seeking personal greatness. They were daily being with Jesus, hearing His teachings, eating and traveling with Him, observing His ways, and yet they had not fully accepted Him into their minds; they had not yet 100% yielded themselves to be like Him, by the overcoming power daily demonstrated before their very eyes! Amazing!

This wavering, double-mindedness of the disciples was clearly shown in the responses Peter gave to Jesus when they had traveled to the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, and Jesus asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" Matthew 16:13.





Various answers were given—John the Baptist, Elias, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. Then He asked them more pointedly, “But whom say ye that I am?” (verse 15). Peter responded, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (verse 16). Jesus told him, “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” (verse 17).

Sometime shortly thereafter, however, when Jesus began to tell them how He would be persecuted and killed and be raised the third day, “Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.” Matthew 16:22. In this, Peter was allowing the devil to speak through him to discourage Jesus from going to the cross. Instead of wanting to get a clearer understanding of why Jesus was saying such dire and terrible things regarding His future, Peter rebuked the Lord, disputing with Him! Jesus’ answer to Peter shows what power was controlling the brash disciple—“But he turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.” (verse 23).

Peter wavered between truth and error. He was not fully on the Lord’s side. He was not converted, but still carnal. Self was still uppermost in his mind. He did not want Jesus to die, and so Satan could use him to voice that devilish sentiment to Jesus!

We ought to obey God rather than men

After conversion, Peter was a new man. He had learned the lesson that Paul in after years would write to the Corinth church—“I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.” 1 Corinthians 15:31. Earlier in this same book, Paul had declared his self-denial this way: “I therefore so run, not as uncertainly;

so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” 1 Corinthians 9:26, 27.

Peter’s focus after the upper room experience was Christ and Him crucified, as was that of the other believers who had been with him on the Day of Pentecost. This is why when they were commanded not to preach in the name of Jesus, they—Peter and the other apostles—answered and said, “We ought to obey God rather than men...And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.” Acts 5:29, 32. Even when the council of the Pharisees and the Sadducees “were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them,” after hearing their testimony, they did not budge or back down from the truth. There was no more fear in their hearts, no more selfish desire to escape persecution for righteousness’ sake. There was no more cursing and swearing by Peter in denial of his Lord, for he was no longer a carnally minded, selfish coward. Now all of them were filled by the power of the Holy Ghost, truly 100% converted, on the side of Jesus, standing for truth and righteousness, and bold as lions, as is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. They had all been transformed by the renewing of their minds and were ready to be living sacrifices for God, come what may.

The attitude of the disciples changed from fear and questioning to rejoicing!

After they had been beaten by the council, and commanded again not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let go, their attitude was not one of fear, not one of questioning “Why me, Lord?” nor even one of “Where are you, my God, when I need you?”, but one of REJOICING! “And they departed from the presence of the council,

rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.” Acts 5:41, 42.

Their full loyalty was to their Lord and Saviour who had died on Calvary to save them from eternal death, therefore, they obeyed God rather than men. Even church leaders, whom they had been taught to obey since childhood, were not to be obeyed when instructing them to go against God.

In this strict obedience to God even under threats and persecution they joined the ranks of the faithful in ages past—Noah, Abraham, Esther, Mordecai, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah, the prophets of God, etc. They looked beyond their present condition, to the eternal glories beyond, “the great reward in heaven.”

Paul inspired by the Holy Ghost, wrote it so well—“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:17, 18.

The strength of Christ enabled the disciples to boldly stand for truth

The disciples’ attitude and that of Paul reflected the mind of Christ, “who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:2. The light of Christ was shining



brightly through the persecuted disciples as they stood firm for truth. It was the strength of Christ that upheld them, and enabled them to be so bold, for “now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled: and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” Acts 4:13.

“With the consecrated worker for God, in whatever place he may be, the Holy Spirit abides. The words spoken to the disciples are spoken also to us. The Comforter is ours as well as theirs. The Spirit furnishes the strength that sustains striving, wrestling souls in every emergency, amidst the hatred of the world, and the realization of their own failures and mistakes. In sorrow and affliction, when the outlook seems dark and the future perplexing, and we feel helpless and alone—these are the times when, in answer to the prayer of faith, the Holy Spirit brings comfort to the heart.” AA 51.



Patricia is a second-generation SDA writer who loves to study and share the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. She enjoys biking, rock collecting, and spending time with family. She resides in Louisiana with her husband and two children.



“Turn your eyes upon Jesus; look full in His wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim; in the light of His glory and grace.”

Refrain of Hymn #290 in the Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal – “Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus”, by Helen H. Lemmel.

The Parable of the Sower

By Mrs. E. G. White



By parables Christ revealed the mysteries of redemption. His hearers were familiar with the things of nature, and these he used to represent the spiritual truths he wished to communicate. All had an opportunity to hear his appeals as they were made in sympathy for men. In the synagogue, by the wayside, and in the boat thrust out a little from the land, he spoke to the people, feeding their famished souls with the bread of life. Christ presented his truths in parables, in the form of a story. The Pharisees would not listen to direct truth; but parable teaching was popular, and commanded the respect and attention not only of the Jews, but also of the people of other nations.



Christ's lessons were to be repeated by His disciples

Christ knew there were many who would keep these lessons in mind until their hidden meaning should be discerned, but that others would never reach to their deep meaning. The disciples would come to the Great Teacher to inquire, and he instructed them. Christ gladly taught all who had interest enough to say, Explain to us the meaning of your words.

These lessons of Christ were to be repeated by his disciples. When Peter, Andrew, James, and John were called by Christ to forsake their nets and follow him, the promise was given them, "I will make you fishers of men." Those uneducated peasants of Galilee were to fulfil the divine commission. Through them Christ's lessons were to be carried to all peoples, nations, and tongues.

Every fellow believer is to be considered brother, sister or mother

In his zeal Christ was indifferent to his need of food and repose, and on one occasion his mother and brothers sought to draw him from his work. They thought if they could speak with him, they could draw him away from the multitude. But they could not reach him for the press, and they sent word to him that they were without, desiring to see him. But Christ was absorbed in the solemn and awful warnings he was giving to the people. He desired that his words should find a lodgment in some hearts. He could not be interrupted; his relatives could not draw him away. Under such circumstances, his duty to them was secondary. He did not rebuke them, but he seized upon this incident to convey a lesson that would be of great benefit to his mother, his disciples, and the concourse of people before him.

In answer to the message, he said, "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?" Christ never manifested any lack of respect for his mother or his brothers; but this was a point where he could fix the attention of the people, and answer the question, which was agitating many minds, as to what they should do if they received Christ. He knew that some present would accept his words, and that this course would bring to them determined opposition from fathers and mothers and relatives. He read the hearts before him; and stretching forth his hands to his disciples, he earnestly said, "Behold my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

This is the assurance given to all who follow the teachings of Christ that they shall become members of the heavenly family. Says Christ, Obedience to my Father in heaven is filial obedience. This is the bond of union between me and all who shall become members of the heavenly family. All who accept the word of truth will enter the hallowed circle that binds to me every believer as brother or sister or mother.



Christ spoke to the crowd in parables

On the shore a company has gathered to see and hear Jesus,--an eager, expectant throng. The sick are there, lying on their rugs, waiting to present their cases before him. It is Christ's God-given right to heal the woes of a sinful race, and he now rebukes disease, and diffuses around him life and peace and health.

But the crowd continues to increase. They press close about Christ until there is no room to receive them. Then, speaking a word to the men in their fishing-boats, he steps into the boat that is waiting to take him across the lake, and bidding them push off a little from the land, he speaks to the people as they stand upon the shore.

"And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up: some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprang up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up, and choked them: but others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixty-fold, some thirtyfold. . .

"And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive."





They loved the associations of the world more than they loved God

Did Christ blind the eyes so that the people could not discern? He gave them great light, and from time to time added to the light by the exposition of prophecy. What, then, eclipsed the light?--The answer is given: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and

their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."

In heaven it was said, by the ministering angels, The ministry we were commissioned to perform, we have done. We pressed back the army of evil angels. We sent brightness and light into the souls of men, quickening their memory of the love of God expressed in Jesus. He attracted their eyes to the cross of Calvary. Their souls were deeply moved by the sense of the sin that crucified the Son of God. They were convicted. They saw the steps to be taken in conversion; they felt the power of the gospel; their hearts were made tender as they saw the sweetness of the love of God. In all this they heard the Father's call, but it was in vain. Their hearts were given to covetousness; they loved the associations of the world more than they loved their God.

Christ, the sower, came to sow the world with the truth

Christ tells the disciples the meaning of the parable. It is the kingdom of God that is represented. His word is the seed. "Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower," says he. "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the wayside. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful."

Christ is the sower of the seed. He came to sow the world with truth. Not one tiny seed of error does he cast into the ground. He sees that the precious seeds of truth do not have a fair opportunity when seeds of a perverted character have taken deep root. The plowshare of truth is needed, not merely to cut off the tops of the thorns, but to take them out by the roots. Therefore he makes the doctrines of his kingdom so plain that the truth appears in contrast with error; for truth, if planted and cherished in the heart, will uproot error. And all who have the privilege of hearing the Word, and who receive it not, must render an account for their rejection of the instruction and warnings given. They are represented as those who, "seeing see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand."



All who come to Christ for clearer knowledge of truth will receive it

Some who heard the parables of Christ came to him privately, and asked for an explanation. This was the desire that Christ wished to arouse, that he might give them more definite instruction. Those who study his word, with hearts open to receive the impressions made by the Holy Spirit, will not complain that they can not see clearly the meaning of his word. All who come to Christ and inquire for a clearer knowledge of truth, will receive it. He will unfold to them the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; and these mysteries will be understood by the heart that longs to know the truth. A heavenly light will shine into the soul temple, and will be revealed to others as the bright shining of a candle on a dark path.

RH, September 26, 1899



Ellen G. White, 1827–1915, received the spiritual gift of prophecy, and the fruits of her life and work accord with the biblical tests of a true messenger of God. To this day, her counsels are an incalculable blessing to God's people around the world.



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Leaders Who Lead Astray

By Joe Olson

Within this message, I would like to address a fairly sensitive topic. At Hope International, we have worship each morning and we always bring up the prayer requests of those who have called or written in. We lift these prayers to God and ask His blessing upon each one as He sees fit, and one of the fairly-often prayer requests is for the pastor, or for a situation that involves the pastor.

We have dealt with many instances where people have quit going to church, or are seeking fellowship elsewhere because of what the pastor is preaching. And of all people that need to hear the truth, the youth need it the most. They will be the ones who will take up the banner after those with gray hair have gone to the grave. And what will they preach and teach about the kingdom of God? What will they preach and teach about our distinctive doctrines? Will they uphold the truths of Adventism? Will they continue to lift up the Biblical injunctions to keep God's holy law and especially the Sabbath? What will we pass on to them?

I know it is no news to a lot of you that there are many winds of doctrine that are blowing through the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We see the habitual onslaughts of the devil in trying to break our hold on Bible truth. There are so many attacks, on so many fronts, that now, more than ever, we need to stay dependent upon a "Thus saith the Lord". You can read today about entire church conferences that are threatening to break away from the established Church to do their own will, and they are not breaking away to live more holy, pure and righteous lives. They are disconnecting because they do not want to live under the distinctive truths that made us the light of the world.

We need to know the Bible for ourselves

Women's ordination, spiritual formation and centering prayers, trying to get together with those not

of our faith, or ecumenism, mergers with Catholic institutions to stay in business, homosexuality, creationism being debunked, teachers in our schools who actually teach evolution... the list goes on and on. How are we to meet all of these errors? As we always have... by a "Thus saith the Lord".

My message title... "Leaders Who Lead Astray" is not a condemnation of church leadership. It is a warning to each church member that what we believe and do had better be based on what God says and not what a leader says. In this day more than any other, as we prepare for our Lord's soon return, we need to know the Bible for ourselves! We have to read the Spirit of Prophecy to be aware of what is coming. It has to be Jesus who leads and not the leaders! History proves that leaders will often lead us astray.

The re-writing of history is changing the church

You have probably heard of "historical revisionism". It means exactly what it sounds like... a revision or a revising of history. And if you do not read yourself, you can be taken up in this revisionism. Let me give you an example of what I am talking about... One of Adventism's founding truths was that the Law of God must be obeyed. And we, through study and prayer, determined that the Sabbath had been lost sight of; we realized we must keep the seventh day holy.

As a result of our study, we began to understand who the "Man of Sin" was, and who have been instrumental in changing, or thinking to change, God's holy day of worship, and we proclaimed that truth from the rooftops. We felt everyone needed to know the truth. We believed that the truth would set you free. But today, where are the voices that are giving that message the "certain sound"? Well, we have gone through many "revisions". You see, we were once a small group of people that was outside of mainstream Christianity. We were just a little (supposedly fanatical)

group of believers that thought Jesus was coming soon and we had to get ready to meet Him in the clouds. But, when Jesus did not return, we had to go back to our Bibles to see what happened, and we discovered that the Bible referred to what we called, a "Great Disappointment." So then we, with renewed zeal, went forth to proclaim the fact that Jesus had entered into the Most Holy Place and was going over the names of each soul to determine whether he or she would be covered by the blood of Jesus or not. Were their names in the Book of Life and would they be retained there? "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." Rev. 3:5.

We must study to be sure we are hearing truth

We used to believe that we needed to overcome. We used to believe that

we needed to quit sinning. We used to believe in the power of Jesus to save. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. 7:25. And speaking of intercession, we used to believe that Jesus was in the heavenly sanctuary, working in our behalf to cleanse us from sin. Where are those messages today? What about the Three Angels' Messages? Do we still believe in these glorious Bible truths?

You see, in many cases, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has gone "mainstream". We are no longer that little band of believers who stood for the truth though the heavens might fall. And yes, the leaders of the church have a lot to do with that... but we must take our own responsibility for this. We cannot look to the leaders to lead us... Jesus must lead us. And Jesus cannot lead us unless we become people of the Book once again.

People can only change the history books if the rest of the people do not know what the original history was. We can be told that Jesus takes everybody to heaven if we do not know that in Revelation 21:8 it says, "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth





with fire and brimstone...” We can be told that your sexual preference does not matter to Jesus if we do not know that in Leviticus 20:13 it says, “If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death...” We have to know what the Bible teaches... not what our leaders teach us. I’m not at all saying that we cannot, or should not, listen to our pastors and leaders. What I *am* saying is that we need to make sure what they are teaching us is pure, Biblical truth.



We must stop blindly following the leaders

God’s people have always dealt with this same thing... “For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.” Isa. 9:16. Not every leader or teacher leads astray, but it certainly appears like it has been the majority of them. In Noah’s day, how many leaders stood for the truth? In Abraham’s day... how many leaders? In Moses’ day? How about in Jesus’ day? “Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.” Matt. 15:14. Do you know who Jesus was talking about here? This was in reference to the scribes and Pharisees. “Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?” Matt. 15:1-3.

The devil is happy when we transgress God’s commandments. He doesn’t care if the transgression is because we have substituted our own rules, or if we just ignore the rules... as long as we transgress. You see, in Jesus’ day, the leaders were all about rules... just not God’s rules. “Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem. And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brassen vessels, and of tables. Then the

Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.” Mark 7:1-9.

Will Jesus find any faith when He returns?

Jesus spent all of His adult life trying to get the people to listen to Him instead of the leaders. And it was a continual, arduous, uphill climb. The people were so used to doing whatever the leaders said, that they barely knew how to act without them. They were so afraid of being kicked out of the church, that they would do whatever the leaders said. They wouldn’t even stand up for their own children who followed what Jesus said... “These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.” John 9:2. The Son of God is *physically with them* and healing them, yet the people are more concerned about keeping their church membership than confessing their allegiance to the Saviour. And you know what is even more incredible? There were many of the leadership that believed on Jesus, but they dared not confess Him lest they, too, get disfellowshipped. “Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:” John 12:42. These are some of the chief rulers...

not just “some”, but MANY of them!

At one point, Jesus asked out loud if He would find faith when He returned. Apparently He had a real concern whether there would be anyone who would confess Him and do His will in the last days. Why would that be? Why would it appear that there might be no faith... in *anyone* when He comes back? Because of what He was seeing right then. If He was physically standing in their midst... if the Son of God was *right in front of them*, and the people were more worried about what the church leaders would do to them, what were the odds that church members in our day would fare better, especially *without* Jesus physically standing here?

Jesus Christ must be our leader

Do you see what I am saying? Church membership is supposed to be this warm, loving, holy connection that causes you to grow in Christ and become more like Him. This is where we are supposed to learn and study and grasp the eternal realities. Here is where we are to be encouraged to go out to all we know and tell them the truth about God’s law and His power to keep us from sinning. It is not supposed to be a place where rules, other than God’s, have been installed. We should not have to ask if we can hand out a Great Controversy. We should not be told we can’t support who we want. This is no place to command whether or not you can call someone to do an evangelistic series. Where do the leaders get the idea they can use such authority on us? From us! It is because *we* allow it. We have chosen whom we will obey... just like the Jews of old. We have put our trust in the institution rather than the God of the institution. Our pride and hope and joy is in our Church rather than our God. Why else would we allow the leaders to tell us



what to do? Who is supposed to be our Leader? Whom do we profess to follow? Then why, when we see all of the wickedness and false doctrine, do we continue to support these leaders? Why do we sit in church, week after week and let them control our worship service? Why do we not stand up and say, “This shall not be done!” Why do we not walk away in disgust and determine not to be a part of any more abominations? Because “they” might disfellowship us.

Where is our faith? Where is our trust in the God who died for us? Why do we fear man more than God? What did Jesus say about that? “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” Matt. 10:28. Jesus said we need to get our priorities straight. This whole

chapter of Matthew 10 is talking about going out and preaching and teaching people about the truth of God. And Jesus made the specific point that it would be an adversarial life. Everyone will fight against you, He said—even your own family! Even... your own church. “But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;” Matt. 10:17.

The devil has never changed his tactics

As Solomon said, there is nothing new under the sun. “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be;





successful for the last 6,000 years. I mean, when the Creator of this universe asks if He will find faith when He returns, that says to me that the devil has been very, very effective. Six thousand years ago, the devil tempted Eve to think that God was not that serious about sin and disobedience. You know, the old... "Thou shalt not surely die..." Adam and Eve found out that was a lie. Four thousand years ago, the devil tempted everyone to think that God would never destroy the world by a flood, and that there would be no punishment for the wicked. You know, the old... "There's never been rain... what is rain?" The antediluvians found out that was a lie. Two thousand years ago, the devil changed his tack and tempted the people to think that the only way to heaven was to go through multitudinous rules and regulations that God never set up, and strictly obey each one. "For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers." Matt. 23:4.

and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun." Ecc. 1:9. What has been... will be again. The devil really has never changed his tactics. He has always done the same thing. Oh, he will tack to the left or the right, but he always uses the same tricks. And why not, he has been extremely

They strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel. They found out that was a lie, too. The only way to heaven was and is through the blood of Jesus. And two thousand years

later..., what is the devil's tack? How does he tempt man now? "God's not going to kill us." "He's not that serious about what He says." "You have to keep our rules... not God's rules." He's throwing all of the lies at us now that he has used over the last 6,000 years. He knows, even if we do not, that this is just about it for this world. He knows probation is just about up. And he is aiming every, single weapon in his arsenal at us to see what might work for each soul on this earth. For those who like to sin, he tempts them to think that there will be no punishment. For those who think there might be some kind of accountability for what they have done, he tempts them to think that God is not THAT picky or THAT serious.

And then there are the rule-keepers...

For those who believe we do have to follow the "rules", the devil gives them all sorts of rules, just like with the scribe and Pharisees... just not God's rules. Surely you have seen them today... Just like the "rule-keepers" of old... They don't crack a smile because Ellen White says we should not joke. They ask really loudly if there is cheese or milk in the casserole at church dinner because Ellen White says we should not eat dairy products. They are tithe-payers... on everything. And they are the unhappiest people on the



planet. They are just like the scribes and Pharisees that Jesus talked about... “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” Matt. 23:23.

Do not allow anyone to keep you from serving God as you know you should

The religion of Jesus Christ should make you the happiest person anywhere. Come on, if Jesus is in our hearts, we are bound for heaven! How can we not have more joy than anyone else anywhere? Of course it should weigh heavily on us if our family and friends and loved ones refuse to choose the Saviour we love, but that should in no way take our joy for ourselves away. We are children of the heavenly King! Hallelujah! And we cannot allow any person... especially the leaders in the church, to keep us from serving our God as we know we should. Jesus called them blind leaders! Let's read this verse again...“Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.” Matt. 15:14. Unfortunately, Jesus did not have too much good to say about the church leadership. And they rejected Him. What are the odds things have improved over the years? As we get closer to the end of time, when Jesus asked if He would find any faith when He returned... what are the odds that church leadership has gotten more holy? And please, please understand that I am not condemning all church leaders. There were leaders in Jesus' day that followed Him. There are leaders who follow Him today. But we have to look at holy, inspired history and remember that what has been, will be again. We have to look at what Jesus said about there being faith when He returns. We have to look at how much Jesus had to say about the leaders in His day. And then we have



to ask ourselves if leaders over the years have improved.

We have to take responsibility for ourselves! You cannot trust in man! ANY man! Any pastor! Any leader! Do not assume that I am suggesting that you trust me. Absolutely not! Trust in Jesus! Trust in His word! Know for yourselves what is truth and follow it, no matter what any leader, including me, says. Remember the thief on the cross—the one who defended Jesus and asked the Lord to save him? It was a wonderful and glorious moment for Jesus amidst a sea of disappointments. The church leadership had seen to it that Jesus was crucified. His own disciples had fled away. Even some of the very people He had fed and healed were in the crowds saying, “Crucify Him!”

Do you know the background of the thief on the cross?

And here is this poor thief. What a heartwarming moment. But what many people do not know is why this thief was not already a disciple of Jesus. He was not a hardened criminal. In fact, he was a pretty good guy. He was convicted by the teachings of Jesus earlier. He knew his life was not where it should be. And as he listened to the words of Jesus, he felt the drawings of divine love. He was pulled towards the glorious truths of the Son of God. Then why was he here on a cross next

to Jesus, as a condemned man? Why did he first begin to rail upon Jesus like the other thief did? What happened in his life that he did not commit himself to Jesus earlier when he had the opportunity? Church leadership. Pastors! “To Jesus in His agony on the cross there came one gleam of comfort. It was the prayer of the penitent thief. Both the men who were crucified with Jesus had at first railed upon Him; and one under his suffering only became more desperate and defiant. But not so with his companion. This man was not a hardened criminal; he had been led astray by evil associations, but he was less guilty than many of those who stood beside the cross reviling





the Saviour. He had seen and heard Jesus, and had been convicted by His teaching, but he had been turned away from Him by the priests and rulers.” DA 750.

Who are we told turned the thief away from Jesus? The priests... meaning the pastors... and the rulers. This is from Acts of the Apostles, page 43: “Peter urged home upon the convicted people the fact that they had rejected Christ because they had been deceived by priests and rulers...”

How many reject the truth of

Christ... the truths of the Bible, because of the priests and rulers? Are *we* immune to their deceptions? And remember, they thought they were right. All the while they were rejecting Jesus Christ and teaching others to reject Him... they thought they were the ones in the right! Jesus called them blind leaders of the blind. Could it happen again? Will it happen again? We are not left without warning. “In the future, men claiming to be Christ’s representatives will take a course similar to that followed by the priests and rulers in their treatment of Christ and the apostles. In the great crisis through which they are soon to pass, the faithful servants of God will encounter the same hardness of heart, the same cruel determination, the same unyielding hatred.” AA 430.

Take a stand for the truth and see what happens

When will this take place? In the future... in the “great crisis” to come. What will God’s faithful servants have to face? Hardness of heart. Cruel determinations against us. Unyielding hatred! Do you think to yourself, “I do not experience this... I don’t recognize this hatred.” Stand up. Stand up for the truth and see what happens then. Don’t be one of the dumb

dogs that will not bark. Tell them how much you enjoy the messages of Hope International. Tell them that we need to hear messages about the errors of Catholicism. Tell them that women’s ordination is wrong and that you expect them to stand for the truth. Tell them that this ecumenism and trying to get along with the other pastors in town will lead them to give up the Sabbath truth.

Or try this... tell them that you have decided to send your tithes and offerings where you think it will do more good, where you are actually being fed the truths of the Bible. See what happens when you say these things. The goal, of course, is to get them to see the light and for them to be saved.

We need to pray for all of our church leaders and pastors. The devil wants them destroyed even more than he wants us dead. They need our love and compassion and prayer. But what they do NOT need is our unquestioning obedience. What they DO need is to see us standing for the truth. May the Lord give us the wisdom and love and compassion we need for our leaders and the strength to stand, even if everyone else bows down.

Just one more quote that says it so much better than I can... “The stronger and purer the faith of God’s people, and the firmer their determination to obey Him, the more fiercely will Satan strive to stir up against them the rage of those who, while claiming to be righteous, trample upon the law of God. It will require the firmest trust, the most heroic purpose, to hold fast the faith once delivered to the saints.” AA431.



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

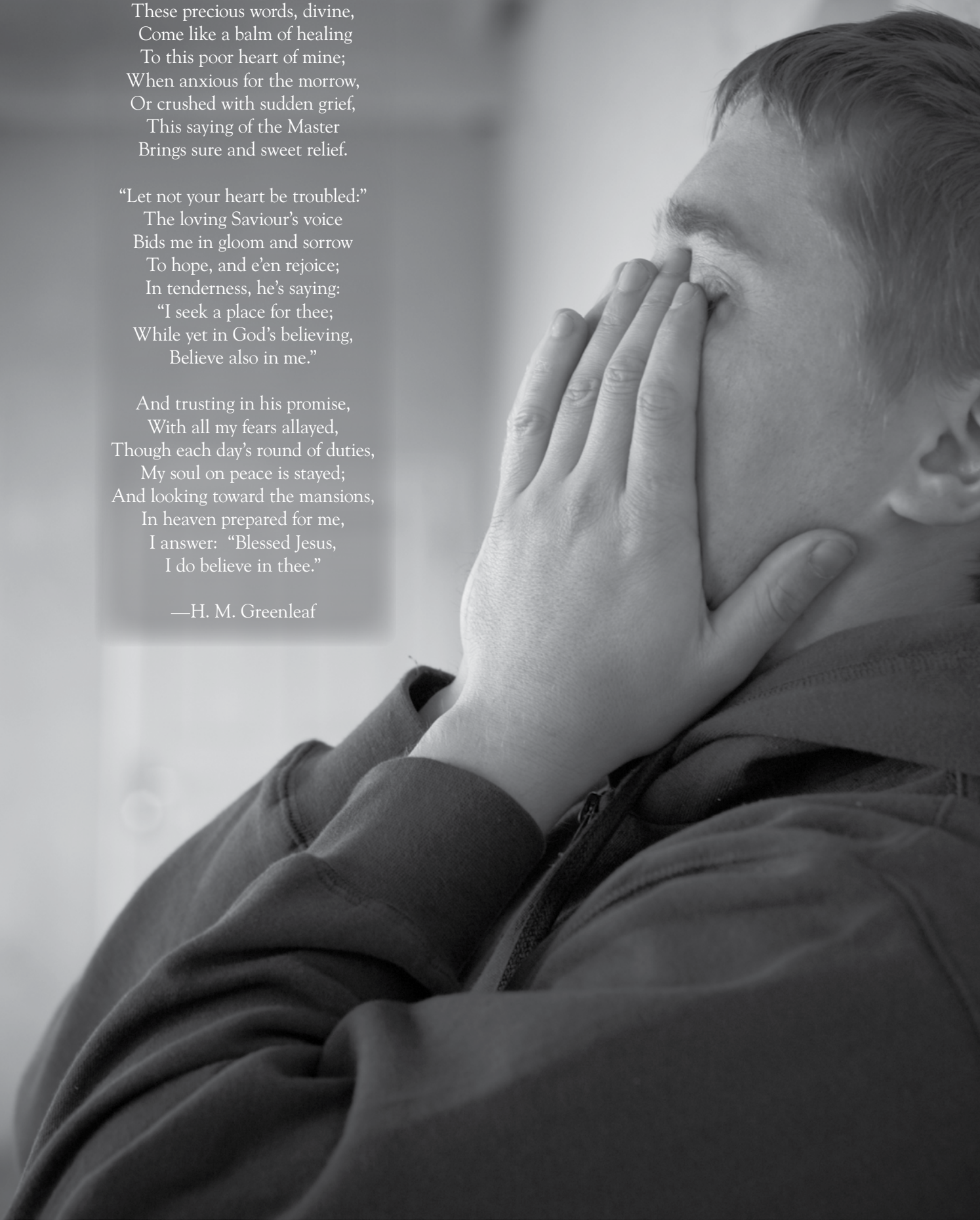
Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled

“Let not your heart be troubled:”
These precious words, divine,
Come like a balm of healing
To this poor heart of mine;
When anxious for the morrow,
Or crushed with sudden grief,
This saying of the Master
Brings sure and sweet relief.

“Let not your heart be troubled:”
The loving Saviour’s voice
Bids me in gloom and sorrow
To hope, and e’en rejoice;
In tenderness, he’s saying:
“I seek a place for thee;
While yet in God’s believing,
Believe also in me.”

And trusting in his promise,
With all my fears allayed,
Though each day’s round of duties,
My soul on peace is stayed;
And looking toward the mansions,
In heaven prepared for me,
I answer: “Blessed Jesus,
I do believe in thee.”

—H. M. Greenleaf



Parable of the Fig Tree

By James Edson White



*“Now learn a parable of the fig-tree:
When his branch is yet tender, and putteth
forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:
so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these
things, know that it is near, even at the doors.”*

Matt. 24:32, 33.

In Matthew 24:3, the disciples ask the question, “What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?” Most carefully does the Lord answer this question. He first reviews the great events which were to take place on the earth. Jerusalem was to be destroyed; the elect, or true people of God, were to pass through the most terrible period of persecution which has ever come upon God’s

people. The nations of the earth were to be rent with wars, and perplexed and distressed with the rumors and alarms of war. Great calamities were to come upon the earth, such as famines, pestilences, and earthquakes. These were to become more frequent and desolating until the final plagues of God should end in its destruction.



The sun would be darkened, and the moon would refuse to give her light

As the days of this world's history should draw to a close, our Saviour promised that unmistakable and striking signs would appear in the heavens. The sun would be darkened; the moon would refuse to give her light; and the stars would fall from heaven.

These were to be tokens of Christ's coming; for He says: "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and glory." Matthew 24:30.

In preceding articles in this magazine an account has been given of the accurate fulfillment of some of these signs as predicted by the Lord. And yet the world seems to be asleep as to their thrilling import. The darkening of the sun and the falling of the stars have already occurred as have other signs. These signs proclaim to the world that its end is near, and that the second coming to the earth of the Creator and Redeemer is very near.

Take heed that no man deceive you

But it is Satan's chief purpose to lull the world to sleep, so that these signs and the warning message of God's servants will have no more effect on the people of the present day, than did the preaching of Noah on the people who lived in the days that were before the flood.

The Saviour knew that this would be the case, and so He sounds the warning: "Take heed that no man deceive you." There are two ways in which we may be deceived in regard to the coming of the Lord. One is to believe that He has come when He has not, and the other is to deny the signs that He has given to show that His coming is near, and so be found unbelieving and unprepared at His coming.

The signs foretold by our Saviour were given that men

might know of His coming. This may be seen by the following parable: "Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that He is near, "even at the door."

These signs could only be fulfilled in the time of the end

"These things" to which Christ refers as signs of His near coming, are given in Luke 21:25, 26: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth."

These signs could not be given in the times of Christ or



His apostles. They could be fulfilled only in the “time of the end”, spoken of in Daniel 12.

We are living in an age when all these things have been fulfilled, or are transpiring all around us. Let history respond to the great prophecy of our Saviour, as found in the 24th chapter of the gospel as recorded by Matthew.

When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors

Jerusalem was destroyed within forty years of the giving of this prophecy. (See Luke 21:20, 21). The great tribulation of Matthew 24:21, 22, is in the past. The sun was darkened May 19, 1780. The falling of the stars occurred Nov. 13, 1833. Wars and rumors of

wars are becoming more and more frequent and startling. Distress and perplexity are spread upon all nations, and the enormous standing armies are taxing the resources of the world. The awful tidal waves, and the more frequently recurring cyclones and earthquakes, show that God’s restraining hand is being removed, and the prince of the power of the air is permitted to work out his evil purposes in the destructive elements of wind and water. Famine and pestilence are abroad in the land.

Says Christ: “Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these be fulfilled.” Matthew 24:32-34.



Hope for Health



Sugar consumption may be the main reason that your pancreas is overworked, worn out and not functioning well. If you are struggling with an out of control appetite and feeling sluggish, you may want to reach past the sugar and try cinnamon instead. This super spice not only packs a flavorful punch, but it will help your overall health, and aid in weight-loss. Today cinnamon is used mainly for cooking purposes, but was once so highly prized that wars were fought over it, and it was even used as currency!

CINNAMON

Scientific Studies:

- In a study published by researchers at the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Maryland, cinnamon was seen to reduce the proliferation of abnormal cell development in the body. In 2013 research was presented at a meeting of the International Federation of Fertility Societies/American Society for Reproductive Medicine that indicated the women who added cinnamon to their diet had more regular menstrual cycles than women who were given a placebo. Increases in fertility were also noted for the women taking the cinnamon and wanting to become pregnant.
- Researchers at Kansas State University found in other studies that cinnamon fights the E.coli bacteria in unpasteurized juices.
- Studies also suggest that cinnamon is an insulin "mimicker" that may help maintain normal blood sugar levels.
- In some trials, cinnamon has shown an amazing ability to stop medication-resistant fungal and yeast infections.
- Penn State researchers revealed that diets supplemented with cinnamon may help reduce the body's negative responses to eating high-fat meals.
- Published in April 2012 in the International Journal of Preventative Medicine, researchers found that cinnamon improved blood sugar and insulin levels. The group given the cinnamon also had significant improvements in blood sugar, triglycerides, weight and body mass! The group taking the placebo had relatively no recordable levels of change.

Check out this little spice and it's powerful health benefits:

- Cinnamon can have an anti-clotting effect on the blood.
- Just ½ teaspoon of cinnamon per day may help maintain healthy levels of LDL cholesterol (the bad cholesterol).
- Cinnamon has been proven effective against menstrual pain and infertility, and one of its natural chemicals, cinnamaldehyde, was shown to increase the hormone progesterone as well as decrease testosterone production in women, helping to balance hormones.
- It is a great source of manganese, fiber, iron, and calcium. The combination of calcium and fiber in cinnamon is important and can be helpful for the prevention

of several different conditions. Both calcium and fiber can bind to bile salts and help remove them from the body. By removing bile, fiber helps to prevent the damage that certain bile salts can cause to colon cells, thereby reducing the risk of future colon problems. In addition, when bile is removed by fiber, the body must break down cholesterol in order to make new bile. This process may help to balance cholesterol levels, which can be helpful in avoiding heart health issues. For sufferers of bowel issues, the fiber in cinnamon may also provide relief from constipation and diarrhea.

- When cinnamon is consumed it raises our body temperature, produces heat and speeds up our metabolism. When our metabolism increases, it enables us to burn more calories, thereby causing a reduction in our weight.
- Cinnamon has anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, antifungal and antioxidant properties. According to NaturalStandard.com, many herbalists recommend cinnamon for digestive symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and indigestion.

Interesting Fact:

When added to food, cinnamon inhibits bacterial growth and food spoilage, making it a natural food preservative.

Customer Testimonial:

I have been using your product for some time now and recently went to the doctor for a check up - he is scratching his head because everything from blood sugar levels, cholesterol levels and triglycerides have changed dramatically. One side affect though- I lost 25 lbs!!! Nice to know Hope for Health is there for me every day! - M.W.

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Health Gem

SOME HINTS ON WALKING

The Present Truth

By E. J. Waggoner

It should be remembered that walking is recommended as altogether the best thing for cold feet; but it needs to be stated that it makes a vast difference how one walks. When walking, whether in the discharge of one's duties, or purely as an exercise, one should get the most possible good from it. Even though we may take a walk for the purpose of warming our feet, the good effects should not be confined to our feet. Indeed, the feet will profit by the exercise in proportion as the entire system is benefited.

Warming the feet

Another excellent method for warming the feet is the following, which more nearly approaches walking, and helps to make walking easier, yet which can be employed by feeble people who are not able to take active exercise. Stand erect, in proper standing position, with the weight upon the balls of the feet,

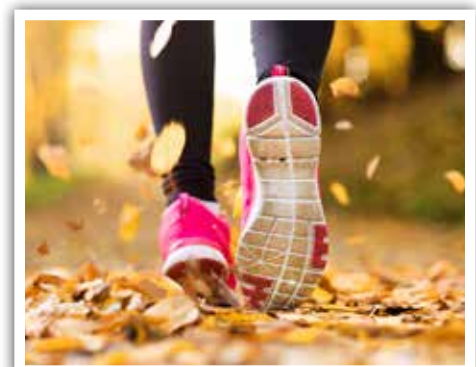
and rise up on the toes as high as possible; then come down, almost to the former position, but taking care that the heels do not quite touch the floor. Thus the muscles of the calves and the feet are kept in tension. Then rise as before, and come down again, keeping the heels still clear of the floor, and continue alternately rising on the toes and settling down, for several minutes. On the first trial you will find that the muscles of legs soon get very tired; but each exercise will increase their power, until your regular number of alternatives will be at least two hundred. You can continue the exercise as long as you please, without fear, and you will at the close, if not before, experience a sensation of intense heat in the legs and feet, which will not immediately pass away. If you take this exercise regularly every day, as whenever your feet feel cold, you will soon find that your feet will be habitually warm; and you will also



find, your other habits being good, that walking is a pleasure.

The foot needs room to move and breathe

It will be taken for granted that the feet are clothed in the most comfortable manner possible. When we say this, it must be understood as meaning the most comfortable manner consistent with the barbarous fashion that civilisation imposes on us. Until we get courage to defy custom sufficiently to wear sandals, and so adjusted as to leave the foot room to move and breathe, they will necessarily suffer to some extent. But let us have them as comfortable as the shoemaker can make them.





A rapid pace is far less tiresome than a slow one

One of the first requisites to deriving benefit from walking is that it be done briskly and not in a listless, loafing manner. A rapid walk of half a mile gives one more exercise than twice as far at a slow pace. Then, too, one should walk in such a way as not to become exhausted. To come in from a walk fagged out, is to lose all the benefit of it. It is a fact that when one has really learned how to walk, a rapid pace is far less tiresome than a slow one. This is on the principle that it is more tiresome to stand still than to move about. When one's legs begin to feel tired from a long walk, relief will often be experienced by breaking into a run.

In walking, the body should be erect, head up, chest thrown forward, and hips back. This is the only way to secure an erect position. Pay attention to the shoulders. The directions so often given to children, "Throw your shoulders back", is calculated to produce deformity, rather than otherwise. The shoulders must necessarily fall into line if the chest and hips take the right position. One will then be able to balance easily on the balls of the feet.

Make proper use of the legs

Then it should be understood that the feet and legs are for walking with,

and that the rest of the body is to be carried. If the muscles of the legs are regularly exercised in the proper manner, it will not be difficult to walk with the legs alone, instead of with the entire body, as so many do. It is to the ignorance of how to make proper use of legs, that so much of the fatigue of climbing stairs is due. Either walking or stair-climbing, if properly done, will never have the tendency to injure the internal organs of any woman, or to cause the back to ache.

Walk lightly

The feet and legs are composed of a series of levers and springs, all calculated for one purpose. The soul of the foot is arched, so that one may spring, and thus walk lightly; for it should be understood that the more lightly one walks the more is one benefited. Many people come down on their feet with all their weight, as



though their legs were jointless, wooden pegs, and their feet clubs. Their tread across the floor is elephantine. This is most ungraceful, and at the same time injurious to the body, if one does much of it; for all the organs are jolted and shaken up.

The motion of walking should be one of gliding

If in walking one steps as nearly as possible on the ball of the foot, leaving it on the ground just long enough to get purchase for a quick spring ahead, the motion will be a gliding one, instead of a series of forward falls from which one is saved by throwing out the leg. By this means one can run across the floor or upstairs with far less disturbance to the inmates than by walking slowly by the falling, stiff-legged method. And the benefit derived from the exercise is incalculably greater. One gets exercise of the muscles, and accelerated circulation of the blood, without fatigue. In climbing stairs, instead of coming down heavily on the steps, one should set the foot down lightly, and let the muscles of legs lift the body up with a spring.

At another time we shall have something more to say about exercises for strength and warmth, that can be taken at any time, and and by the feeblest persons. EDITOR.

EJW, Present Truth (UK) 222
April 3, 1902



Gratitude

Dear Lord, we thank thee for the joy of living day by day,
That we may see thy glorious works which lie along our way—
The flowers blooming sweet and fair, the fields and meadows green
The fruitful hills, the mountains clothed in distant silvery sheen.
We wake each morn refreshed and glad that we are safe and well!
What wonder that our hearts with love and grateful praises swell?
We thank thee for the air we breathe, the things we see, the sounds
Of nature's sweetest harmonies, the beauty which surrounds
Our earthly scenes; the sunshine bright, the blue of thy fair skies;
And for the glad, contented thoughts which in our hearts arise.
We joy in living! may it be that while we live, we live to thee!

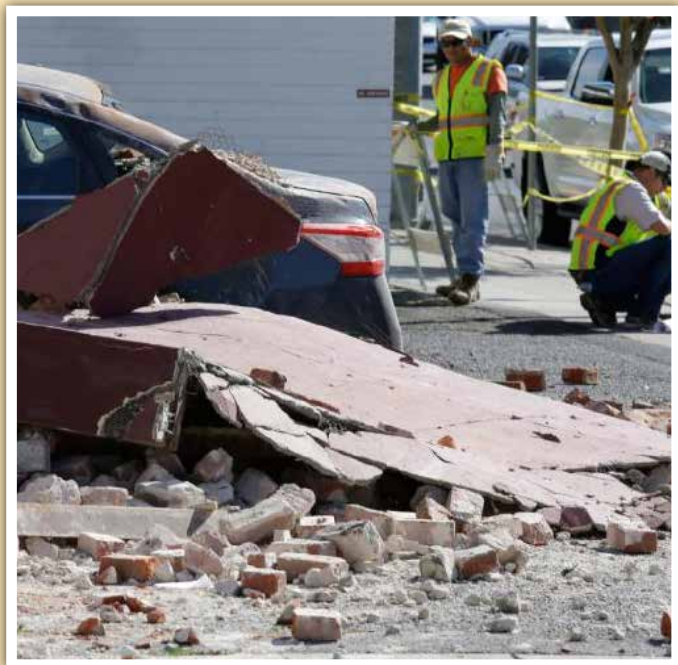
—Mary D. Brine

News Watch

Shares Worthless
Stocks tumble assets
anxiety deepens
Interest rates
Crash!
liquidity
DEPRESSION FORECAST

Time Magazine—Sept. 8/Sept. 15, 2014, (Double Issue)

- ▶ Quake Course, page 10, “A young skateboarder flies off a buckled sidewalk and into the air in the wake of the 6.0 magnitude earthquake that ripped through Napa, Calif., on Aug. 24, leveling more than a dozen buildings in the area.
- ▶ Libya Faces Civil War As Regional Powers Enter the Fray, page 12.
- ▶ China’s silent war on terrorism—Deadly year—since the violence in the capital last fall, the country has been rocked by brutal attacks at railway stations..., page 12.
- ▶ Ukraine—Patients gather in a basement after a shell struck a hospital compound in the rebel-held city of Donetsk on Aug. 24, page 12.
- ▶ West Africa--\$430 million—Amount needed to fight the current Ebola outbreak, according to a draft World Health Organization document, page 13.
- ▶ Disunited Kingdom—On Sept. 18 voters in Scotland will go to the polls to decide if the nation of 5.3 million should break off from the rest of the U.K. and become a fully independent country. Page 14.



City workers at right map out the installation of fencing around earthquake damaged buildings, in Napa, Calif. The earthquake that jolted California’s wine capital may have caused at least \$1 billion in property damage, but it also added impetus to the state’s effort to develop an early warning system that might offer a few precious seconds for residents to duck under desks, trains to slow down and utility lines to be powered down before the seismic waves reach them. (AP PHOTO/ERIC RISBERG)

Editor’s note: I have shared some of the things going on throughout the world to show that the unrest is universal—see end time perspective.



Patients and relatives gather in a hospital basement after an early-morning shelling that hit the hospital compound in central Donetsk, Ukraine.
(MAURICIO LIMA—THE NEW YORK TIMES)

End Time Perspective: “The nations are in unrest. Times of perplexity are upon us. Men’s hearts are failing them for fear of the things that are coming upon the earth. But those who believe in God will hear the voice amid the storm, saying, ‘It is I; be not afraid.’” ST. Oct 9, 1901.

Ellen White's *Vision*

The Two Ways

At the conference at Battle Creek, Michigan, May 27, 1856, I was shown in vision some things that concern the church generally. The glory and majesty of God were made to pass before me. Said the angel: "He is terrible in His majesty, yet ye realize it not; terrible in His anger, yet ye offend Him daily. Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." These roads are distinct, separate, in opposite directions. One leads to eternal life, the other to eternal death. I saw the distinction between these roads, also the distinction between the companies traveling them. The roads are opposite; one is broad and smooth, the other narrow and rugged. So the parties that travel them are opposite in character, in life, in dress, and in conversation.

Travelers of the narrow way

Those who travel in the narrow way are talking of the joy and happiness they will have at the end of the journey. Their countenances are often sad, yet often beam with holy, sacred joy. They do not dress like the company in the broad road, nor talk like them, nor act like them. A pattern has been given them. A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief opened that road for them, and traveled it Himself. His followers see His footsteps, and are comforted and cheered. He went through safely; so can they, if they follow in His footsteps.

Travelers of the broad road

In the broad road all are occupied with their persons, their dress, and the pleasures in the way. They indulge freely in hilarity and glee, and think not of their journey's end,

of the certain destruction at the end of the path. Every day they approach nearer their destruction; yet they madly rush on faster and faster. Oh, how dreadful this looked to me!

I saw many traveling in this broad road who had the words written upon them: "Dead to the world. The end of all things is at hand. Be ye also ready." They looked just like all the vain ones around them, except a shade of sadness which I noticed upon their countenances. Their conversation was just like that of the gay, thoughtless ones around them; but they would occasionally point with great satisfaction to the letters on their garments, calling for the others to have the same upon theirs. They were in the broad way, yet they professed to be of the number who were traveling the narrow way. Those around them would say: "There is no distinction between us. We are alike; we dress, and talk, and act alike."

What has come over the professed peculiar people of God?

Then I was pointed back to the years 1843 and 1844. There was a spirit of consecration then that there is not now. What has come over the professed peculiar people of God? I saw the conformity to the world, the unwillingness to suffer for the truth's sake. I saw a great lack of submission to the will of God. I was pointed back to the children of Israel after they left Egypt. God in mercy called them out from the Egyptians, that they might worship Him without hindrance or restraint. He wrought for them in the way by miracles, He proved and tried them by bringing them into strait places. After the wonderful dealings of God with them, and their deliverance so many times, they murmured when tried or proved by Him. Their language was, "Would to God we had



died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt.” They lusted for the leeks and onions there.

At the least trial, many are easily discouraged

I saw that many who profess to believe the truth for these last days, think it strange that the children of Israel murmured as they journeyed; that after the wonderful dealings of God with them, they should be so ungrateful as to forget what He had done for them. Said the angel, “Ye have done worse than they.” I saw that God has given His servants the truth so clear, so plain, that it cannot be resisted. Wherever they go, they have certain victory. Their enemies cannot get round the convincing truth. Light has been shed so clear that the servants of God can stand up anywhere and let truth, clear and connected, bear away the victory. This great blessing has not been prized, or even realized. If any trial arises, some begin to look back, and think they have a hard time. Some of the professed servants of God do not know what purifying trials are. They sometimes make trials for themselves, imagine trials, and are so easily discouraged, so easily hurt, self-dignity is so quick to feel, that they injure themselves, injure others, and injure the cause. Satan magnifies their trials, and puts thoughts into their minds that, if given way to, will destroy their influence and usefulness.

Some imagine themselves slighted and injured when it is not so

Some have felt tempted to take themselves from the work, to labor with their hands. I saw that if the hand of God should be taken from them, and they be left subject to disease and death, then they would know what trouble is. It is a fearful thing to murmur against God. They do not bear in mind that the way which they are traveling is a rugged, self-denying, self-crucifying way, and they must not expect everything to move on as smoothly as though they were traveling in the broad road.

I saw that some of the servants of God, even ministers, are so easily discouraged, self is so quickly hurt, that they imagine themselves slighted and injured when it is not so. They think their lot hard. Such realize not how they would feel should the sustaining hand of God be withdrawn, and

they pass through anguish of soul. They would then find their lot tenfold harder than it was before, while they were employed in the work of God, suffering trials and privations, yet withal having the Lord’s approbation.

Those who have had so few privations do not recognize when they have an easy time

Some that are laboring in the cause of God know not when they do have an easy time. They have had so few privations, and know so little of want or wearing labor or burden of soul, that when they have an easy time, when they are favored of God and almost entirely free from anguish of spirit, they know it not, and think their trials great. I saw that unless such have a spirit of self-sacrifice, and are ready to labor cheerfully, not sparing themselves, God will release them. He will not acknowledge them as His self-sacrificing servants, but will raise up those who will labor, not slothfully, but in earnest, and will know when they have an easy time. God’s servants must feel the burden of souls, and weep between the porch and the altar, crying, “Spare Thy people, Lord.”

Some of the servants of God have given up their lives to spend and be spent for the cause of God, until their constitutions are broken down, and they are almost worn out with mental labor, incessant care, toil, and privations. Others have not had, and would not take, the burden upon them. Yet just such ones think they have a hard time, because they have never experienced hardships. They never have been baptized into the suffering part, and never will be as long as they manifest so much weakness and so little fortitude, and love their ease so well.

There needs to be a scourging among our ministers

From what God has shown me, there needs to be a scourging among the ministers, that the slothful, dilatory, and self-caring ones may be scourged out, and there remain a pure, faithful, and self-sacrificing company who will not study their ease, but will minister faithfully in word and doctrine, willing to suffer and endure all things for Christ’s sake, and to save those for whom He died. Let these servants feel the woe upon them if they preach not the gospel, and it will be enough; but all do not feel this.

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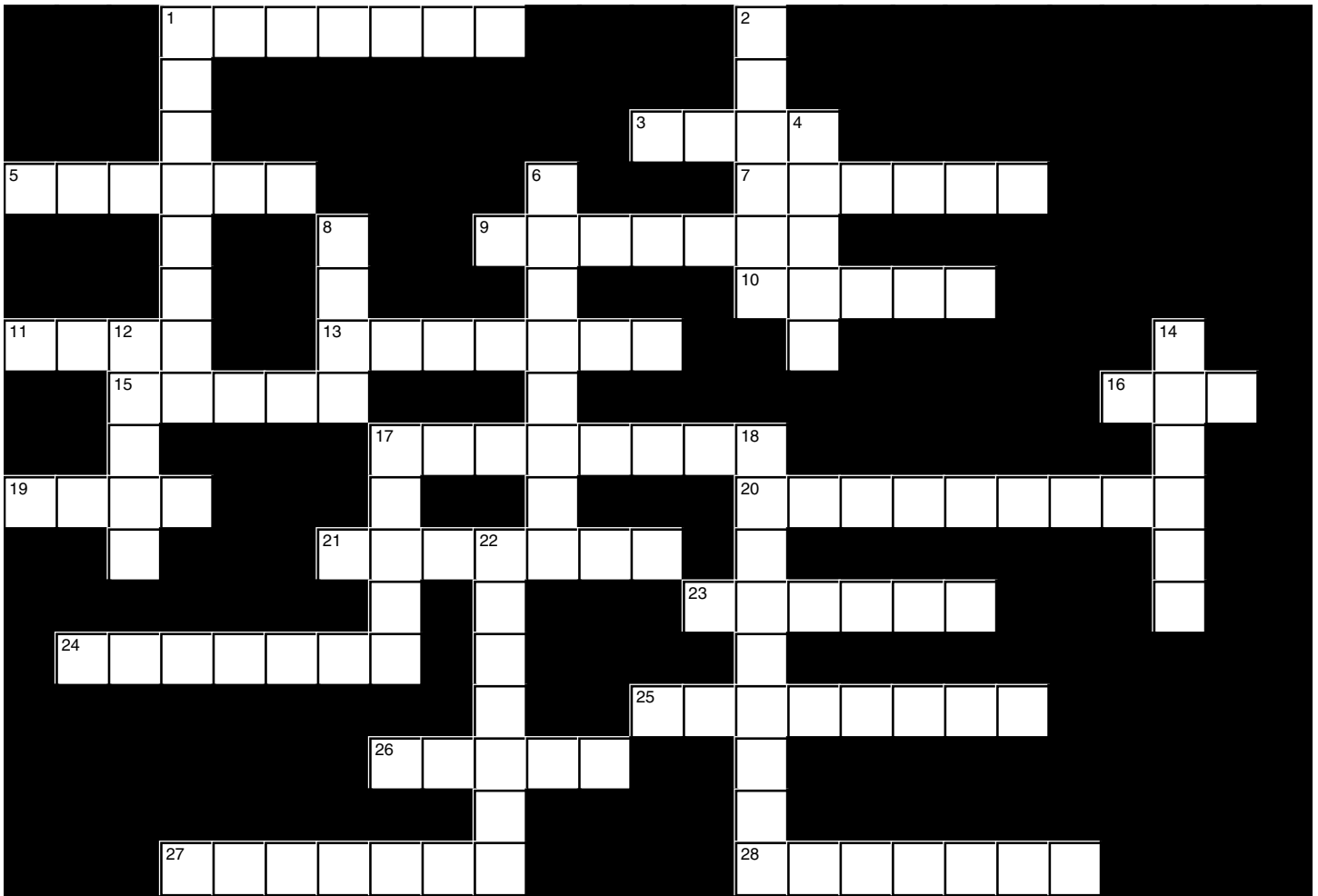
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Christian Crossword



ACROSS

1. Rebekah's nurse
3. She married Naomi's son, Mahlon
5. The disciple of and successor to Elijah
7. A minor prophet who made an appeal to Jews to rebuild the temple
9. She was hired to nurse David in his old age
10. Abraham's grandfather
11. Born of Tarsus of Cilicia into a strict Pharisee family
13. The resourceful and charming wife of Nabel of Carmel
15. The harlot of Jericho who dealt kindly with Joshua's spies
16. The patient and upright man from the land of Uz
17. The mother of Moses and Aaron
19. Laban's oldest daughter
20. The mother of John the Baptist
21. The brother of Mary and Martha
23. The successor to Felix as procurator of Judea
24. A Philistine woman who charmed Samson
25. He raised his orphaned cousin Esther
26. A governor of Judea recalled to Rome by Nero

DOWN

1. She married the Roman governor of Judea
2. Samuel's successor as public servant and spokesman for God
4. Sarah's Egyptian servant girl
6. The high priest during David's reign
8. The product of Lot's incestuous relationship with his older daughter

12. The husband of Bathsheba
14. Job's friend from Naamah
17. Father of the great hero and judge of Israel, Gideon
18. A silversmith in Ephesus
22. He broke his father's heart by leading a revolt against him

Answers from Christian Crossword published in the September 2014 issue of Our Firm Foundation

