Experiencing Character Perfection

Returning From the Dead

A Sudden Revolution: What Happened to the Worldwide Church of God?

See Page 3
THE Sabbath has been a landmark of the Seventh-day Adventist Church since 1846 when Joseph Bates introduced it to the small group who had survived the great disappointment of 1844. In the beginning they kept it from midnight to midnight. Then they discovered that God measured days from sundown to sundown. See Genesis 1; Leviticus 23:32.

As a boy growing up in an Adventist home, I came under the strong spiritual influence of my mother. The family altar was sacrately kept morning and evening. Even though we were busy with chores on the farm, she diligently prepared for the Sabbath. Baking and cooking was done on the Sabbath. On Friday afternoon, before the sun set, the baths were taken, shoes were shined, and our clothes were in order. Our house was a humble abode—but it was swept clean for the Sabbath. Mother was a musician, so the piano, along with our voices, ushered in the beginning and ending of the Sabbath hours.

Today, we boast of 8½ million souls as being members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but how many of them have been instructed in proper Sabbathkeeping? How many of those millions have a sacred altar in their home?

We wonder why we are losing so many of our precious youth to the world. Many of them are the product of the worldliness of the home without the family altar. Many of them were sent off to boarding academies and colleges where they found very little spiritual support, and where there was very little true Sabbathkeeping. In some places the pastors have allowed athletic games and swimming during the sacred Sabbath hours. Some people go to restaurants to eat after the church service. Business is sometimes discussed on the church steps.

In some cases, after cookies and punch—in churches, small and large—many use the Sabbath hours for worldly socializing. Could there be a tendency for our church to become just a social club—like many of the evangelical, charismatic churches? We find that in the days of Jeremiah the breaking of the Sabbath brought a curse upon the church:

"Thus saith the Lord; Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers. But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction." Jeremiah 17:21-23.

"The Sabbath question is to be the issue in the great final conflict in which all the world will act a part. Men have honored Satan's principles above the principles that rule in the heavens. They have accepted the spurious sabbath, which Satan has exalted as the sign of his authority. But God has set His seal upon His royal requirement. Each Sabbath institution bears the name of its Author, an ineffaceable mark that shows the authority of each. It is our work to lead the people to understand this. We are to show them that it is of vital consequence whether they bear the mark of God's kingdom or the mark of the kingdom of rebellion, for they acknowledge themselves subjects of the kingdom whose mark they bear. God has called us to uplift the standard of His downtrodden Sabbath. How important, then, that our example in Sabbathkeeping should be right." Testimonies, vol. 6, 352-353.

Surely it would be well for each of us to review the complete chapter in Testimonies, vol. 6, 349-368, entitled "The Observance of the Sabbath."

"Jeremiah called their attention repeatedly to the counsels given in Deu-

teronomy. More than any other of the prophets, he emphasized the teachings of the Mosaic law and showed how these might bring the highest spiritual blessing to the nation and to every individual heart. 'Ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein,' he pleaded, 'and ye shall find rest for your souls.' Jeremiah 6:16." Prophets and Kings, 411.

Do we believe that the church today can continue to backslide in Sabbathkeeping and escape the judgments of God? Again, Inspiration speaks to us:

"As the Sabbath was the sign that distinguished Israel when they came out of Egypt to enter the earthly Canaan, so it is the sign that now distinguishes God's people as they come out from the world to enter the heavenly rest. The Sabbath is a sign of the relationship existing between God and His people, a sign that they honor His law. It distinguishes between His loyal subjects and transgressors." Testimonies, vol. 6, 349-350.

The Sabbath is to be the great test for all Seventh-day Adventists, and for all the people of the world, as we come to the judgment of the living. The mark of the beast and Sunday laws will bring the test to every Seventh-day Adventist:

"Already preparations are advancing, and movements are in progress, which will result in making an image to the beast. Events will be brought about in the earth's history that will fulfill the predictions of prophecy for these last days." Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 976.

Only those who have prayerfully developed the character of Jesus and have kept the Sabbath carefully, by the power of the Holy Spirit, will endure through the time of trouble and be saved.

May God help us to be true Seventh-day Adventists and to keep the Sabbath fully.

Ron Spear—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

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In the midst of the ongoing discussion regarding character perfection, some sincere souls, prompted by the conviction of the Holy Spirit, are compelled to ask, If character perfection is an attainable goal, how can I enter into such an experience?

Our value as human beings, in the judgment of God, is referred to as our moral worth. It is the measurement in the balances of God of our moral character. Our character consists of how we tend to think and feel, as manifested in words and actions, in response to the varied stimuli to our higher mental powers or faculties of discernment, conscience, and will.

A perfect Christlike character is the only thing that can be taken from this earth to heaven. Nothing less than a spotless character will be given entrance into eternal life:

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Hebrews 12:14.

"We can never see our Lord in peace, unless our souls are spotless. We must bear the perfect image of Christ." Review and Herald, May 30, 1882.

"Our characters must be molded in harmony with Christ's character; our wills must be surrendered to His will. Then we shall sit together in heavenly places with Him." Pacific Union Recorder, March 26, 1903.

A perfect character is not born full grown. Like a plant it begins small and matures with cultivation and growth, but it is perfect at every stage of growth. Just as ours must grow, Christ's spiritual nature followed the divine order of growth—inmature, but perfect at every stage:

"The example of Jesus is a light to the young, as well as to those of mature years; for His was a representative childhood and youth. From His earliest years His example was perfect. In both His physical and His spiritual nature He followed the divine order of growth illustrated by the plant, as He wishes all youth to do. Although He was the Majesty of heaven, the King of glory, He became a babe in Bethlehem, and for a time represented the helpless infant in its mother's care. In childhood He did the works of an obedient child. He spoke and acted with the wisdom of a child, and not of a man, honoring His parents, and carrying out their wishes in helpful ways, according to the ability of a child. But at each stage of His development He was perfect, with the simple, natural grace of a sinless life. The sacred record says of His childhood, 'The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him.' Luke 2:40. And of His youth it is recorded, 'Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.' Luke 2:52." The Youth's Instructor, May 25, 1909.

Christ's character was made perfect through suffering:

"The Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering. Was He not perfect before?—Yes. But He was made a perfect Saviour, learning obedience by the things which He suffered, that humanity might have a perfect character and be fitted for the society of the angels of Heaven. Man was not able, in his own behalf, to meet and overcome the prince of darkness; but Christ overcame him in man's behalf and broke his power over the human race, so that through His merits they might be overcomers in their own behalf." The Signs of the Times, May 20, 1889.

Christ is our Example in all things. Possessing our corrupt flesh, He was a Brother in our infirmities, but His sancti-
fied higher powers recoiled from evil, and, through the enabling grace from His Father, His spiritual nature or character never accepted or possessed the passions of His flesh:

“Our Saviour identifies Himself with our needs and weaknesses, in that He became a Suppliant, a nightly Petitioner, seeking from His Father fresh supplies of strength, to come forth invigorated and refreshed, braced for duty and trial. He is our Example in all things. He is a Brother in our infirmities, but not in possessing like passions. As the sinless One, His nature recoiled from evil. He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and privilege. He required all the stronger divine support and comfort which His Father was ready to impart to Him.” Testimonies, vol. 2, 201-202.

Christ worked out the problem of how fallen human nature could fully obey God’s law. Therefore, we can live His life in the human nature that we possess—once we are born again:

“Satan claimed that it was impossible for human beings to keep God’s law. In order to prove the falsity of this claim, Christ left His high command, took upon Himself the nature of man, and came to the earth to stand at the head of the fallen race, in order to show that humanity could withstand the temptations of Satan. He became the Head of humanity, to be assaulted with temptations on every point as fallen human nature would be tempted, that He might know how to succor all who are tempted. On this earth He worked out the problem of how to live in accordance with God’s standard of right. Bearing our nature, He was true to God’s standard of righteousness, gaining the victory over Satan. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet He was without sin.” The Upward Look, 172.

Just as we may do, Christ wrought out a perfect character:

“Christ came, and in the likeness of man wrought out before the world a perfect character, that the world may be without excuse.” Manuscript Releases, vol. 9, 125.

Christ’s life shows that we also can obtain and maintain perfection of character:

“Christ is the Captain of our salvation. ‘It became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.’ Hebrews 2:10. The suffering that poured in upon the Son of God is beyond anything that man will be called to endure; yet Christ overcame, and perfected a spotless character. By His suffering and resistance He made plain to man that perfection of character can be obtained and maintained by humanity.” The Youth’s Instructor, December 28, 1899.

God calls us to reach the standard of character perfection modeled by Christ:

“None need fail of attaining, in His sphere, to perfection of Christian character. By the sacrifice of Christ, provision has been made for the believer to receive all things that pertain to life and godliness. God calls upon us to reach the standard of perfection and places before us the example of Christ’s character. In His humanity, perfected by a life of constant resistance of evil, the Saviour showed that through cooperation with Divinity, human beings may in this life attain to perfection of character. This is God’s assurance to us that we, too, may obtain complete victory.” Acts of the Apostles, 531.

The Bible and its revelation of Christ’s character reveal to us our defects of character:

“No man, woman, or youth can attain to Christian perfection and neglect the study of the Word of God. By carefully and closely searching His Word we shall obey the injunction of Christ, ‘Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.’ John 5:39. This search enables the student to closely observe the divine Model, for they testify of Christ. The Pattern must be inspected often and closely in order to imitate it. As one becomes acquainted with the history of the Redeemer, he discovers in himself defects of character; his unlikeness to Christ is so great that he sees he cannot be a follower without a very great change in his life.” Review and Herald, November 28, 1878.

God’s holy law is the mirror that reveals our moral blemishes:

“There are temptations that will come to every one of us. We all have our different dispositions to overcome, and how are we to know that we are doing this work day by day? We must look into the mirror—God’s holy law—and there discover the defects in our characters. It is a very difficult thing for one to understand himself. We must examine closely to see if there is not something that must
used in the advancement of His work. In His providence He brings these souls into different positions and varied circumstances, that they may discover the defects that are concealed from their own knowledge. He gives them opportunity to overcome these defects and to fit themselves for service.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 524.

For us to condemn sin in the flesh, as did Christ, we must have a sanctified will, an illuminated conscience, and a Spirit-guided reason—the mind of Christ:

“By conversion and transformation men are to receive the mind of Christ. Every one is to stand before God with an individual faith, an individual experience, knowing for himself that Christ is formed within, the hope of glory.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 428.

As was Christ’s, our higher powers must be born of the Holy Spirit:

“When we are born from above, the same mind will be in us that was in Jesus, the mind that led Him to humble Himself that we might be saved.” *Desire of Ages*, 330–331.

As we partake of Christ’s divine nature, the hereditary, as well as the cultivated appetites, passions, tendencies, propensities, and so forth, of sin are removed from the character. Just as Christ’s higher powers repulsed all the propensities to sin in the fallen flesh, our spiritual natures, our characters, need not retain one sinful propensity. This transformation is the work of is in the world through lust. Then we are cleansed from all sin, all defects of character. We need not retain one sinful propensity. Christ is the Sin-Bearer; John pointed the people to Him, saying, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.’ John 1:29. And Paul declared, ‘You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, . . . and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.’ Ephesians 2:1–6.

“As we partake of the divine nature, hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong are cut away from the character, and we are made a living power for good.” *Review and Herald*, April 24, 1900.

Character perfection involves the taking away of the objectionable traits:

“Giving up the life to Christ means much more than many suppose. God calls for an entire surrender. We cannot re-

Every one is to stand before God with an individual faith, an individual experience, knowing for himself that Christ is formed within, the hope of glory.

Christ, the Sin-Bearer, the Lamb of God which taketh away our sins:

“In His prayer to the Father, Christ said, ‘This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.’ John 17:3. We must learn of Christ. We must know what He is to those He has ransomed. We must realize that through belief in Him it is our privilege to be partakers of the divine nature, and so escape the corruption that receive the Holy Spirit until we break every yoke that binds us to our objectionable traits of character. These are the great hindrances to wearing Christ’s yoke and learning of Him. There is no one who has not much to learn. All must be trained by Christ. When we fall upon the living Rock, our wrong traits of character are taken away as hindrances to perfection of character. When self dies, Christ lives in the human agent. Acquaintance with Christ makes us long to abide in Him, and to have Him abide in us.” Ibid., April 25, 1899.

Our mental powers are to be cultivated and developed. Through study of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, we can illuminate and educate our conscience. We are to develop our reasoning powers. See *Counsels on Health*, 48. In this process of Christian growth—the development of our character—the indulgence of appetite is our greatest enemy:

“We need to learn that indulged appetite is the greatest hindrance to mental improvement and soul sanctification.” *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 156.

There must be strict temperance in the habits of life if we are to reach the highest standard of character development:

“Here is a lesson for all, but especially for the young. A strict compliance with the requirements of God is beneficial to the health of body and mind. In order to reach the highest standard of moral and intellectual attainments, it is necessary to seek wisdom and strength from God, and to observe strict temperance in all the habits of life.” *Review and Herald*, January 25, 1881.

We think of the better world as the place where all that we have lacked here will be fully developed. This may be true in many aspects of our life, but Inspiration warns us that some aspect of the development of our higher powers, if not maximized here, will not be accomplished there. Though our character may be perfect to its level of growth, and we can be saved “as by fire,” there will be an eternal loss. The following message is indeed sobering:

“Eternity is before us. All improvements we make here of our mental powers, all the high attainments we make in refining and elevating ourselves by connecting closely with Heaven, will be translated with us, while if we dwarf our capabilities by inaction, if we deteriorate our talents, which are susceptible of the highest cultivation, we cannot in the better world redeem that past neglect of self-culture, that great loss.

“Some may be saved as by fire. Their useless life has brought to them infinite loss. We should make improvement in this life, all that we can by the help and grace of God, knowing we can take these improvements with us into heaven. We will glorify our Father in heaven in proportion as we purify and perfect our characters here.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, 21.
“Many are incapacitated for labor both mentally and physically by overeating and the gratification of the lustful passions. The animal propensities are strengthened, while the moral and spiritual nature is enfeebled. When we shall stand around the great white throne, what a record will the lives of many then present. Then will they see what they might have done had they not debased their God-given powers. Then will they realize what height of intellectual greatness they might have attained, had they given to God all the physical and mental strength He had entrusted to them. In their agony or remorse they will long to have their lives to live over again.” Counsels on Diet and Foods, 160.

Whatever may be the nature of our sins or the defects of our character, we are promised that we will be given discernment to know them and power to overcome them:

“Hold the truth firmly by the hand of faith in righteousness; for the great need at this time among those who profess to know the truth, is an individual application of the truth to daily experience. The question you should put to your soul is, ‘Is Christ my Saviour? Is the sanctification of the Spirit in my life? Do I by faith behold Christ Jesus as my Atoning Sacrifice, my Only Hope?’ Help has been laid upon One that is mighty. Jesus has given His life, that every soul might have abundant help in Him. Provision has been made whereby every soul that is struggling under sinful practices, may be made free from sin. ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.’ John 1:29. The Christian is not to retain his sinful habits, and cherish his defects of character; but he is to be renewed in the spirit of his mind after the divine similitude. Whatever may be the nature of your defects, the Spirit of the Lord will enable you to discern them, and grace will be given you whereby they may be overcome. Through the merits of the blood of Christ, you may be a conqueror—yes, more than a conqueror.” The Youth’s Instructor, June 7, 1894.

To accomplish our goal we will need to utilize wisely every hour of our probation: “There are stern battles to fight against hereditary and cultivated faults of character and disposition. Satan watches every opportunity to divert the mind from thoughts of God. He seeks to prevent us from searching the heart, from studying the law of God and comparing our life and character with its perfect standard. We must guard against his wiles. We should ever remember that life is short, and if we would attain to that perfection of character which Christ requires of us, every hour of our probation must be wisely improved as a treasure more precious than gold.” The Signs of the Times, August 23, 1883.

They have enlisted in Christ’s army. The warfare is before them, and they enter it bravely and cheerfully, fighting against their natural inclinations and selfish desires, bringing the will into subjection to the will of Christ. Daily they seek the Lord for grace to obey Him, and they are strengthened and helped. This is true provision has been made whereby every soul that is struggling under sinful practices, may be made free from sin. “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” True conversion is the new heart dying daily to self and day by day receiving enabling grace to live the life of holiness. We must strive every day against sin:

“There are those who listen to the truth, and are convinced that they have been living in opposition to Christ. They are condemned, and they repent of their transgressions. Relying upon the merits of Christ, exercising true faith in Him, they receive pardon for sin. As they cease to do evil and learn to do well, they grow in grace and in the knowledge of God. They see that they must sacrifice in order to separate from the world; and, after counting the cost, they look upon all as loss if they may but win Christ.

conversion. In humble, grateful dependence he who has been given a new heart relies upon the help of Christ. He reveals in his life the fruit of righteousness. He once loved himself. Worldly pleasure was his delight. Now his idol is dethroned, and God reigns supreme. The sins he once loved he now hates. Firmly and resolutely he follows in the path of holiness.” The Youth’s Instructor, September 26, 1901.

“We must strive daily against outward evil and inward sin, if we would reach the perfection of Christian character.” Review and Herald, May 30, 1882. □

To be continued.

SIN SHALL NOT HAVE DOMINION OVER YOU
by Charles Fitch

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A Sudden Revolution:  
What Happened to the Worldwide Church of God?

RECENT articles by David Neff, Executive Editor of Christianity Today, published in that magazine October 2, 1995, have given informative insight into the doctrinal revolution that has taken place in the Worldwide Church of God. In this article I want to examine what has taken place, and then look at the lessons for the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The present leader of the Worldwide Church of God is Joseph Tkach, Jr., who succeeded his father, Joseph W. Tkach, Sr., who died in September 1995. The elder Tkach had succeeded the founder of the Worldwide Church of God, Herbert W. Armstrong, upon his death approximately a decade ago.

In the ten years that have transpired since the death of Herbert Armstrong, dramatic changes have been made by the leadership in the Worldwide Church of God. As theological developments go, these changes are among the most dramatic turnabouts that any church has witnessed. Not only is this the result of the changes that have been made but also the breathtaking speed in which these changes have been effected. Indeed, Joseph Tkach, Jr. had this to say, “All these changes in the space of ten years? Many are now advising us that profound course corrections of this magnitude are without historical precedence, at least since the days of the New Testament Church.” It would not be easy to question the truth of that statement. As Seventh-day Adventists, we have been amazed at the rapidity of the changes in doctrinal stance in our own church, but they have been slow compared to the changes in the Worldwide Church of God.

What have been the results of the theological changes in the Worldwide Church of God? Well, they have been numerous: (1) Many members feeling betrayed, with their faith undermined, have left the Worldwide Church of God. (2) Some former members have joined splinter groups and have established new organizations. (3) Some have seemingly left the church to fellowship nowhere, maybe losing their faith in Christianity. (4) Often family and friends have been split. (5) It has led to angry dialogue, wounded feelings and acrimonious debates. (6) It has led to a rapid decline in income for the Worldwide Church of God. (7) This decline in income has led to hundreds of the church’s workforce being laid off.

Of course, all these consequences would be worthwhile if the Worldwide Church of God were moving toward a more fundamental, Bible-based theology. Indeed, as one examines the changes that have taken place, there are areas of change that as Seventh-day Adventists we would applaud. They have left some of their erroneous teachings to take hold of true principles of Christianity, but in other areas where they had basic fundamental Biblical teachings, they have turned away from these truths to accept the faulty theology of Evangelical Protestantism.

I applaud the leadership of the Worldwide Church of God for having the courage to reevaluate their doctrines. We as Seventh-day Adventists must never hold to a doctrine if, in investigation, we cannot find thorough support for it in the Word of God. Indeed, our church has taken proper corrective action in the past. For example, in the 1870s we introduced the...
The Biblical principle of tithing to replace the concept of systematic benevolence, which was not the full principle taught in the Bible. In 1888, the wonderful message of Christ Our Righteousness was fully presented, adding to our understanding of doctrines and our strong belief in the Sabbath, and the perpetuity of the Ten Commandments. If we go back to earlier times, we can think of what was added in the health message and in the educational work. All these were important growth areas in the development of our church.

Now let us look at what changes have come from the teachings of Herbert Armstrong to the present-day Worldwide Church of God:

(1) Armstrong taught that we need to keep all of God's law in order to be saved. That is now seen as legalism and has been discarded.

(2) Armstrong taught that each member of the church should pay a triple tithe, comparable with what the children of Israel returned in the days of their loyalty to God. Tithe paying as an obligation is now seen as legalism.

(3) Armstrong believed that we will not be born again until the resurrection. The Worldwide Church of God now believes that we are born again here on earth before the return of Jesus.

(4) Armstrong believed that human beings were themselves destined to become gods. The Worldwide Church of God now believes in the Holy Trinity in which God exists eternally in three Persons.

(5) Armstrong appeared to preach that commandment keeping is a basis of salvation. The Worldwide Church of God now preaches that salvation is by grace through faith.

(6) Armstrong taught belief in the Old Testament feast days as a basis of salvation. The Worldwide Church of God now considers these festivals to be helpful, but optional.

(7) Armstrong taught that Rome and apostate Protestant churches constituted Babylon the Great. Now the Worldwide Church of God believes that members of other faiths do not constitute Babylon the Great.

(8) Armstrong taught that the keeping of the seventh-day Sabbath was a criterion of true Christian identity. The Worldwide Church of God now has decidedly abandoned this position, indicating that Sabbathkeeping is optional.

(9) Armstrong taught British "Israelism." Now the Worldwide Church of God rejects that teaching.

(10) Armstrong condemned contemporary medical science, the use of cosmetics, and traditional Christian celebrations such as Easter and Christmas. The Worldwide Church of God now has abandoned these condemnations.

Legalism surely is to be feared, but there is great evidence that in their concerns to move away from the legalism of the past, they have been swept into the pit of antinomianism.

(11) Herbert Armstrong, an editor of The Plain Truth magazine, focused on end-time prophetic interpretation. Under the new leadership the Worldwide Church of God no longer emphasizes in The Plain Truth what it calls end-time predictive speculation. Rather, it focuses upon the sufficiency of the Lord's substitutional sacrifice to save us from the penalty of sin.

(12) Armstrong saw salvation by faith and works. The Worldwide Church of God now teaches salvation by grace, based on faith alone without resort to works of any kind.

(13) Armstrong saw commandment keeping as a part of our salvation. However, now the Worldwide Church of God understands that Christian works, which constitute our response to God's work in our behalf, in fact, form no basis for our salvation. The Worldwide Church of God has moved away from the emphasis of the New Covenant without recourse to the Old Covenant.

(14) Armstrong taught that we must not eat unclean meats. The Worldwide Church of God no longer discriminates between clean and unclean meats. It does not take long for Seventh-day Adventists, especially those who have a great love for God and His truth, to realize the earth-shaking divisions that these changes, within the space of ten years, have made to the membership of the Worldwide Church of God. With a loss of so many of the distinctive members of this church, there is a grand exodus of members that is continuing to this day. It will revert more and more toward the mainline churches of Protestantism and have no real reason for its existence.

A number of other things are likely to take place. Within a short space of time, Sunday observance will become the basis of those who have remained loyal to the denomination. Worldliness will increase well beyond the problem with cosmetics to other dress issues, jew-

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and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Revelation 12:17. “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:12. “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.” Revelation 22:14. As Seventh-day Adventists we take of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” Revelation 18:4.

(3) The Sabbath—Is it optional? Is it considered legalism to keep sacred the 24-hour period each week bounded by the Friday evening setting of the sun and the Saturday evening setting of the sun? Surely it will not be legalism to keep the Sabbath in the earth made new. “For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.” “And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.” Isaiah 65:17; 66:23.

(4) The removal of condemnation on medical science, the use of cosmetics and traditional Christian celebrations such as Easter and Christmas. While as Seventh-day Adventists we do not condemn medical science, nevertheless, we do see that God has a health message that is a wonderful preventer of sickness and disease. Neither do we condemn the use of cosmetics, but we teach that to place such emphasis upon ourselves is inconsistent with Christian principles; and, of course, we see in Easter and Christmas the pagan origins of these festivals. We do not see these condemnations as the center of our message, but, nevertheless, we do see the dangers that are arising in the sunrise Easter services and the great elaborate Christmas programs that lead our attention away from Christ and Christian charity.

(5) We believe that the principles of health certainly dictate against eating unclean meats. Today, as disease and contamination are spreading on every side, it becomes increasingly obvious that animal products per se are becoming unfit for human food. Therefore, in our health message we seek to follow the true principles of the Lord.

With the new leadership of the Worldwide Church of God, we teach that salvation is by grace through faith and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, and not of works lest any man should boast. Nevertheless, we recognize the impact of verse 10 of Ephesians 2. “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them,” which shows the proper relationship between good works and salvation. The holy ones of God are depicted as victorious Christians. “These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.” Revelation 14:4–5.

It will be noted that the architects of the dramatic changes in the Worldwide Church of God were almost exclusively the leadership. The rank and file members of the church seem to have had little influence upon these decisions. We note in our own church changes coming in or being constructed by the leadership. This is a most dangerous and divisive approach—even if truth were being established. If we truly believe in the priesthood of all believers, the laity would be fully involved in the studies, dialogues and decisions. Some examples of such changes by leadership in our church in recent times have been the way the changes are filtering in on the human nature of Christ, on the issue of victorious Christian living, and on the ordination of women.

However, there are great truths which they have now rejected as obligatory:

(1) It is not legalism to return a faithful tithe, providing that tithe is returned by a cheerful giver. The robbery of God would be vastly worse than any robbery that might affect our fellow human beings.

(2) The Roman Catholic and the apostate Protestant churches form Babylon at the end of time. This is a message that must be given in great love, so that we might call faithful men and women out of the arena of Babylon into the marvelous light of the everlasting gospel. “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not part

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struggle to avoid the pitfall of legalism while not being drawn into the dilemma of antinomianism. We need to have our understanding and our lives firmly planted within the framework of the One Who alone can give us strength to keep the commandments of God.

Now let us look at some of the teachings that were changed by the Worldwide Church of God that needed to be made in order to harmonize with the truths of the Gospels in the Bible: (1) The believers were not born again until the resurrection; (2) that human beings were themselves destined to become gods; (3) that commandment keeping alone provides a basis for our salvation; (4) the belief in British Israelism; (5) Christians are obliged to observe the annual Old Testament festivals.

However, there are great truths which they have now rejected as obligatory:

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membered, nor come into mind.” “And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.” Isaiah 65:17; 66:23.

(4) The removal of condemnation on medical science, the use of cosmetics and traditional Christian celebrations such as Easter and Christmas. While as Seventh-day Adventists we do not condemn medical science, nevertheless, we do see that God has a health message that is a wonderful preventer of sickness and disease. Neither do we condemn the use of cosmetics, but we teach that to place such emphasis upon ourselves is inconsistent with Christian principles; and, of course, we see in Easter and Christmas the pagan origins of these festivals. We do not see these condemnations as the center of our message, but, nevertheless, we do see the dangers that are arising in the sunrise Easter services and the great elaborate Christmas programs that lead our attention away from Christ and Christian charity.

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However, I praise the Lord that not everyone has been deceived. All around the world increasing numbers of men and women are recognizing the deep apostasy into which many of our church members have fallen. This remnant will be the basis of giving the loud cry to the world. Though company after company will defect from the faith, myriads of faithful people will come in under the blessing of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. May we remain faithful and unwavering in our loyalty to God and to His truth.
The True Remedies—VIII
Trust in Divine Power, Concluded

Trust in Your Enabler

"The tempted one needs to understand the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of mankind—the power of decision, of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. Desires for goodness and purity are right, so far as they go; but if we stop here, they avail nothing. Many will go down to ruin while hoping and desiring to overcome their evil propensities. They do not yield the will to God. They do not choose to serve Him.

"God has given us the power of choice; it is ours to exercise. We cannot change our hearts, we cannot control our thoughts, our impulses, our affections. We cannot make ourselves pure, fit for God's service. But we can choose to serve God, we can give Him our will; then He will work in us to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus our whole nature will be brought under the control of Christ.

"Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be made in the life. By yielding up the will to Christ, we ally ourselves with Divine Power. We receive strength from above to hold us steadfast. A pure and noble life, a life of victory over appetite and lust, is possible to everyone who will unite his weak, wavering human will to the omnipotent, unwavering will of God." The Ministry of Healing, 176.

"The necessity for the men of this generation to call to their aid the power of the will, strengthened by the grace of God, in order to withstand the temptations of Satan and resist the least indulgence of perverted appetite is twice as great as it was several generations ago. But the present generation have less power of self-control than had those who lived then.

"The Redeemer of the world came from heaven to help man in his weakness, that, in the power which Jesus came to bring him, he might become strong to overcome appetite and passion, and might be victor on every point." Testimonies, vol. 3, 488.

Trust in Your Pardoner

"Many are suffering from maladies of the soul far more than from diseases of the body, and they will find no relief until they shall come to Christ, the Wellspring of Life. Complaints of weariness, loneliness, and dissatisfaction will then cease. Satisfying joys will give vigor to the mind and health and vital energy to the body. . . .

"The burden of sin, with its unrest and unsatisfied desires, lies at the very foundation of a large share of the maladies the sinner suffers. Christ is the Mighty Healer of the sin-sick soul. These poor afflicted ones need to have a clearer knowledge of Him whom to know aright is life eternal. They need to be patiently and kindly yet earnestly taught how to throw open the windows of the soul and let the sunlight of God's love come in to illuminate the darkened chambers of the mind." Testimonies, vol. 4, 579.

"Satan is the originator of disease; and the physician is warring against his work and power. Sickness of the mind prevails everywhere. Nine-tenths of the diseases from which men suffer have their foundation here. Perhaps some living home trouble is, like a canker, eating at the very soul and weakening the life forces. Remorse for sin sometimes undermines the constitution and unbalances the mind. There are erroneous doctrines also, that as of an eternally burning hell and the endless torment of the wicked, that, by giving exaggerated and distorted views of the character of God, have produced the same result upon sensitive minds. Infidels have made the most of these unfortunate cases, attributing insanity to religion; but this is a gross libel and one which they will not be pleased to meet by and by. The religion of Christ, so far from being the cause of insanity, is one of its most effectual remedies; for it is a potent soother of the nerves." Testimonies, vol. 5, 443-444.

Trust in Your Redeemer

"In Christ's day many heard the gospel, but their minds were darkened by false teaching, and they did not recognize in the humble Teacher of Galilee the Sent of God. But after Christ's ascension His enthronement in His mediatorial kingdom was signaled by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. On the day of Pentecost the Spirit was given. Christ's witnesses proclaimed the power of the risen Saviour. The light of Heaven penetrated the darkened minds of those who had been deceived by the enemies of Christ. They now saw Him exalted to be 'a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance of Israel, and forgiveness of sins.' Acts 5:31. They saw Him encircled with the glory of Heaven, with infinite treasures in His hands to bestow upon all who would turn from their rebellion. As the apostles set forth the glory of the Only-Begotten of the Father, three thousand souls were convicted. They were made to see themselves as they were, sinful and polluted, and Christ as their Friend and Redeemer. Christ was lifted up, Christ was glorified, through the power of the Holy Spirit resting upon men. By faith these believers saw Him as the One who had borne humiliation, suffering, and death that they might not perish but have everlasting life. The revelation of Christ by the Spirit brought to them a realizing sense of His power and majesty, and they stretched forth their hands to Him by faith, saying, 'I believe.' " Christ's Object Lessons, 119-120.

"The plan of salvation, making manifest the justice and love of God, pro-

Continued on 30
Returning From the Dead

This article continues a study of Daniel 11:40-45. If you are not familiar with the previous articles in this series, we encourage you to review them. They may be found in Our Firm Foundation, beginning with the January 1996 issue.

The editors send forth this article with the desire that it will serve to bring out the Berean response of searching the Scriptures daily with all readiness of mind to prove whether these things are so. See Acts 17:11. With our readers, we also look forward to an even clearer understanding of Bible prophecy as the scroll of world events continues to unroll.

—Editors

He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.” Daniel 11:42-43.

Previously in this series of articles we identified the prophetic use of the word “hand” as illustrative of a power which brings another power under its dominion, influence, or control. As the sequence of events illustrated in Daniel 11:40-45 began in verse 40, we saw the king of the north sweep away the king of the south, but we do not see the prophetic use of the word “hand” to illustrate that the southern king comes under the control of the king of the north. The king of the north “enters,” but does not stretch forth his hand.

In verse 40 we simply see the king of the south being swept away as the king of the north passes through the countries which made up the king of the south’s domain. We identified the message in verse 40 as the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, through the combined efforts of the Papacy and the United States. While verse 40 identifies the war between atheism and the Papacy, which began during the French Revolution and continued until 1989, it does not illustrate that the Soviet Union came under the spiritual control of the Papacy in 1989. It simply identifies a tremendous historical event which was used by the Lord to identify the starting point for the final verses of Daniel 11.

In Daniel 11:41 we see the United States brought under the spiritual control of the Papacy by the symbols used within the verse. We previously discussed Sister White’s teaching, “that much of the history” of Daniel 11 would be “repeated” as the final verses of that chapter come to pass. Some of those histories were the events connected with the rise to power of the Papacy which marked the beginning of the Dark Ages. The rise of the Papacy to control the world was itself a repetition of history, for pagan Rome conquered three geographical areas in order to come to rule the world, and, likewise, the Papacy had to pluck up three horns before it ascended to the control of the earth.

Modern Rome is first presented as retaliating and sweeping away the southern kingdom—the “kingdom” of atheism which
brought about its deadly wound in 1798. Then its second obstacle is the glorious land of the United States. Following the United States, we see the third hindrance illustrated as it brings "Egypt," or the rest of the world, under its spiritual control, thus returning it to its former position as ruler of the world.

Pagan Rome, papal Rome of the Dark Ages, and the Papacy of today each overcome three obstacles in order to take the throne of the earth. Though these histories parallel each other in the sense of three obstacles, they are different in some respects. Pagan Rome literally conquered the world using its own military prowess. Papal Rome of the Dark Ages took the throne of the earth by the literal conquest of three horns, though they did so without their own army, using instead the armed forces of their sympathetic allies. After the three horns were literally subdued, then the spiritual bondage was enforced. The Papacy of today will first spiritually conquer the glorious land and Egypt, and then the literal consequences will follow.

In Daniel 11:41 the United States will come under the spiritual control of the Papacy when it (the United States) legislates a national Sunday law—the mark of papal authority. In verse 41 the subjection of the United States represented by the "hand" is alluded to by the identification of those who escape the hand of the Papacy.

The Final Obstacle

In Daniel 11:42 we see the king of the north once more "stretching forth his hand." This time it is against her final obstacle, which is identified as "the countries" and the "land of Egypt." The "land of Egypt" symbolizes the world with all its countries.

"Why is it so hard to lead a self-denying, humble life? Because profession Christians are not dead to the world. It is easy living after we are dead. But many are longing for the leeks and onions of Egypt. They have a disposition to dress and act as much like the world as possible and yet go to heaven. Such climb up some other way. They do not enter through the straight gate and narrow way," Testimonies, vol. 1, 131. (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.)

"I am filled with sadness when I think of our condition as a people. The Lord has not closed heaven to us, but our own course of continual backsliding has separated us from God. Pride, covetousness, and love of the world have lived in the heart without fear of banishment or condemnation. . . . The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader and is steadily retreating toward Egypt. . . . Have we not been seeking the friendship and applause of the world rather than the presence of Christ and a deeper knowledge of His will?" Ibid., vol. 5, 217-218.

"Many are not growing strong, because they do not take God at His Word. They are conforming to the world. Every day they pitch their tents nearer to Egypt, when they should encamp a day's march nearer the heavenly Canaan." Signs of The Times, March 6, 1884.

"The plagues upon Egypt when God was about to deliver Israel were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God's people." The Great Controversy, 627-628.

"The Lord God of Israel is to execute judgment upon the gods of this world, as upon the gods of Egypt." Manuscript Releases, vol. 10, 240.

The context of the passage under consideration points out that the next step for the Papacy, after passage of the Sunday law in the United States, is to move against the rest of the countries of the world. This is also the sequence of events which the Spirit of Prophecy identifies:

"As America, the land of religious liberty, shall unite with the Papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false sabbath, the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example." Testimonies, vol. 6, 18.

"Foreign nations will follow the example of the United States. Though she leads out, yet the same crisis will come upon our people in all parts of the world." Ibid., 395.

Not only does Sister White uphold this sequence of the conquest of the world by the Papacy but this is also the order of events in Revelation 13. First, through the passage of a national Sunday law, the United States speaks as a dragon, as well as forming an image to the beast:

Then the churches of our land . . . shall influence the State to enforce their decrees and sustain their institutions, then will Protestant America have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy.

The "image of the beast" is a description of the use of secular power to enforce religious dogma.

"When the churches of our land, uniting upon such points of faith as are held by them in common, shall influence the State to enforce their decrees and sustain their institutions, then will Protestant America have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy." The Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 4, 278.

Both the speaking as a dragon and the making of an image to the beast officially will take place at the time of the national Sunday law. There are, no doubt, many events which lead up to this climactic act of apostasy, but it is after the event in Revelation 13:11, when the United States will force the world also to set up an image to the beast:

"Saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live." Revelation 13:14, last part.

The world will make their own image to the beast, and the United States will empower it. By definition, in order for the world to set up an image to the beast, and thus "enforce" and "sustain" the "decrees" of the "churches," it must have a world system, such as the United Nations, in place:

"And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." Revelation 13:15.

Deceived Through Spiritualism

When the United States passes the national Sunday law, it not only speaks as a
dragon but also erects an image to the beast. After this action, the glorious land of the United States will deceive the whole world through the spiritualistic powers that were so profoundly associated with the history of Egypt:

"I was pointed back to the children of Israel in Egypt. I saw [that] when God worked through Moses before Pharaoh, the magicians came up and said they could do the same. I saw the same work was now going on in the world and among the professors churches similar to the work of the magicians anciently." *Manuscript Releas es*, vol. 19, 129-130.

Through these deceptions the whole world will be brought to worship the Papacy:

"And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast." Revelation 13:14, first part.

The spiritual bondage portrayed by John is represented by Daniel in verse 42 when the king of the north stretches forth his "hand" upon the "countries" of "Egypt." When the United States "causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed," (Revelation 13:12) the world in reality will be worshiping Satan, for to worship "the beast," is to "worship the dragon which gave power unto the beast." 

"Satan, in his pride and arrogance, had declared himself to be the rightful and permanent ruler of the world, the possessor of all its riches and glory, claiming homage of all who lived in it, as though he had created the world and all that were therein." *Review and Herald*, September 1, 1874.

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High." Isaiah 14:12-14.

"Ever since his fall, Satan has been at work to establish himself as ruler of this earth."* Review and Herald*, March 9, 1886.

The Two Classes of the World

After John identifies "them that dwell on the earth" making "an image to the beast," he states in Revelation 13:16 that "all" people will be affected by this image.

"In short, that contemporary map of shame would be the graphic expression of the atrocity we have come to describe so blandly as the division of the world into North and South...into rich and poor." —Malachi Martin

The whole world will follow the United States, but as John describes the "all" who will be affected by this action, he then divides this group into two classes—"both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond." Daniel also divides the world up into "rich and poor." Ancient Egypt had two neighbors who had interesting histories:

The Libyans, to the west of Egypt, lived on the fringe of the desert, which prevented them from attaining to any measure of prosperity. Throughout their history they had cast a longing eye toward Egypt and the fertile Nile valley. They attempted to invade Egypt several times, but were always repulsed. Egypt symbolizes the entire world, while Libya represents what is labeled today as the Third World. Libya symbolizes the poor, underprivileged, and downtrodden countries which long to move up to the prosperity of the affluent Western World.

Ancient Ethiopia included not only Nubia but also the part of Western Arabia bordering the Red Sea. The Egyptians coveted Ethiopia because of the gold mines in its mountains and its wealth in cattle, ivory, hides, and ebony, and because products from Central Africa entered Egypt through Ethiopian traders. The wealth of Egypt first passed through the hands of the shrewd Ethiopian traders. As modern Egypt represents the world, and Libya the poor, third-world countries, so Ethiopia represents the most affluent countries of the world.

Daniel links up with John's testimony when identifying that the Papacy will control the entire world, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond—Libya and Ethiopia. See Daniel 11:43; Revelation 13:16.

"As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies recorded by Daniel demand our special attention, as they relate to the very time in which we are living. With them should be linked the teachings of the last book of the New Testament Scriptures." *Prophets and Kings*, 547.

Daniel adds that the Libyans and Ethiopians shall be at his steps. See Daniel 11:43.

"steps—4703: from 6805; a step; figuratively companionship:—going, step.

6805: a primitive root; to pace, i.e. step regularly; (upward) to mount; (along) to march; (down and causative) to hurl:—bring, go, march (through), run over." *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*.

To be at the steps of the king of the north is to march with him as he runs over the whole world. John states that the second beast causes "the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast." Revelation 13:12. In the book, *Keys of This Blood*, written by Malachi Martin, we find an interesting passage. Martin is a Vatican insider who has written many books concerning Catholicism. In *Keys of This Blood*, Martin elaborates on why he believes that within this century the pope will be enthroned over the whole world.

As Malachi Martin addresses the structure of the countries of the world, he describes in depth how the pope views them. Here are quotations from *Keys of This Blood*, showing how a "contemporary map" of the world would be drawn by the pope:

"In short, that contemporary map of shame would be the graphic expression of the atrocity we have come to describe so blandly as the division of the world into North and South, which is to say, in plainer terms, the division of nations, and of populations within nations, into rich and poor.

..."It is just such a map of shame that Pope John Paul does hold up to the world in his moral assessment of the geopolitical arrangements that are setting up our future for us. ..."

"On the modern map of world shame that is the subject of so much of John Paul's attention, North and South do not figure as precise geographical terms. Instead, they are global frontiers where wealth and poverty divide not only nations, but societies within nations. ...

"Whether it is applied in the confines of the United States, or in the world at large, John Paul's moral assessment of North and
South is simple and clear. In a morally adjusted economy, he insists, the rich should not get richer if the poor get poorer.” *Keys of This Blood*, Malachi Martin, 163-164, 171.

**Egypt Shall Not Escape**

In Daniel 11:42 the land of Egypt represents the entire world, which has many countries that, according to Daniel, will not escape. The word translated as “escape” in this verse is different from the word translated as “escape” in the last verse. The last verse conveyed an idea of being saved by slipping out of a hand which had previously been clapped. The word *escape* in this verse conveys the meaning of not finding any deliverance from Rome’s iron fist.

*escape—6413: feminine of 6412; deliverance; concretely an escaped portion:* deliverance, (that is) escape (-d), remnant.

“6412: a refugee:—(that have) escape (-d, -th), fugitive.” *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance.*

In verse 41 when the United States passes the national Sunday law, speaks as a dragon, and erects an image to the beast, many people will be overthrown—not many countries. Then the world will follow the United States, and many countries, in fact, all the countries of the earth will be overthrown as they march in step with the Papacy.

Verse 42 introduces us to the pope in the process of bringing the world into harmony with the Papacy. There we see the third obstacle overcome, which allows the Papacy to ascend to the throne of the world. At this point the king of the north ceases to be simply a church, and returns to the position of the ruling geopolitical power in the world. This position of authority was taken away in Daniel 11:40 when the king of the south “pushed” at him in 1798. The deadly wound will be fully healed when the Papacy stretches forth his hand upon the world and its countries, and is subsequently given “control” of the economies of the world.

We know he will assume control of the economy of the world, for John tells us “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 13:17. Daniel links his testimony with John’s as he states in verse 43 that at this time the king of the north “shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt.” Daniel 11:43.

Daniel uses Egypt to provide the scenario to identify these end-time scenes. He uses Egypt to symbolize the world, as well as using Egypt’s ancient neighbors to divide the world into both rich and poor, free and bound. The history of Egypt allows us to see the spiritualistic influence which will mislead and entrap the world into accepting this deception as we remember the role of the Egyptian magicians in resisting the plagues of God.

As the United States, and then the world, legislatas and enforces apostasy against God, each step away from truth is followed by more and increasingly destructive judgments:

“Roman Catholic principles will be taken under the care and protection of the state. This national apostasy will speedily be followed by national ruin.” *Last Day Events,* 134.

Each step in apostasy will bring more devastation upon the world. When Daniel identifies the king of the north as stretching forth his hand upon Egypt and the countries of the world in Daniel 11:42, the apostasy will have nearly reached its ultimate climax. At that time the world will be racked with the judgments of God as the Spirit of God is withdrawn and man’s rebellion is almost fully developed. In this condition, the people of the world will surely be looking for a Saviour to promise them a return to temporal prosperity. We see in this scenario a perfect ploy for the pope of Rome to make promises of peace to a devastated population. This crisis situation has a parallel to the history of the Egyptian plagues:

“But Egypt was desolated by plagues before Pharaoh would consent to listen to the great I AM. He persisted in his stubbornness till Egypt was ruined, and the Egyptians, from the lowest serf to the king upon his throne, looked upon the dead bodies of their firstborn.” *Review and Herald,* April 23, 1901.

In this devastated condition the population of Egypt was terrified and quite willing to surrender their “treasures of gold and of silver, and all the precious things.”

“The Egyptians had been enriched by the labor unjustly exacted from the Israelites, and as the latter were to start on the journey to their new home, it was right for them to claim the reward of their years of toil. They were to ask for articles of value, such as could be easily transported, and God would give them favor in the sight of the Egyptians. The mighty miracles wrought for their deliverance would strike terror to
The Third Angel's Message Party Versus The Division Party
Part 2

In Part one of this article we noted that in fulfillment of inspired testimony, two parties have developed in our church. One party represents those who faithfully “contend most earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. They will not be turned from the present message, which is already lightening the earth with its glory.” Selected Messages, book 2, 114. This party we have called the “third angel’s message party.”

Though they bear various labels such as New Theology, Liberals, Celebration types, and so forth, by contrast from the third angel’s message party, we have identified those who have turned away from the message as being the “division party.” In spite of their accusations to the contrary, they indeed have been the ones who have brought about the major division in the church.

Though the teachings of the division party are presented with numerous variations of doctrinal error, one of the positions held most in common was accurately predicted a long time ago by the Lord’s messenger to His endtime people:

“The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God.” Selected Messages, book 1, 48.

“There will be a hatred kindled against the Testimonies which is satanic. The workings of Satan will be to unsettle the faith of the churches in them, for this reason: Satan cannot have so clear a track to bring in his deceptions and bind up souls in his delusions if the warnings and reproofs and counsels of the Spirit of God are not heeded.” Ibid.

The division party certainly fulfills this prophecy, with a great many teachings contrary to the Spirit of Prophecy writings, as well as to the Scriptures.

Some time ago, this writer was invited to join a group of about fifteen representatives of the third angel’s message party which met with about the same number of persons from the division party. They came from various parts of the country and met for three days. In some cases one would speak for approximately an hour for the division party, answering questions afterwards. Next, one would speak from the third angel’s message party, followed by questions. After a pastor from the division party spoke, I asked him how he could explain what Jesus said to the young ruler in Matthew 19:16-17, who asked, “What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” Jesus responded, “... if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.”

The pastor said that Jesus did not mean what the text says, and he tried to explain it differently. I was sitting by a well-known church leader and friend. I turned to him and commented, “Ellen White said many times that obedience to God’s commandments is the condition of salvation.” He replied, “Do you think she was omniscient?” He did not trust her writings. That is a common thread that runs through the thinking of the division party. Tragically, today our denominational bookstores are promoting books that reject the precious truth that it is possible, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to overcome sin before Jesus comes.

Ellen White was chosen by God to receive the prophetic gift to be given to the last church that would see the close
of probation. Her statements about Christian perfection are voluminous.

The springboard from which she wrote so many times about Christian perfection was Romans 8:3-4: “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Ellen White, with her pioneers, took the position from Romans 8:3-4, Hebrews 2:16-18, and other texts, that Jesus took our sinful nature and that only by doing so could He be our Example in overcoming sin.

Our church was unified on that position for over one hundred years, until some of our brethren at the General Conference met with two evangelicals, Dr. Donald Barnhouse and Walter Martin. These men considered us to be a sect if we believed that Christ took our sinful nature. To avoid being so labeled, our brethren agreed with the evangelicals and adopted the position that Christ took the nature of Adam before his fall. What a price to pay for the sake of popularity! Subsequently, the book Questions on Doctrine was published, presenting this new view that Jesus cannot be our example in overcoming sin, as being the authoritative position in our church. That change in position on the nature of Christ has had much to do with the division that is being written about in this study.

The following are some examples of the hundreds of statements Ellen White made on Christ taking man’s fallen nature:

“The great work of redemption could be carried out only by the Redeemer taking the place of fallen Adam. . . . The King of Glory proposed to humble Himself to fallen humanity! . . . He would take man’s fallen nature.” Review and Herald, February 24, 1874.

“Clad in the vestments of humanity, the Son of God came down to the level of those He wished to save. In Him was no guile or sinfulness; He was ever pure and undefiled; yet He took upon Him our sinful nature.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7A, 452-453; Review and Herald, December 15, 1896.

Ellen White had a great burden for God’s people to prepare for the latter rain. The following standard that will be presented to receive the latter rain is extremely high. Therefore, to avoid discouragement we must understand that it is an advancing experience in faith, love and appreciation of what Christ has done for us, God does not ask anything of us that He will not give us the power of His love to accomplish. We must believe that truth. Ellen White says of the believer: “God loves them as He loves His Son. Christ, Emmanuel, stands between God and the believer, revealing the glory of God to His chosen ones, and covering their defects and transgressions with the garments of His own spotless righteousness.” Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 6, 1115.

However, God does not cover willful sin; of that, we must repent. The goodness of God expressed here should never lead us into presumption, but it should be a real comfort to us as we strive for the goal, depending upon the power of God’s love to consume sin in us through our cooperation with Him.

Several passages will be referred to in that context: “Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation.” Testimonies, vol. 1, 187. “I saw that none could share the ‘refreshing’ unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action.” Early Writings, 71.

“Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost.” Testimonies, vol. 5, 214.

“When those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort they must be conquerors in the battle with evil.” The Great Controversy, 425.

These statements tell us what is required of us in order to be ready for the great work of redemption could be carried out only by the Redeemer taking the place of fallen Adam. . . . The King of Glory proposed to humble Himself to fallen humanity! . . . He would take man’s fallen nature.
The next statement tells what God's
curch is to be like in the time of the
latter rain. "The church, being endowed
with the righteousness of Christ, is His
depository, in which the wealth of His
mercy, His love, His grace, is to appear
in full and final display. . . . The gift of
His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant,
is to be to His church as an encompassing
wall of fire, which the powers of hell
shall not prevail against. In their
untainted purity and spotless perfection,
Christ looks upon His people as the
reward of all His suffering, His humiliation,
and His love, and the supplement of His
glory—Christ, the Great Center from
which radiates all glory." Testimonies to
Ministers, 18-19.

Most of those in the division party
claim that man cannot perfectly obey
God's law, but Inspiration says, "By His
own obedience to the law, Christ
testified to its immutable character and proved
that through His grace it could be perfectly
obeyed by every son and daughter of
Adam." Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 49.

Satan has said many times that God
gives man a law that he cannot keep.
The following is one such accusation:
"Satan had represented Him [God] to
man as arbitrary, stern, and unforgiving.
. . . He declared that man could not keep
the law, and that God was arbitrary and
cruel in demanding of him something
that he could not do." The Youth's In-
structor, February 22, 1900.

B

By His own obedience to the law, Christ
testified to its immutable character and
proved that through His grace it could be
perfectly obeyed by every son and daughter of
Adam.

If it is impossible for man to per-
fectly obey the law, then we must say
that Satan is correct in making the charge.

In Testimonies to Ministers, 409-410,
under the heading "The Fatal Choice," it
is speaking of the light in the 1888
message that came to us. Satan wants to
destroy the unity of the Adventist church
by deceiving our people, causing them to
discard the message the Lord has sent. It
will be clearly seen from Inspiration as
we proceed that the division party, which
teaches a finished work on the cross for
salvation, has discarded the 1888 mes-

sage the Lord sent to His church.

Then she writes, they will "receive
the most unreasonable assertions and
false suppositions and false theories." This
explains why the most unreasonable
assertions of unconditional salvation
(or a finished work on the cross for
salvation) would ever raise its head
against the pure third angel's message
that God gave to the Advent move-
ment. Then she writes, "Satan laughs
at their folly, for he knows what truth
is. Many will stand in our pulpits with
the torch of false prophecy in their
hands, kindled from the hellish torch of
Satan."

The next statement is sad indeed.
"Satan declared that it was impossible
for the sons and daughters of Adam to
keep the law of God, and thus charged
upon God a lack of wisdom and love. If
they could not keep the law, then there
was fault with the Lawgiver. Men who
are under the control of Satan repeat
these accusations against God, in assert-
ing that men cannot keep the law of
God." Signs of the Times, January 16,
1896. It is hard for one to imagine that
many of our pastors are under the con-
roll of Satan, saying the law cannot be
kept. Statements have been given above
showing that God calls for a perfected
people before the close of probation.
Review and Herald, May 27, 1890, speaks of the opposition to Waggoner

will rise up against it, and this will cause
a shaking among God's people." Early
Writings, 270.

The division party has risen up against
the high standard for which God is call-
ing, but there is very good news for
those who believe the straight testimon
y. In Early Writings, page 270-271, all
who truly receive it will obey it and be
purified and receive the pouring out of
God's love in the latter rain, and evil
angels will not have any more power
over them.

The standard is extremely high, but
Christ's standard in taking our fallen
nature, was high also. He could not fail
once. What love He has shown us, that
He would become one of us to demon-
strate what we could become through
Him! God's people will advance rapidly
in Christian growth as they come near to
the final crisis. See Review and Herald,
December 13, 1892. That will greatly
change their perspective of what they
can do by God's grace. Selected Mes-
ages, book 2, 114, quoted before, said
that a new life was coming from Heaven
and taking possession of all God's people.
They have believed the straight testi-
mony and have been seeking so earnestly
to comply with God's will that the Holy
Spirit takes possession of them. Evidently
this is when God takes the reins in His
own hands to direct the work. See Testi-
onies to Ministers, 300.

Some have believed that the 1888
message was on the liberal side. Not so.
It was solidly grounded on conditional
salvation. It was identical to what has
been presented here. It is a sure revela-
tion of the certainty of what constitutes
the third angel's message if we believe
the prophetic gift to our church. E. J.
Waggoner's book titled Christ and His
Righteousness came out in 1890. The
core of his position on salvation is from
pages 46-47. If one is to enter heaven,
Waggoner said, "He must be made right-
eous before he can do the good that is
required of him, and which he wants to
do." Ibid., 55. Waggoner is saying here,
as we shall see, that one is made right-
eous by being born of the Spirit. On
pages 56-57, he writes, "What a deplor-
able condition! We must have the right-
eousness of the law or we cannot enter
heaven, and yet the law has no righteous-
ness for one of us. . . . The nation that
keeps the truth will be a nation that
keeps the law of God. Such will be doers
of His will, and they shall enter into
the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 7:21. The
question, then, is, How may the righteousness that is necessary in order that one may enter that city, be obtained?” Many would misunderstand Waggoner’s answer here on how one gets the righteousness to enter heaven. An explanation may be in order:

Waggoner presents two aspects of justification by faith: (1) to be forgiven and (2) to be born of the Spirit. The latter he refers to as imparted righteousness—just another term for being born of God’s love. See Testimonies to Ministers, 468. It is the same as Romans 5:5: “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.” Waggoner does not speak of the forgiveness aspect on page 57. He does, however, make clear the new birth and forgiveness on pages 66–67. If you remember his question: How do I get the righteousness of the law to enter heaven? You will understand his answer. It is Christ’s imparted righteousness in the new birth. Now his answer: “To answer this question is the great work of the gospel. Let us first have an object lesson on justification, or the imparting of righteousness.” Why is it so important to know what Waggoner said about salvation? Because you saw that Waggoner presented salvation as conditional on being born of the Spirit to keep God’s law to enter heaven. Waggoner began with what Christ told Nicodemus.

In Testimonies to Ministers, 91–92, there is a beautiful recap on what we just briefly covered in Waggoner’s book on imparted righteousness. “The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. . . . It presented justification through faith in the S Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God.” This is just what Waggoner said. We must have a righteousness that keeps the law to enter heaven, and that is Christ’s imparted righteousness (to be born again). “All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.”

It was in 1889 that Ellen White wrote of the 1888 message, “The present message—justification by faith—is a message from God; it bears the divine credentials, for its fruit is unto holiness.” Selected Messages, book 1, 359.

No wonder Ellen White said so many times that God sent the 1888 message. It places the new birth in justification by faith, which is our fitness to join the heavenly universe, and establishes the binding claims of God’s law (with His love). God sent the 1888 message for the special purpose of preparing His people for the latter rain. It had begun to fall in 1892. She wrote: “The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer.” Selected Messages, book 1, 363. Then she wrote in 1896: “The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world.” Selected Messages, book 1, 235.

This was and is the latter-rain message that is to be given to the world. One can clearly see how wide the chasm is between this message and the message of the division party.

After all that has been written in this paper, is the writer against the people in the division party? No. Their concept on salvation? Yes. He has good friends in the division party, and he sincerely hopes and prays that there will be a great rallying to the wonderful message that God has entrusted to us. ☐

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**We must have a righteousness that keeps the law to enter heaven, and that is Christ’s imparted righteousness (to be born again).**

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In Defense of God’s Law, Part 3

SOME teach that God’s moral law has been abolished by the death of Christ on the cross. However, it was the ceremonial law, which pointed to the crucifixion of Christ, that came to an end.

There are two laws clearly defined in scripture. The first law is the moral law—God’s Ten Commandments. The second law, which sets the rules for the sanctuary or ceremonial services, was given because of the transgression of the moral law.

The moral law, God’s Ten Commandments, is eternal and unchanging. The ceremonial law was temporary. The Bible says concerning the moral law, “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.” Romans 3:31.

Concerning the ceremonial law, the Bible says, “Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances.” Ephesians 2:15.

The moral law is not to be made void; it is to be established. The second law was to be abolished by Christ’s death on the cross.

The great preacher John Wesley wrote, “The ritual or ceremonial law, delivered by Moses to the children of Israel, containing all the injunctions and ordinances which related to the old sacrifices and service of the temple, our Lord indeed did come to destroy, to dissolve, and utterly abolish. To this hear all the apostles witness. . . . This ‘handwriting of ordinances’ our Lord did blot out, take away, and nail to His cross.” [See Colossians 2:14]

“But the moral law contained in the Ten Commandments, and enforced by the prophets, He [Jesus] did not take away. It was not the design of His coming to revoke any part of it. This is a law which never can be broken, which ‘stands fast as the faithful witness in heaven.’ The moral law stands on an entirely different foundation from the ceremonial or ritual law. . . . Every part of this law must remain in force upon all mankind and in all ages; as not depending either on time, or place, or any other circumstance liable to change; but on the nature of God and the nature of man, and their unchangeable relation to each other.” Sermons on Several Occasions, vol. 1, 221-222.

When and where did these two laws come from? In the beginning, when God created man, He placed Adam under a short probation. Adam would secure eternal life if he proved to remain obedient to God. So God placed Adam in Eden and permitted him to eat from the tree of life in the Garden of Eden as long as he did not disobey God in partaking of the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” See Genesis 2:16-17.

If Adam would disobey God, then he would face death. Unfortunately, Adam did disobey, and then he was much in need of a Saviour.

The good news is that there is a Redeemer for sinful and disobedient humanity. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” John 3:16-17.

It would be nearly four thousand years before the Saviour would come and die on the cross for guilty humanity; therefore, it was necessary to institute a ceremonial service that would explain the plan of salvation. God did just that. He instituted a service in which there were sacrifices offered, representing the Saviour to come. When Jesus would appear and die for our sins, then the ceremonial services would no longer be needed. Consequently, the laws that governed these services also came to an end at the death of Christ on the cross.

And so it was, Abel offered a sacrifice representing Christ. See Genesis 4:4.

“Now builded an altar . . . and offered burnt offerings,” representing the Saviour to come. Genesis 8:20. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob also offered up the innocent victims representing the aton-
ing sacrifice of Jesus Christ for their sins. See Genesis 12:7-8; 26:25; 31:54.

Then in A.D. 31, Christ was crucified on the cross. He became the Lamb "which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29. In that most solemn moment, "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent." Matthew 27:51. When Jesus died, the Father tore the veil in the temple from top to bottom, signifying the end of the sacrificial and ceremonial services, and therefore, the end of the ceremonial law.

The Giving of the Moral Law

These two laws, the moral and the ceremonial, differ in how they were communicated:

Before the giving of the moral law on two tables of stone, the people made special preparation for three days. Then Moses met with God on Mount Sinai. "And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." Exodus 19:16-18. Then Moses records, "And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone." Deuteronomy 4:12-13.

While on the mount, God wrote on two tables of stone the Ten Commandments. See Exodus 24:12. The Bible emphasizes that God wrote just Ten Commandments, "He added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone." Deuteronomy 5:22.

It is evident that the Lord desired to make a clear distinction between His moral law and all other laws by the way He communicated them.

With the moral law, God Himself spoke it from heaven with His own voice. See Exodus 19:16-19; Deuteronomy 4:12-13. He wrote it twice with His own finger. See Exodus 31:18; 32:16; Deuteronomy 10:1-5. He engraved it upon two tables of stone. See Exodus 32:16. It was placed in the ark in the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary. See Exodus 25:16, 22; Deuteronomy 10:1-5.

Now notice how the ceremonial law was communicated to man. Moses went up to the mount where he was instructed over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." Colossians 2:14-17.

What was "blotted out" or wiped out? A document written by a man's hand referring to ordinances regulating

When Jesus would appear and die for our sins, then the ceremonial services would no longer be needed. Consequently, the laws that governed these services also came to an end at the death of Christ on the cross.

by the LORD, and he wrote it with his own hand. See Exodus 24:15-18; Deuteronomy 31:9, 24. Moses wrote the ceremonial law upon a book of parchment. See Deuteronomy 31:24. Moses spoke the words of this ceremonial law to the people. See Deuteronomy 1:3-5; 31:11; 32:45-46. This law was then put by the side of the ark—not inside of it. See Deuteronomy 31:24-26.

Thus we see the moral law inside of the ark, and the ceremonial law outside of the ark. The moral law was written on tables of stone, and the ceremonial law was written in a book. The former was written by God, and the latter by Moses. The moral law was spoken by God, while the other was written by Moses. The former relates to morals, the latter to rules governing the ceremonial services. Who would deny that these are two separate and distinct laws? The Bible plainly tells us that there are two laws. The Lord said, "Neither will I make the feet of Israel move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; only if they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them [God's moral law], and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them [the ceremonial law]." 2 Kings 21:8.

Everywhere in scripture, when it speaks about abolishing the law, it is the ceremonial law, not the moral law. Paul said, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing the ceremonial law. Therefore, we are to judge no man in regard to "meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come." Paul was no doubt referring to people who taught that you still needed to keep the ceremonial law to be saved. They were judging their fellow believers as to "meat" and "drink" offerings that were a "shadow of things to come," namely, the crucifixion of Christ. However, Christians are under no obligation to carry out the requirements of the ceremonial law. When Christ died on the cross, these "meat" and "drink" offerings met their fulfillment.

Furthermore, no one was to be judged concerning "a holyday [the Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles], or of the new moon [the first day of each month (see Numbers 10:10; 28:11)], or of the sabbath days [plural, referring to ceremonial sabbaths, not the weekly sabbath]." The keys to this text, of course, are those meat, drinks, holy days, new moons, and sabbath days, which were a "shadow of things to come." These ceremonial services prefigured the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. Consequently, they came to an end when Christ completed His earthly ministry.

Now, does Paul say that we are not to observe any holy day? No. Does Paul say that one of the Ten Commandments is nullified? No. Paul is speaking only about the blotting out of the ceremonial law.

But, tragically, some people actually oppose the law of God and try to change
God's holy day, the seventh-day Sabbath. They contend that we must keep nine out of the Ten Commandments, but that the seventh-day Sabbath is for the Jews only.

Many people claim that Jesus gave a "new law" to Christians. It is the same as nine-tenths of the old law, but somehow the one-tenth left out of the "new law" makes it Christian—not Jewish.

The following questions must be asked: When did Jesus give His church this "new law"? Where did He announce it? To whom did He announce it? How many precepts does this "new law" contain? And what is the penalty for transgressing it?

Can we find this "new law" in the Gospels or the epistles of Paul? Did Jesus tell It to His disciples in secret, or to a vast multitude in public? Did He announce it before or after the cross? Are there nine commandments or twelve commandments? Does this law only concern Christians? If there is indeed a "new law," these questions should be very easy to answer.

The truth of the matter is that there is no "new law," and the New Testament is completely silent upon such questions.

Some teach that the Sabbath is not to be found in the New Testament, whereas the other nine commandments are clearly repeated and reaffirmed as part of God's law. However, this is not true. Neither the first, second, third, fourth, nor the tenth commandment are anywhere repeated word for word in the New Testament as they are commandments when answering the rich, young ruler. Was Jesus reinstating these commandments as if they had been abolished by His death on the cross? Obviously not; Christ was not yet crucified. Jesus was simply quoting from the law itself, which had not changed.

If, of course, the Sabbath is no longer binding because it is not quoted word for word in the New Testament, then the first three and the tenth commandments are abolished also for the same reason.

It is most interesting that the Sabbath commandment is actually mentioned more often than any of the other commandments in the New Testament. It is referred to no less than fifty-nine times.

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The five five commandments are quoted word for word in the New Testament in the following passages: See Matthew 5:21-27; 15:4; 19:18-19; Mark 7:10; 10:19; Luke 18:20; Romans 7:7; 13:9; Ephesians 6:2-3; James 2:11.

In Matthew 19:16-19, Jesus quoted the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth commandments when answering the rich, young ruler. Was Jesus reinstating these commandments as if they had been abolished by His death on the cross? Obviously not; Christ was not yet crucified. Jesus was simply quoting from the law itself, which had not changed.

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It is most interesting that the Sabbath commandment is actually mentioned more often than any of the other commandments in the New Testament. It is referred to no less than fifty-nine times.
But, tragically, men have not remembered to keep the Sabbath holy, a fact which has resulted in rampant skepticism and scoffing.

Perhaps the greatest moral reason for keeping the Sabbath is that it is the Lord’s day. The commandment says that the “seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God.” Exodus 20:10. It is said of Jesus that “the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.” Mark 2:28.

The eighth commandment says, “Thou shalt not steal.” Exodus 20:15. Why should we not steal? Because it protects the possessions and property of its owner. We are not lawfully able to take that which belongs to someone else.

The Creator, who has made everything, including all seven days in the week, has allowed us to perform our secular duties on the first six days. However, God has reserved the seventh day for Himself. The seventh day is not our day. It belongs to God, and God alone. The Lifegiver has commanded us, His creation, not to perform our secular duties on the seventh day, but we are to keep it holy.

Let us illustrate the point. Suppose a wealthy man has seven very beautiful and fruitful pear trees. He has given permission to a neighbor to freely take from the first six trees, but the seventh tree the owner has reserved for his own special use. This would be a very generous offer indeed! Now suppose that the neighbor became ungrateful and also partook from the seventh pear tree. Would this not be considered immoral?

If it be wrong to rob a man of his pears, which are here today and gone tomorrow, how much more so would it be morally wrong to rob God every week of the honor due to Him on His Sabbath day.

If a man would knowingly rob God of His day by pursuing his worldly interests and selfish ambitions on that holy day, then that man is just as capable of stealing from his fellow man.

God Himself placed the Sabbath in the center of the moral law. No other day has God so highly honored. All the other “sabbath days,” which coincided with the feasts days, grew out of man’s fallen condition, but the weekly Sabbath grew out of an infinite and loving God. If we would understand the sacred claims of the Sabbath, then we would see the Lord whose hands have fashioned the worlds and has provided for every blessing we enjoy. We would also appreciate the Almighty, whose voice can make the earth tremble, and who has forbidden us to desecrate His holy day.

With all these entreaties and warnings from Holy Writ, how can a man deliberately set aside the law and the authority of His Creator? How disappointing such behavior must appear to God Who gave us His only begotten Son!

Today, God needs men and women who will choose to do what is right because it is right, and because right-doing is pleasing to God. Any man can go with the crowd or with the current. However, our great God, our Creator, is worthy that we be willing to stand alone for His holy Sabbath day.

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Opposition to the Message

JUST as Kadesh-Barnea brought ancient Israel to the greatest crisis of their journey, so the message of 1888 brought modern Israel to the parting of the ways and the greatest crisis of our history. That the Lord intended to pour out the latter rain and quickly finish His work is abundantly evident:

“The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth.” Review and Herald, November 22, 1892. “If you would stand through the time of trouble, you must know Christ and appropriate the gift of His righteousness, which He imparts to the repentant sinner.” Ibid.

“For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.” Romans 9:28. It is through the preaching of the message of righteousness by faith that the latter rain comes and this text is fulfilled.

“Yet the work will be cut short in righteousness. The message of Christ’s righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other to prepare the way of the Lord. This is the glory of God, which closes the work of the third angel.” Testimonies, vol. 6, 19.

Written during the nineties [1890s], “A work is to be accomplished in the earth similar to that which took place at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the days of the early disciples, when they preached Jesus and Him crucified. Many will be converted in a day; for the message will go with power.” Review and Herald, November 22, 1892.

What Might Have Been

That the Lord fully intended to lead the Advent movement to a quick and glorious triumph following the Minneapolis Conference is evident from the following statements:

If these had done their work, the world would have been warned ere this. See Review and Herald, October 6, 1896.

“Had the purpose of God been carried out by His people in giving to the world the message of mercy, Christ would, ere this, have come to the earth, and the saints would have received their welcome into the city of God.” Testimonies, vol. 6, 450. (Published in 1900. First appeared in the Australasian Union Record, October 15, 1898.)

“If the people of God had gone to work as they should have gone to work right after the Minneapolis meeting in 1888, the world would have been warned in a few years and the Lord would have come.”—A statement attributed to Sister White and corroborated by a letter to the writer from Elder W. C. White. See also The Desire of Ages, 633–634; Testimonies, vol. 9, 29.

“God has raised up men to meet the necessity of this time who will cry aloud and spare not, who will lift up their voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins. See Isaiah 58:1. Their work is not only to proclaim the law, but to preach the truth for this time—the Lord our righteousness.... But there are those who see no necessity for a special work at this time. While God is working to arouse the people, they seek to turn aside the message of warning, reproof, and entreaty. Their influence tends to quiet the fears of the people, and to prevent them from awakening to the solemnity of this time. Those who are doing this, are giving the trumpet an uncertain sound. They ought to be awake to the situation, but they have become ensnared by the enemy. If they do not change their course, they will be recorded in the books of heaven as stewards who are unfaithful in the sacred trusts committed to them, and the same reward will be apportioned to them as to those who are at enmity and in open rebellion against God.” Review & Herald, August 13, 1889.

Preach the Law

“You will meet those who will say, ‘You are too much excited over the matter. You are too much in earnest. You should not be reaching for the righteousness of Christ, and making so much of that. You should preach the law.’ As a people, we have preached the law until we are as dry as the hills of Gilboa that had neither dew nor rain. We must preach Christ in the law, and there will be
sap and nourishment in the preaching that will be as food to the famishing flock of God. We must not trust in our own merits at all, but in the merits of Jesus of Nazareth.” Review and Herald Extra, December 23, 1890.

**Criticized Messengers**

The ten unfaithful spies centered their criticism upon Caleb and Joshua, and finally they bade the people stone them. Because Moses stood with these two own kindling?” Review and Herald Extra, December 23, 1890.

We must preach Christ in the law, and there will be sap and nourishment in the preaching that will be as food to the famishing flock of God. We must not trust in our own merits at all, but in the merits of Jesus of Nazareth.

faithful men, he shared the criticism and reproach heaped upon them.

“God has sent to His people Testimonies of truth and righteousness, and they are called to lift up Jesus, and to exalt His righteousness. Those whom God has sent with a message are only men, but what is the character of the message which they bear? Will you dare to turn from, or make light of, the warnings, because God did not consult you as to what would be preferred? God calls men who will speak, who will cry aloud and spare not. God has raised up His messengers to do His work for this time. Some have turned from the message of the righteousness of Christ to criticize the men and their imperfections, …

“They have too much zeal, are too much in earnest, speak with too much positiveness, and the message that would bring healing and life and comfort to many weary and oppressed souls, is, in a measure, excluded; for just in proportion as men of influence close their own hearts and set up their own wills in opposition to what God has said, will they seek to take away the ray of light from those who have been longing and praying for light and for vivifying power. Christ has registered all the hard, proud, sneering speeches spoken against His servants as against Himself.” Review and Herald, May 27, 1890.

“The third angel’s message will not be comprehended, the light which will lighten the earth with its glory will be called a false light, by those who refuse to walk in its advancing glory. The work that might have been done, will be left undone by the rejecters of truth, because of their unbelief. We entreat of you who oppose the light of truth, to stand out of the way of God’s people. Let Heaven-sent light shine forth upon them in clear and steady rays. God holds you to whom this light has come, responsible for the use you make of it. Those who will not hear will be held responsible; for the

truth has been brought within their reach, but they despised their opportunities and privileges.” Ibid.

“There is to be in the churches a wonderful manifestation of the power of God, but it will not move upon those who have not humbled themselves before the Lord, and opened the door of their heart by confession and repentance. In the manifestation of that power which lightens the earth with the glory of God, they will see only something which in their blindness they think dangerous, something which will arouse their fears, and they will brace themselves to resist it. Because the Lord does not work according to their ideas and expectations, they will oppose the work. ‘Why,’ they say, ‘should not we know the Spirit of God, when we have been in the work so many years?’—Because they did not respond to the warnings, the entreaties, of the messages of God, but persistently said, ‘I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.’ Revelation 3:17. Talent, long experience, will not make men channels of light, unless they place themselves under the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness.” Review and Herald Extra, December 23, 1890.

**Own Ideas**

“For nearly two years we have been urging the people to come up and accept the light and the truth concerning the righteousness of Christ, and they do not know whether to come and take hold of this precious truth or not. They are bound about with their own ideas. They do not
let the Saviour in.” *Review and Herald*, March 11, 1890.

This statement shows that it is the acceptance of the Laodicean message with its complete remedy that brings Jesus into the heart. See Revelation 3:14–22. Those who reject this message refuse to let the Saviour in. The hesitant attitude on the part of the people generally was due to the attitude of many of the leaders toward the new preaching. They interposed themselves between the people and God’s message. Just as the whole camp of Israel was affected by the faithless and rebellious attitude of the ten princes who “brought an evil report” (Numbers 13:32), so Adventists in general were made cautious and hesitant and many were led to openly reject the message because of the attitude of men of long years’ experience in whom they had confidence:

“There is sadness in heaven over the spiritual blindness of many of our brethren. . . . The Lord has raised up messengers and endowed them with His Spirit, and has said, ‘Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.’ Isaiah 58:1. Let no one run the risk of interposing himself between the people and the message of Heaven. The message of God will come to the people; and if there were no voice among men to give it, the very stones would cry out.

Criticism in Rooms

Just as the Israelites “murmured in their tents” at Kadesh-Barnea (Psalm 106:25), so those who opposed the message of righteousness by faith at Minneapolis murmured and criticized in their rooms:

“I shall never again, I think, be called to stand under the direction of the Holy Spirit as I stood at Minneapolis. The presence of Jesus was with me. All assembled at that meeting had an opportunity to place themselves on the side of truth by receiving the Holy Spirit, which was sent by God in such a rich current of love and mercy. But in the rooms occupied by some of our people we heard ridicule, criticism, jeering, and laughter. The manifestations of the Holy Spirit were attributed to fanaticism. . . . The scenes which took place at that meeting made the God of heaven ashamed to call those who took part in them His brethren. All this the heavenly Watcher noticed, and it was written in the book of God’s remembrance.”

Special Testimony to the Review and Herald Office, 16–17; written in 1896 (also found in Spalding and Magan’s Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies by Ellen G. White, 34; Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, 1565). Could there be a more striking antitype to what happened at Kadesh-Barnea?

Several ministers who attended the Minneapolis conference have testified to their personal knowledge of what happened in the rooms of some of the delegates. The following is from one who stayed in the same house with a group of workers:

“In our lodging house we were hearing a good many remarks about Sister White favoring Elder Waggoner, and that he was one of her pets. The spirit of controversy was up, and when the delegates came in from the last meeting of the day there was simply babbles, with much laughter and joking and some very disgusting comments were being made, no spirit of solemnity prevailing. A few did not engage in the hilarity. No worship hour was kept, and anything but the solemnity that should have been felt and manifested on such an occasion was present.” Written by Elder C. McReynold in 1931.

Satan in Control

Just as Satan got control of the ten spies whose false report kept Israel from entering the Promised Land at the time of God’s appointment, and led them to bitterly denounce and persecute the two men of faith, so Satan’s spirit controlled those who rejected the message of 1888 and criticized, ridiculed and persecuted the men of faith who gave it. In Testimonies to Ministers, 77–81, is a testimony from God’s servant entitled “A Faithful Message,” and written from Hobart, Tasmania, May 1, 1895. After speaking of Cain’s hatred for Abel which led to murder, the following statement is made:

“Just as soon as man separates from God so that his heart is not under the subduing power of the Holy Spirit, the attributes of Satan will be revealed, and he will begin to oppress his fellowmen. . . . Men who are entrusted with weighty responsibilities, but who have no living connection with God, have been and are doing despite to His Holy Spirit. They are indulging the very same spirit as did Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and as did the Jews in the days of Christ. See Matthew 12:22–29, 31–37. Warnings have come from God again and again for these men, but they have cast them aside and ventured on in the same course.”

After repeating many of the woes pronounced by Christ upon the scribes and Pharisees, as recorded in Matthew 23, with the prediction that other prophets and teachers would be sent to them in the future against whom they would manifest the same persecuting spirit of their fathers, the application is then made to the rejecters of the message at Minneapolis and the persecution of the messengers: “This prophecy was literally fulfilled by the Jews in their treatment of Christ and of the messengers whom God sent to them. Will men in these last days follow the example of those whom Christ condemned? These terrible predictions they have not yet carried out to the full; but if God spares their lives, and they nourish the same spirit that marked their course of action both before and after the Minneapolis meeting, they will fill up to the full the deeds of those whom Christ condemned when He was upon the earth.” Ibid., 79.

Continuing, we read: “Satan takes the control of every mind that is not decidedly under the control of the Spirit of God. Some have been cultivating hatred against the men whom God has commis-
estioned to bear a special message to the world. They began this satanic work at Minneapolis. Afterward, when they saw and felt the demonstration of the Holy Spirit testifying that the message was of God, they hated it the more, because it was a testimony against them. They would not humble their hearts to repent, to give God the glory, and vindicate the right. They went on in their own spirit, filled with envy, jealousy, and evil surmisings, as did the Jews. They opened their hearts to the enemy of God and man. Yet these men have been holding positions of trust, and have been molding the work after their own similitude, as far as they possibly could. . . . Those who are now first, who have been untrue to the cause of God, will soon be last, unless they repent. Unless they speedily fall upon the Rock and be broken, and be born again, the spirit that has been cherished will continue to be cherished. Mercy’s sweet voice will not be recognized by them. Bible religion, in private and in public, is with them a thing of the past. They have been zealously declaiming against enthusiasm and fanaticism. Faith that calls upon God to relieve human suffering, faith that God has enjoined upon His people to exercise, is called fanaticism. But if there is anything upon the earth that should inspire men with sanctified zeal, it is the truth as it is in Jesus. It is the grand, great work of redemption. It is Christ, made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” Ibid., 79-80.

“I question whether genuine rebellion is ever curable. . . . Call rebellion by its right name and apostasy by its right name, and then consider that the experience of the ancient people of God with all its objectionable features was faithfully chronicled to pass into history. The Scripture declares, ‘These things . . . are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.’” 1 Corinthians 10:11. And if men and women who have the knowledge of the truth are so far separated from their Great Leader that they will take the great leader of apostasy and name him Christ our Righteousness, it is because they have not sunk deep into the mines of truth. They are not able to distinguish the precious ore from the base material.” Selected Messages, book 2, 393.

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September 1996  Our Firm Foundation  27
Pride and Worldliness to Be Avoided

The people of God should not imitate the fashions of the world. Some have done this, and are fast losing the peculiar, holy character which should distinguish them as God's people. They give the lie to their profession. They think they are not like the world, but they are so near like them in dress, in conversation, and in actions, that there is no distinction between them.

Why is it so hard to lead a self-denying, humble life? Is it not because professed Christians are not dead to the world? If they were, it would be easy living for Christ. But many have a disposition to dress and act as much like the world as possible, and yet go to heaven. Such are seeking to climb up some other way. They do not enter through the strait gate and narrow way. And when they are thrown on a bed of death, the great inquiry is, "Am I prepared to die, prepared to appear before God in judgment, and pass the grand review?" Ah! then, if they could take back and live over the past, they would correct their lives; they would shun the follies of the world, its vanity and pride. They would live to the glory of God, and set an example to all around them.

Few manifest an interest in their eternal welfare; few are preparing for their final change; earth attracts them, its treasures seem of worth to them. They find enough to engross the mind. Satan is ever seeking to plunge them deeper and deeper into the cares of this life. As soon as one perplexity is off the mind, he stands ready to involve them in another by exciting an unholy desire for more of the things of earth. And thus time passes, and when it is too late they see that they have gained nothing substantial. They have grasped at shadows, and lost eternal life.

Many dress like the world to have an influence. They spend hours that are worse than thrown away, in studying this or that fashion to decorate the poor, mortal body. But here they make a sad and fatal mistake. If they would have a saving influence, if they would have their lives tell in favor of the truth, let them imitate the humble Pattern; let them show their faith by righteous works, and make the distinction broad between themselves and the world. The words, the dress, and the actions should tell for God. Then a holy influence will be shed upon all, and all will take knowledge of them, that they have been with Jesus. Unbelievers will see that faith in Christ's coming affects the character.

God hates pride; "and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up." Malachi 4:1. The third angel's message must yet work like leaven upon the hearts of many that profess to believe it; pride, selfishness, covetousness, and love of the world must be subdued. Jesus is soon coming; and He will acknowledge as His none but those who have been purified and made white, and who have kept themselves separate, unspotted from the world.

Those who profess to believe the third angel's message, often wound the cause of God by lightness, joking, and trifling. This evil is all through our ranks. There should be a humbling before the Lord; the Israel of God should rend the heart, and not the garment. Childlike simplicity is rarely seen; the approbation of man is more thought of than the displeasure of God. Set your hearts in order, dear brethren and sisters, lest the brittle thread of life be cut, and you lie down in the grave unsheltered, unprepared for the judgment. Unless you make

Ellen G. White
your peace with God, and tear yourselves from the world, your hearts will grow harder, and you will lean upon a false prop, a supposed preparation, and find out your mistake too late to secure a well-grounded hope.

The ax must be laid at the root of the tree. Pride and worldliness should not be suffered in the church. It is these things that separate God from His people. They have been asleep to the pride and conformity to the world which exist in the very midst of the church. Pride, covetousness, selfishness, and love of the world, are constantly increasing. The external appearance is an index to the heart. When hearts are affected by the truth, there will be a death to the world; and those who are dead to the world will not be moved by the laugh, the jeer, and the scorn of unbelievers. They will feel an anxious desire to be like their Master, separate from the world. They will not imitate its fashions or customs. The noble object will be ever before them, to glorify God, and gain the immortal inheritance, and in comparison with this, everything of an earthly nature will sink into insignificance.

Too many neglect the Bible. They do not make that book their study and their rule of life as they should. Especially are the young guilty of this neglect. Most of them find plenty of time to read almost any other book; but the precious book that points to eternal life, the important book that is to judge them in the last day, is scarcely studied at all. Idle stories are attentively read, while the Bible is passed by neglected. A day is coming, a day of clouds and thick darkness, when all will wish to be thoroughly furnished by the plain, simple truths of the Word of God, that they may meekly, yet decidedly, give a reason of their hope. All must understand the reason of their hope, to strengthen their own souls in the fierce conflict before the people of God. Without this, they will be wanting, and cannot have firmness and decision.

God will have a people separate and distinct from the world. When any cherish a desire to imitate the fashions of the world, He ceases to acknowledge them as His children, and they become the children of the world and of darkness. Those that had professed Christ, virtually put Him off, and show that they are strangers to grace and to the meek and lowly Jesus. Had they acquainted themselves with Him, they would walk worthy of Him.

Young and old, God is now testing you. You are deciding your own eternal destiny. Your pride, your vain and empty conversation, your selfishness, are all put in the scale, and in many cases the weight of evil is fearfully against you. While evil is increasing and taking deep root, it is choking the good seed which has been sown in the heart. Many are flattering themselves that they are good Christians who have not a single ray of light from Jesus. They know not what it is to have the heart renewed by grace. They have no living experience for themselves in the things of God.

God proves His people in this world. This is the fitting up place to appear in His presence. Here persons show what power affects their hearts and controls their actions. If it is the power of divine truth, it will lead to good works. It will elevate the receiver and make him noblehearted and generous, like his divine Lord. But if evil angels control the heart, it will be seen in various ways. The fruit will be covetousness, selfishness, pride, and evil passions. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Many professors of religion are not willing to examine themselves closely to see whether they are in the faith, and some are leaning on a false hope. They seem to think a profession of the truth will save them. When they subdue those sins which God hates, Jesus will come in and sup with them and they

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with Him. They will then draw divine strength from Jesus, and will grow up in Him, and be able to say with holy triumph, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 15:57.

It is the privilege of every Christian to enjoy the deep movements of the Spirit of God. A sweet, heavenly peace may pervade the mind, and you may meditate with pleasure upon God and heaven. You may feast upon the glorious promises of His Word. But know first that you have begun the Christian course. Know that the first steps are taken in the road to everlasting life. Be not deceived here; for eternal interests are at stake.

Review and Herald, September 9, 1884.

"Those who are ready to do service are those who feed most on Christ. Read and study His word, think in the inspiration of His Spirit, and receive of His grace, not to hoard, but to give to others. In order to instruct others, the teachers must first be learners of Christ. There are Marthas in every church. They are intensely busy in religious activities, and they do much good; but we need also Mary's side of character. The most zealous workers need to learn at the feet of Jesus."

Testimonies to Ministers, 346
The Medical Missionary Corner
Continued from 11
vides an eternal safeguard against defec-
tion in fallen worlds, as well as among those who shall be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Our only hope is perfect trust in the blood of Him who can save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. The death of Christ on the cross of Calvary is our only hope in this world, and it will be our theme in the world to come. . .

Why should man not study the theme of redemption? It is the greatest subject that can engage the human mind. If men would contemplate the love of Christ, displayed in the cross, their faith would be strengthened to appropriate the merits of His shed blood, and they would be cleansed and saved from sin.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 5, 1132–1133.

Trust in Your Restorer

“The time has come to which holy men have looked with longing since the flaming sword barred the first pair from Eden, the time for ‘the redemption of the purchased possession.’ Ephesians 1:14. The earth originally given to man as his kingdom, betrayed by him into the hands of Satan, and so long held by the mighty foe, has been brought back by the great plan of redemption. All that was lost by sin has been restored. ‘Thus saith the Lord . . . that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited.’ Isaiah 45:18. God’s original purpose in the creation of the earth is fulfilled as it is made the eternal abode of the redeemed. ‘The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.’ Psalm 37:29.

“A fear of making the future inheritance seem too material has led many to spiritualize away the very truths which lead us to look upon it as our home. Christ assured His disciples that He went to prepare mansions for them in the Father’s house. Those who accept the teachings of God’s word will not be wholly ignorant concerning the heavenly abode. And yet, ‘eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.’ 1 Corinthians 2:9.

Human language is inadequate to describe the reward of the righteous. It will be known only to those who behold it. No finite mind can comprehend the glory of the Paradise of God.

“In the Bible the inheritance of the saved is called ‘a country.’ See Hebrews 11:14–16. There the heavenly Shepherd leads His flock to fountains of living waters. The tree of life yields its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the service of the nations. There are ever-flowing streams, clear as crystal, and beside them waving trees cast their shadows upon the paths prepared for the ransomed of the Lord. There the wide-spreading plains swell into hills of beauty, and the mountains of God rear their lofty summits. On those peaceful plains, beside those living streams, God’s people, so long pilgrims and wander-
cers, shall find a home.” The Great Contro-
versy, 674–675.
I have recently come across your publication and have found it to be a great blessing to read. The message of Christ Our Righteousness especially has made a profound impression in my life. I rejoice even more in this last-day message. My prayer is that all honest souls may have this experience in their lives. To accept and embrace this message will be our only defense in the time of trouble. ZZ, Canada

I thank you so much for sending me your eye-opening magazine—Our Firm Foundation. It sure lifted my spirit, and I would like you to put me on your monthly mailing list. May the loving, soon-coming Saviour bless you greatly in sending the truth to all who are seeking and searching. RS, California

I would like to express to you my deep appreciation for sending me Our Firm Foundation, even when I couldn’t pay for it. As a young Adventist man, I have found your articles interesting and profitable. I have learned throughout my years how important the Spirit of Prophecy is in our church, and it grieves my heart to see my congregation reject the Testimonies that God has given us. GC, California

We just learned of your publication, Our Firm Foundation, from a caring friend who shared an old copy. Please include us on your mailing list. LE, Florida

Thank you for the books which you sent me. I was very happy to receive them! We will use these books to assist those who have not known the Word of God, for it is written that we must go and spread the glad tidings to the whole world. Thank you and please send more. As a small society, we are being surrounded by a vacuum. People like being different from our teaching. I kindly request that you send us more teaching books so that we can win other souls to the coming Kingdom. Please include magazines (Our Firm Foundation), and health and temperance books. JK, Kenya

Christian greetings in Jesus’ name! I shall be very glad if you will kindly send me the Spirit of Prophecy books, as well as past and present Our Firm Foundation magazines. Also, please send me the Bible lessons entitled Truth For Today. I hope you will consider my request. AL, Kaimos

I was recently converted and am a repentent fellow SDA brother in Zimbabwe. I have just heard about Hope International and have been studying your magazines and books very well. The Great Controversy actually helped me to understand the Bible teachings and prophecies by referring constantly to your books like Prophets and Kings, The Desire of Ages, and Christ’s Object Lessons.

I sincerely request that you send me a copy of each of the above three books, so I can have my own copy of them. Patriarchs and Prophets would also help me in understanding Old Testament stories. Additional copies of Our Firm Foundation would also help me so much! Hopefully you will be able to help me soon—before Jesus comes again! MS, Zimbabwe

All was well with me until I discovered some differences in how Bibles are being written. I am using a Good News Bible, and it is sometimes misleading. It contradicts other Bibles like the King James Version. For example, when other Bibles state that there was a terrible war in heaven, my Bible simply states there was a war on earth.

Here in Zimbabwe, books are very expensive. From Eternity Past, by E.G. White, costs about 560 Zimbabwe dollars, however, my salary is only $400—and I am married. The KJV Bible costs about $200.

In the name of the living God of Israel, please help me with the following: (1) a KJV Bible, (2) an English hymnbook, (3) The Great Controversy, and (4) From Eternity Past, etc. TN, Zimbabwe

I am hereby applying to your association to send to me some spiritual books which will assist me in my further studies. I am very interested in reading spiritual books and sharing them with others. PP, Uganda

I am a young man of 25 years of age, and I am the head church elder at —— SDA Church in Zimbabwe. I have been heading up this 500-member church for the past two years.

I was fascinated when I came across some magazines from Hope International in 1994. I became an addicted Bible student through those magazines. May God bless and prosper you for such a wonderful work you are doing for the Lord! Since we started receiving those magazines from our friends, our church has become a studious church. We have dug deeper into the Spirit of Prophecy. I have personally presented the messages with love, as true and undiluted as you have presented them to the flock of the Lord.

Although I don’t have the Spirit of Prophecy books, I have gained much knowledge of their contents through quotations in the magazines.

Through quoting these books, I am meeting some resistance from my local church and conference. The main reason being that I am quoting Ron Spear, and not Ellen White, since the quotations are presented from the magazine, but with no books to support the quotations. Since I am still doing some studying and am not yet working, I cannot afford even one copy of the Spirit of Prophecy books because the prices are so high here in Zimbabwe.

Please, sir, I am desperately in need of the three-volume set of the Spirit of Prophecy, but I cannot afford them as yet. Since the day I saw the advertisement for these books, I have had no peace of mind. If I receive those three volumes, I will form a local church library of your magazines and use the three volumes as reference books. I am sure, with these volumes, I can convince our church to make some monthly or annual orders of the magazines.

Time is no longer, brother. If we fail to do what we ought to do now, we will do it during perilous times. If we don’t equip ourselves now with the Word of God, the Spirit will have nothing to remind us of during the time of trouble. JB, Zimbabwe
Fortify yourself, your family and fellow Adventists against Satan’s “very last deception” for Seventh-day Adventists. (See Selected Messages, book 1, 48.)

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