History in Transition

See page 4
Editorial

In the production of Our Firm Foundation magazine we have recognized and accepted the responsibility of the calling to be watchmen upon the walls of Zion. However, after almost eleven years of work, it seems that the darkness is becoming deeper. The watchmen must gather strength and courage from this increasing rebellion and continue sounding an alarm when danger approaches.

“Christ sees the wickedness on the earth today. He sees that the sins of Noah’s and Lot’s time are being repeated. What terrible revelations of crime are being made! Everything seems to be stirred with an intense activity from beneath. Excitement is continually kept up. Feasting, buying, and selling, are brought into the churches. The watchman cries, ‘The morning cometh, and also the night.’ The night symbolizes prevalence of error, misinterpretation and misapplication of Scripture. Every species of delusion is now being brought in. The plainest truths of God’s Word are covered with a mass of man-made theories. Deadly errors are presented as the truth to which all must bow. The simplicity of true godliness is buried beneath tradition.” Review and Herald, March 16, 1897.

A new challenge is now confronting those in Zion who are sighing and crying for the abominations that are done within the church. The very message which this movement was raised up to proclaim is now being fulfilled as the world wonders after the pope. The Christian Coalition is winning unprecedented power in the political world. The media is flooding the populace with information designed to prepare them for spiritualistic delusions and, ultimately, Sunday legislation. The watchmen now must be willing to raise an alarm identifying the growing apostasy outside of the church—as well as within. To willingly neglect this duty is to prove unfaithful.

“If the leading men in our conferenc-es do not now accept the message sent to them by God, and fall into line for action, the churches will suffer great loss. When the watchman, seeing the sword coming, gives the trumpet a certain sound, the people along the line will echo the warning, and all will have opportunity to make ready for the conflict. But too often the leader has stood hesitating, seeming to say: ‘Let us not be in too great haste. There may be a mistake. We must be careful not to raise a false alarm.’ The very hesitancy and uncertainty on his part is crying: ‘Peace and safety.’ Do not get excited. Be not alarmed. There is a great deal more made of this religious amendment question than is demanded. This agitation will all die down.’ Thus he virtually denies the message sent from God, and the warning which was designed to stir the churches fails to do its work. The trumpet of the watchman gives no certain sound, and the people do not prepare for the battle. Let the watchman beware lest, through his hesitancy and delay, souls shall be left to perish, and their blood shall be required at his hand.

“We have been looking many years for a Sunday law to be enacted in our land; and, now that the movement is right upon us, we ask: Will our people do their duty in the matter? Can we not assist in lifting the standard and in calling to the front those who have a regard for their religious rights and privileges? The time is fast approaching when those who choose to obey God rather than man will be made to feel the hand of oppression. Shall we then dishonor God by keeping silent while His Holy Commandments are trodden underfoot?

“While the Protestant world is by her attitude making concessions to Rome, let us arise to comprehend the situation and view the contest before us in its true bearings. Let the watchmen now lift up their voice and give the message which is present truth for this time. Let us show the people where we are in prophetic history and seek to arouse the spirit of true Protestantism, awaking the world to a sense of the value of the privileges of religious liberty so long enjoyed.

“God calls upon us to awake, for the end is near. Every passing hour is one of activity in the heavenly courts to make ready a people upon the earth to act a part in the great scenes that are soon to open upon us. These passing moments, that seem of so little value to us, are weighty with eternal interests. They are molding the destiny of souls for everlasting life or eternal death. The words we utter today in the ears of the people, the works we are doing, the spirit of the message we are bearing, will be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death.

“My brethren, do you realize that your own salvation, as well as the destiny of other souls, depends upon the preparation you now make for the trial before us? Have you that intensity of zeal, that piety and devotion, which will enable you to stand when opposition shall be brought against you? If God has ever spoken by me, the time will come when you will be brought before councils, and every position of truth which you hold will be severely criticized. The time that so many are now allowing to go to waste should be devoted to the charge that God has given us of preparing for the approaching crisis.” Testimonies, vol. 5, 715-717.

Brethren, this is the very hour for which we have been called individually and as a movement to meet earth’s final crisis. The time is here to arise and shine by putting away our sins through the power of Christ. This is the day to awaken and sound the final warning to a world which is presently being swept away with Satan’s final deceptions. May the Lord grant us the wisdom to look up, for certainly redemption is drawing nigh.

Jeff Pippenger, Associate Editor
It is the mission of Hope International and the editors of Our Firm Foundation to clearly present Christ and His truth. The days that yet remain of this world are few, and what we do we must do 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

Table of Contents

Vol. 11, No. 3 March 1996

Articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History in Transition</td>
<td>Jeff Pippenger</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The prophesied healing of the deadly wound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please, God, Tell Me What to Do</td>
<td>Vernon Shafer</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing God’s Will, Part 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Distortions and Inaccuracies of the Christian Coalition</td>
<td>Jeff Wehr</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the United States’ founding fathers desire to legislate Christianity?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beasts’ and Kings’ Wills Versus the Lamb’s Will</td>
<td>Preston Monterrey</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To whose will am I submitting?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God’s Plan of Rational Remedies</td>
<td>Vernon Sparks</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bringing Adventists to the Test, Part 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sacredness of Vows</td>
<td>Taylor Bunch</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Exodus in Type and Antitype, Part 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Law of God is a pledge of perfect rest and assurance in obedience.”</td>
<td>Ellen G. White</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Departments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Editorial</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Missionary Corner</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hope International is a special ministry assisting in the God-given work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We believe this Remnant Church of Bible prophecy has been brought into existence by the calling of the Lord, and we look for its final triumph in purity at the second coming of Christ. That the church does not now perfectly reflect the will of our Lord is cause for sorrow, but not for discouragement. The Word of God stands pledged that all within her borders will be sifted and tried, and though the greater portion will fail the test, there will yet remain a remnant to honor the Lord by their obedience to all His commands. Therefore, Hope International urges upon all the duty of supporting the Seventh-day Adventist Church in every way possible, insofar as is consistent with the principles of the government of God and the leading of His Holy Spirit upon the heart.

Shipping Information: For all products advertised in this publication (unless otherwise noted): Please add 10% of your total order for shipping plus $2.00 for handling. For destinations outside the US, please add 15% of your total plus $2.00 for handling. Washington residents please add 7.6% sales tax to your total order, including shipping and handling. All prices are in U.S. dollars.
In the first two articles of this series we presented evidence which demonstrates that God has counseled us to understand history. In past ages, God’s people have been destroyed because of a lack of knowledge.

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.” Hosea 4:6.

At least part of the knowledge which will protect us as we approach these final hours of earth’s history, is a knowledge of the past. In the second article we focused on the history which transpired during the first and second angels’ messages of 1843–44. We identified this experience as prefiguring the final revival of the latter rain.

In this article we will look at a time in history which has also been identified as necessary for our understanding. This history is directly associated with the primary focus of our study—the final six verses of Daniel 11. In preparation for this article, we closed the previous article with the following passage:

“We have no time to lose. Troubles times are before us. The world is stirred with the spirit of war. Soon the scenes of trouble spoken of in the prophecies will take place. The prophecy in the eleventh chapter of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment. Much of the history that has taken place in fulfillment of this prophecy will be repeated. In the thirtieth verse a power is spoken of that ‘shall be griev’d.’ [Daniel 11:30–36 quoted.]

“Scenes similar to those described in these words will take place. We see evidence that Satan is fast obtaining the control of human minds who have not the fear of God before them. Let all read and understand the prophecies of this book, for we are now entering upon the time of trouble spoken of: [Daniel 12:1–4 quoted.]” Manuscript Releases, vol. 13, 394. All emphasis supplied unless otherwise stated.

Sister White identifies the historical fulfillment of Daniel 11 as something which we should expect to see repeated as the “complete fulfillment” of Daniel 11 unfolds. She especially highlights Daniel 11:30–36.

The pioneers and Sister White understood that Daniel 11 was fulfilled from verse 1 through the first phrase of verse 40, which brings us up to 1798—“the time of the end.” Therefore, when Sister White speaks of the complete fulfillment of Daniel 11, she is speaking of verses 40–45. Directing us to “scenes” and “history” which will be repeated, she isolates the history of these verses further by quoting Daniel 12:1–4. Sister White clearly recognized the standing up of Michael in Daniel 12:1 as being the close of probation. The complete fulfillment of verses 40–45 takes us from 1798 to the battle of Armageddon. During the events described in these verses, Michael stands up, closing His mediatorial work and human probation:

“ ‘And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.’ Daniel 12:1. When this time of trouble comes, every case is decided; there is no longer probation, no longer mercy for the impenitent. The seal of the living God is upon His people. This small remnant, unable to defend themselves in the deadly conflict with the powers of earth that are marshaled by the dragon host, make God their defense. The decree has been passed by the highest earthly authority that they shall worship the beast and receive his mark under pain of persecution and death. May God help His people now, for what can they then do in such a fearful conflict without His assistance!’ Testimonies, vol. 5, 212–213.

It is within the time frame from 1798 to beyond the close of probation that we should expect to see repeated “scenes similar” and “much of the history” prophesied to take place in Daniel 11, especially the scenes and history associated with Daniel 11:30–36. Let us briefly review the historical fulfillment of Daniel 11:

The vision of Daniel 11 begins with the kingdom of Medo-Persia being defeated by Alexander the Great. In verse four we see
Alexander’s kingdom divided into four parts for his four generals. From verse 5 onward, only two of his generals are mentioned. These two kings were Seleucus and Ptolemy. Their interaction begins a story of the ongoing struggle for world dominion recorded throughout the rest of Daniel 11. This power struggle is prophetically portrayed as the battle between the kingdoms of the north and south.

One important point of this story is how the Scriptures identify the kings of the north and south. By comparing recorded history with the testimony of Daniel 11, historians and pioneers discovered that the king of the north was the kingdom which controlled the geographical area of Babylon. They discovered also that the king of the south was the kingdom which controlled the geographical area of Egypt. This principle in Daniel 11 brings together the testimony of Scripture with the record of history. This geographical key is the rule which we will apply to Daniel 11:40-45 as we begin to identify who are the kings of the north and south. This historical truth is, no doubt, one of the clues, which the Spirit of Prophecy intended to direct us to at the time when this prophecy was to come to its “complete fulfillment.”

Through the first 13 verses, we find the ebb and flow of history described, as different kingdoms rose and fell. In verse 14, we see the primary subject of all Daniel 11 identified for the first time in the vision by the phrase, “robbers of thy people.” This verse states that these “robbers,” will “establish the vision.” Uriah Smith addresses this phrase in verse 14 with the following observation:

"To establish the vision." The Romans more than any other people are the subject of Daniel’s prophecy. Their first interference in the affairs of these kingdoms is here referred to as being the establishment, or demonstration, of the truth of the vision which predicted the existence of such a power." Daniel and the Revelation, 244.

From this point on, the vision portrays the history of either pagan or papal Rome. In verse 20 we find pagan Rome summons Joseph to pay taxes in Bethlehem. In verse 22 pagan Rome breaks the prince of the covenant,” by crucifying Christ.

In verse 24 we see pagan Rome’s time of dominion set forth within a biblical time prophecy. The last phrase of this verse sets forth 360 years as the time when pagan Rome would rule the world by the words, “even for a time.” Uriah Smith concurs with other pioneers and historians on the starting and ending point for this time prophecy:

"The battle was fought September 2, 31 B.C., at the mouth of the gulf of Ambracia, near the city of Actium. The world was at stake. . . .

"This battle doubtless marks the beginning of the 'time' mentioned in verse 24. As during this 'time,' devices were to be forecast from the stronghold, or Rome, we should answer easily in the affirmative.” Ibid., 266-267.

Using Daniel 11:30-36 as a historical outline identified by the Spirit of Prophecy, we note that this past history was a transition time for Rome. Pagan Rome was about to leave the scene of action as the ruler of the earth, and papal Rome was about to step

By comparing recorded history with the testimony of Daniel 11, historians and pioneers discovered that the king of the north was the kingdom which controlled the geographical area of Babylon.
In A.D. 508 the powers of Europe began to wage war against the “three horns,” and by 538 the last of the three horns met defeat, and the Papacy ascended to the throne of the world.

with them that forsake the holy covenant,” of verse 30.

Verse 31 records that “arms shall stand on his part.” As history and prophecy move forward to the next step in the sequence to set papal Rome on the throne of the world, we find that Clovis, the king of France, dedicated his sword and his country to the Papacy. France became the first Catholic nation, the first of seven kingdoms found in Europe to renounce their pagan beliefs and embrace Catholicism, and also the first to submit the nation to the service of the Papacy. This alliance provided the ways and means to defeat the three Arian horns. Prophecy taught that these three horns would be removed before the Papacy assumed authority over the world.

Not only did Clovis and the other horns of Europe bring their finances and arms to bear against the three horns, they also seized (took away) their pagan resistance against Catholicism. This fact is illustrated as they “take away the daily.”

Speaking of the “daily,” Sister White states: “Then I saw in relation to the ‘daily’ (Daniel 8:12) that the word ‘sacrifice’ was supplied by man’s wisdom, and does not belong to the text, and that the Lord gave the correct view of it to those who gave the judgment hour cry. When union existed, before 1844, nearly all were united on the correct view of the ‘daily,’ but in the confusion since 1844, other views have been embraced, and darkness and confusion have followed.” Early Writings, 74–75.

The pioneers viewed the “daily,” as symbolizing the attack against God’s truth in the plural. More than one abomination, therefore, treads down the church; that is, as far as the church is concerned, both paganism and the Papacy are abominations. But as distinguished from each other, the language is restricted. One is the ‘daily’ desolation, and the other is pre-eminently the transgression or ‘abomination’ of desolation.

“How was the ‘daily’, or paganism, taken away? ... The conversion of Clovis [A.D. 496] is said to have been the occasion of bestowing upon the French monarch the titles ‘Most Christian Majesty’ and ‘Eldest Son of the Church.’ Between that time and A.D. 508, [the other horns of Europe] were brought into subjection.

“From ... A.D. 508, the Papacy was triumphant so far as paganism was concerned, ... When the prominent powers of Europe gave up their attachment to paganism, it was only to perpetuate its abominations in another form; for Christianity as exhibited in the Roman Catholic Church was, and is, only paganism baptized.” Daniel and the Revelation, 270–272.

The history of Daniel 11:31 is a description of the pagan powers of Europe coming to the aid of the Papacy to set it upon the throne of the world. The removing of the “daily,” and the polluting of the “sanctuary of strength,” is a description of their turning from open paganism, which previously was their confessed religion biblically symbolized as their “sanctuary of strength.” The words “take away” carry a two-fold meaning as they not only teach a removal, but also a secondary definition conveys the idea of—lifting up. When paganism was set aside by the powers of Europe, through their submission to Catholicism, paganism was actually lifted up, for Catholicism is the greatest manifestation of paganism of all time.

In A.D. 508 the powers of Europe began to wage war against countries represented by the “three horns,” and by 538 the last of the three horns met defeat, and the Papacy ascended to the throne of the world. Then “the abomination that maketh desolate,” symbolic of the Papacy, was set up.

In verses 32–35 we see the persecution of the Dark Ages illustrated, with the final phrase of verse 35 pointing to the end of the 1260 years with the words, “even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.” This phrase takes us up to verse 40. But before Daniel gets to verse forty, verses 36–39, present the description of the main subject of Daniel—the Papacy:

“And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that is determined shall be done.” Daniel 11:36.

This is clearly the Papacy, and Paul paraphrases this passage in his most potent statement of the Papacy:

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

Sister White combines both Daniel’s king which does “according to his will” and Paul’s “man of sin” in describing the Papacy:

“This compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in the development of ‘the man of sin’ foretold in prophecy as opposing and exalting himself above God. That gigantic system of false religion is a masterpiece of Satan’s power—a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth according to his will.” The Great Controversy, 50.

As we continue the study of Daniel 11:40–45 we will see a historical sequence within these verses which closely parallels the history we have just reviewed. We will set forth evidence to demonstrate that Daniel 11:40 is a description of a spiritual war between the Papacy and atheism which began in 1798. We will show that France wore the crown of the king of the south in 1798, but that in 1917 that crown was passed to its successor—the Soviet Union.
We will demonstrate that the king of the north in 1798 was the Papacy and that the Papacy is still wearing that prophetic crown. Verse 40 teaches that initially in the war between the king of the south and the king of the north, the king of the north was grieved in its ability to prevail against the southern kingdom. In fact, the war begins with the king of the north receiving a deadly wound, as his political kingdom was taken away.

When writing on Daniel 11:30, Sister White pointed us to a time when Rome was unable to prevail against its enemy. Revelation 13 describes the Papacy as the head which receives a deadly wound. The deadly wound of papal Rome is a repetition of pagan Rome being grieved over her ability to maintain control of her former empire. See Daniel 11:30. The war and the grieving of the Papacy is described when the king of the south would "push" at the king of the north in Daniel 11:40.

But verse 40 teaches that a change would take place. In time, the king of the north would return and, through military and economic power, sweep away the king of the south. We will see that economic and military power were supplied to the king of the north in this war, in the same way that Clovis came to the aid of the Papacy in the past.

We will see that in fulfillment of this verse the Soviet Union, the modern-day king of the south, was swept away by the Papacy—the northern king. This sweeping away was accomplished through an alliance with the United States. Not only do these recent events parallel the history highlighted by Sister White in Daniel 11:30–31, but they support the testimony of Revelation 13, which identifies the United States as the beast which comes to the aid of the Papacy at the end of the world.

We have considered the three geographical areas which pagan Rome conquered as it came to the throne of the world. We compared it to the removal of the three horns preceding the Papacy's ascension to the throne of the world which began the Dark Ages. We will see in our next article that verse 40 is the first of three steps which modern Babylon takes as she returns to the throne of the world in our day. The first step was implementing the fall of the king of the south, the former Soviet Union, and this step is now past history.

The second step is delineated in verse 41, where the king of the north takes control of the glorious land. The glorious land of this verse is none other than the second beast of Revelation 13, which has already entered into an unholy alliance with the Vatican in order to bring about the demise of the Soviet Union. As Clovis came to the aid of the Papacy by offering military and economic support, along with the acceptance of Catholicism instead of paganism, the United States not only offered military and economic support to bring down the Soviet Union, but the United States also turned away from the definition of Protestantism which, by definition, precludes an alliance with the Papacy.

The third step is given in verse 42 in which the world, as prophetically represented by Egypt, will come into the grip of the iron fist of Rome. Then in verse 43 the economics of the world come under the power of the king of the north. When the economics of the world come under the control of the king of the north, representing the Papacy, then the Papacy has returned to the position of dominance as a geopolitical power. The Papacy lost this standing in 1798. When it returns to this position, its deadly wound will have been fully healed.

Verse 44 speaks of the latter rain and the persecution of God's people, while verse 45 describes the division of the world into two classes as we approach Armageddon. We will find many items of interest as we continue through the study of these verses. As we continue on in this series, we will not only defend the premises set forth here in greater detail, but we will continue to compare this sequence with the scenes and histories to which Sister White specifically directed us.

Daniel 11:30–36 is not simply a historical sequence which has been set forth as a pattern to use in order to understand Daniel 11:40–45; it is the very history of the Papacy's first rise to power at the beginning of the Dark Ages. The tells a restoration of her power. 'I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.' Verse 3. The infliction of the deadly wound points to the downfall of the Papacy in 1798. . . Paul states plainly that the 'man of sin' will continue until the second advent. 2 Thessalonians 2:3–8. To the very close of time he will carry forward the work of deception . . .

"And let it be remembered, it is the boast of Rome that she never changes. The principles of Gregory VII and Innocent III are still the principles of the Roman Catholic Church. And had she but the power, she would put them in practice with as much vigor now as in past centuries. Protestants little know what they are doing when they propose to accept the aid of Rome in the work of Sunday exaltation. While they are bent upon the accomplishment of their purpose, Rome is aiming to re-establish her power, to recover her lost supremacy. Let the principle once be established in the United States that the church may employ or control the power of the state; that religious observances may be enforced by secular laws; in short, that the authority of church and state is to dominate the conscience, and the triumph of Rome in this country is assured.

"God's Word has given warning of the impending danger; let this be heeded, and the Protestant world will learn what the purposes of Rome really are, only when it is too late to escape the snare. She is silently growing into power. Her doctrines are exerting their influence in legislative halls, in the churches, and in the hearts of men. She is piling up her lofty and massive structures in the secret recesses of which her former persecutions will be repeated. Stealthily and unsuspectedly she is strengthening her forces to further her own ends when the time shall come for her to strike. All that she desires is vantage ground, and this is already being given her. We shall soon see and shall feel what the purpose of the Roman element is. Whoever shall believe and obey the Word of God will thereby incur reproach and persecution." The Great Controversy, 579–581.

The glorious land of this verse is none other than the second beast of Revelation 13, which has already entered into an unholy alliance with the Vatican in order to bring about the demise of the Soviet Union.
For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom;

COLOSSIANS 1:9-10

Please, God,
Tell Me What to Do

You are faced with an important decision. You really want to know what you should do. You want to do what is right for everyone involved. You ask yourself a thousand times, “What should I do?” You pray about it, but somehow there does not seem to be an easy answer. God does not hand us the ready-made answer on a platter. No, you are still faced with the struggle, “Which way should I turn?”

You talk to friends. One tells you to do nothing. Someone else advises you to go for it. Try greener pastures. Another tells you something else. “Oh, if I just knew what I should do?” you think. But the answer does not seem to come.

Depending on God

Some time ago I was reading about the life of George Mueller—a contemporary of Ellen White. He was a sincere, devoted man of God, who was burdened with the needs of the abandoned orphans of Bristol, England. Mueller was the pastor of a large church and a devout student of the Bible. Near the end of his life he confided that he had read the Bible through approximately two hundred times. In the course of his study he was impressed that if a person is doing the Lord’s work, God will demonstrate his power by supporting it.

Mueller became convinced from his reading of God’s promises that if the “cattle of a thousand hills” belong to the Lord, and God is “our strength,” and the “rewards of them that diligently seek Him,” then we should learn to depend upon Him rather than man.

In those days you supported your church by pew rentals. Your family would rent a pew in the church. The ones up front went for a higher price, so those were occupied by the most affluent in the congregation. Nobody else sat in your pew unless you invited them to do so. The rental from the pews was used to pay for the pastor’s salary and the upkeep of the church.

Pastor Mueller said, “I don’t like that. People should be able to come into my church and sit where they want; so they can hear the Word of God absolutely free.” So he decided, “We will no longer have pew rentals in my church.”

Then the question arose, “How is the pastor going to be paid?” Pastor Mueller responded, “I am not going to accept a salary. We will put a box in the back of the church and people who want to give, can donate a thank offering. But as for me, I am going to depend on the Lord to provide for my needs.” This idea was revolutionary, and was not accepted very well by his brother ministers, but he believed God’s Word.

It was shortly after this time that the burden of working for the orphans of Bristol, England, became a real concern to him. He saw the desperate need for someone to provide for those abandoned children. So he began to establish orphanages. He started out small, but as he saw more and greater needs, he moved ahead in faith until he had built homes that provided care for thousands of these destitute children.

All through his life he never ever solicited funds from the public, or from the church, or from others. He never had any fund-raising campaigns. Whenever there was a need he got down on his knees and took it to the Lord, and the Lord provided.

There were many tests of faith, but he always stood steadfast. On one occasion, shortly after he had made this commitment with the Lord, a lady came to him and said, “Pastor, I understand that you need some money. How much do you need?” He responded, “My dear sister, I have made a commitment with the Lord that I would never reveal to others what the needs are, but that I would always take them to the Master.” Somewhat impatiently his caller said, “Well, the Lord has told me that you need some money, and here it is.” She gave him a sum of money that was precisely the amount that he needed to provide food for his orphans on that particular day.

It would be nice to have a large fund from which we could draw, to carry on.

Vernon Shafer is retired and writes from College Place, Washington.

Vernon Shafer

8, Our Firm Foundation, March 1996
the Lord’s work, but the Lord says, “No, you depend on Me and I will take care of your needs.” That was pastor Mueller’s experience. He kept meticulous records, and toward the end of his life he indicated that he had received over five thousand specific answers to his prayers.

I have shared this background about Pastor Mueller so you would know what kind of a person he was and the kind of relationship he had with his Lord. Shortly before his death, he related the principles that he followed in seeking to know God’s will. He testified that, “In trivial matters and in transactions involving most important issues, I have found this method is always effective.”

I would like to share those principles with you along with some observations from the Scriptures, and from God’s messenger to the church, on this topic of how we can know God’s will.

**God’s Will for Us**

First, it would be well to look at what the Word tells us about what God’s will is for us. Paul tells us that God desires us to know “His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” Colossians 1:9. He then goes on to explain that the purpose of this is “that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing.” Colossians 1:10. Or as he explains to the Thessalonians, the purpose is that we should learn how to walk and to please God. See 1 Thessalonians 4:1.

In Colossians 1:10 He goes on further and indicates that the purpose in knowing God’s will is that we might be “fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.” Again, in Hebrews 13:21 He clarifies that the purpose is to “make you perfect in every good work to do his will.” Then in 1 Thessalonians 4:3 Paul tells us that our sanctification is God’s ultimate will for us.

Though there are many other Bible references we might cite, one more observation from Paul is important. In 2 Timothy 1:7 he notes that, “God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” Here we have an important clue that God not only wants us to know and understand and follow His will but He wants us to have confidence and assurance in using the mind and judgment He has given us that we may glorify Him in our lives. This biblical principle is certainly implicit in the following principles or guidelines Mueller used to make decisions:

### 1. Submission to God’s Will

Mueller said, “I seek at the beginning to get my heart in such a state that it has no will of its own in regard to a given matter.”

This step is generally the hardest of all. If we can get self out of the way, ninety percent of the problem is over-

**It would be nice to have a large fund from which we could draw, to carry on the Lord’s work, but the Lord says, “No, you depend on Me and I will take care of your needs.”**

...we must “trust and obey, for there’s no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.”

The Lord’s messenger also reminds us that, “Christ’s work was to set before men the character of His kingdom, showing that names and positions and titles are nothing, but that pure virtue and a holy character is accounted as everything in

---

March 1996  Our Firm Foundation  9
worldly wisdom, it will come to naught. Even though we are convinced that we are doing God’s work, if we do it according to our own will and plan, according to the worldly way of doing things, it will fail.

Therefore, the first requirement is that we make the total commitment that, first and last, with God’s help, we will put

to the words Ellen White wrote to a person she was counseling:

“Your feelings, your impressions, your emotions, are not to be trusted, for they are not reliable.” Testimonies, vol. 5, 513.

If, as a psychologist, there is anything that I have learned about people, it is the truth of that statement. There is one thing about our feelings, impressions and emotions that is sure, and that is that they are

going to change. I have been fascinated as I have studied into this topic to learn how much Ellen White had to say about this subject. Notice some of her counsel:

“In the face of the most positive commands of God, men and women will follow their own inclinations and dare to pray over the matter, to prevail upon God to consent to allow them to go contrary to His expressed will.” Testimonies, vol. 3, 72. Perhaps you have never done that, but have known someone who did. However, if we do, notice what the Lord says will happen:

“...The Lord is not pleased with such prayers. Satan comes to the side of such persons, as he did to Eve in Eden, and impresses them, and they have an exercise of mind, and this they relate as a most wonderful experience which the Lord has given them.” Ibid. Notice the delusion—believing something that is not true?

Ellen White goes on to say,

“A true experience will be in perfect harmony with natural and divine law. False experience will array itself against science and the principles of Jehovah...”

“...There are those who would understand their duty clearly if it were in harmony with their natural inclinations. Circumstances and reason may clearly indicate their duty; but when against their natural inclination, these evidences are frequently set aside. Then these persons will presume to go to God to learn their duty. But God will not be trifled with. He will permit such persons to follow the desires of their own hearts. ‘But my people would not hearken to my voice.’

“So I gave them up unto their own hearts’ lust: and they walked in their own counsels.” Psalm 81:11-12:

“Those who desire to follow a course which pleases their fancy are in danger of being left to follow their own inclinations, supposing them to be the leadings of God’s Spirit. The duty of some is indicated sufficiently clear by circumstances and facts; but, through the solicitation of friends, in harmony with their own inclinations, they swerve from the path of duty and pass over the clear evidences in the case; then, with apparent conscientiousness, they pray long and earnestly for light. They have earnest feeling in the matter, and they interpret this to be the Spirit of God. But they are deceived. This course grieves the Spirit of God.” Testimonies, vol. 3, 73. Then she gives this solemn warning:

“They had light and in the very reason of things should have understood their duty; but a few pleasing inducements balance their minds in the wrong direction, and they urge these before the Lord and press their case, and the Lord allows them to have their own way. They have so strong an inclination to follow their own course that He permits them to do so and to suffer the results. These imagine that they have a wonderful experience.” Ibid., 74.

This is the kind of delusion that Pastor Mueller was talking about, and thus we have the caution that it is dangerous to go by feelings and impressions alone.

3. Anchored in the Word

Always seek the will of God through the Word. “The Spirit and the Word must be combined. If I look to the Spirit alone without the Word,” said Mueller, “I lay myself open to great delusions also.” Notice how much emphasis he placed upon the Bible. Your impressions must always be anchored there. It must be the foundation upon which we build. The psalmist declares, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” Psalm 119:105. Again, Ellen White also emphasized that, “Every soul must be regulated by the Law of God. Compare everything you propose to do with the Law of God.” Ask, Is this the way of the Lord?” Ellen G. White 1898 Materials, 1685.

Ellen White described the ways by which God reveals His will to us. She said, “There are three ways in which the Lord reveals His will to us, to guide us, and to fit us to guide others. How may we know His voice from that of a stranger?
How shall we distinguish it from the voice of a false shepherd?" Testimonies, vol. 5, 512.

She mentions a little earlier, "He expects you to recognize the enemy and to resist him." Ibid. And then she says that we must also learn to recognize the Lord's voice.

If you have heard somebody talk to you on the telephone, you say, "Oh, yeah! That's Joe," or "That's Mary." How do you know? Because you know them well enough that you recognize their voice. In the same way we must also learn to know our Saviour. We have to talk to Him, hear Him talk to us, become so familiar with Him that we can recognize His voice, and we know that His voice will always be consistent with what He has revealed before in His Word.

First, we are told, "God reveals His will to us in His Word, the Holy Scriptures,... and it will be recognized if we do not separate our souls from Him by walking in our own ways, doing according to our own wills." Ibid.

The second way the Lord reveals His will to us is in "His providential workings."

"Another way in which God's voice is heard is through the appeals of His Holy Spirit, making impressions upon the heart." Ibid.

But remember Mueller's experience. Impressions alone are not enough. You must have the impressions plus the Word. And when you combine them so that you know and recognize the Lord's voice, then the impressions become one of the avenues that the Lord may use to communicate His will. This is, of course, after you have taken care of the will problem and put that aside.

There is a wonderful promise hidden in Ellen White's comments on this topic. She speaks of the "Spirit making impressions on the heart, which will be wrought out in the character." Ibid. So it is not just some impulsive thing that we are going to do, but it is something that works in our character to develop in us this process of sanctification that Paul spoke about. Ellen White went on to explain:

"If you are in doubt upon any subject you must first consult the Scriptures. If you have truly begun the life of faith you have given yourself to the Lord to be wholly His, and He has taken you to mold and fashion according to His purpose, that you may be a vessel unto honor. You should have an earnest desire to be pliable in His hands and of the Good Shepherd, and this places you in doubt and peril. You ought to be able to distinguish His voice."

I pray that each of us may have such a close involvement and dialogue with our Saviour that we will be able to distinguish His voice in all circumstances.

We have to talk to Him, hear Him talk to us, become so familiar with Him that we can recognize His voice, and we know that His voice will always be consistent with what He has revealed before in His Word.

To be continued.

1 George Mueller: Man of Faith and Miracles, by Basil Miller, Bethany House Pub. 6820 Auto Club Road, Minneapolis, Minn. 55438; 50-51. All quotations attributed to Mueller are from this book.
The Christian Coalition is one of the strongest political forces in America. It is part of their agenda to bring "Christian" values to bear on our society. They have made major political gains through grassroots politics in taking over local elections. However, the gains they have made can be greatly attributed to their many unfortunate distortions and inaccuracies concerning American history and constitutional law. They have been able to capitalize on the general public's lack of knowledge on such matters. We will now consider several of these distortions and inaccuracies.

Church and State—Separate?

The Christian Coalition declares that the phrase "separation of church and state" does not appear in the Constitution and therefore the principle is not part of our American heritage. In response to this distortion, scholar Leo Pfeffer stated, "It is true, of course, that the phrase 'separation of church and state' does not appear in the Constitution. But it was inevitable that some convenient term should come into existence to verbalize a principle so clearly and widely held by the American people. . . . [T]he right to a fair trial is generally accepted to be a constitutional principle; yet the term 'fair trial' is not found in the Constitution. To bring the point even closer home, who would deny that 'religious liberty' is a constitutional principle? Yet that phrase too is not in the Constitution. The universal acceptance which all these terms, including 'separation of church and state,' have been received in America would seem to confirm rather than disparage their reality as basic American democratic principles." Leo Pfeffer, *Church, State, and Freedom*.

President Thomas Jefferson wrote that the First Amendment had erected a "wall of separation between church and state," in an 1802 letter to the Danbury Baptist Association of Connecticut. Furthermore, in the 1879 *Reynolds v. U.S.* decision, the Supreme Court cited Jefferson's principle of separation of church and state to be observed "as an authoritative declaration of the scope and effect of the [First] Amendment."

James Madison wrote, "Strongly guarded . . . is the separation between the church and the state." Later he said in an 1819 letter, "[T]he number, the industry and the morality of the priesthood, and the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the church from the state." Rob Boston, *Why the Religious Right is Wrong*, 220. All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.

The Christian Coalition has even called the principle of "separation of church and state" a communistic principle. They cite Article 53 of the Constitution of the Soviet Union in support of their unfortunate distortion. It can hardly be said that Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and our other founding fathers borrowed this concept from the Soviet Union. Our founding fathers embraced this principle long before the Russian Revolution of 1917, which led to the formation of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Constitution.

The truth of the matter is that the Soviet Union borrowed these concepts of freedom of religion, press, speech, and assembly from the United States, but for the most part never granted these privileges to its people. These principles were simply on paper in the Soviet Union, while these principles became reality in the United States. Because the Soviet Constitution provides for freedom of
speech, do we say that this freedom originated in Communist Russia? Do we say that freedom of the press originated in the Soviet Union and is a communistic principle? Do we say that the right to free assembly originated in Red Square? The absurdity of the idea shows the weakness of the Christian Coalition’s argument.

They also claim that Jefferson’s “separation of church and state” is “one-directional.” In other words, the First Amendment was only designed to keep government out of religion, not religion out of government. However, Jefferson never used the phrase “one-directional” and never supported that concept. This leads us into the next great distortion of the Christian Coalition, namely, that the United States is a “Christian” nation.

America: A “Christian” Nation

Both Ellen White and the Christian Coalition have referred to the United States as a “Christian nation.” However, that which is meant by the Lord’s servant is different than the meaning attached to it by the Christian Coalition.

The Spirit of Prophecy describes America as a nation in which many of the people are professedly Christian, a nation whose foundations are not the legislation of church dogs, but a nation whose foundations were built on “civil and religious liberty.” See The Great Controversy, 252.

“To protect liberty of conscience is the duty of the state, and this is the limit of its authority in matters of religion. Every secular government that attempts to regulate or enforce observance by civil authority is sacrificing the very principle for which the evangelical Christians so nobly struggled.” Ibid., 201; see also 441.

Unfortunately, the Christian Coalition, the so-called “evangelical Christians,” will pressure the state to enforce religious observance. “When the Protestant churches shall unite with the secular power to sustain a false religion, . . . then will Protestant America have formed an image to the Papacy, and there will be a national apostasy which will end only in national ruin.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 976.

The separation of church and state is a Christian and/or Protestant principle. The union of church and state is not. “The union of the church with the state, be the degree never so slight, while it may appear to bring the world nearer to the church, does in reality but bring the church nearer to the world . . . . The regulation adopted by the early colonists, of permitting only members of the church to vote and to hold office in civil government, led to most pernicious results. This measure had been accepted as a means of preserving the purity of the state, but it resulted in the corruption of the church.” The Great Controversy, 297.

The Pilgrims and the Puritans who settled in America in the 1600s were anything but tolerant. Most people reading this article would not have been welcomed in the Plymouth or Massachusetts Bay Colonies. The colonies

It was after the American Revolution that our founding fathers began to create a new government. The Pilgrims and the Puritans are not our founding fathers, let alone Christopher Columbus. If our founding fathers desired to create a Christian nation, then it would have become very evident in the American Constitution. As it is, the Constitution does not even mention God or Jesus Christ. The omission of God in the Constitution was not an expression of hostility toward Christianity or any other religion. The U.S. Constitution is a civil document, not a religious document. As Charles Pinckney, a delegate from South Carolina said, “The Legislature of the United States shall pass no law on the subject of religion.” William Lee Miller, The First Liberty: Religion and the American Republic (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), 110.

In 1797 the United States signed the Treaty of Tripoli with the Muslims of North Africa. Article 11 states, “As the Government of the United States is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion; as it has in itself no character of enmity against the law, religion or tranquillity of Musselman [Muslims]; . . . . Negotiations for this treaty were conducted by George Washington. The treaty was endorsed by Timothy Pickering, the secretary of state, and President John Adams. The Senate approved the treaty without any objections to its content. Article 11 never became a point of controversy, because our laws are civil laws, not religious laws. The Constitution never gave the government any power to pass religious legislation or to prohibit the free exercise of religion.

Often the Christian Coalition points to the Northwest Ordinance as proof of the “Christian” nation concept. The first problem that these advocates face is the fact that Thomas Jefferson wrote the Northwest Ordinance. Thomas Jefferson was clearly for “separation of church and state.” The Northwest Ordinance, which set down the rules for governing the territory of the Northwest was approved by Congress on July 13, 1787. These rules included protection of civil liberties and how a territory could become a state.

According to scholars, only seventeen percent of Americans had church membership prior to the Revolution. That does not say much for churches controlling the government in creating a “Christian” nation.
The first draft written by Jefferson was completely secular and had no references to religion. Then a congressional committee revised it and mandated that a certain section of each township be reserved for education. Next, a proposal was made that a section of each township north of the area reserved for educational purposes be earmarked for religion. Then, a recommendation was made that the land would be used for the “support of religion and charitable uses.” Later, it was proposed that they leave out the word “religion” and reserve the land simply for “charitable uses.” The final draft of article 3 read, “Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall be forever encouraged.” (Rob Boston, Why the Religious Right is Wrong, 80).

Notice that it did not say that “schools and churches shall forever be encouraged.” If this were a “Christian” nation, then certainly churches would be encouraged. What was being encouraged? Education was being encouraged.

For this American experiment to work, it would be advantageous for its people to be religious, moral, knowledgeable, skilled, educated, hard working, patriotic, honest, and the list goes on. But churches do not need to control the government for people to be religious, moral, and knowledgeable. It is significant to note that Congress did not in 1789 reenact the provision of 1787 for a lot in each township to be set aside “perpetually for the purposes of religion.” Journals of the Continental Congress ed. Worthington C. Ford et al. (Washington, D.C., 1904–1937), XXXIII, 399–400.

The Christian Coalition will often cite the 1892 Holy Trinity Church v. United States decision to prove that this is a “Christian” nation. In this ruling, Justice David Brewer declared, “This is a Christian nation.” However, in 1905, he published a book entitled The United States: A Christian Nation. The following is from his book:

“But in what sense can [the United States] be called a Christian nation? Not in the sense that Christianity is the established religion or the people are compelled in any manner to support it. On the contrary, the Constitution specifically provides that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.’ Neither is it Christian in the sense that all its citizens are, either in fact or in name, Christians. On the contrary, all religions have free scope within its borders. Numbers of our people profess other religions, and many reject all. Nor is it

It should be clearly understood that there is nothing in the Constitution that keeps a student from praying in school. In fact, the Constitution as it is now, protects the student’s right to pray in school.

Christian in the sense that a profession of Christianity is a condition of holding office, or otherwise engaging in public service, or essential to recognition either politically or socially. In fact, the government as a legal organization is independent of all religions.” Page 12.

Prayer in School

Another favorite distortion of the Christian Coalition is the argument that secular humanists have “kicked” God and prayer out of the school. It should be clearly understood that there is nothing in the Constitution that keeps a student from praying in school. In fact, the Constitution as it is now, protects the student’s right to pray in school. It is true that in 1962 and 1963 court cases, the government decided not to assume the responsibility to write school prayers and select Bible readings. However, the courts did not decide that students could not pray and study their Bibles in school. In fact, Justice Tom Clark observed, “It might well be said that one’s education is not complete without a study of comparative religion or the history of religion and its relationship to the advancement of civilization. It may certainly be said that the Bible is worthy of study for its literary and historic qualities. Nothing we have said here indicates that such study of the Bible or of religion, when presented objectively as part of a secular program of education, may not be effected consistently with the First Amendment.” Abington Township School District v. Schempp, 374 U.S. 203 (1963).

The Christian Coalition asserts that prayer and Bible reading in school was done away with in 1962, and ever since then morals and test scores in America have declined because of these court rulings. However, as of 1962, only five states had current laws requiring Bible reading. This does not mean that Bible reading in those states was being carried out. It only means that the law was on the books. Nine states had no such laws on the books. Eleven states declared the practice unconstitutional. And in twenty-five states the laws allow the practice to be optional. In fact, only the State of Massachusetts had prayer and Bible readings on the books prior to 1900. It was soon after the turn of the century that the conservative National Reform Movement originally campaigned hard to get these laws on the books. Thus, laws regarding prayer and Bible study in the public schools are relatively new and were not the work of our founding fathers.

There are many factors that have led to the decline of morals in America. Violence, immorality, and crude jesting on television and in the theaters are major culprits. Crowded urban centers, suggestive advertising, the break up of the family, declining morals and values in the local church, hypocrisy in the church, the materialism of the age, the increase of junk food, the influx of trashy novels and other printed matter, the preoccupation with entertainment, and the declining work ethic, have all contributed to the decline of morals in America.

Yet a recent 1993 poll was taken by Gallop and Bezila. They found that ninety-five percent of teenagers believe in God; eighty-six percent believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ; ninety-one percent believe in heaven; ninety-three percent believe God loves them. George H. Gallop, Jr. and Robert Bezila, “Poll: U.S. Teens Believe That God Loves Them,” Religious News Service, April 21, 1993. Consequently, it cannot be said that spiritual beliefs have declined because the government chose to allow individuals to be responsible for their own religious practices.

The greatest witness for the Christian religion is not uniform prayers, but the life of a genuine Christian living out the principles of his Saviour in the life. A survey conducted in 1989 by Parents magazine, found that sixty-eight percent agreed with the statement, “Although no prayer should be said aloud, there should be a minute of silence each day so that students could pray silently, meditate, or do nothing if they prefer.” However, only seventeen percent agreed with the statement, “A prayer should be said aloud once a day in public schools, and students should be required to participate.” (Rob Boston, Why the Religious Right is Wrong, 112.)
As far as test scores dropping since 1962, the Christian Coalition again fails to tell the whole story. In the early 1960s, college entrance exams like the SAT were almost exclusively taken by wealthy, well-educated students headed for prestigious schools. Today, everyone who wants to go to college takes these exams. Obviously, the test scores will drop when you have more young people from a variety of backgrounds of educational opportunities taking these tests. In reality, there has been no properly documented drop in religious interests or test scores since 1962.

The Victory That Leads to Ruin

It is unfortunate that so many Christians have accepted the distortions and inaccuracies promoted by the leaders of the Christian Coalition. In this battle over freedom of religion versus the legislation of religion, the Christian Coalition will both win and lose. Prophecy tells us that they will eventually win in bringing in religious legislation. But they will also lose by bringing in that religious legislation. Instead of blessing America, they will lead us into national ruin. It is bad enough to have declining morals in America; however, it is even worse to trample upon the inalienable rights of others.

Inspiration predicted that the two great principles of civil and religious liberty would be trampled upon in America when the second beast of Revelation 13 speaks as a dragon. The repudiation of these principles would not be the work of a singular power. The people would pressure the lawmakers of our land to pass religious legislation. This religious legislation would bring religious persecution, and this religious persecution would be over worship.

The Bible says, “And he [the second beast] exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship him; and causeth that as many as would not worship the image of beast should be killed...” 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.” Revelation 13:12, 15, 17. What type of legislation concerning worship will the Vatican and certain Protestants force upon society?

The Vatican

Currently, the pope is pushing for Sunday laws in Europe. “The blue law issue is expected to be contentious throughout Europe as the European Economic Community (EEC) struggles to determine policy for member nations. Pope John Paul II continues to press for mandatory Sunday-closing laws in all EEC nations.” Church & State, May, 1992.

“God said everyone should have a day off a week. Muslims chose Fridays, Jews Saturdays, Christians Sundays. Now the European Community is pretending to be God. It is about to decree that EC citizens must take Sundays off.” Economist, October 19, 1991, 16.

“In respecting religious liberty and the common good of all, Christians should seek recognition of Sundays and the Church’s holy days as legal holidays.” Catechism of the Catholic Church. New Hope, KY: Urbiet Orbi, 1994, 528.

John Paul II “insists that men have no reliable hope of creating a viable geopolitical system unless it is on the basis of Roman Catholic Christianity.” Malachi Martin, The Keys of This Blood, 492.

“Sunday is our mark of authority... The church is above the Bible, and this transference of sabbath observance is proof of that fact.” The Catholic Record, London, Ontario, September 1, 1923.

Protestants in America

Religious Right activist David Barton said, “The court, in addressing the seventh-day sabbath of the Jewish religion vs. the first-day sabbath of the Christian religion, returned to the Scriptures to show that it could not be argued that Saturday, or any other day, was the day commanded by the Scripture—the sabbath could be any day, so long as it occurred every seventh. However, the court emphasized the importance of a uniform national sabbath; in this, a Christian nation, Sunday was to be that day.” David Barton, The Myth of Separation, 76.

Pat Robertson said, “There will never be world peace until God’s house and God’s people are given their rightful place of leadership at the top of the world... Laws in America that mandated a day of rest [Sunday] from incessant commerce have been nullified as a violation of the separation of church and state.” Pat Robertson, The New World Order, 246, 227, 233, 236. Robertson laments that the separation of church and state prevents the nation from legislating a national Sunday law.

The United Nations

The following article is a quote from a Nazarene magazine called NewsWatch. In its 1994 November/December issue, 4–5, it read, “The French magazine, Foy et Roi, reported from the United Nations Organization in Geneva, Switzerland, that plans are worked out to dissolve the UNO to make way for a World Tribunal... This project and this plan provides for a total unification of church and state, and also provides for a single form of worship. The appointed day for all people will be Sunday. The number received by the people will promise the right to buy or sell.

“At the end of this statement, a Christian rose and asked the speaker, ‘What happens to the minorities who will not accept this plan?’ The Christian was told, ‘Their number will be canceled with a black line and they will be deprived of the right to buy or sell and will thus be forced to destruction.’”

The players that will usher in this New World Order of Church and State are here. While the Christian Coalition increases its influence over America, the Vatican is increasing its influence over the world. The United Nations, the world’s international vehicle, is even speaking about Sunday laws. Beyond the

God said everyone should have a day off a week... Now the European Community is pretending to be God. It is about to decree that EC citizens must take Sundays off.
We welcome this earnest interest in eschatology, but not without first sharing a word of caution regarding an excessive, unhealthy enthusiasm and emphasis that may eclipse the theme of greatest importance—the third angel’s message, which is the message of justification by faith in verity:

"The theme of greatest importance is the third angel’s message, embracing the messages of the first and second angels. All should understand the truths contained in these messages and demonstrate them in daily life, for this is essential to salvation. We shall have to study earnestly, prayerfully, in order to understand these grand truths; and our power to learn and comprehend will be taxed to the utmost." Evangelism, 196. All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.

"Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel’s message, and I have answered, ‘It is the third angel’s message in verity.’" Evangelism, 190.

One of the definitions given by Inspiration regarding justification by faith is found in The Faith I Live By, 111: “What is justification by faith? It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which it is not in his power to do for himself. When men see their own nothingness, they are prepared to be clothed with the righteousness of Christ.”

The New Testament conveyed to us a balance that must exist between: 1) Despising not prophesynings and 2) putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, making not provision for the flesh. See 1 Thessalonians 5:20; Romans 13:14.

The apostle Paul expanded on his view of the meaning of putting on the Lord Jesus Christ when he said: “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.” Colossians 3:12-13.

Human pride and selfishness lay at the very foundation of man’s glory. If ever humanity is to enter in through the gates of heaven, mankind must first abandon their sins. Men must see their own nothingness and be prepared to be clothed with the righteousness of Christ—His character.

Through prophecy, God has given us the warning to avoid the wicked, angry and persecuting character of the beast and king powers of Daniel and Revelation.

Beasts’ and Kings’ Wills Versus the Lamb’s Will
“By a variety of images the Lord Jesus represented to John the wicked character and seductive influence of those who have been distinguished for their persecution of God’s people.” Testimonies to Ministers, 117–118.

“It is the dragon that is wrought; it is the spirit of Satan that is revealed in anger and accusing.” Manuscript Releases, vol. 13, 315.

“Not a semblance of the dragon’s spirit must be seen in the life or the character of Christ’s servants.” Ibid.

The prophetic book of Daniel reveals how Heaven deals with proud and wicked kings such as Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, by humbling them and removing them.

Consequently, when Nebuchadnezzar, the king, spoke and said: “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?” (Daniel 4:30), the Lord, in his love and care sought to humble the proud king and lead him in the path of justification by faith. After seven years of a very humbling experience, he was able to testify: “Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour [not myself, but] the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.” Daniel 4:37.

“The Holy Spirit has so shaped matters, both in the giving of the prophecy and in the events portrayed, as to teach that the human agent is to be kept out of sight, hid in Christ, and that the Lord God of heaven and His law are to be exalted. Read the book of Daniel. Call up, point by point, the history of the kingdoms there represented. Behold statesmen, councils, powerful armies, and see how God wrought to abase the pride of men, and lay human glory in the dust.” Testimonies to Ministers, 112.

Other kingdoms represented by a variety of symbols such as metals, beasts, horns, and kings, were also victims of human pride and selfishness. Men, be they rulers or subjects, have pursued their own wills.

According to His Own Will

In our legitimate effort to expose the identity of these wicked powers, we should not overlook one basic thread they all had in common—the ambition to follow their own will to the ultimate. Here are some examples:

“I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great.” Daniel 8:4.

“And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven.” Daniel 11:3–4.

Many students of Bible prophecy have identified this power of verses 3 and 4 as Alexander, the great Greek general, whose forms to our medical, evangelistic, administrative, educational and printing institutions, we are exalting self over God.

We follow the spirit of the wicked powers in the following ways: when we purposely refuse to follow God’s plan in the way of eating, dressing, conversing, working, resting, and so on; when we humiliate our spouses in order to get our own will done; when we manipulate people in order to exalt our own views; or when we throw a temper tantrum at home, at church or work because someone does not see an issue as we see it.

We reflect the character of these beasts and kings when we despise or exclude people from committees because they oppose our pet projects, and ideas, and when we prohibit people from reading literature not endorsed by their regular or official channels, although the reading material is biblically sound.

The prophet Isaiah understood well how broadly men have followed their own will when he said: “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way.” Isaiah 53:6.

According to His Father’s Will

Although all men have gone astray and have turned to their own ways, I would like now to introduce another King, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Contrary to the beasts and kings in the book of Daniel who did according to their own will, the King of kings, symbolized sometimes as the Lamb of God, always acted in harmony with the will of Jehovah.

“Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.” Isaiah 53:10.

“The will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.” Revised Standard Version

“By his hand shall the Lord’s will advance.” Berkeley

Even before Christ took the nature of fallen humanity, He chose and expressed
We are told by Inspiration that the surrendering of our will to God is not an easy attainment. “The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever fought.”

willing submission to God, His heavenly Father. He said unto them: “How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” Luke 2:49.

Jesus, the King of kings, taught us to do the Father’s will:

“And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.” Luke 11:1–2.

Christ also gave us the example that for Him, His Heavenly Father’s will was supreme:

“In the meanwhile his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish his work.” John 4:31–34.

“I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of Him which hath sent me.” John 5:30.

“For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” John 6:38.

Even as our Saviour came to the last hours of His life, He always maintained this attitude of submission to do His heavenly Father’s will:

“And he was delivered unto them: and when he was set down, he knew that the hour was come, wherein he should depart out of this world unto the Father; and having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.” John 13:1.

And being clothed with humility, possessing that love that is pure, peaceable, 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 unreserved 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.” Testimonies, vol. 3, 106–107.

“It is for you to yield up your will to the will of Jesus Christ; and as you do this, God will immediately take possession, and work in you to will and to do of His good pleasure. Your whole nature will then be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; and even your thoughts will be subject to Him. . . . By yielding up your will to Christ, your life will be hid with Christ in God, and allied to the power which is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from God that will hold you fast to His strength; and a new light, even the light of living faith, will be possible to you. But your will must cooperate with God’s will . . .” Messages to Young People, 152–153.

“As the will of man cooperates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings.” Christ’s Object Lessons, 333.

In the light of our discussion, we must seek “the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.” Isaiah 55:6–7.

The Lord will gladly pardon our stubborn and selfish wills if we are willing to forsake our own ways and thoughts and submit our entire being to His divine control. Then we will be prepared to pray: “Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.” Psalm 143:10.

A Warning and a Promise

In closing, I would like to point out that all these beasts and kings, kingdoms and rulers, were ambitious to do their own will because they loved the world and the things in it. Their goal was to serve self by grasping as much of the world as possible and hanging on to it as long as possible. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, the Seleucids, the Ptolemys sought to gain all, through following their own will, but instead they lost all. They all passed away. However, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who always sought to do His Father’s will, shall never pass away. He is alive! He is the same yesterday, today and forever. He will come soon to redeem those who have learned to submit themselves to the control of the Holy Spirit on a day-by-day, moment-by-moment basis.

In the light of these facts, the words of the apostle John take on a new meaning for each of us:

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” 1 John 2:15–17.

Let us not fail to learn from our study of prophecy, one of its primary lessons—that man’s will must be laid in the dust and only God’s will exalted. It is my prayer that we may submit wholly to God and find a holy pleasure as we go forth to accomplish our heavenly Father’s will. May our experience be: “Delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” Psalm 40:8. ☰

Eschatology is the study of end-time events.
The True Remedies—VI
Proper Diet

"The diet affects both physical and moral health." Healthful Living, 76.

"Is my diet such as will bring me in a position where I can accomplish the greatest amount of good?" Ibid., 78.

"Grains, fruits, nuts, and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. These foods, prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible, are the most healthful and nourishing. They impart a strength, a power of endurance, and a vigor of intellect, that are not afforded by a more complex and stimulating diet." Counsels on Diet and Foods, 81.

"Fruits, grains, and vegetables, prepared in a simple way, free from spice and grease of all kinds, make, with milk and cream, the most healthful diet. They impart nourishment to the body, and give a power of endurance and vigor of intellect that are not produced by a stimulating diet." Healthful Living, 78.

"In the providence of God, every country produces articles of food containing the nourishment necessary for the upbuilding of the system." Counsels on Diet and Foods, 94.

"People cannot all eat the same things. Some articles of food that are wholesome and palatable to one person may be hurtful to another. So it is impossible to make an unvarying rule by which to regulate everyone's dietetic habits." Healthful Living, 78.

"A second meal should never be eaten until the stomach has time to rest from the labor of digesting the preceding meal." Ibid., 84.

"The stomach must have careful attention. . . . After it has done its work for one meal, do not crowd more work upon it before it has had a chance to rest, and before a sufficient supply of gastric juice is provided. Five hours at least should be given between each meal, and always bear in mind that if you would give it a trial, you would find two meals better than three." Ibid., 83-84.

"Most people enjoy better health while eating two meals a day than three; others, under their existing circumstances, may require something to eat at supper time; but this meal should be very light. Let no one think himself a criterion for all, that everyone must do exactly as he does." Ibid., 84.

"It is quite a common custom with the people of the world to eat three times a day, besides eating at irregular intervals between meals; and the last meal is generally the most heartily and is often taken just before retiring. This is reversing the natural order; a hearty meal should never be taken so late in the day. Should these persons change their practice, and eat but two meals a day, and nothing between meals, not even an apple, a nut, or any kind of fruit, the result would be seen in a good appetite and greatly improved health." Ibid.

"At mealtime cast off care and tax ing thought. Do not be hurried, but eat slowly and with cheerfulness, your heart filled with gratitude to God for all His blessings." Ibid., 85.

"Some health reformers are constantly worrying for fear their food, however simple and healthful, will hurt them. To these let me say, Do not think that your food is going to hurt you; but when you have eaten according to your best judgment, and have asked the Lord to bless the food, believe that He has heard your prayer, and be at rest." Ibid.

"In order to have healthy digestion, food should be eaten slowly. Those who wish to avoid dyspepsia, and those who realize the obligation to keep all their powers in a condition which will enable them to render the best service to God, will do well to remember this. If your time to eat is limited, do not bolt your food, but eat slowly, and slowly." Ibid., 86.

"Eat slowly, and allow the saliva to mingle with the food. The more liquid there is taken into the stomach with the meals, the more difficult it is for the food to digest . . . . The benefit you derive from your food does not depend so much on the quantity eaten, as on its thorough digestion, nor the gratification of the taste so much on the amount of food swallowed as on the length of time it remains in the mouth." Ibid., 86-87.

"Taken with meals, water diminishes the flow of the salivary glands; and the colder the water the greater the injury to the stomach. Ice water or iced lemonade, drunk with meals, will arrest digestion until the system has imparted sufficient warmth to the stomach to enable it to take up its work again." Ibid., 89-90.

"Food should not be washed down; no drink is needed with meals. Eat slowly, and allow the saliva to mingle with the food. The more liquid there is taken into the stomach with the meals, the more difficult it is for the food to digest; for the liquid must be first absorbed . . . . Hot drinks are debilitating; and besides, those who indulge in their use become slaves to the habit. . . . Do not eat largely of salt; give up bottled pickles; keep fiery spiced food out of your stomach; eat fruit with your meals, and the irritation which calls for so much drink will cease to exist. But if anything is needed to quench thirst, pure water, drunk some little time before or after a meal, is all that nature requires. . . . Water is the best liquid possible to cleanse the tissues." Ibid., 90.

"I would advise all to take something warm into the stomach every morning at least. You can do this without much labor. You can make graham gruel. If the graham flour is too coarse, sift it, and while the gruel is hot, add milk. This will make a most palatable and healthful dish for the campground. And if your bread is dry, crumb it into the gruel, and it will be enjoyed. I do not approve of eating much cold food, for the reason that the vitality must be drawn from the system to warm the food until it becomes of the same temperature as the stomach before the work of digestion can be carried on. Another very simple yet wholesome dish is beans boiled or baked. Dilute a portion of them with water, add milk or cream, and make a broth; the bread can be used as in graham gruel." Testimonies, vol. 2, 603.

To be continued.

March 1996 Our Firm Foundation 19
In the first article of this series we studied how God is behind the explosion of knowledge in man's understanding of natural law. In the early days of our church, the Lord instructed us to train medical missionary nurses and MD physicians to be the core of our health work. This counsel was undoubtedly given in part because, of all of the differing types of health care workers, this class of workers have best kept pace with the God-ordained explosion of knowledge in natural sciences—anatomy, physiology, chemistry, biochemistry, and so on. As science is discovering how the human body is constructed and how it truly functions in health and disease, many physicians and nurses are adopting some of the principles of health that are in harmony with the revealed truth of the Spirit of Prophecy and Scriptures. This fact is demonstrated by the increasing promotion of high-fiber diets, less animal fat in the diet, exercise for the prevention and treatment of disease, and so on.

Although our core medical missionaries were to be trained nurses and MD physicians, they were to be given the opportunity to know the very best things done by other systems of health care. After being trained in the most up-to-date system of natural science, they were then to adopt all methods of health care that were in harmony, first, with Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy, and then with natural law. The Spirit of the Lord counseled them, "You are not justified in advocating one school [system of health care] above the others, as though it were the only one worthy of respect." Pamphlets in the Concordance, no. 66, 40.

We have examples of how Ellen White related to physicians and to the discoveries of science in her day. Whenever she or her family were ill and needed professional assistance, she tended to ask for help from those who were the most up-to-date in their knowledge of natural law. As advances in modern medicine were made, she related to them in a positive way. She repeatedly acknowledged the legitimate place for surgery, which is frequently associated with anesthetics. See Selected Messages, book 2, 284; Manuscript Releases, vol. 14, 269-270. She herself used or approved the use of coffee (see Selected Messages, book 2, 302-303) and tea (see ibid., 302) if needed, for their medicinal effects. She personally received X-ray treatments (see ibid., 303) for a skin lesion. She received and recommended smallpox vaccination. Ibid. She spoke of the potential benefit of blood transfusions. Ibid. When asked about the use of quinine to save the life of a malaria patient, she is quoted as saying, "We are expected to do the best we can." Ibid., 282. She also referred to "the intelligent use" of "some simple herbs" "that at times are beneficial." Ibid., 294. These, of course, act upon the human body as a medication through a physiological effect.

Ellen White stated that her occasional use of "poisonous" tea as a medicine, but never as a beverage, was in harmony with her messages from the Lord. "I do not preach one thing and practice another. I do not present to my hearers rules of life for them to follow while I make an exception in my own case." Selected Messages, book 2, 302.

Her example reveals that she recognized that methods of diagnosis and treatment based on obedience to natural law can be a part of Heaven's health program when they are needed and when they are available. She related to the development of modern technology in a positive way, resorting to it when it offered the best results possible under the circumstances. Her example reveals that God expects us to prevent...
If the sick and suffering will do only as well as they know in regard to living out the principles of health reform perseveringly, then they will in nine cases out of ten recover from their ailments.

Experience Not Reliable

Some will say that they have used successfully, or they have observed others use successfully, one or more methods of diagnosis and treatment not yet acknowledged as being in harmony with natural law. They accept their successful personal or observed “experience” as evidence of the truthfulness of their methods. Experience alone is not a safe guide in arriving at truth: “Experience is said to be the best teacher. Genuine experience is indeed valuable. But habits and customs gird men and women as with iron bands, and these false habits and customs are generally justified by experience, according to the common understand-

sixty to seventy percent of the time he will feel benefited by that treatment. Also, if one does not have faith in a given treatment, he will feel that he is worse sixty to seventy percent of the time after receiving that treatment. Another confounding factor is that most illnesses get better regardless of the treatment given. A third confusing factor is that usually more than one treatment is given at a time—such as a change

in diet, rest, increased fluids, poultices, herbs, or medication. Thus, without controlled studies it is almost impossible to determine whether or not a given treatment is beneficial, neutral, or counterproductive—for the patient recovering in spite of the treatments. If we are using methods of health care that we know are in harmony with divine revelation and natural law, then we can thank God for the results and not be overly concerned about determining which remedy had which effect. It is too easy to give excess credit to the remedy and not enough to God who has worked through His natural means to bring about the healing.

Divine Guidance

Because of the Spirit of Prophecy, we as Seventh-day Adventists have a tremendous advantage over the world in knowing beneficial and true methods of health care. We are told that after proper instruction in healthful living has been given, “If the sick and suffering will do only as well as they know in regard to living out the principles of health reform perseveringly, then they will in nine cases out of ten recover from their ailments.” Medical Ministry, 224. Thus, the true remedies of “pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power” (Ministry of Healing, 127), along with perhaps charcoal, poultices, massage, simple manipulation, and simple herbs applied in intelligent and rational ways, will get us over the vast majority of our illnesses. The above reference from Medical Ministry, 224, also tells us that there will always be a small percentage of illnesses that will not be cured by the simple remedies.
Some of the above ten percent who are not cured by the simple remedies will respond to the more complex methods of treatment. The methods chosen should be the most widely acknowledged as being rational remedies—that is, in harmony with natural law and divine revelation.

Writing in the Review and Herald of October 11, 1898, Mrs. E. G. White quoted the following report of Elder H. C. Lacey regarding the nurses’ training at Avondale School. “In connection with the other work undertaken by our school, there has been organized this year a special department of physiology and hygiene. This department offers to the student the means of acquiring a practical knowledge of the workings of the wonderful mechanism of the human body, and furnishes an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the most approved methods in the rational treatment of disease. The study of anatomy, the form and structure of the body; of physiology, the use and functions of the various organs; and of hygiene, the laws that underlie their healthful activities, is pursued from a biblical and scientific point of view.

“The object we have before us is the qualifying of laborers to engage in the all-round work of the third angel’s message.”

A practice which we need to avoid is that of overusing, and thus misusing, the more complex remedies of modern technology. Rather than put forth the effort and time to restore our organs to their normal function through the simple, natural remedies readily available to all, we impatiently rush to the doctor desiring a prescription medication to give us a quick cure. This approach is not in harmony with the counsels from the Lord; neither is it in harmony with good science.

Satan first deceived Eve by getting her to believe her senses and her “experience.” After perceiving no evil results from touching the fruit, she proceeded to taste of it. “It was grateful to the taste, and as she ate, she seemed to feel a vivifying power, and imagined herself entering upon a higher state of existence.” Patriarchs and Prophets, 56. Her “experience” in opposition to a direct “Thus saith the Lord” was then used to mislead Adam into error and disobedience. See Health Reformer, 80. In these last days Satan is appealing, and will continue to appeal, to our senses and to our “experiences” to lead us to live and work in disobedience to truth as written by God’s hand in Scripture, the Spirit of Prophecy, and the physical world. If Satan can get us to base our health message and practice on an “experience” that is contrary to a “Thus saith the Lord” in the natural world, he knows that sooner or later he will find it much easier to get us to go contrary to a “Thus saith the Lord” in other areas. Because a method of health care gives seemingly good results is not evidence that it is based on truth and is thus safe to use. The closer we get to Satan’s personation of Christ, the more crucial it becomes that we are certain that our practices and messages are in harmony with truth and that they are not a mere reflection of our “experience,” or that of others.

Emphasize Rational Remedies

There are theories which are not safe for us to handle. We must base our faith upon the “Thus saith the Lord” of the Bible, Spirit of Prophecy, and the true sciences of nature.

“Theories will be brought in that it will not be wise for us to handle. Satan is a cunning worker, and he will bring in subtle fallacies to darken and confuse the mind and root out the doctrines of salvation. . . .”

“The man who makes the working of miracles the test of his faith will find that Satan can, through a species of deceptions, perform wonders that will appear to be genuine miracles. . . .”

“Let not the days pass by and precious opportunities be lost of seeking the Lord with all the heart and mind and soul. If we accept not the truth in the love of it, we may be among the number who will see the miracles wrought by Satan in these last days, and believe them. Many strange things will appear as wonderful miracles, which should be regarded as deceptions manufactured by the father of lies.” Selected Messages, book 2, 53.

The miracle-working abilities of Satan and his agents will necessitate our emphasizing the natural remedies that are effective because they are working through obedience to the natural laws of Christ, the Creator, rather than the supernatural, miracle-working power used by Christ in His ministry on earth:

“The way in which Christ worked was to preach the Word, and to relieve suffering by miraculous works of healing. But I am instructed that we cannot now work in this way, for Satan will exercise his power by working miracles. God’s servants today could not work by means of miracles, because spurious works of healing, claiming to be divine, will be wrought.

“For this reason the Lord has marked out a way in which His people are to carry forward a work of physical healing, combined with the teaching of the Word. Sanitariums are to be established, and with these institutions are to be connected workers who will carry forward genuine medical missionary work. Thus a guarding influence is thrown around those who come to the sanitariums for treatment.

“This is the provision the Lord has made whereby gospel medical missionary work is to be done for many souls.” Ibid., 54.

Part of our task in the giving of the three angels’ messages to every kindred, nation, tongue, and people is to teach natural law and to encourage obedience to it. See Counsels on Health, 21. We are to lead the people in the application of the simple, rational—in harmony with natural laws—remedies. God’s blessing will be upon such work, and it will lead to supernatural results. God’s end-time miracles will be largely related to His blessing in the use of simple, rational remedies.

“God’s miracles do not always bear the outward semblance of miracles. Often they are brought about in a way which looks like the natural course of events. When we pray for the sick, we also work for them. We answer our own prayers by using the remedies within our reach. Water, wisely applied, is a most powerful remedy. As it is used intelligently, favorable results are seen. God has given us intelligence, and He desires us to make the most of His health-giving blessings. We ask that God will give bread to the hungry; we are then to act as His helping hand in relieving hunger. We are to use every blessing God has placed within
our reach for the deliverance of those in danger.

"Natural means, used in accordance with God’s will, bring about supernatural results. We ask for a miracle, and the Lord directs the mind to some simple remedy. We ask to be kept from the pestilence that walketh in darkness, that is stalking with such power through the world; we are then to cooperate with God, observing the laws of health and life. Having done all that we possibly can, we are to keep asking in faith for health and strength. We are to eat that food which will preserve the health of the body.

"God gives us no encouragement that He will do for us what we can do for ourselves. Natural laws are to be obeyed. We are not to fail of doing our part. God says to us, ‘Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.’ Philippians 2:12-13.

"We cannot disregard the laws of nature without disregarding the laws of God. We cannot expect the Lord to work a miracle for us while we neglect the simple remedies He has provided for our use, which apply and opportunely applied, will bring about a miraculous result. Therefore, pray, believe, and work." Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 938-939.

Unsafe Health Care

Even though we may be benefited temporarily by using health care methods unapproved by God, in the end there will be irrecoverable loss:

"Those who give themselves up to the sorcery of Satan may boast of great benefit received thereby, but does this prove their course to be wise or safe? What if life should be prolonged? What if temporal gain should be secured? Will it pay in the end to disregard the will of God? All such apparent gain will prove at last an irrecoverable loss. We cannot with impunity break down a single barrier which God has erected to guard His people from Satan’s power." Testimonies, vol. 5, 199.

We are not justified in looking beyond the most widely accepted understandings of the sciences of anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, and so on, to treatment methods with other explanations of how the body is constructed and how it functions in health and disease. Neither are we justified in the use of methodologies which are not widely acknowledged to work in obedience with the natural laws of the Creator. We have more than enough to keep us busy in the use of the remedies for which we have a clear “Thus saith the Lord.” It is not safe to trust in health care providers who have not the fear of God and whose practices are contrary to the laws of life or natural law:

"It is not safe to trust to physicians who have not the fear of God before them. Without the influence of divine grace the hearts of men are ‘deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.’ Jeremiah 17:9. Self-aggrandizement is their aim. Under the cover of the medical profession what iniquities have been concealed, what delusions supported! The physician may claim to possess great wisdom and marvelous skill, when his character is abandoned and his practice contrary to the laws of life.” Ibid., 194.

When we tamper with spiritualism or hypnosis, in any of their many forms, we lose control of our will at great peril to our eternal well-being:

"In this degenerate age Satan holds control over mortals who depart from the right, and venture upon his ground. He exercises his power upon such in an alarming manner. . . . They do not mean to enter deep into this work, but such know not what they are doing. They are venturing on the devil’s ground, and are tempting him to control them. This powerful destroyer considers such his lawful prey, and will exercise his power upon them, and that against their will. When they wish to control themselves they affirm are wrought by them, they little know what a power for evil they are cherishing; but it is a power which will yet work with all signs and lying wonders—with all deceivableness of unrighteousness. Mark the influence of these sciences, dear reader, for the conflict between Christ and Satan is not yet ended.” Selected Messages, book 2, 351-352.

Yes, indeed, Satan has come down as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. He comes with all subtlety to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. His agents claim that their methods work through the inherent powers of the mind, the energy currents of the body, or through energy fields or magnetism. We need to avoid all such methods, for they do not work, or possibly do not work, because of obedience to natural law. Thus, they are likely to be a “miracle” of Satan by which he is casting his spell upon the soul as well as the body.

Satan approaches us in a hidden manner. He works marvelously upon the bodies of those who tend to do his bidding. He works especially to deceive, if possible, the very elect.

"Satan is preparing his deceptions, that in his last campaign against the people of God they may not understand that it is he. 2 Corinthians 11:14: ‘And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.’

"He is too cunning to come openly, boldly, with his temptations; for then the
The Sacredness of Vows

VOw, and pay unto the Lord your God: let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared." Psalm 76:11. "Come, vow and pay the Lord your God. . . . Bring gifts to honor Him."—Fenton.

For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name. . . . So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows." Psalm 61:5, 8. "For thou hearest my vows, O God, thou grantest the desire of reverent men. And I will ever sing thy praise, paying my vows through all my days." Moffatt. A vow is a "pledge;" it is "a solemn promise especially to God; an engagement solemnly entered into, to adopt a certain course of life, pursue a definite end, observe some moral precept, or surrender oneself to a higher life of holiness." Such a vow is made by every person who becomes a Christian. When we take on the name of Christ we solemnly promise to be like Christ. When we experience the new birth we enter into a pledge to live the new life. It is our duty to make such vows and it is also our duty to sacredly keep them.

Exodus Movement

"When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee. But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee. That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; even a freewill offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the Lord thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth." Deuteronomy 23:21-23.

Here we are told that it is a sin to make a vow unto the Lord and not pay it. This includes oral vows "promised with thy mouth." The Lord made every effort to teach the Israelites that their promises to both God and man should be sacredly kept. If men or women vowed to devote themselves to the service of the Lord, they were obliged to adhere strictly to His service, according to the conditions of the vow. The same was true when they pledged their children to a sacred service as in the case of Hannah and Samuel. "So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the Lord. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head. . . . But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide for ever. . . . Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord. And he worshipped the Lord there." 1 Samuel 1:9-11, 22, 28.

Samuel was her only child and it was a great sacrifice to give him up to the service of the temple from his early boyhood days, but if she had failed, the nation would have been deprived of the service of one of the greatest prophets and judges who ever lived. Hannah fulfilled her vow.

Money Vows

"And Moses spake unto the heads of the tribes concerning the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded. If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth." Numbers 30:1-2.

Then follows instruction that the money vows or pledges made by children are void unless ratified by express or tacit consent of their parents. If the father holds his peace when he hears of the vow of his child his silence confirms the pledge and it is binding. If he immediately disallows the pledge, the vow is made void and the Lord releases the son or daughter from paying it. The same is true regarding the vows of married women without the knowledge and consent of their husbands. When he learns of the vow of his wife, he can confirm it by his silence or
annul it by disallowing it. In the case of a disallowed pledge the promise is, "And the Lord will forgive her," that is, release her from the vow. Verse 12.

Sacred Obligation

The Scriptures make it plain that vows made to the Lord are sacred and therefore binding and payment should not be deferred or put off. "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry with thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?" Ecclesiastes 5:4-6.

The vow should be performed while the sense of the obligation is still fresh and strong in our minds lest the lapse of time should lead us to repent of the promise or even deny that the pledge was made. The reason given why this should not be done is because the Lord has no pleasure in fools; that is "hypocritical and perfidious persons, who, when they are in distress, make liberal vows, and when the danger is past, neglect and break them, and so discover the highest folly, in thinking to mock and deceive the All-seeing and Almighty God." Cruden.

Most vows of loyalty are made when we are in serious trouble or are facing grave danger. For this reason there is a temptation to forget the vow as soon as the danger is over and the deliverance accomplished; but these vows are also binding and obligatory. "I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows, which my lips have uttered; and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble." Psalm 66:13-14.

When the men who manned the ship on which Jonah was fleeing from duty had cast him overboard, "Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows." Jonah 1:16. Whether these vows were kept or not, we are not told. While Jonah was in the belly of the whale he remembered his broken pledges and unpaid vows and promised to pay them if God would deliver him. See Jonah 2:1-9. God delivered him and Jonah kept his promise and through him the Lord saved a great and wicked city from destruction.

Because, even, the vows made while we are in trouble are binding we should be very careful lest in a time of emotional excitement or sudden fear or passion we make rash vows which may be difficult or virtually impossible of fulfillment. A vow should be made deliberately and calmly with the knowledge that we have the power to perform it. If the fulfillment of a financial vow is uncertain it is perfectly proper to make the pledge conditional upon the continuance of the present income, or upon the expectation of money to be received. It is not wrong to make vows, in fact, it is our duty to make them. The admonition is to recognize their sacred and binding nature and be careful. Legitimate and rational vows made in the face of danger are often ignored after the danger is over.

Every Seventh-day Adventist should make the same vow Jacob made. . . . All who observe the Sabbath and thus recognize God as the Creator should also pay tithe and recognize Him as the Possessor of the heavens and the earth.

Jacob's Vow

"And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." Genesis 28:20-22.

Jacob was in serious trouble and only God could help him. He had deceived his father and virtually stolen his brother's birthright from whose wrath he was now fleeing. In his helplessness he cast himself on the Lord, and the Lord had given him a remarkable dream revealing to him the plan of redemption in the image of a ladder. In recognition of God's ownership of all things, Jacob vowed that he would faithfully return to Him the tenth, the tithe. Jacob kept his promise and the Lord gave him what he asked for and more too. His character was transformed as the result of his experience with the angel at the brook; he was reconciled to his angry brother, and became the father of the twelve tribes of Israel. The promise to

March 1996  Our Firm Foundation  25
Vow of Zacchaeus

"And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycomore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:1-10. "Here and now, ness to the soul.” The price is too great for such meager results.

All Obligations Are Vows

There are those who are unwilling to make even conditional pledges to the support of the church when they are constantly making vows to their fellow men. Every financial obligation and promise is a vow. This includes the monthly rent or payments on a contract and all other weekly, monthly or yearly payments or obligations, such as telephone, light, water, gas, coal, grocery and other bills. We cannot do business without making promises or vows to our fellow men and it is proper that we should do so providing we pay them and refuse to enter into any arrangement that we cannot live up to. This is where the instruction of Deuteronomy 23:21-23 and Ecclesiastes 5:4-6, especially applies. Why should we be so willing to make so many vows for our own benefit and then refuse to make pledges to finance God’s cause? Such a course is inconsistent and unfair to others who are bearing the burdens in a businesslike manner.

Your baptismal vow is sacred and binding. In it you promised to forsake the world and all its foolishness and follies and cling to Christ alone till death. . . . Are you loyal, or are you drifting and breaking your baptismal vows?

Master, I give half my property to the poor, and if I have unjustly exacted money from any man, I pledge myself to repay to him four times the amount.” Weymouth.

Zacchaeus made this vow to Jesus in the presence of the multitude who were murmuring because Jesus was accepting the hospitality of one they considered a “notorious sinner.” Restitution is one of the chief evidences of genuine conversion; it is one of the fruits meet for repentance. When genuine Christianity begins, all dishonesty ends. Zacchaeus kept his vow although it left him a poor man in material wealth, but immensely rich in happiness and spiritual treasure. Poverty of soul is a far greater calamity than material poverty. Getting what we deprived appetites and passions lust for at the price of dishonesty brings “lean-

promise payment at a certain time are bound by the sacred obligations of a vow or pledge which should be strictly kept. A person has no right to employ another or others unless they are able to pay their wages. If there is any uncertainty about the time of payment it should be made known to the person employed before he begins his services. This is strict Christian honesty and should be carefully adhered to by all Christians.

A genuine Christian should faithfully live up to his or her marriage vows: “Do you covenant to live together in the relation of husband and wife, forsaking all others, promise to love, cherish and protect each other in sickness and in health; clinging to each other in adversity as well as in prosperity until death shall separate you?” Are you husbands and wives strictly loyal to that marriage vow which is sacred and binding?

Your baptismal vow is sacred and binding. In it you promised to forsake the world and all its foolishness and follies and cling to Christ alone till death. Those who are baptized into this movement thereby vow to be loyal to the principles and teachings of the message, which is God’s special message for this time. Are you loyal, or are you drifting and breaking your baptismal vows?

Condition of Eternal Life

“If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live.” Ezekiel 33:15-16.

Only those who make full restitution for dishonest dealings and who “restore the pledge” or pay their vows to both God and man are promised eternal life. The seriousness of breaking a promise or pledge is illustrated in the experience of Ananias and Sapphira. See Acts 5:1-11. They pledged the entire proceeds of a piece of property and then withheld part of the price and the Lord visited upon them terrible judgments for refusing to pay their vow.

The last days are to be characterized by laxity in paying vows and meeting obligations. It is a generation of “liars” and “falsebreakers” or covenant breakers. They do not keep their promises.
Sacred and Binding

"At stated periods, in order to preserve the integrity of the law, the people (of Israel) were interviewed as to whether they had faithfully performed their vows or not. A conscientious few made returns to God of about one third of all their income for the benefit of religious interests and for the poor. . . . There must be an awakening among us as a people upon this matter. There are but few men who feel conscious-stricken if they neglect their duty in beneficence. But few feel remorse of soul because they are daily robbing God. . . . There are many neglected vows and unpaid pledges, and yet how few trouble their minds over the matter; how few feel the guilt of this violation of duty. We must have new and deeper convictions on this subject. The conscience must be aroused, and the matter receive earnest attention; for an account must be rendered to God in the last day, and His claims must be settled." Testimonies, vol. 4, 467–468.

"Although no visible marks of God’s displeasure follow the repetition of the sin of Ananias and Sapphira now, yet the sin is just as heinous in the sight of God, and will as surely be visited upon the transgressor in the day of judgment; and many will feel the curse of God even in this life. When a pledge is made to the Lord, to give a certain amount, they are the visible witnesses of a contract made between ourselves and God. The pledge is not made to man, but to God, and is as a written note given to a neighbor. No legal bond is more binding upon the Christian for the payment of money, than a pledge made to God.

"Persons who thus pledge to their fellow-men, do not generally think of asking to be released from their pledges. A vow made to God, the Giver of all favors, is of still greater importance; then why should we seek to be released from our vows to God? Will man consider his promise less binding because made to God? Because his vow will not be put to trial in courts of justice, is it less valid? Will a man who professes to be saved by the blood of the infinite sacrifice of Jesus Christ, ‘rob God’? Are not his vows and his actions weighed in the balances of justice in the heavenly courts?" Ibid., 469–470.

Let us join the Psalmist in saying: "My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear Him." "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people." Psalms 22:25; 116:18

We must have new and deeper convictions on this subject. The conscience must be aroused, and the matter receive earnest attention; for an account must be rendered to God in the last day, and His claims must be settled.

Health Emphasis Week at Hope International

RECENTLY, Dr. Phil Collins spent a week at our Eatonville headquarters and shared with us a series of messages on health which are especially important as we enter the closing scenes of this earth’s history. Dr. Collins holds a Ph.D. in Health Science from Loma Linda University and is a health educator employed by Park Ridge (SDA) Hospital in North Carolina. These messages are a rich source of scientific documentation of the validity of our health reform message. Indeed, we have nothing of which to be ashamed in the inspired messages of health as found in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.

You can now obtain these ten presentations, available on VHS video tapes or audio cassettes.

Helping Americans Prevent America’s Diseases

Topics:
Consequences of Fatigue
The Protein Myth
Tune Up Your Diet
Sugar, Your Sweet Enemy
Fat! And You—parts 1, 2, and 3
Walk! Don’t Run
Drink Your Water
Sunshine in the Fresh Air

Video—two tapes, only $25.00 per set
Audio—ten tapes, only $25.00 per set

See page 3 for shipping and sales tax information.
The Christian Warfare

FINALLY, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” Ephesians 6:10–13.

Every Christian must take a part in the warfare against sin. The enemies of God would crush His Law. They hate it because it reproves their sins. A profligate man once said that he wished all evidences of the truth to be destroyed; for they were so convincing that they could not be controverted. So today many cry, “Away with the Law of God!” for the same reason that the Jews, in condemning Jesus, cried, “Away with this man!” The Word of God rebukes iniquity, and His Law condemns the lawbreaker. “Sin is the transgression of the law,” John declares. 1 John 3:4. The Law is the sin-detector, and therefore the very mention of the Commandments of God stirs up the evil attributes of him who is willfully sinning against God.

A single mention of God’s Law is a sting to the conscience of such men. A single sentence of Holy Writ, which expresses the binding claims and the immutability of the Law of God, drives them beside themselves with rage. The words, “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul” (Psalm 19:7); “Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments” (chapter 19:6); “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law” (verse 18), cause them to be stirred to madness. They make no such prayer, but close the eyes of their understanding, lest they shall see, and be convinced and converted.

During our recent camp meeting at Adelaide, two men took their stand on the street just outside the entrance to the camp ground, and preached against the truth. They were men who had before fought like tigers against the truth, and had exulted in their supposed victory; and now the evidence for the truth was so strong that they wished to storm it down. They interrupted the meetings, and made a tirade against the truth. The people were indignant at these interruptions; they wished to hear what was said in the tent; and finally the police took the matter in hand, and there were no more outbreaks. But though these disorderly elements were at work, we knew that the Lord had a work to be done, and we went right on, making no reference to the persistent opposition. Our work was to preach the truth.

From hour to hour those who work to promulgate the truth must depend on the blessing which comes from God, and from God only. And just in proportion as we have faith and trust in God, we shall receive blessings in rich abundance. The blessing of the Holy Spirit will be on the truth, which is proclaimed in the sight of the heavenly universe, and heaven’s light will shine forth to elevate and ennoble.

Many things were said against Mrs. White during the Adelaide meeting. Soon after my work there commenced, an article appeared in one of the papers, representing me as among the greatest fanatics. But these things disturbed me not. God is our Refuge and Strength. He teaches us where we may hide from the strife of tongues; if we will let Him, He will lead us into His pavilion. Our lives, hid with Christ in God, will be refreshed and strengthened.

Ellen G. White
Those who hate the Law of Jehovah reveal that they have carnal minds, which are not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. This is not for want of proof, but because of the stubborn resistance of their unbelieving hearts—not because of ignorance, but because they have set their feet in the path of transgression. It is not evidence that they need; for they have had evidence piled upon evidence, and it has only rendered them more desperate, abusive, and cruel in their denunciations. They are determined not to turn their feet out of the path of sin into the path of holiness; they will not run in the way of God’s Commandments. They have cast the Lord’s instruction behind their backs, and they manifest the attributes of the destroyer. This is the root and groundwork of all the terrible hatred against the Law of Jehovah. We have this hatred to meet, but if we arm ourselves against our assailants with, “It is written,” we are in no peril. It was thus that Christ met the foe, and He says, “Without me ye can do nothing.” John 15:5. We must have the mind which was in Jesus. Read what composes the Christian’s armor. See Ephesians 6:11-18. Take this armor and put it on, trusting in God to give you the victory.

When the Lord Jesus visited our earth, He brought with Him renovating energy. He put enmity between the seed of the woman and the serpent. But there is no enmity between fallen angels and fallen men. Both, through apostasy, are evil; and wherever there is evil, with no disposition to repent, it will always league with Satan against God. Fallen men and fallen angels unite in a desperate struggle to destroy God’s Great Standard of Righteousness. There was a bond of sympathy among the angels that Satan succeeded in drawing into rebellion, and he made them his allies in the effort to dethrone God and to abolish His Law. Satan’s work in our world today is to destroy the moral image of God in man, by making void the Divine Law; and our enemies are inspired by his spirit. By casting aside God’s Great Standard of Character, he can degrade human nature, and win men and women to his standard; for, “Where no law is, there is no transgression.” Romans 4:15. With what triumph, then, he watches the professedly Christian world, as they earnestly do the very work he is doing.

As God’s servants strive to fight against the enemy of God, Christ must be to each one of them a personal Saviour. Each one must experience His pardoning grace. The tree of life is a representation of the preserving care of Christ for His children. As Adam and Eve ate of this tree, they acknowledged their dependence upon God. The tree of life possessed the power to perpetuate life, and as long as they ate of it, they could not die. The lives of the antediluvians were protracted because of the life-giving power of this tree.

My brother, my sister, Jesus is inviting you to become a branch of the Living Vine. He is calling upon you to connect with Him, that in His strength you may do His Commandments. You have tried to sever yourself from Him, but you have not succeeded. God loves you, and would have you sit at His feet and learn of Him. His forgiveness, compassion, and long-suffering are represented to the world in Christ. If Christ had not paid the ransom for our souls, we would not have had a probation in which to develop characters of obedience to God’s Commandments. Then do not disappoint Christ by perversity and unbelief. Appreciate God’s Gift to man. Show that you understand what your probation means. It means life or death to each one of us. By our daily conduct we are deciding our eternal destiny.

It is not toil that degrades men, or that ranks them among the outcasts of society; it is sin. Adam, pure and innocent, and fresh from the hand of God, was given his work. This work did not deplete him. While he was engaged in his appointed work, he never thought of hiding from God, but responded as soon he heard His footsteps in the garden, and hastened to shorten the distance between him and his Maker. What precious communings he had with God! But after he sinned, he feared that every sound was the footstep of God. He did not want to see God, and when he heard Him coming, he did not hasten to meet Him, but hid himself. “And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?” Genesis
3:9-11. This, then, was the reason. He had broken the command of God; and the light of righteousness that had encompassed him as a garment had disappeared, leaving him naked, and he was afraid to meet God. Sin is the only nakedness, the only degradation, the only dishonor, that we can know; it is the only thing that will make us afraid to meet God. After transgressing God's commands, man was excluded from the tree of life; for by eating of it, he would only prolong a life of sin. But Christ has promised, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Revelation 2:7. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Chapter 22:14.

God sent Christ into the world to redeem men from sin. Shall we not, then, accept the society of the only begotten Son of God? The sinner is privileged to recognize Christ as his divine and adorable Brother, but this relationship cannot be claimed while he continues to cherish sin. If you will cast your burden upon Christ, the Sin-bearer, He will remove your sins, and irradiate your mind with the bright beams of His righteousness. Then you will no longer look upon the requirements of God as briers and thorns which pierce the flesh. When you consider thoughtfully the Commandments of God, when you behold God in Jesus Christ, you will turn from the deceptions of Satan. You will acknowledge the truth which sanctifies the receiver, and a marvelous change will be wrought in you. The prejudices and jealousies which have proved your stumbling block and spoiled your life will vanish.

Religion does not consist in observing mere forms. A religion that has been handed down to us by our teachers, and which we have received only as a part of our education, will not stand against the devices of Satan. Religion must be conviction, deep and penetrating, crucifying the flesh. As the blood circulates through the body in a vitalizing current, so Christ must be received into the heart. What will avail any soul unless Christ is received into the heart by faith? Of all who thus receive Him the Word declares, "To them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." John 1:12.

The Commandments of God are not the dry theories and maxims growing on the trunk of Phariseeism. Every jot and tittle of the Law of God is a pledge of perfect rest and assurance in obedience. If you will obey these Commandments, you will find, in every specification, a most precious promise. Take Jesus as your Partner. Ask of Him help to keep God's Law. He will be to you a Safeguard and Counselor, a Guide that will never mislead.

There is no safe armor for the Christian but truth. This will be our safeguard in our associations with our fellow men. Our convictions must be true; our feelings must be true. We need to make sure that we are on the Lord's side in the warfare that is going forward on this earth. Truth must become our personal property, a part of our individual selves, if we would fight manfully the good fight of faith. If God's truth is cherished as an abiding principle, it will keep watch over our souls, and will send an alarm if danger threatens, summoning us to action against every enemy. But no power but truth—steadfast, pure truth—can keep us loyal to God. The simple truth of God, as it is in Jesus, brought into the practical life, will elevate and refine; but if it is not rooted in the heart, we cannot stand against evil. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ alone can make us steadfast to true principles and keep us so.

Review and Herald, January 26, 1897.

God's Plan of Rational Remedies
Continued from 23

A False Latter Rain

We are warned that just preceding the loud cry, a spurious revival promoting doctrinal error will come in among us:

"It is Satan's object now to get up new theories to divert the mind from the true work and genuine message for this time. He stirs up minds to give false interpretation of Scripture, a spurious loud cry, that the real message may not have its effect when it does come. This is one of the greatest evidences that the loud cry will soon be heard and the earth will be lightened with the glory of God." Selected Messages, book 3, 410.

Those among us who apostatize will use hypnotism to mislead others:

"The time has come when even in the church and in our institutions, some will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. . . . "Let us bear a plain, clear testimony right to the point, that hypnotism is being used by those who have departed from the faith, and that we are not to link up with them. Through those who depart from the faith, the power of the enemy will be exercised to lead others astray." Ibid., 411.

In the end-time, apostate Adventists will use the miracle working power of the devil to attempt to deceive us with healings not based on natural law:

"Those who look for miracles as a sign of divine guidance are in grave danger of deception. It is stated in the Word that the enemy will work through his agents who have departed from the faith, and they will seemingly work miracles, even to the bringing down of fire out of heaven in the sight of men. By means of 'lying wonders' Satan would deceive, if possible, the very elect." Ibid., book 3, 408-409.

We are warned that those who are not living in harmony with the natural laws of health reform will interpret Satan's snares as being the providence of God:

"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." Testimonies, vol. 3, 491.

There must be no spiritual stupidity. We need to keep ourselves clear from all practices that may be using hypnotism and/or the electric currents of Satan. Once we yield ourselves to the methods of Satan, we are increasingly susceptible to his power. Only through a knowledge of and surrender to every truth of God, as written in Inspiration and in nature, will we be protected from the miracle-working power of Satan and his agents. It is the prayer of this author that each one of us will be protected from the deceptive "miracles" of Satan as he works with all cunning and deceivableness in the area of health care and false doctrines to bring Seventh-day Adventists to the test.
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Just a few lines to say that the Firm Foundation is just great. Keep up the good work, for we have not much time left. I wish I could do more.  CL, Ohio

We enjoy getting your magazine. Keep up the blessed work. We need it. I enjoyed the dress reform article, even though I am struggling personally with the practical how-to's when it is cold, living in the mountains and not being able to afford to run out and get the warm hose, etc.  CF, California

Recently I attended a camp meeting where I picked up one of your publications, Our Firm Foundation, and after reading it and being most interested, the Lord has directed me to forward to you $150 for the further progress of your good work. I have since arranged a subscription locally, and look forward to receiving it.  AL, Australia

Enclosed is $1,000 to aid with overseas literature requests. This is a once-in-a-lifetime donation, so although it is relatively small, I am asking the Lord’s blessing upon it as upon your work.  DM, Florida

Enclosed find a check for $175. $100 is for the gospel ministry here and overseas—whichever needs it most. (Maybe to buy paper to print our message on?) The Lord is so good to us, and we just want to share our money with others. The Lord bless you all.  HS, Wisconsin

Please send me the copy of Rome’s Challenge and Heralds of Peace and anything else you have that will explain how Sunday was instituted for God’s true worship day.  DR, North Carolina

I pray that the Lord will bless Our Firm Foundation where we can still have a straight truth in the SDA Church. It is still God’s church and will be until the end.  KB, North Carolina

We hope you are beginning this new year in good spirits. May God’s Holy Spirit be with you as you work to lead others to Jesus.  JT, Wisconsin

Thanks for the great work you are doing in propagating the message of the eternal kingdom of God. I have just finished reading your tabloid, Earth’s Final Warning, which I borrowed from a friend, and I must confess that I have never seen our messages so precisely and compactly presented. God bless you.

I will be grateful if you can send me more of your publications so that I can share with my friends. Also, I will appreciate it if you can send me a set of the “Conflict of the Ages” series, as well as copies of Rome’s Challenge, and Heralds of Peace.

Our church has no printing press in this country. Our only source of these books is through importation, which when they manage to come in are particularly expensive due to government regulations, as well as foreign exchange bottlenecks.

As it is now, except I get these books from godly people like you, I might never read them for the rest of my life, and I am also speaking for thousands of youth like me who are burning for Christ.

I am on the staff of one of the leading banks in the country, and for the past three years, I have been the clerk of my church.  AO, Lagos

May I have at least 100 of the tracts of health information about Pure Air, Sunlight, Abstemiousness, Rest, Exercise, Proper Diet, Water, and Trust in Divine Power?

I was asked to teach the people at our church this year. I am the health and temperance leader. If you also have other information about healthful living which you think I can use, please send it to me.

I also study with other people outside the church. Some people are asking for Bibles. If I do not know if you have some. May I please have about eight Bibles?

May the Lord bless you as you continue to work for Him.  Zimbabwe

We would like to encourage you to consider making a donation toward “Literature Assistance.” Each month Hope International sends out several thousand dollars worth of free literature. Yet we still have requests beyond our capacity to fill. If you have extra Bibles that are in good condition, preferably the King James Version, we can also use them for requests such as the one above.—Editors

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6.

“If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore.” Psalm 132:12.

Bible passages like the above remind us of the importance of teaching our children the way of the Lord while they are yet young. That is why Hope International is moving forward with the idea of holding youth meetings at many of Hope’s speaking engagements. We hope and pray that these meetings will encourage our youth to lift up their eyes and behold the love of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Additional funds will be needed to cover travel and lodging costs. If you are interested in supporting this project, please send your donations to Hope International, marked “Youth Ministry.”
# Selected Sermons

## 1995 Camp Meetings

and Other Selected Presentations

**Video and Audio Tapes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Video Price</th>
<th>Audio Price</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ray DeCarlo</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>$5.00*</td>
<td><em>Give Glory to Him; The Law and the Sabbath: Meeting Objections (1 video tape or 2 audio tapes)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen Dickie</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td><em>God's Farm; We Still Believe; Faith or Presumption; Mission Spotlight (1 video tape or 4 audio tapes)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron Goss</td>
<td>$11.00</td>
<td>$7.50</td>
<td><em>A Command and a Privilege; The Last Party; Your Day in Court (1 video tape or 3 audio tapes)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ralph Larson</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td><em>Having These Promises; Highest of Our High Calling; The Better Sacrifice; The Atonement (1 video tape or 4 audio tapes)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hal Mayer</td>
<td>$8.00</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td><em>The Two Mysteries (1 tape)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Pippenger</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
<td>$12.50</td>
<td><em>Information Overload; The Prophetic Catalyst; The Impending Sunday Law; Boiling the Frogs; None Shall Help (1 video tape or 5 audio tapes)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evan Sadler</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td><em>Looking Outward; Religious Liberty (1 video tape or 2 audio tapes)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vernon Sparks</td>
<td>$11.00</td>
<td>$7.50</td>
<td><em>The Hole of the Pit Whence Ye Are Digged; The Rock Whence Ye Are Hewn; Ye That Follow After Righteousness (1 video tape or 3 audio tapes)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron Spear</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td><em>1888 Re-Examined; The Sealing (1 video tape or 2 audio tapes)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colin Standish</td>
<td>$11.00</td>
<td>$7.50</td>
<td><em>Teach Me to Pray; The Cleansing of the Sanctuary; Study the Word (1 video tape or 3 audio tapes)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russell Standish</td>
<td>$11.00</td>
<td>$7.50</td>
<td><em>Am I a Legalist?; Go Ye Into All the World; Why Grace Is Not Enough (1 video tape or 3 audio tapes)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Deception, Deceit, Lies, and Guile; A Form of Godliness; Romans 7 and 8 (1 video tape or 3 audio tapes)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russell Standish</td>
<td>$11.00</td>
<td>$7.50</td>
<td><em>Pentecost; The 144,000; Blow the Trumpet in Zion (1 video tape or 3 audio tapes)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Wehr</td>
<td>$13.00</td>
<td>$12.50</td>
<td><em>Diminish Not a Word; Religious Liberty; The Temple of the Lord (1 video tape or 3 audio tapes)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>The Holy Spirit, parts 1, 2; Daniel for Our Day; The Two Beasts Clasping Hands; In Defense of Religious Liberty (1 video tape or 5 audio tapes)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Audio cassette prices: If you wish to purchase one or two sermons from a multi-tape set, please add 50 cents extra per tape.

Please see page 3 for shipping and tax charges.

---

**Hope International**

P.O. Box 940

Eatonville, WA 98328

Address Correction Requested